whole, as far as I can judge, new characters are more apt to appear in the males of our domesticated animals than in the females,[29] and afterwards to be inherited exclusively or more strongly by the males. Finally, in accordance with the principle of inheritance as limited by sex, the preservation and augmentation of secondary sexual characters in natural species offers no especial difficulty, as this would follow through that form of selection which I have called sexual selection.

Inheritance at corresponding periods of Life.

This is an important subject. Since the publication of my 'Origin of Species,' I have seen no reason to doubt the truth of the explanation there given of one of the most remarkable facts in biology, namely, the difference between the embryo and the adult animal. The explanation is, that variations do not necessarily or generally occur at a very early period of embryonic growth, and that such variations are inherited at a corresponding age. As a consequence of this the embryo, even after the parent-form has undergone great modification, is left only slightly modified; and the embryos of widely-different animals which are descended from a common progenitor remain in many important respects like one another and probably like their common progenitor. We can thus understand why embryology throws a flood of light on the natural system of classification, as this ought to be as far as possible genealogical. When the embryo leads an independent life, that is, becomes a larva, it has to be adapted to the surrounding conditions in its structure and instincts, independently of those of its parents; and the principle of inheritance at corresponding periods of life renders this possible.

This principle is, indeed, in one way so obvious that it escapes attention. We possess a number of races of animals and plants, which, when compared with one another and with

[29] I have given in my 'Descent of Man' (2nd edit. p. 223) sufficient evidence that male animals are usually more variable than the females.