

animal, is a phenomenon of a distinct kind from the passage from the more simple to the more perfect forms of animal organization and instinct. To pretend that such a step, or rather leap, can be part of a regular series of changes in the animal world, is to strain analogy beyond all reasonable bounds.

Introduction of man, to what extent a change in the system. — But setting aside the question of progressive development, another and a far more difficult one may arise out of the admission that man is comparatively of modern origin. Is not the interference of the human species, it may be asked, such a deviation from the antecedent course of physical events, that the knowledge of such a fact tends to destroy all our confidence in the uniformity of the order of nature, both in regard to time past and future? If such an innovation could take place after the earth had been exclusively inhabited for thousands of ages by inferior animals, why should not other changes as extraordinary and unprecedented happen from time to time? If one new cause was permitted to supervene, differing in kind and energy from any before in operation, why may not others have come into action at different epochs? Or what security have we that they may not arise hereafter? And if such be the case, how can the experience of one period, even though we are acquainted with all the possible effects of the then existing causes, be a standard to which we can refer all natural phenomena of other periods?

Now these objections would be unanswerable, if adduced against one who was contending for the absolute uniformity throughout all time of the succession of sublunary events — if, for example, he was disposed to indulge in the philosophical reveries of some Egyptian and Greek sects, who represented all the changes both of the moral and material world as repeated at distant intervals, so as to follow each other in their former connection of place and time. For they compared the course of events on our globe to astronomical cycles; and not only did they consider all sublunary affairs to be under the influence of the celestial bodies, but they taught that on the earth, as well as in the heavens, the same identical phenomena recurred again and again in a perpetual vicissitude. The same individual men were doomed to be re-born, and to perform the same actions as before; the same arts were to be invented, and the same cities built and destroyed. The Argonautic expedition was destined to sail again with the same heroes, and Achilles with his Myrmidons to renew the combat before the walls of Troy.

Alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quæ vehat Argo
Dilectos heroas : erunt etiam altera bella,
Atque iterum ad Trojam magnus mittetur Achilles.*

The geologist, however, may condemn these tenets as absurd, without running into the opposite extreme, and denying that the

* Virgil, Eclog. iv. For an account of these doctrines, see Dugald Stewart's *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, vol. ii. chap. ii. sect. 4., and Prichard's *Egypt. Mythol.* p. 177.