

rate order, where disclaiming any close alliance with inferior creatures, he proudly stands alone, towering far above them all.

It is not, however, on a pre-eminence in any single physical quality or function that this title to superiority can be founded; for in each of these endowments man is excelled in turn by particular races of the lower animals; but the chief perfection of his frame consists in its general adaptation to an incomparably greater variety of objects, and an infinitely more expanded sphere of action. As the beauty of an edifice depends not on the elaborate finishing of any one portion, but results from the general suitableness of the whole to the purposes for which it was constructed, so the excellence of the human fabric is to be estimated by the exquisite proportion and harmony subsisting among all its parts, and pervading the whole system of its functions. The design of its structure and economy embraces widely different, and far higher aims than those contemplated in the organization of any of the inferior animals. Destined to possess an intellectual, a social, and a moral existence, Man has had every part of his organization modified with an express relation to these great objects of his formation. This will best appear when we come to examine the organs which are subservient to the sensitive and active faculties; but even here, where our views must, for the present, be limited to the mechanical circumstances of his structure, the proofs are sufficiently numerous to warrant this general conclusion.

Man presents the only instance among the mammalia of a conformation by which the erect posture can be permanently maintained, and in which the office of supporting the trunk of the body is consigned exclusively to the lower extremities. To this intention the form and arrangement of all the parts of the osseous fabric, and the position and adjustments of the organs of sense have a well marked reference.\* The lower limbs are qualified to be the efficient

\* In most quadrupeds, as we have seen, the thorax is deep in the direction from the sternum to the spine, but is compressed laterally, for the evi-