

more marvellous is the progressive construction of the human mind, and still more arduous the task of tracing the finer threads which connect the delicate web of its ideas, which fix its fleeting perceptions, and which establish the vast system of its associations, and of following the long series of gradations by which its affections are expanded, purified, and exalted, and the soul prepared for its higher destination in a future stage of existence.

Here, indeed, we perceive a remarkable interruption to that regular gradation, which we have traced in all other parts of the animal series; for between man and the most sagacious of the brutes there intervenes an immense chasm, of which we can hardly estimate the magnitude. The functions which are purely vital, and are necessary for even the lowest degree of sensitive existence, are possessed equally by all animals: in the distribution of the faculties of mere sensation a greater inequality may be perceived: the intellectual faculties, again, are of a more refined and nobler character, and being less essential to animal life, are dealt out by nature with a more sparing and partial hand. Between the two extremities of the scale we find an infinite number of intermediate degrees. The more exalted faculties are possessed exclusively by man, and constitute the source of the immense superiority he enjoys over the brute creation, which so frequently excels him in the perfection of subordinate powers. In strength and swiftness he is surpassed by many quadrupeds. In vain may he wish for the power of flight possessed by the numerous inhabitants of air. He may envy that range of sight which enables the bird to discern from a height at which it is itself invisible to our eyes, the minutest objects on the surface of the earth. He may regret the dulness of his own senses, when he adverts to the exquisite scent of the hound, or the acute hearing of the bat. While the delicate perceptions of the lower animals teach them to seek the food which is salutary, and avoid that which is injurious, man alone seems stunted in his powers of discrimination, and is compelled to gather instruction