

—M. Paul Janet, of the French Institute, in a volume of profound reasoning, vindicates the decried doctrine of Final Causes, not as a tenet of metaphysics, but as an induction at which we arrive by observation of nature, and which science may, without prejudice, accept. Where we find in the present adjustment of things an evident preparation for something that is to be in the future, we are warranted, argues M. Janet, in affirming the existence of a final cause. In the adaptation of the embryo, or of the chick in the egg, to the circumstances of the world outside, which is to be its sphere, we have a signal instance of such finality, and other instances countless in number, as well as infinite in complexity, may be adduced. When man uses means manifestly conducive to an end, we infer intention and design; not that we can actually see intention and design in the minds of other men; but we infer their presence by extending to others that of which we are conscious in ourselves. Why not extend the same inference to Nature? Man is a part of nature; therefore, we know, if we know anything, that there are in nature intention and design. The problem with which M. Janet does not seem to us to deal so satisfactorily is that arising from the appearances of waste, failure, abortion, monstrosity in nature, which seem to conflict with the assumption of final cause and directing intelligence. To say that these things may be necessary to the general balance of the Universe is merely to wrap the difficulty in words; and those who satisfy themselves by repeating that nature is prodigal, not because she is foolish, but because she is rich, forget that the prodigality of nature involves a great deal of cruelty as well as of waste. We cannot help remarking by the way, that in design, after all, there appears to inhere the notion of human effort and of human infirmity. Life, in its highest sense, seems a less inadequate and inappropriate term for the activity of Deity. No name is so free from the taint of anthropomorphism, or of anything incongruous and degrading, as the Living God.

In the course of the argument we find striking confirmations of our view that a great difficulty is presented to the theory of Natural Selection through the improvement of accidental varia-