

has been lost through variation, it occasionally reappears through reversion, so that the parents apparently fail to transmit their own likeness. In all cases, however, we may safely conclude that the child inherits all its characters from its parents, in whom certain characters are latent, like the secondary sexual characters of one sex in the other. When, after a long succession of bud-generations, a flower or fruit becomes separated into distinct segments, having the colours or other attributes of both parent-forms, we cannot doubt that these characters were latent in the earlier buds, though they could not then be detected, or could be detected only in an intimately commingled state. So it is with animals of crossed parentage, which with advancing years occasionally exhibit characters derived from one of their two parents, of which not a trace could at first be perceived. Certain monstrosities, which resemble what naturalists call the typical form of the group in question, apparently come under the same law of reversion. It is assuredly an astonishing fact that the male and female sexual elements, that buds, and even full-grown animals, should retain characters, during several generations in the case of crossed breeds, and during thousands of generations in the case of pure breeds, written as it were in invisible ink, yet ready at any time to be evolved under certain conditions.

What these conditions precisely are, we do not know. But any cause which disturbs the organisation or constitution seems to be sufficient. A cross certainly gives a strong tendency to the reappearance of long-lost characters, both corporeal and mental. In the case of plants, this tendency is much stronger with those species which have been crossed after long cultivation and which therefore have had their constitutions disturbed by this cause as well as by crossing, than with species which have always lived under their natural conditions and have then been crossed. A return, also, of domesticated animals and cultivated plants to a wild state favours reversion ; but the tendency under these circumstances has been much exaggerated.

When individuals of the same family which differ somewhat, and when races or species are crossed, the one is often