All these considerations have induced me to give this rapid outline sketch of the degree of comparison which I hold to exist between Chordate and Nemertean (more especially Palæonemertean and Schizonemertean) nervous systems, although I am perfectly aware that there is a growing tendency among those authors at present occupied with questions concerning the morphology of the Vertebrate nervous system (Froriep, Baldwin Spencer, Beard, Cunningham, Kleinenberg, and many others) to accept Semper's and Dohrn's views of the Annelidan descent of Vertebrates. Wiedersheim, in the new edition of his "Vergleichende Anatomie" (1886), does not even hesitate to bring these results in their unripe phase before the more extensive public of students, and this generally in acquiescent terms. It is curious to see how, *e.g.*, the question of the cephalic nerves and their comparison to spinal nerves, that of the nerve-roots, the cephalic ganglia and their respective connecting trunks, have given occasion to the most diverse twisting and retwisting of the facts in order to bring out a fixed scheme or diagram, which might then be compared to what obtained in Annelids, and in which the highest degree of similarity between the respective somites might be obtained, thus establishing a preconceived idea of the Vertebrate ancestor as a most rigorously segmented animal. The value of these speculations has been already tested above, and I may be allowed once more to express my conviction that our comparisons between the Chordata and their lower Invertebrate predecessors may only be looked upon as in any way satisfactory so long as they remain on a very broad and general basis, and that any very special homology said to be demonstrated ought for that very reason to be more especially suspected.[1]

For my part I believe that, along the lines above indicated, a comparison between Vertebrate and Invertebrate nervous systems will in future prove to be more fruitful, but I wish to repeat that for the present we can only indicate general points of coincidence between the two, and must rigorously refrain from making comparisons in detail.

On the other hand, it is suggestive once more to consider what has been recorded above (p. 89) concerning the nervous system of *Drepanophorus lankesteri*, when compared with that of certain Annelids; and we may, I believe, safely come to the conclusion which was formulated by me seven years ago, but which I now hold to be much more solidly established, that we have in the Nemertea an important group through which definite glimpses may be obtained at the sources from which both Chordata and Appendiculata (Ray Lankester) have respectively sprung. The proposition

[1] Bateson (*loc. cit.*, p. 562) seems to take a similar view of the efforts here alluded to. He says:—"No doubt the cranial nerves may, by arbitrary divisions and combinations, be shaped into an arrangement which more or less simulates that which is supposed by some to have been present in the rest of the body, but little is gained by this exercise beyond the production of a false symmetry."—Dohrn himself, whose suggestions have so largely contributed to the accumulation of all this conflicting evidence, is now rather in the position of Goethe's Zauberlehrling, and writes (Studien, x., p. 468, 1885)—"Auch auf diesem Gebiet (die Frage nach der Bedeutung der Hirnnerven)bildet die bisherige vergleichende Anatomie das Bild eines auf stürmischer See steuerlos herumgeschleuderten Schiffes."