ever, under similar circumstances. In consequence of these observations, it seems now to be generally admitted, that the oxygen of the atmospheric air is absorbed by the blood; and, in some unknown state of combination, reaches the extreme subdivisions of the arteries; where it is united with a portion of carbon, and forms carbonic acid gas: that this carbonic acid gas is retained in some unknown state of combination in the venous blood; till, in the lungs, it is expelled, and oxygen is absorbed in its stead; according to the laws which regulate the diffusion of gaseous bodies, and which were formerly explained. Along with the carbonic acid gas, a large quantity of aqueous vapour, as we have stated, is at the same time separated from the blood.

It would be foreign to the objects of this treatise, were we to enter further into the reasons for the view we have given of the phenomena of respiration. These reasons are many and strong; and seem indeed to prove clearly, that the changes which the blood undergoes, during its circulation through the body, are as we have described them. We shall, therefore, assume, that our view of respiration is correct; and shall offer a few remarks on the attendant circumstances, and on the consequences, of respiration.

First. To what influence are we to ascribe the different colours of arterial and of venous blood?