

Few facts are more remarkable in the history of the progress of human discovery, than that it should have been reserved almost entirely for the researches of the present generation, to arrive at any certain knowledge of the existence of the numerous extinct races of animals, which occupied the surface of our planet, in ages preceding the creation of man. The rapid progress, which during the last half century, has been made in the physical sciences, enables us now to enter into the history of Fossil Organic Remains, in a manner which, till within a very few years, would have been quite impracticable; during these years the anatomy of extinct species of Quadrupeds has been most extensively investi-

posed: thus a Polype, or an Oyster, are as perfectly adapted to their functions at the bottom of the sea, as the wings of the Eagle are perfect, as organs of rapid passage through the air, and the feet of the stag perfect, in regard to their functions of effecting swift locomotion upon the land.

Unusual deviations from ordinary structure appear monstrosities only, until considered with reference to their peculiar use, but are proved to be instruments of perfect contrivance, when we understand the nature of the service to which they are applied: thus; the beak of the Cross Bill (*Loxia curvirostra*, Linn.) would be an awkward instrument if applied to the ordinary service of the beaks of the Passerine Order, to which this bird belongs; but viewed in relation to its peculiar function of extracting seeds from between the indurated scales of Fir cones, it is at once seen to be an instrument of perfect adaptation to its intended work.

The *Perfection* of an organized Body is usually considered to be in proportion to the Variety and compound Nature of its parts, as the *imperfection* is usually considered to be in the Ratio of its Simplicity.