

To this the extreme Darwinians would probably answer that this characteristic of organisms—to assume a new equilibrium when the old one is disturbed—is itself the result of a selective process which has been at work since the very beginning of life.

One of the most important criticisms which Bateson brings forward may be briefly stated as follows. Species are discontinuous; how? The Lamarckians and Buffonians answer: by the accumulation of structural responses to the conditions of the environment; the Darwinians answer: by the natural selection of particular terms in a continuous series of minimal variations, the selection being determined in relation to the surrounding conditions or environment. In both cases it is a question of relation between the organism and the environment. But whereas species are discontinuous, the conditions of the physical environment tend to form a continuous series, that is to say, different environments pass insensibly into one another. Moreover, different species occur in similar environment, and members of the same species inhabit different environments. To this dilemma Bateson's answer is, of course, that discontinuous variations occur which are neither direct nor indirect adaptations to the environment; while the Darwinian answer is that an essential part of an organism's environment is animate, namely, the surrounding organisms which are discontinuous or specific. But this Bateson would doubtless call a vicious circle, as the original discontinuity is what has to be explained. On the other hand, one wonders if there is not a tendency to exaggerate both the discontinuity of species and the continuity of the environment.

*Inter alia*, Mr. Bateson refutes the common belief that variation is greater in amount in domesticated animals than in wild forms; and he also combats the hypothesis of Reversion, which is conveniently appealed to to explain the sudden occurrence of large and regular variations.

Within our limits we are unable to give more than a hint of the scope of a work which seems to us one of the most important contributions to evolution doctrine