

parative anatomy points out in the different diverging and ascending steps of the organic system, and which we call the systematic developmental series, corresponds with one portion of the palæontological developmental series; it deals with the anatomical result of the latter in the present; and is, at the same time, parallel with the individual developmental series; and this, again, is parallel with the palæontological series.

The varied differentiation, and the unequal degree of perfecting which comparative anatomy points out in the developmental series of the system, is chiefly determined by the ever-increasing variety of conditions of existence to which the different groups adapt themselves in the struggle for life, and by the different degrees of rapidity and completeness with which this adaptation has been effected. Conservative groups which have retained their inherited peculiarities most tenaciously remain, in consequence, at the lowest and rudest stage of development. Those groups progressing most rapidly and variously, and which have adapted themselves to changed conditions of existence most readily, have attained the highest degree of perfection. The further the organic world developed in the course of the earth's history, the greater must the gap between the lower conservative and the higher progressive groups have become, as in fact may be seen too in the history of nations. In this way also is explained the historical fact, that the most perfect animal and vegetable groups have developed themselves in a comparatively short time to a considerable height, while the lowest or most conservative groups have remained stationary throughout all ages in their original simple stage, or have progressed, but very slowly and gradually.