

and deformed, often bring forth monsters, and children more defective still than their fathers.

The scurvy, dropsy, and such diseases as proceed from a vitiated state of the blood and other fluids, are the most fatal to mankind; but these fluids depend upon the solids, which are the real organic parts. As we become advanced in life the vessels contract, the muscles lose their strength, and the secretory organs are obstructed; from which causes the blood, and other fluids, become viscid, and occasion those diseases which are generally supposed to arise from vitiated humours. The natural decay of the solids are, therefore, the original causes of those disorders; nevertheless, if the fluids become stagnated, or are obstructed in their circulation, by a contraction of the vessels, they produce alarming symptoms, and soon corrupt and corrode the weakest parts of the solids. Thus do the causes of dissolution continually multiply until they put a period to our existence.

All these causes of decay act continually upon our material existence, and contribute to its dissolution. Nature, however, approaches to this much-dreaded period by slow and imperceptible