

sphere, must often be destroyed by the greater weight and more irresistible agitations of a denser element. To ornament the bosom of the deep, therefore, more solid forms, sending forth blossoms capable of sustaining the action of such an element, were requisite: and therefore God, who gifted his creature man with an inquiring spirit, and with an appetite for knowledge of the works of creation, to furnish him with objects for inquiry, and to gratify that appetite to the utmost, not only placed before his eyes upon the earth an innumerable host of creatures, of which he could gain a notion by only opening his eyes and by observing their beauties, and, experiencing their utility, might praise his Maker for them; but also filled the deep with inhabitants, and ornamented it with animals that appeared to vegetate and blossom like plants, that, his curiosity being excited, he might also study the inhabitants of the water, and glorify his Maker for the creation of them also.

But we may derive another use from the consideration of these plant-like animals, if the sceptic endeavours to persuade us, from the gradual progress, observable in natural objects from low to high, and from the narrow interval that often separates those in the same series from each other, that by the action of certain physical causes, consequent upon certain established laws and a fixed order of things, and by the stimulus of certain appetencies in themselves, animals gradually changed their forms and organization, and thus, by slow degrees, kept improving in all respects, till at last the monkey became the man; if the sceptic thus attempts to pervert us, we may turn round upon him, and ask him, how it was that the zoophyte, buried in the depths of the ocean, should imitate the plant? can a studied imitation, everywhere denoting purpose and design, a mighty structure, including innumerable forms and parts connected with each other, and formed evidently according to a preconceived