

from the lowest to the highest form of life, should be, in some degree, a continuous chain; that the various classes of existence should shade into one another, so that it often proves a matter of no little difficulty to point out the exact line of demarcation where one class or family ends, and another class or family begins. The naturalist passes from the vegetable to the animal tribes, scarcely aware, amid the perplexing forms of intermediate existence, at what point he quits the precincts of the one to enter on those of the other. All the animal families have, in like manner, their connecting links; and it is chiefly out of these that writers such as Lamarck and Maillet construct their system. They confound gradation with progress. Geoffrey Hudson was a very short man, and Goliath of Gath a very tall one, and the gradations of the human stature lie between. But gradation is not progress; and though we find full-grown men of five feet, five feet six inches, six feet, and six feet and a half, the fact gives us no earnest whatever that the race is rising in stature, and that at some future period the average height of the human family will be somewhat between ten and eleven feet. And equally unsolid is the argument, that from a principle of gradation in races would deduce a principle of progress in races. The tall man of six feet need entertain quite as little hope of rising into eleven feet as the short man of five; nor has the fish that occasionally flies any better chance of passing into a bird than the fish that only swims.

Geology abounds with creatures of the intermediate class: there are none of its links more numerous than its connecting links; and hence its interest, as a field of speculation, to the assertors of the transmutation of races. But there is a fatal incompleteness in the evidence, that destroys its character as such. It supplies in abundance those links of