

a function of the skin perfectly intelligible, on the supposition that near the surface of the body, the albuminous portions of the blood are always converted into gelatine. With respect to the aqueous vapour thrown off from the lungs: we have every reason to believe, as before stated, that much of this vapour is *derived from the chyle*, in its passage through the lungs; and that by such separation of water, the *weak* and delicate albumen of the chyle, is converted into the *strong* and perfect albumen of the blood; according to the principles detailed at the commencement of this chapter.

Thirdly. What are the uses of the continual extrication of carbonic acid from living animals; and could not a little superfluous carbon have been thrown off from their bodies in a more simple manner? The precise use of the constant evolution of carbonic acid, or how it is effected, we know not; but one great use which has been assigned to this evolution, is, the formation of the heat of the body; and not only the power of forming that heat; but also the power of varying it according to circumstances—a power so characteristic of organic life. Out of the body, carbon does certainly give off heat on combination with oxygen. Hence, it has been maintained with great plausibility, that the same combination, within a living body, may give origin to its heat; though it must be confessed, there are