

35.
"Natural
selection"
and "sexual
selection."

terms "natural selection" and "sexual selection" appeared for the first time in Darwin's writings. The "struggle for existence," and the resulting "survival of the fittest" individuals, represent definite processes always going on consciously or unconsciously in nature and in human society; nor is it less significant that many other phrases have been coined, by which the same idea has been made useful in other domains of research. "Hybrids," "mongrels," "rudimentary organs," and "monstrous" developments, which in earlier times were subjects of mere curiosity, have been raised to scientific importance as indicative of the concealed and mysterious agencies by which natural forms are altered or maintained, and natural processes encouraged or checked. "Environment" and "adaptation" open out great vistas of inquiry, whilst nearly all those different lines of search and of reasoning have latterly become centred in the great problem of "heredity"—the central question of biological science. In addition to these, the older terms of the naturalists and anatomists have received new interpretations. It has been shown by Darwin himself how the vague endeavours of system-makers, since Linnæus, after a "natural" as distinguished from a merely "artificial system of classification" of living beings, implied "something more" than mere resemblance, and that this something more is "propinquity of descent—the only known cause of the similarity of organic beings—it being the bond, hidden by various degrees of modification, which is partially revealed to us by our classifications."¹ In the light afforded by

36.
Meaning of
natural
classifica-
tion.

¹ 'Origin of Species,' 1st ed., p. 413.