

mation of beings; why may she not sometimes give redundant parts, since she so often withholds those which are essential? How many animals are deficient both in senses and members? Why should we suppose, that in each individual every part is useful to others, and necessary to the whole? Is it not sufficient that they are found together, that they are not hurtful, can grow without hindrance, and unfold without obliterating each other? All things which are not hostile enough to destroy each other certainly can subsist together; and perhaps there are, in most beings, fewer relative, useful, or necessary parts, than those which are indifferent, useless, or superabundant; but as we would always refer things to a certain end, when parts have no apparent uses, we either suppose they have hidden ones, or invent relations which have no foundation, and only serve to lead us into errors. We do not consider that we alter the philosophy, and change the sense of the object, when instead of inquiring how Nature acts, we endeavour to divine the end and cause of her acting. This general prejudice, which is too frequently adopted, serves only to cover our ignorance, and is both useless and opposite to the inquiry after, and discovery of, the effects of Nature.