

the medium of human views; and our judgment of his benevolence can be formed only by reference to our own affections, and by their accordance with those fervent aspirations after good, which the Author of our being has deeply interwoven with our frame.

The evidence of design and contrivance in the works of nature carries with it the greatest force whenever we can trace a coincidence between them and the products of human art. If in any unknown region of the earth we chanced to discover a piece of machinery, of which the purpose was manifest, we should not fail to ascribe it to the workmanship of some mechanist, possessed of intelligence, actuated by a motive, and guided by intention. Farther, if we had a previous experience of the operation of similar kinds of mechanism, we could not doubt that the effect we saw produced was the one intended by the artificer. Thus, if in an unexplored country, we saw, moving upon the waters of a lake, the trunk of a tree, carved into the shape of a boat, we should immediately conclude that this form had been given to it for the purpose of enabling it to float. If we found it also provided with paddles at its sides, we should infer, from our previous knowledge of the effects of such instruments, that they were intended to give motion to this boat, and we should not hesitate to conclude that the whole was the work of human hands, and the product of human intelligence and design. If, in addition, we found this boat furnished with a rudder and with sails, we should at once understand the object of these contrivances, and our ideas of the skill of the artificer would rise in proportion to the excellence of the apparatus, and the ingenuity displayed in its adaptation to circumstances.

Let us suppose that in another part of this lake we found an insect,* shaped like the boat, and moving through the water by successive impulses given to that medium by the action of levers, extending from its sides, and shaped like paddles, having the same kind of movement, and producing

* Such as the *Notonecta glauca*, Lin., or water boatman, and the *Dytiscus marginalis*, or water beetle.