

highly interesting in itself, under a variety of relations, and yet one that has been hitherto very little attended to.

Before entering upon this inquiry, it is proper to define what is meant by a *species*, so that the definition may serve to regulate the employment of the term. A species, therefore, may be defined, as comprehending *the individuals which descend from each other, or from common parents, and those which resemble them as much as they resemble each other*. Thus, we consider as *varieties* of a species, only the races more or less different which may have sprung from it by generation. Our observations, therefore, regarding the differences between the ancestors and descendants, afford us the only certain rule by which we can judge on this subject; all other considerations leading to hypothetical conclusions destitute of proof. Now, considering the *varieties* in this view, we observe that the differences which constitute it, depend upon determinate circumstances, and that their extent increases in proportion to the intensity of these circumstances.

Thus, the most superficial characters are the most variable: the colour depends much upon the light; the thickness of the fur upon the heat; the size, upon the abundance of food. But in a wild animal, even these varieties are greatly limited by the natural habits of the animal itself, which