

extremities must be adapted to their various actions, and the carpus, or the tarsus, and phalanges* must change, more than all the rest, to accommodate the extremity to its different offices. Is it not more pleasing to see the reason of this most surprising adjustment, than merely to say it is a law? †

There is yet another opinion, which will suggest itself by the perusal of the following chapter, to those who have read the more modern works on Natural History. It is supposed that the same elementary parts belong to all animals, and that the varieties of structure are attributable to the transposition of these elementary parts. I find it utterly impossible to follow up this system to the extent which its abettors would persuade us to be practicable. I object to it as a means of engaging us in very trifling pursuits—and of diverting the mind from the truth; from that conclusion, indeed, to which I may avow it to be my intention to carry the reader. But this discussion also must follow the examples, and we shall resume it in a latter part of the volume.

* Carpus, the wrist; tarsus, the ankle or instep; phalanges, the rows of bones forming the fingers or toes.

† See the Additional Illustrations.