

lumn in the age of early infancy ; and here we shall see, that, although at that period the parts, in which the conditions of strength and flexibility are so remarkably developed in the adult state, are not yet formed, or not completed ; those parts which are essential to the security of the life of the individual are nearly in as perfect a state as at the age of manhood : so that in the midst of the most decided marks of weakness and imperfection in the rest of the column, there is an extraordinary instance of strength and perfect growth, in precisely that part of it which could not have been left in an incomplete state, without manifest, immediate, and constant danger to the individual. In other words, the bodies and processes of the several vertebræ on which the strength and flexibility of the spine depend, are in early infancy still in a soft or cartilaginous state ; while the annular portions, which with their intervening ligaments constitute the spinal canal, are completely ossified ; so as to give as great a degree of security to the spinal marrow as at the age of manhood.

Nor need we spend much time in ascertaining the final cause of this remarkable difference. Is it not indeed obvious on a moment's reflection, that the very helplessness and imperfect state of the physical powers in infancy, so ill understood and appreciated, though so beautifully described by Lucretius, contribute to the fuller develop-