

We are now therefore to consider the nature of the disturbing cause, if I may borrow that expression for a moment, which occasionally interferes with the uniformity of specific character: And, with respect to specific forms, it may be remarked, that, although it is to a certain extent true that all organized bodies have the power of producing beings resembling themselves, yet circumstances of temperature, and of quantity or quality of food, and other causes, have usually some influence in the developement of the body of each individual; thereby producing some corresponding variation in the form: and, consequently, the resemblance between the parent and offspring is never perfect. But—and this is a fact of the highest importance—there is no ground for believing that such variations proceed beyond certain limits; no ground therefore for believing that any of the above mentioned circumstances could have produced all the differences perceptible in organized bodies; could have advanced for instance, by a gradual alteration of structure, a lower to a higher species. Experience, on the contrary, founded on an examination of the records of remote antiquity, seems to shew that the limits of variation were ever the same that they are now. It appears for instance from the mummies of Egypt^k, that

^k Vid. Cuvier, *Oss. Foss.* i. Disc. Prelim. p. 75, 80.