

We may answer them in their own way; that if the species has gradually changed, we must find traces of these gradual modifications; that between the palæotheria and the present species we should have discovered some intermediate formation; but to the present time none of these have appeared.

Why have not the bowels of the earth preserved the monuments of so remarkable a genealogy, unless it be that the species of former ages were as constant as our own; or at least because the catastrophe that destroyed them had not left them time to give evidence of the changes?

As to the naturalists who allow that the varieties are confined within certain limits fixed by nature, it is necessary, in order to answer them, that we should examine what may be the extent of these limits—a curious research very interesting in itself in many respects, and yet one which has hitherto excited but very little attention.

This inquiry calls for the definition of a *species*, which may serve as the foundation for the use which is made of the term. A species, then, includes *the individuals which descend from one another, or from common parents, and those which resemble them as strongly as they resemble one another.* Thus we only call the *varieties* of a species, those races, more or less different, which may have proceeded from them by generation. Our observations on the distinctions between ancestors and descendants are consequently our only rational rule; for every other would enter into hypothesis without proofs.

But in thus considering the *variety*, we observe that the differences which constitute it depend on