

are often faithfully transmitted—frequently even when one parent alone possesses some new peculiarity; and we may on the whole conclude that inheritance is the rule, and non-inheritance the anomaly. In some instances a character is not inherited, from the conditions of life being directly opposed to its development; in many instances, from the conditions incessantly inducing fresh variability, as with grafted fruit-trees and highly-cultivated flowers. In the remaining cases the failure may be attributed to reversion, by which the child resembles its grandparents or more remote progenitors, instead of its parents.

Inheritance is governed by various laws. Characters which first appear at any particular age tend to reappear at a corresponding age. They often become associated with certain seasons of the year, and reappear in the offspring at a corresponding season. If they appear rather late in life in one sex, they tend to reappear exclusively in the same sex at the same period of life.

The principle of reversion, recently alluded to, is one of the most wonderful of the attributes of Inheritance. It proves to us that the transmission of a character and its development, which ordinarily go together and thus escape discrimination, are distinct powers; and these powers in some cases are even antagonistic, for each acts alternately in successive generations. Reversion is not a rare event, depending on some unusual or favourable combination of circumstances, but occurs so regularly with crossed animals and plants, and so frequently with uncrossed breeds, that it is evidently an essential part of the principle of inheritance. We know that changed conditions have the power of evoking long-lost characters, as in the case of animals becoming feral. The act of crossing in itself possesses this power in a high degree. What can be more wonderful than that characters, which have disappeared during scores, or hundreds, or even thousands of generations, should suddenly reappear perfectly developed, as in the case of pigeons and fowls, both when purely bred and especially when crossed; or as with the zebline stripes on dun-coloured horses, and other such cases? Many monstrosities come under this same head, as when