

## CHAPTER I.

### OF THE NATURE AND COMPOSITION OF ORGANIZED BODIES IN GENERAL, AS COMPARED WITH INORGANIC MATTERS.

“ A LIVING being considered as an object of chemical research, is a laboratory, within which a number of chemical operations are conducted ; of these operations, one chief object is to produce all those phenomena, which taken collectively are denominated *Life* ; while another chief object is to develope gradually the corporeal machine or Laboratory itself, from its existence in the condition of an atom, as it were, to its utmost state of perfection. From this point of utmost perfection, the whole begins to decline as gradually as it had been developed ; the operations are performed in a manner less and less perfect, till at length the being ceases to live ; and the elements of which it is composed, again set free, obey the general laws of inorganic nature.”\*  
Such is the history of organic existence ; nor, though the periods of developement and of decay

\* Berzelius *Traité de Chimie*, tom. v. p. 1.