

of nature herself, to the study of the things and forms of nature, not in their abstract and artificial positions, but in the concrete and in their actual environment; also to replace the statical by the dynamical view of things. Nevertheless, the introduction of the general formulæ of selection, adaptation, and evolution, especially when generalised after the fashion of Spencer, is only another instance of the tendency to bring the study of individual things under general principles and rigid formulæ, to look upon the actual things and phenomena of nature merely as examples of general processes, in the same way as earlier naturalists looked upon natural specimens as modelled according to definite and rigid types.

Besides being the only way in which the human mind seems to be able to grasp a great mass of detail and make its knowledge applicable in individual cases and for practical purposes, it seems to afford a special delight to recognise in that which is novel and unknown, traits of that which is familiar and known; still more to find oneself in possession of a leading idea and guiding principle, by the instrumentality of which unknown regions can be explored and new phenomena discovered which would otherwise have remained concealed. Such a fascination attaches, for instance, to the "periods" of Mendeleef (in chemistry), and to the search for the "missing link" of Haeckel (in biology). Especially to those who are fortunate enough to find out such a resemblance, their discovery acts with a magical force, with a kind of spell, compelling them and their disciples to regard the new formula or the happy generalisation as a master-key which unlocks