

racés of dogs have descended from one common stock, of which the wolf is the original source.\*

It is well known that the horse, the ox, the boar, and other domestic animals which have been introduced into South America, and have run wild in many parts, have entirely lost all marks of domesticity, and have reverted to the original characters of their species. But dogs have also become wild in Cuba, Hayti, and in all the Caribbean islands. In the course of the seventeenth century, they hunted in packs from twelve to fifty, or more, in number, and fearlessly attacked herds of wild boars and other animals. It is natural, therefore, to inquire to what form they reverted? Now, they are said by many travellers to have resembled very nearly the shepherd's dog; but it is certain that they were never turned into wolves. They were extremely savage, and their ravages appear to have been as much dreaded as those of wolves; but when any of their whelps were caught, and brought from the woods to the towns, they grew up in the most perfect submission to man.

Many examples might be adduced to prove that the extent to which the alteration of species can be pushed in the domestic state depends on the original capacity of the species to admit of variation. The horse has been as long domesticated as the dog, yet its different races depart much less widely from a common type; the ass has been still less changed, the camel scarcely at all; yet these species have probably been subjected to the influence of domestication as long as the horse.

*Mummies of animals in Egyptian tombs identical with species still living.* — As the advocates of the theory of transmutation trust much to the slow and insensible changes which time may work, they are accustomed to lament the absence of accurate descriptions, and figures of particular animals and plants, handed down from the earliest periods of history, such as might have afforded data for comparing the condition of species, at two periods considerably remote. But, fortunately, we are in some measure independent of such evidence: for, by a singular accident, the priests of Egypt have bequeathed to us, in their cemeteries, that information which the museums and works of the Greek philosophers have failed to transmit.

For the careful investigation of these documents, we are greatly indebted to the skill and diligence of those naturalists who accompanied the French armies during their brief occupation of Egypt: that conquest of four years, from which we may date the improvement of the modern Egyptians in the arts and sciences, and the rapid progress which has been made of late in our knowledge of the arts and sciences of their remote predecessors. Instead of wasting their whole time, as so many preceding travellers had done, in exclusively collecting human mummies, M. Geoffroy and his associates examined diligently, and sent home great numbers of embalmed bodies of consecrated animals, such as the bull, the dog, the cat, the ape, the ichneumon, the crocodile, and the ibis.

\* History of British Quadrupeds, p. 200. 1837.