

is always most severe between those which are most closely allied and which fill nearly the same place in the economy of nature. Hence, when the conditions of existence are modified, the original stock runs great risk of being superseded by some one of its modified offshoots. The new race or species may not be absolutely superior in the sum of its powers and endowments to the parent stock, and may even be more simple in structure and of a lower grade of intelligence, as well as of organisation, provided, on the whole, it happens to have some slight advantage over its rivals. Progression, therefore, is not a necessary accompaniment of variation and natural selection, though, when a higher organisation happens to be coincident with superior fitness to new conditions, the new species will have greater power and a greater chance of permanently maintaining and extending its ground. One of the principal claims of Mr. Darwin's theory to acceptance is, that it enables us to dispense with a law of progression as a necessary accompaniment of variation. It will account equally well for what is called degradation, or a retrograde movement towards a simpler structure, and does not require Lamarck's continual creation of monads; for this was a necessary part of his system, in order to explain how, after the progressive power had been at work for myriads of ages, there were as many beings of the simplest structure in existence as ever.

Mr. Darwin argues, and with no small success, that all true classification in zoology and botany is, in fact, genealogical, and that community of descent is the hidden bond which naturalists have been unconsciously seeking, while they often imagined that they were looking for some unknown plan of creation.

As the 'Origin of Species,'* is in itself a condensed

* Origin of Species, p. 121.