

that gaseous matter which is separated by the animal economy, and which if retained within animals, would to them be fatal, constitutes, on the other hand, the chief food of plants. Nor in these two respects only, are the two great systems of organization mutually dependent: for unless plants consumed the carbonic acid gas which is formed by animals; this deleterious compound would probably accumulate in the atmosphere, so as to destroy animal life; while it is doubtful, whether the present races of vegetables could exist, if carbonic acid gas were not formed by animals. Again, the general scheme of Providence, for the nourishment of animals, claims our especial notice. Animals have not only been destined to prey on each other: but all created beings are the food of other beings progressively higher than themselves in the scale of organization. By this wise arrangement, the labour of the assimilating power has been greatly diminished; and by the same means, that accumulation of dead animal remains, which soon would be overwhelming, is entirely prevented. Even in the fabric of individual animals, and in the operations which are carried on within these beings, the same wise purposes of mutual relation and dependance are observable. Thus, whether we contemplate the repeated employment of the same materials; or the various important ends, in many