

getting up and walking onward, and showing what science has done and is doing,—by pointing to that immense mass of facts which have been ascertained and systematized under the forms of the great doctrines of Morphology, of Development, of Distribution, and the like. He sees an enormous mass of facts and laws relating to organic beings, which stand on the same good sound foundation as every other natural law; and, therefore, with this mass of facts and laws before us, seeing that, as far as organic matters have hitherto been accessible and studied, they have shown themselves capable of yielding to scientific investigation, we may accept this as proof that order and law reign there as well as in the rest of nature; and the man of science says nothing to objectors of this sort, but supposes that we can and shall walk to a knowledge of the origin of organic nature, in the same way that we have walked to a knowledge of the laws and principles of the inorganic world.

But there are objectors who say the same from ignorance and ill-will. To such I would reply that the objection comes ill from them, and that the real presumption, I may almost say the real blasphemy, in this matter, is in the attempt to limit that inquiry into the causes of phenomena which is the source of all human blessings, and from which has sprung all human prosperity and progress; for, after all we can accomplish comparatively little; the limited range of our own faculties bounds us on every side,—the field of our powers of observation is small enough, and he who endeavours to narrow the sphere of our inquiries is only pursuing a course that is likely to produce the greatest harm to his fellow-men.

But now, assuming, as we all do, I hope, that these phenomena are properly accessible to inquiry, and setting out upon our search into the causes of the phenomena of organic nature, or, at any rate, setting out to discover how much we at present know upon these abstruse matters, the question arises as to what is to be our course of proceeding, and what method we must lay down for our guidance. I reply to that question, that our method must be exactly the same as that which is pursued in any other scientific inquiry, the method of scientific investigation being the same for all orders of facts and phenomena whatsoever.

I must dwell a little on this point, for I wish you to leave this room with a very clear conviction that scientific