

Thus, what is the relative frequency of continuous and discontinuous variations? In what proportion are observed variations merely individual or possibly racial? What are the causes of germinal variations? Are somatogenic modifications *in any degree* transmissible? What is and has been the scope and rigour of natural elimination? To what extent is isolation demonstrable? These and a score of similar questions are at present unanswerable.

It is not that we are where we were forty years ago. It is rather that we have become more aware of our ignorance and of the complexity of the problem.

Easy enough it is to express *opinion*, e.g. that there must be something after all in the Lamarckian and Buffonian position, though one is at a loss to explain the mechanism of heredity whereby modifications of the body could be transmitted; that many, from Geoffroy St. Hilaire to Bateson, have shown evidence for leaps and bounds in evolution; that Nägeli, Eimer, and a dozen others have been on the track of undiscovered laws of progressive growth; that Darwin and Wallace were right in insisting on the importance of natural elimination, though it may not be so all-sufficient as is often supposed; that Romanes and Gulick disclosed a new factor in expounding the various forms of "isolation"; that Weismann has done well to expose the credulity of belief in the inheritance of acquired characters, though he may have exaggerated the negative position; and that the same naturalist's hypotheses as to the origin of variations are at present most welcome stop-gaps in our ætiology. But *opinion* has no place in science.

It is then a *thätige Skepsis* which appears the healthiest mood at present. Not of course that this is anything new; it is a constantly recurrent phase, alike in the individual and in the race. Indeed, the rate of intellectual progress in either may perhaps be measured by the more or less rapid recurrence of the sceptical phase.

Lamarckianism was in its way a very satisfactory theory—until its weak points were discovered; Darwin went, though in another direction, one better; Weis-