

without employment, parts of the body which exist without performing any service—adapted for a purpose, but without in reality fulfilling that purpose. When we consider the attempts which the earlier naturalists have made in order to explain this mystery, we can scarcely help smiling at the strange ideas to which they were led. Being unable to find a true explanation, they came, for example, to the conclusion that the Creator had placed these organs there “for the sake of symmetry,” or they believed that it had appeared unwise and unsuitable to the Creator (seeing that their nearest kin did possess such organs) that these organs should be completely wanting in creatures, where they are incapable of performing a function, and where it cannot be otherwise from the special mode of life. In compensation for the non-existing function, he had at least furnished them with the outward but empty form; much in the same manner as civil officers, in uniform, are furnished with an innocent sword, which is never drawn from the scabbard. I scarcely believe, however, that any of my readers will be content with such an explanation.

Now, it is precisely this widely spread and mysterious phenomenon of rudimentary organs, in regard to which all other attempts at explanation fail, which is perfectly explained, and indeed in the simplest and clearest way, by Darwin's *Theory of Inheritance and Adaptation*. We can trace the important laws of inheritance and adaptation in the domestic animals which we breed, and the plants which we cultivate; and a series of such laws of inheritance have already been established. Without going further into this at present, I will only remark that some of them perfectly explain, in a mechanical way, the existence of rudimentary