

word, if man had no period to his existence, and if all the beings by which he is surrounded existed in the same manner as they do at present, the idea of time would vanish and the individual would in fact become the species.

Let us then consider Nature for a few moments under this new aspect. Man certainly comes into the world enveloped in darkness. His mind is equally naked with his body ; he is born without knowledge and without defence, and brings nothing with him but passive qualities. He is compelled to receive the impressions of objects on his organs ; even the light shines on his eyes long before he is able to recognize it. To Nature he is at first indebted for every thing, without making her any return. No sooner, however, do his senses acquire strength and activity, and he can compare his sensations, than he reflects upon the universe ; he forms ideas, which he retains, extends, and combines. Man, after receiving instruction, is no longer a simple individual, for he then, in a great measure, represents the whole human species. He receives from his parents the knowledge which had been transmitted to them from their forefathers ; and thus, by the divine arts of writing and printing, the present age, in some sort, becomes identified