

tes? Assuredly it would appear that the stream of human blood, through whatever channel it may flow, carries along with it qualities derived from its original source, so that hereby nation is preserved distinct from nation, and one race of men from another. We are all aware that certain temperaments of constitution, certain dispositions, and certain diseases, are hereditary in particular families; and such evils no education or efforts of art can eradicate. Occasionally, too, we mark, that a certain character of physical frame, such as the height of stature, the form of the head and chest, the resemblance of features, &c, prevails through all the members of one family, derived either from father or mother.

The life of man does not extend long enough for him to observe the progress of those changes which can only be effected in the course of successive generations; therefore, on this subject we can only reason from analogy, or from what may be observed to take place among inferior animals. If we instance the dog, it may be observed that we do not find greyhounds, terriers, spaniels, pointers, existing in a state of nature; these, which we may term different races of dogs, result from the artificial intermixture of particular breeds; they are all descended originally from the same stock, but, in the course of successive generations, have severally acquired forms, habits, and dispositions of the most opposite description. Again, in almost every county we observe similar deviations among cattle; thus the red oxen of Devonshire appear of a very different race to the white-faced oxen of Herefordshire; the hornless breed naturalized from Poland presents an equally striking contrast with the brown oxen of Yorkshire; then, let any one or all of these be compared with the straight black heifer which browses on our Scottish hills, and we shall at once perceive what varieties may, by artificial causes, be permanently established among animals of the same species. Horses vary no less remarkably, which cannot fail to be observed when we compare the breed of the racer with that of the clumsy and bony draught-horse of Lincolnshire, and when we contrast these in their turn with the Scotch Galloway or Shetland pony. It is perfectly evident that the differences here exhibited between individual animals belonging to the same species are by no means greater than the differences exhibited by the human race in different parts of the world; and we may, therefore, reasoning from analogy, conclude, that, if such differences as these could in these animals be induced by external causes acting upon them, so likewise might differences as remarkable in the human frame arise from analogous causes, operating, doubtless, with not less power upon it.*

The hereditary transmission of certain peculiarities of structure has been attested on indisputable authority, and many singular facts, in illustration, have been recorded. But the truth is, that although certain variations of existing features and limbs may be presented, such as the nose of one race being more flattened than that of another or the legs of one more elongated than that of another, no change can ever take place which can transform one species of animals into another. The barrier seems to be this—the impossibility, through all changes, of adding any additional faculty or organ of sense to the animal. The sense of smell may be improved in the dog, as it is in the American Indian; the sense of hearing may be also brought, in an animal already possessing that sense, to a higher state of perfection, as it is likewise in many savages, but all the art of man cannot develop either a new sense or a new function in any class of animals. It is this which separates, by an everlasting and insurmountable barrier, the highest class of apes from the lowest and most miserable class of savages. The former may be taught every kind of trick, but never can they acquire the gift of speech, because the organization in their windpipes exhibits a defect which must prevent their ever attaining this faculty. It ap-

pears that the greatest variety, or the most remarkable deviation from any original animal organization that has yet been propagated, amounts to a super-numerary toe on the hind and forefoot; but it is observed, that there is a continual effort on the part of nature to recur, after any such digression, to the original type. On this principle may perhaps be explained the very curious fact, that in picture galleries the likeness of the members of the same family may be seen to pass through various gradations, receding from, then returning to, a very exact resemblance of the original; so that it is presumed, that, in the course of generations, individuals arise who are the exact fac-similes of one or more of their very remote ancestors.

DURATION AND END OF HUMAN LIFE.

The life of man has been likened to a dream—a falling star—a taper-flame—a leaf—a dew drop—and, most assuredly, that object which is the most fragile in creation, be what it may, it will most resemble; for frail, though mysteriously subtle, is the power which confines the soul within its earthly tabernacle. We have viewed man as the inhabitant of all regions of the world; yet, whatever variety his external form has presented to us, the blood is of the same nature which throbs within his heart, the mind is of the same essence which animates his frame. We may now, therefore, narrow our view, and look into our own breasts, for man is complete in every individual man; one regarded as an isolated being is the type of the whole human species. It has been beautifully said by Wordsworth—

“Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting;
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home—
Heaven lies about us in our infancy.”

