

species derive less support, than from the progression we have been tracing in the class of Fishes. The Sauroid Fishes occupy a higher place in the scale of organization, than the ordinary forms of bony Fishes ; yet we find examples of Sauroids of the greatest magnitude, and in abundant numbers in the Carboniferous and Secondary formations, whilst they almost disappear and are replaced by less perfect forms in the Tertiary strata, and present only two genera among existing Fishes.

In this, as in many other cases, a kind of *retrograde* development, from complex to simple forms, may be said to have taken place. As some of the more early Fishes united in a single species, points of organization which, at a later period, are found distinct in separate families, these changes would seem to indicate in the class of Fishes a process of Division, and of Subtraction from more perfect, rather than of Addition to less perfect forms.

Among living Fishes, many parts in the organization of the Cartilaginous tribes, (e. g. the brain, the pancreas, and organs subservient to generation,) are of a higher order than the corresponding parts in the Bony tribes ; yet we find the cartilaginous family of Squaloids co-existing with bony fishes in the Transition strata, and extending with them through all geological formations, unto the present time.