

the delicate state, as it were, of infancy ; in short, to a state precisely analogous to that of the weak sugars, and other organic compounds, comparatively with the strong and perfect varieties of the same substances ; as described in the preceding chapter.

Such is, we believe, an accurate account of the merely solvent or reducing powers of the stomach. We have next to show the means by which this solution or reduction is effected.

The process of combining different substances with water, and of thus reducing them from a stronger to a weaker condition, may, in some instances, and to a certain degree, be effected artificially. But in no instance do we appear to be able to invert the process ; or to complete an organic compound, by separating the compounds from the water which enters into its composition. For example, we can, in some respects, make a strong sugar weak, but we cannot change a weak into a strong sugar ; though such a change, within certain limits, seems to be, to the organic agents, just as easy, as the reducing process.

The different operations of cookery, as roasting, boiling, baking, &c. have all a reducing effect ; and may, therefore, be considered as preparatory to the solvent action of the stomach. Of these operations, Man's nature has taught him to avail himself, and they constitute the