

8. *Legs*.—We are now arrived at organs that are the most perfect instruments of locomotion and prehension, organs which are found in their greatest perfection in the highest animals, articulated *legs* and *arms*, terminating in the most perfect instrument, upon the due employment or misemployment of which the weal or woe of the whole human race, as far as second causes are concerned, depends.

The legs of animals may be considered generally as to their *number*, *composition*, and *adaptation to their functions*.

As to their *number*, taking the legs of vertebrated animals, which may be regarded, being the most perfect, as a standard to measure others by, we may assume that *four* is the most perfect number. Thus, in man, the highest animal, there are two for locomotion, and two principally for prehension. Taking, therefore, man for the ultimate point to which all tend, let us see how, in this respect, the scale is formed.

We observed in certain tribes of the Annelidans, an approach to jointed legs, and it should seem a link, connecting, in some degree, that Class with the *Myriapods*; with these last, therefore, we may start in our consideration of articulated locomotive organs, and here we find a long body moved by numerous legs, gradually acquired, as we have seen, with its increasing length. We may observe, that in the superior tribes of animals, the four legs being planted in pairs at each extremity of the body, the gradual increase of stature did not require additional props, but only the proportionate growth of the existing or natal legs and arms; but in the Myriapods, where the great increase of the body in length is not between the original extremities, but beyond them, additional supports were requisite, so that, as the body increased in length, its Creator, in his goodness willed—that it might not draw its slow length along like a wounded snake—that it should be furnished at