

## LECTURE VIII.

### UNITY OF THE DIVINE PLAN AND OPERATION IN ALL AGES OF THE WORLD'S HISTORY.

CONTRIVANCE, adaptation, and design, are some of the most striking features of the natural world. They are obvious throughout the whole range of creation, in the minutest as well as in the most magnificent objects; in the most complicated as well as in the most simple. So universally present are they, that whenever we meet with any thing in nature which seems imperfectly adapted to other objects, as the organ of an animal or plant, which exhibits malformation, it excites general attention, and the mere child need not be told that, in its want of adaptation to other objects, it is an exception in the natural world.

In order to illustrate what I mean by contrivance, adaptation, and design, let me refer to a familiar example: the human eye. Made up of three coats and three humours, of solids and fluids, of nerves, blood-vessels, and muscles, and rivalling the most perfect optical instrument, it must have required the most consummate contrivance to give the requisite quantity and position to parts so numerous and unlike, for producing the phenomena of vision. Yet how perfectly it is done! How few, out of the hundreds of millions of eyes of men and other animals, fail of vision through any natural defect!

No less marvellous are the adaptations of the eye. In order to be adapted to the wonderful effect which we call light, its coats and humours must be transparent, and possess a certain density and opacity, that the rays may form an image on the retina. Yet to prevent confusion in the image, the transparency must be confined to the central parts of the eye, and a dark plexus of veins and muscles must be so situated as to absorb the scattering rays. In order to adapt the eye to different distances, and to the greater or less intensity of the