

ORIGEN AND CELSUS.

WHEN the seed of the forest tree begins to germinate, and the cotyledons burst their ligaments and lift themselves into light, the growing plant thenceforward gathers its nutriment out of *the air*. The massive trunk of the oak which has stood for a thousand years, is composed chiefly of vapours absorbed through the leaves and organized into fibre by the cunning chemistry of nature. Some few mineral substances enter into its composition, and are taken up out of the soil through the roots. But these grosser elements are slight in comparison with those of more ethereal origin; how slight, may be measured by the handful of dust which remains when the log has been consumed in the furnace, and the carbon and hydrogen have returned to the source from whence they came. An animal is formed of the same materials, and is developed by analogous laws. A single cell with the force called life in it