

be infinitely varied in different species, does a single individual remain for a moment stationary ; but all, sooner or later, transcend their prime, and finally share the common lot of dissolution.

That peculiar principle or principles, which under some condition or other, exists in all organized beings, and by which they are distinguished from inanimate matter, has received various appellations. In the present enquiry these principles may be viewed as agents ; and to discriminate them from Heat, Electricity, and other agents operating on inorganic matters, they may be denominated *organic agents*. In conducting our investigations into the nature of these principles or agents, our difficulty will be much lessened, by endeavouring previously to have a clear understanding of what these agents actually do. We shall, therefore, in the first place, give a short sketch,

1. *Of Organic Bodies considered as Chemical Compounds.*—In their well-marked forms, no two things perhaps can be conceived to offer a stronger contrast, than the two great divisions of organic bodies—vegetables and animals. Yet these two kinds of bodies so gradually approximate, and seem even to coalesce, that it is not possible to say where the one ends and the other begins. The same remark applies to the chemical composition of vegetables and animals.