

*plan*, which is not in itself indispensable for the main purposes on account of which the house is built. He proceeds on a principle of Order, as well as on one of Special Adaptation. He makes his building according to a certain style, suited to the prevailing taste of the period; and in no style of architecture are the windows and doors, and other parts of the structure, arranged without some regard to symmetry. Witness—as illustrative of the same point—the general resemblance in the forms of the weights used in a merchant's shop—the regularity in the plaits of a wicker basket—the mould in which a water-jug is cast—and the countless devices for ministering to the sense of beauty, irrespectively of the direct and proper use to which an article of manufacture is intended to be put. It would probably be impossible to mention a single object fashioned by human intelligence, in which, while some special end is aimed at, the influence of the principle of order is not at the same time manifest. Now, what thus holds good regarding the works of man, holds good also regarding the works of God. While special adaptations are every where met with in nature, the Creator has been pleased, for the most part, if not invariably, to conform himself to a general type or pattern. It was at one time a subject of fierce controversy among scientific men, whether the phenomena of the universe are to be explained by reference to the principle of Adaptation, or to that of Order; one party, with Cuvier, maintaining the former opinion; and another, with Geoffrey St. Hilaire, the latter. But both sides (as has often happened) were so far right, and so far wrong. The question between the disputants was: Adaptation *or* Order? The truth of the case is: Adaptation *and* Order united. On the one hand, for instance, the eye was expressly fitted to be an instrument of vision; on the other hand, however, a general plan is discernible, according to which the eyes of all creatures are formed; and only such departures have been made from the typical form—the normal eye, as we may term it—as were rendered necessary or desirable by the circumstances in which particular animals were designed to live.

The law, that the works of nature, while exhibiting special adaptations, are formed upon a general plan, did not altogether escape the notice of the reflecting minds of antiquity. They had glimpses of it, though dim and imperfect. The formal and scientific exposition which it has received of late from several eminent writers, has been one of the fruits of the progress of physical investigation; and Drs. McCosh and Dickie are entitled to the highest praise for having gathered together into a focus all the light which the different natural sciences, as far as we are at present acquainted with them, shed upon