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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Introduction.

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II. Ditto.

III. Development of Amphioxus.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER

II. The Lampreys. Their Position with Reference to Fishes. Bdellostoma, Myxine, Petromyzon, Palaeospondylus.


V. Teleostomes. The Forms of Recent "Ganoids." Habits and Distribution. The Relations of Prominent Extinct Forms. Crossopercyrians. Typical "Bony Fishes."


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"I shall try to show that life is response to the order of nature; in fact, this thesis is the text of most of the lectures; but if it be admitted, it follows that biology is the study of response, and that the study of that order of nature to which response is made is as well within its province as the study of the living organism which responds, for all the knowledge we can get of both these aspects of nature is needed as a preparation for the study of that relation between them which constitutes life. Our interest in all branches of science is vital interest. It is only as living things that we care to know. Life is that which, when joined to mind, is knowledge,—knowledge in use; and we may be sure that all living things with minds like ours are conscious of some part of the order of nature, for the response in which life consists is response to this order. The statement that physical phenomena are natural seems to mean little, but the phenomena of life are so wonderful that many hesitate, even at the present day, to believe that nature can be such a wonderful thing as it must be if the actions of all living things are natural; and, as I shall try to find out in this course of lectures what we mean by the assertion that living nature is natural, I shall now attempt, by a few illustrations, to give a broad outline of some of the most notable features of the nature of living things."

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

I. Introductory.
II. Huxley and the Problem of the Naturalist.
III. Nature and Nurture.
IV. Lamarck.
V. Migration in its Bearing on Lamarckism.
VI. (I) Zoology and the Philosophy of Evolution.
VII. (II) An Inherent Error in the Views of Galton and Weismann on Inheritance.
VIII. Darwin and the Origin of Species.
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