

worthy of particular attention, that the animals most subject to variation are chiefly those which man has taken into alliance with him from their adaptation to his purposes. Now this tendency to vary multiplies their uses, or, at least, contributes to fit them for following him into different climates, enabling them to accommodate themselves gradually to any change of circumstances to which they may therein be exposed, without diminishing their utility.

Amongst the other races, especially the feline, this appears not to take place, at least only with respect to colour. The cat, though everywhere domesticated, exhibits no other differences than what obtain in the colour of her fur. If we recollect that this favourite quadruped is principally employed to destroy those minor animals that are noxious in and about our houses, to which indeed her instinct impels her, and that she is solely led by that instinct, and adds nothing to it from instruction, her sole savage object being, like that of her congeners, to seize and devour her prey; that she never assists man, like the dog, as the companion of his sports in various ways, but exercises her single function always in the same way, and under the same influence: if we further recollect that these are the general habits of the genus to which she belongs, which appear subject to very trivial modifications from altered circumstances, and that almost all animals that do not follow in the train of man are equally constant, we may hence infer that the Creator has not gifted them with the capability of improvement, and the development of latent qualities not apparent in their wild state.

There is one circumstance, however, in which predaceous or carnivorous animals, when domesticated, show some aberration from their instinct,—they do not refuse farinaceous food. The cat and the dog will both eat bread with great eagerness, and thrive upon it.