

One farther remark is rendered necessary by the illustration above referred to. No one knows better than Agassiz that to compare, in reference to their geographical distribution, animals nearly related, may often lead to errors greater than those likely to result from the comparison of creatures widely different in structure but adapted for somewhat similar external conditions of existence. It is a fact very curious in itself, independently of this application, that we find closely related species differing remarkably in this respect; and that, on the other hand, animals of very different grades and structures are equally remarkable for wide geographical ranges. The causes of these differences are often easily found in structural, physiological, or psychical peculiarities, but in many cases they depend on minute differences not easily appreciable, or on the effects of geological changes.

Fourthly.—Our author commences his dissertation on species by taunting those who maintain the natural limits set to hybridity with a *petitio principii*. The accusation might be turned against himself. The facts shewing that species in their natural state do not intermix, and that hybrids are only in exceptional cases fertile, so enormously preponderate over the few cases of fertile hybridity, that the latter may be regarded as the sort of exception which proves the rule. The practical value of this character in ascertaining the distinctions of species in difficult cases is quite another question, as is the precise nature of the resemblances in distinct species which most favour hybridity, and the greater or less fixity of the barrier in the case of species inhabiting widely separated geographical areas, when these are artificially brought together. Nor is the specific unity to be broken down by arguments derived from the difficulty of discriminating or of identifying species. The limits of variability differ for every species, and must be ascertained by patient investigation of large numbers of specimens, before we can confidently assert the boundaries in some widely distributed and variable species; but in the greater number this is not difficult, and in all may be ascertained by patient inquiry.

Fifthly,—The above considerations, in connection with the doctrines of created protoplasts, and the immutability of species, as so ably argued by Agassiz himself, we hold irresistibly compel us to the conclusion of Cuvier, that a species consists of the “beings descended the one from the other or from common parents”; or at least to that of DeCandolle, that the individuals of a species must “bear to each other so close a resemblance as to allow of