

common ancestors, or which are as similar to these as the latter are among themselves."

In dealing with this matter, Cuvier reasoned in the following manner: "In those organic individuals, of which we know that they are descended from one and the same common form of ancestors—in which, therefore, their common ancestry is empirically proved—there can be no doubt that they belong to one species, whether they differ much or little from one another, or whether they are almost alike or very unlike. In like manner all those individuals also belong to this species which differ no more from the latter (those proved to be derived from a common stock) than these differ from one another." In a closer examination of this definition of species given by Cuvier, it becomes at once evident that it is neither theoretically satisfactory nor practically applicable. Cuvier, with this definition, began to move in the same circle in which almost all subsequent definitions of species have moved, through the assumption of their immutability.

Considering the extraordinary authority which George Cuvier has gained in the science of organic nature, and in consequence of the almost unlimited supremacy which his views exercised in zoology, during the first half of our century, it seems appropriate here to examine his influence a little more closely. This is all the more necessary as we have to combat, in Cuvier, the most formidable opponent to the Theory of Descent and the monistic conception of nature.

One of the many and great merits of Cuvier is that he stands forth as the founder of Comparative Anatomy. While Linnæus established the distinction of species, genera, orders, and classes mostly upon external characters, and upon sepa-