

CHAPTER III.

FUNCTIONS AND INSTINCTS OF ANIMALS.

HAVING, in the last chapter, stated how the dispersion and distribution of animals, under the Divine superintendence and direction, probably took place after the Deluge; and having likewise considered those temporary changes of place, either casual or periodical, which are still in operation, I shall next endeavour to give a general sketch of the animal kingdom its classes and larger groups, and so much of their history, habits, and instincts, as may be necessary to indicate their several *functions* and *offices* in the general plan of creation, so as to illustrate more strikingly the GOODNESS that willed, the WISDOM that planned, and the POWER that executed the wondrous whole; so that each in its place and station, by employing the faculties and organs, with which he has gifted it, in accomplishing his will, praises, though unconsciously, its Almighty and Beneficent Creator, thus loudly calling upon man, the rational head of the creation, to take up the strain and lead the general choir.

Before I descend to particulars, I must say a few words upon the general functions of the animal kingdom. These, like Janus, have a double aspect;—on one side they affect the vegetable world, and on the other their own body.

There is a singular contrast and contrariety between the majority of animals and vegetables. The head of the animal and the root or base of the vegetable perform the same office, that of collecting and absorbing the nutriment of each. The animal derives this nutriment from *organic* matter, the vegetable from *inorganic*. The plant gives oxygen to the heaven, and falling leaves and other matters to the earth. The