

dation of these agents, from the vital agent in the comparatively simple plant, onward to that of the most complicated animal.

Such being the suggestions concerning organic agency, which arise from a general survey of organic operations; let us, with reference to the further bearing and tendency of these suggestions, enquire a little more minutely into the powers and modes of operation of organic agents.

3. *Of the Modes of Operation of Organic Agents.*—In the first place, with regard to what *cannot* be effected by organic agency, we may observe, that no organic agent has the power either of *creating* material elements, or of *changing* one such element into another. By element, it may be right to premise, is here meant, a principle which is not made up of others; and which, consequently, possesses an absolute and independent existence. Whether one, or more, such elements exist, it is not now our object to enquire. The astonishing discoveries of modern chemistry have shown, that many of those substances, formerly considered as elements, are, in fact, compounds; and as the science of chemistry is still progressive, it is probable, that with the enlargement of its boundaries, there will be a still further diminution of the number of those substances which are, as