office; that they have an important share in the act of respiration, whilst they are perfect as a foundation for the extremity. Now, let us take an instance where the mode of respiration of the animal is inconsistent with what we may term the original mechanism of the bones of the shoulder. In the batrachian order, the ribs are wanting: where then are we to look for them? Shall we follow a system which informs us that when a bone is wanting in the cavity of the ear we are to seek for it in the jaw; yet, which, shall leave us in the contemplation of this class of animals deficient in thirty-two ribs, without pointing out where they are to be found, or how these elements are built up in other structures? If, on the contrary, we take the principle that parts are formed or withdrawn, with a never failing relation to the function which is to be performed, we see that no sooner are the compages of the chest removed, and the shoulder thus deprived of support, than the bones to which the extremity is fixed are expanded and varied, both in form and articulation, so as to fulfil their main object of giving security and a centre of motion to the arm.

With respect to the instance which we have accidentally noticed of the mechanism of the jaw in birds, and which is brought forward so vauntingly as a proof of the excellence of the theory, it does, indeed, prove the reverse of what