

more compounded, especially those substances which include azote, are exceedingly liable to putrescent change. For such changes, a certain degree of heat and of moisture appear to be necessary: since in a temperature below the freezing point of water, or in a perfectly dry state of the atmosphere, even animal substances may be preserved unchanged, during any length of time. The phenomena resulting from the dissolution of different kinds of organized matters are of course different; but in every instance, the tendency is toward the formation of compounds more simple than the matter decomposed; that is to say, of compounds whose existence, out of a living body, is not incompatible with the present state of the globe. The matters which, in a warm and damp air, seem first to be loosened from organic combination, are those foreign bodies we have already mentioned, as existing, in every part of the structure of organized beings, in some unknown but active self-repulsive state. Hence arises, during putrescent changes, the formation of sulfuretted and phosphoretted hydrogen, and of other undefined compounds of the same elements: and these gaseous compounds, chiefly, produce the very offensive odour of putrefaction. At the same time, there are formed, carburetted hydrogen, oil, acetic acid, ammonia, and last of all, carbonic acid gas and water; while the azote is