

no matter how diversified, to reproduce, at another period, something similar, and so on, through all ages, until at the period of the establishment of the present state of things, all the infinitude of new animals and new plants which now crowd its surface, should be cast in these four moulds, in such a manner as to exhibit, notwithstanding their complicated relations to the surrounding world, all those more deeply seated general relations, which establish among them the different degrees of affinity we may trace so readily in all the representatives of the same type? Does all this really look more like the working of blind forces than like the creation of a reflective mind establishing deliberately all the categories of existence we recognize in nature, and combining them in that wonderful harmony which unites all things into such a perfect system, that even to read it, as it is established, or even with all the imperfections of a translation, should be considered as the highest achievement of the maturest genius?

Nothing seems to me to prove more directly and more fully the action of a reflective mind, to indicate more plainly a deliberate consideration of the subject, than the different categories upon which species, genera, families, orders, classes, and branches are founded in nature, and manifested in material reality in a succession of individuals, the life of which is limited in its duration to comparatively very short periods. The great wonder in these relations consists in the fugitive character of the bearers of this complicated harmony. For while species persist during long periods, the individuals which represent them are ever changing, one set dying after the other, in quick succession. Genera, it is true, may extend over longer periods; families, orders, and classes may even have existed during all periods during which animals have existed at all; but whatever may have been the duration of their existence, at all times these different divisions have stood in the same relation to one another and to their respective branches, and have always been represented upon our globe in the same manner, by a succession of ever renewed and short-lived individuals.

As, however, the second chapter of this work is entirely devoted to the consideration of the different kinds and the different degrees of affinity existing among animals, I will not enter here into any details upon this subject, but simply recall the fact that, in the course of time, investigators have agreed more and more with one another in their estimates of these relations, and built up systems more and more conformable to one another. This result, which is fully exemplified by the history of our science,¹ is in itself sufficient to show that there is a system in nature

¹ SPIX, (J.) *Geschichte und Beurtheilung aller Systeme in der Zoologie*, Nürnberg, 1811, 1 vol. 8vo.
—COUVIER, (G.) *Histoire des progrès des sciences*

naturelles, Paris, 1826, 4 vols. 8vo.—*Histoire des sciences naturelles, etc.*, Paris, 1841, 5 vols. 8vo.
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