

motion of the hand itself, divided among the joints of twenty-nine bones, it might be objected to with some show of reason, and it might be said,—The bones and the forms of the joints which you are admiring, are so far from being peculiarly suited to the hand of man, that they may be found in any other vertebrated animal. But this would not abate our admiration, it would only induce us to take a more comprehensive view of nature, and remind us that our error was in looking at a part only, instead of embracing the whole system ; where by slight changes and gradations hardly perceptible, the same bones are adjusted to every condition of animal existence.

We recognise the bones which form the upper extremity of man, in the fin of the whale, in the paddle of the turtle, and in the wing of the bird. We see the same bones, perfectly suited to their purpose, in the paw of the lion or the bear, and equally fitted for motion in the hoof of the horse, or in the foot of the camel, or adjusted for climbing or digging in the long clawed feet of the sloth or bear.

It is obvious, then, that we should be occupied with too limited a view of our subject, were we to consider the human hand in any other light than as presenting the most perfect combination of parts : as exhibiting the bones and muscles which in different animals are suited to parti-