

The principles laid down by Oken, of which this classification is the practical result for Zoölogy, may be summed up in the following manner: The grades or great types of Animals are determined by their anatomical systems, such as the body and head; or the intestines, and the flesh and senses. Hence two grades in the animal kingdom. Animals are, as it were, the dismembered body of man made alive. The classes of animals are the special representation in living forms of the anatomical systems of the highest being in creation.

Man is considered, in this system, not only as the key of the whole animal kingdom, but also as the standard measure of the organization of animals. There exists nothing in the animal kingdom which is not represented in higher combinations in Man. The existence of several distinct plans of structure among animals is virtually denied. They are all built after the pattern of Man; the differences among them consist only in their exhibiting either one system only, or a larger or smaller number of systems of organs of higher or lower physiological importance, developed either singly, or in connection with one another, in their body. The principles of classification of both Cuvier and Ehrenberg are here entirely negatived. The principle of Cuvier, who admits four different plans of structure in the animal kingdom, is, indeed, incompatible with the idea that all animals represent only the organs of Man. The principle of Ehrenberg, who considers all animals as equally perfect, is as completely irreconcilable with the assumption that all animals represent an unequal sum of organs; for, according to Oken, the body of animals is, as it were, the analyzed body of Man, the organs of which live singly, or in various combinations as independent animals. Each such combination constitutes a distinct class. The principle upon which the orders are founded has already been explained above, (Chap. II., Sect. III., p. 154.)

There is something very taking in the idea that Man is the standard of appreciation of all animal structures. But all the attempts which have thus far been made to apply it to the animal kingdom as it exists, must be considered as complete failures. In his different works, Oken has successively identified the systems of organs of Man with different groups of animals, and different authors, who have adopted the same principle of classification, have identified them in still different ways. The impracticability of such a scheme must be obvious to any one who has satisfied himself practically of the existence of different plans of structure in the organization of animals. Yet, the unsoundness of the general principle of the classifications of the physiophilosophers should not render us blind to all that is valuable in their special writings. The works of Oken in particular teem with original suggestions respecting the natural affinities of animals; and his thorough acquaintance with every investigation of his predecessors and contemporaries shows him to have been one of the most learned zoölogists of this century.