

chief means by which he is enabled to be omnivorous: for, without such preparation, a very large portion of the matters which he now adopts as food, would be completely indigestible. By different culinary processes, the most refractory substances, can often be rendered nutritious. Thus, by alternate baking and boiling, the woody fibre itself may be converted into a sort of amylaceous pulp; not only possessing most of the properties of the amylaceous principle, but capable of being formed into bread. The culinary art engages no small share of attention among mankind; but, unfortunately, cooks are seldom chemists; nor indeed do they understand the most simple of the chemical principles of their art. Hence, their labour is most frequently employed, not in rendering wholesome articles of food more digestible, which is the true object of cookery; but in making unwholesome things palatable; foolishly imagining that what is agreeable to the palate, must be also healthful to the stomach. A greater fallacy can scarcely be conceived; for, though by a beautiful arrangement of Providence, what is wholesome is seldom disagreeable; the converse is by no means applicable to man; since those things which are pleasant to the taste, are not unfrequently very injurious. Animals, indeed, for the most part, avoid, instinctively, all unwholesome food; probably because every thing that