

lishing of differences, and in reality "the embryo never passes through the form of any other animal, but only through the condition of indifference between its own form and others." And he sums up his reflections by stating that the "development of an individual of a certain animal form is determined by two conditions: first, by a progressive development of the animal by increasing histological and morphological differentiation; secondly, by the metamorphosis of a more general form into a more special one."¹

17.
Von Baer's
views in
modern
terms.

In order better to understand the difference which separates these various reflections, though breathing so much the air of the more modern theory of evolution, from later views, and to prepare for a real comprehension of the great step taken by Darwin, it will be helpful to resort to modern nomenclature. None of the terms of that vocabulary which was invented by Darwin and his followers to bring home to the popular mind the main points of his revolutionary doctrine are to be found in the earlier writings of von Baer. Nevertheless they are useful in defining the views of the great naturalists who preceded Darwin. Since we have become familiar with the idea of the origin and the transmutation of the different animal and vegetable species, we are accustomed to apply the genetic view not only to the growth and development of individual living things in nature, but to everything else. When von Baer speaks of development, when he tells us that "the history of development is the true source of light for the investigation of organised bodies," he means development in the narrower sense,

¹ *Loc. cit.*, p. 231; transl., p. 220.