But the joyous smiles of infancy, and the reckless pastimes of boyhood, must soon be exchanged for the gravity and sedate habits which are summoned into existence by the anxieties and cares of advancing life. That the path we have to tread is beset with thorns, and overgrown with weeds, there is no doubt; but still even the most wretched consider that life is preferable to death—existence to non-existence. It has, therefore, been a matter of care to ascertain those causes which are most conducive to human longevity; and these are reducible to a narrow compass, comprising their dependence almost entirely on the climate in which we live, and on the habits to which we have recourse. In the savage state, life is shorter than it is in the civilized state. The savages in Africa and America seldom live beyond forty years; but, during that period, they are not subject to so many diseases as man is afflicted with in civilized society. Those who attain the greatest longevity are generally the inhabitants of temperate climates, and among them very notable instances have occurred. Lewis Cornaro, a venetian nobleman, having recovered from a severe illness in his thirty-sixth year, enjoyed good health, living on twelve ounces of solid food and thirteen of liquid, until he reached the hundredth year of his age. Thomas Parre, a peasant of Shropshire, died in 1635, at the age of 152 years and 9 months; and it appeared, from the inspection of his body after death, that he might have lived several years longer, had not a plethoric state of his lungs been induced by his exchanging the coarse fare and pure air of his country for the luxurious diet and dense atmosphere of the palace in London. The Countess of Desmond, in Ireland, lived to her 145th year; and numerous instances of Longevity, equally surprising, might be adduced. It is observed, that such cases are principally supplied by the country; indeed, living in towns is so unfavourable to life, that the expectation of its duration is there greatly reduced; thus the greatest expectation of life at six years of age for London is only thirty-six years; but it is forty-one for Northamp-

ton, and forty-five and a half for Sweden. Some curious, but well-attested particulars, concerning the duration of life, may be here enumerated:—1. Dr. Fothergill states, that he has not found a single instance of a person who has lived to be eighty, who had not descended from long-lived ancestors. Dr. Franklin, who died in his eighty-fourth year, was descended from long-lived parents—his father died at eighty-nine, and his mother at eighty-seven. 2. More persons who have married live to be very old than persons who have remained single. “I have only,” says the same author, “met with one person beyond eighty years of age who was never married.” 3. More women live to be old than men; but more men live to be very old than women. Indeed, there appears to be a provision in nature for the mutual accommodation of the sexes; for, at those periods of life when women are the weakest and most subjected to disease, men are stronger than at any other period of their lives; then, when men, by old age, become weakened, women again have the superiority of strength. 4. It is observed that the number of births exceeds, in town and country, the number of deaths, but the proportion varies in different districts, according to a variation of political and moral causes. 5. A numerical proportion of births always exists between the sexes; but more males are born than females, which appears to be a provision of nature for maintaining a due equality between the number of the sexes; for the life of man, independent of destructive wars, is more exposed to accidental causes inducing death, than that of women. Sadler has pointed out a curious fact, which seems established by the tables he has published, viz. that if a man marry a woman younger than himself, the number of boys in their family will exceed the number of girls; but if the man be younger than his wife, then, according to the disparity between their respective ages, the number of girls will equal or predominate over the number of boys. 6. Of all new-born infants, one out of four dies the first year; two-fifths only attain the sixth year; and, before the twenty-second year, nearly one half of the generation is consigned to the grave. Attained, however, to the age of maturity, one out of every thirty or forty individuals dies annually. Such are the general facts which appear to have been established concerning the duration of human life; but it is not to be forgotten that its extension and accompanying happiness must be materially modified by the habits which each individual in his own sphere is led to adopt.

FALL OF NATIONS—EXTINCTION OF RACES OF MEN.

History teaches us that all nations, after attaining the meridian of their glory, and after being crowned with laurels of triumph and victory sink into decay, even as the oak of the forest has its leaves scattered by the wind, and its trunk uprooted and laid prostrate upon the spot on which it flourished. It is a melancholy fact, and one that cannot fail to teach a stern lesson, “where Athens, Rome, and Sparta stood, there is a moral desert now;” nay, the very site on which mighty cities have flourished are no longer to be discovered. Hence, a noble poet has said—

“I've stood upon Achilles' tomb,
And heard Troy doubted—time will doubt of Rome.”

The causes of this decline and fall of nations are sometimes not easily unravelled; but there are at least two which stand forth more prominently than the rest, viz. moral degradation, and the extermination effected by the sword of tyranny. When nations are in their infancy, the struggle to advance forward leaves them no time to indulge in luxury and licentiousness; but when they have attained the summit of their imperial ambition, then their energies relax, their habits become vitiated, and their blood tainted by intermixture with other races that have already succumbed to similar degradation. When the emperors, whose robes of royalty were most of them dyed with blood, reigned over Rome, once “the mistress of the world,”