

friend of man to reach the couch, and to receive the dying embraces of a beloved child; or to obtain those means of human aid, which haply may have averted the stroke of impending death.

But in this, as in many similar instances, we can at once perceive (what we may always in reasoning presume) that an alteration in the constitution of any department of nature would be incompatible with that harmony of the whole, the existence of which is evident to all those who are capable of observing and interrogating philosophically the phenomena of creation. And if it should be said that some species of animals have actually become extinct, and others are gradually becoming more and more rare; yet, in such instances, we shall find the fact to be either the result of a providential adjustment, if the expression may be permitted; or, of the original rarity of the species themselves, as in the case of that uncouth bird the dodo<sup>n</sup>; or, as might

<sup>n</sup> It is not without reason that the epithet *uncouth* has been applied to the dodo; for two distinguished naturalists, in their day, maintained for many years that such a form had never existed, but in the imagination of the painter. One of these individuals however at length had an opportunity of inspecting the well-known specimen of the head of the dodo, which is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford; and was then convinced that such a bird had existed. But so far was he from producing the same conviction in the mind of his friend, by the description of the specimen, that he incurred the charge of an