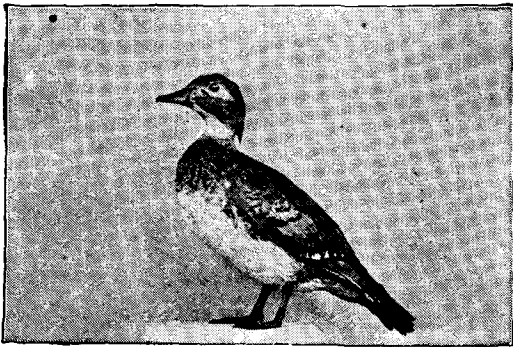


MALE.



FEMALE.

MALE AND FEMALE WOOD DUCK, TO SHOW SECONDARY
SEXUAL CHARACTERS.

[From photographs of stuffed specimens in the Collection of the Maryland Academy of Sciences.]

THE
LAW OF HEREDITY.

A STUDY OF THE
CAUSE OF VARIATION,
AND THE
ORIGIN OF LIVING ORGANISMS.

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SECOND EDITION, REVISED.

BALTIMORE AND NEW YORK:
JOHN MURPHY & CO., PUBLISHERS.

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TO
THE MEMORY OF
CHARLES DARWIN,
FROM WHOSE STORE OF PUBLISHED FACTS I HAVE
DRAWN MOST OF THE MATERIAL FOR THIS
VOLUME.

PREFACE.

The subject which is treated in this book has occupied my thoughts for ten years or more, but I have refrained from publishing my views, as I hope that I may some time be able to submit them to the test of experiment.

Many experiments have suggested themselves to me, but as most of them involve the cultivation and hybridization, for many generations, of such animals and plants as will thrive and multiply in confinement, they can only be carried out by some one who has the means for experimental researches, and who has also a permanent home in the country, where organisms of many kinds may be kept under observation for years, and where many specimens of hybrids between various wild and domesticated species can be reared to maturity.

My own studies have been in a different province of natural science, and it has therefore seemed best to publish this volume in order to call renewed attention to this most fascinating subject.

I have little hope that my views will be permanently accepted in the form in which they are here presented, but I do hope that they may serve to bind together and

to vitalize the mass of facts which we already possess, and that they may thus incite and direct new experiments.

If this book should serve to turn the attention of others into this channel, and should thus ultimately help us to a clearer insight into the nature of the forces which have acted, and still act, to guide the evolution of life, this result will far outweigh the acceptance or rejection of the speculations which are here advanced.

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