

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

DOMESTICATION—NATURE AND CAUSES OF VARIABILITY—SELECTION—DIVERGENCE AND DISTINCTNESS OF CHARACTER—EXTINCTION OF RACES—CIRCUMSTANCES FAVOURABLE TO SELECTION BY MAN—ANTIQUITY OF CERTAIN RACES—THE QUESTION WHETHER EACH PARTICULAR VARIATION HAS BEEN SPECIALLY PREORDAINED.

As summaries have been added to nearly all the chapters, and as, in the chapter on pangenesis, various subjects, such as the forms of reproduction, inheritance, reversion, the causes and laws of variability, &c., have been recently discussed, I will here only make a few general remarks on the more important conclusions which may be deduced from the multifarious details given throughout this work.

Savages in all parts of the world easily succeed in taming wild animals; and those inhabiting any country or island, when first visited by man, would probably have been still more easily tamed. Complete subjugation generally depends on an animal being social in its habits, and on receiving man as the chief of the herd or family. In order that an animal should be domesticated it must be fertile under changed conditions of life, and this is far from being always the case. An animal would not have been worth the labour of domestication, at least during early times, unless of service to man. From these circumstances the number of domesticated animals has never been large. With respect to plants, I have shown in the ninth chapter how their varied uses were probably first discovered, and the early steps in their cultivation. Man could not have known, when he first domesticated an animal or plant, whether it would flourish and multiply when transported to other countries, therefore he could not have been thus influenced in his choice. We see that the close adaptation of the reindeer and camel to extremely cold and hot