

only for a child, but even for the most experienced observer, to define those characters by which the specific resemblance is recognised upon a transient view of the animal. Yet, although not obvious on a superficial examination, nature has not left this point undefinable: for, in almost every instance, the form and number of the bones are so accurately preserved, that, however the colour, or the size and the general form of the body may be altered, we have satisfactory criteria of the species in the points just mentioned. But, of all the constituent parts of the body, this observation holds most eminently with respect to the teeth: and in the case of quadrupeds, which principally constitute the highest class of the animal kingdom, and in which class alone any considerable degree of variation is likely to be observed, we have almost always a ready mode of judging of the identity of specific character by an examination of the teeth; for they in almost every instance have teeth, which are entirely wanting throughout the whole class of birds, and often in reptiles and in fish.

In investigating the remote causes of specific variation, we find that domestication is the most general and extensive; and that the effects are produced principally by the joint operation of the following means, namely, diet, general regi-