

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WILL THERE BE AN ANIMAL SUPERIOR TO MAN?

HE that has glanced over the long line of organic history, and observed how the ascent from the sea-weed to man has been effected, step by step, in regular succession, can not fail to start the inquiry, "Is man destined to be the last term of this series of improving types?" I reply that, while this is peculiarly a question to be answered by Revelation, science affords some intimations which tend to assure us in the possession of the dignity which we now enjoy as the archonts of terrestrial existence.

In the first place, all geological preparations and ideas converge in man. The world seems to have been designed with the view of stimulating to activity the powers of a thinking being. The universe is a rational product; and every department of it, and every isolated object, sustains an intelligible relation to other parts and objects. We are not left to infer, or even to know, that intelligent design is locked up in the secret plans of creation; but what is more suggestive, as well as more satisfactory, is the fact that this intelligence is patent before our eyes, so that we read, as it were, a revelation of the thought embodied in the works of the visible universe. And much of that which is not at once manifest yields to investigation, while a stimulus to investigation is found in the hints and suggestions which Nature seems intentionally to have dropped along the pathway of him who follows the beckoning of his thoughts. Not only were these germs of thought planted from time to time during the whole progress of the past