

they the devices of the human mind to classify and arrange our knowledge in such a manner as to bring it more readily within our grasp and facilitate further investigations, or have they been instituted by the Divine Intelligence as the categories of his mode of thinking?<sup>1</sup> Have we, perhaps, thus far been only the unconscious interpreters of a Divine conception, in our attempts to expound nature? and when, in our pride of philosophy, we thought that we were inventing systems of science and classifying creation by the force of our own reason, have we followed only, and reproduced, in our imperfect expressions, the plan whose foundations were laid in the dawn of creation, and the development of which we are laboriously studying,—thinking, as we put together and arrange our fragmentary knowledge, that we are anew introducing order into chaos? Is this order the result of the exertions of human skill and ingenuity, or is it inherent in the objects themselves, so that the intelligent student of Natural History is led unconsciously, by the study of the animal kingdom itself, to these conclusions, the great divisions under which he arranges animals being indeed but the headings to the chapters of the great book which he is reading? To me it appears indisputable, that this order and arrangement of our studies are based upon the natural, primitive relations of animal life,—those systems, to which we have given the names of the great leaders of our science who first proposed them, being in truth but translations, into human language, of the thoughts of the Creator. And if this is indeed so, do we not find in this adaptability of the human intellect to the facts of creation, by which we become instinctively, and, as I have said, unconsciously, the translators of the thoughts of God, the most conclusive proof of our affinity with the Divine Mind? and is not this intellectual and spiritual connection with the Almighty worthy our deepest consideration? If there is any truth in the belief that man is made in the image of God, it is surely not amiss for the philosopher to endeavor, by the study of his own mental operations, to approximate the workings of the Divine Reason, learning, from the nature of his own mind, better to understand the Infinite Intellect from which it is derived. Such a suggestion may, at first sight, appear irreverent. But, which is the truly humble? He who, penetrating into the secrets of creation, arranges them under a formula which he proudly calls his scientific system? or he who, in the same pursuit, recognizes his glorious affinity with the Creator, and, in deepest gratitude for so sublime a birthright, strives to be the faithful interpreter of that Divine Intellect with whom he is permitted, nay, with whom he is intended, according to the laws of his being, to enter into communion?

<sup>1</sup> It must not be overlooked here that a system may be natural, that is, may agree in every respect with the facts in nature, and yet not be considered by its author as the manifestation of the thoughts

of a Creator, but merely as the expression of a fact existing in nature, no matter how, which the human mind may trace and reproduce in a systematic form of its own invention.