

MM. Laurencet and Meyranx, on the contrary, conceived that the sepia might be reduced to the type of a vertebrate creature, by considering the back-bone of the latter bent double backwards, so as to bring the root of the tail to the nape of the neck; the parts thus brought into contact being supposed to coalesce. By this mode of conception, these anatomists held that the viscera were placed in the same connexion as in the vertebrate type, and the functions exercised in an analogous manner.

To decide on the reality of the analogy thus asserted, clearly belonged to the jurisdiction of the most eminent anatomists and physiologists. The Memoir was committed to Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and Latreille, two eminent zoologists, in order to be reported on. Their report was extremely favorable; and went almost to the length of adopting the views of the authors.

Cuvier expressed some dissatisfaction with this report on its being read;⁶ and a short time afterwards,⁷ represented Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire as having asserted that the new views of Laurencet and Meyranx refuted completely the notion of the great interval which exists between molluscous and vertebrate animals. Geoffroy protested against such an interpretation of his expressions; but it soon appeared, by the controversial character which the discussions on this and several other subjects assumed, that a real opposition of opinions was in action.

Without attempting to explain the exact views of Geoffroy, (we may, perhaps, venture to say that they are hardly yet generally understood with sufficient distinctness to justify the mere historian of science in attempting such an explanation,) their general tendency may be sufficiently collected from what has been said; and from the phrases in which his views are conveyed.⁸ *The principle of connexions, the elective affinities of organic elements, the equilibration of organs*;—such are the designations of the leading doctrines which are unfolded in the preliminary discourse of his *Anatomical Philosophy*. Elective affinities of organic elements are the forces by which the vital structures and varied forms of living things are produced; and the principles of connexion and equilibrium of these forces in the various parts of the organization prescribe limits and conditions to the variety and development of such forms.

The character and tendency of this philosophy will be, I think,

⁶ *Princ. de Phil. Zool. discutés en 1830*, p. 36.
Phil. Zool. 15.

⁷ p. 50.