A New Theory of the Origin of Species

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A NEW THEORY
OF THE
ORIGIN OF SPECIES

BY

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CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY

Classification of Animals and Plants—What are Species—Evolution of same kind, the prevailing idea.

The animal kingdom was classified by the late Prof. Louis Agassiz into five great branches or types, to wit: Protozoa, Radiates, Molluscs, Articulates and Vertebrates, according to a plan of structure peculiar to, and running through each.

Protozoa, is the name now given to a numerous family of nearly structureless forms of life, furnishing, as it were, the raw material from which the other great types have originated and diverged. The Moners constitute a large class of this type, of which Haeckel says—"They are not only the simplest organisms with which we are acquainted, but also the simplest living beings we can conceive of as capable of existing; and though their entire body is but a single, formless, small lump of protoplasm, (each molecule of it being like the other), without any combination of parts, yet they
perform all the functions which in their entirety constitute in the most highly organized animals and plants what is comprehended in the idea of life: namely; sensation and motion, nutrition and propagation.” (1–viii–67).

**Radiates** include all animals whose organs radiate from a common center, and branch out into three classes—Polyps, Acalephs and Echinoderms.

**Molluscs** are all soft bodied animals, without articulated members, though sometimes containing hard parts internally, and are sometimes covered with hard shells. This type divides into three classes—Acephals, Gasteropods and Cephalopods.

**Articulates** are those having bodies more or less divided into lobes, rings or joints, with a skin or crust, sufficiently hard to form an external skeleton. Of these there are three classes—Worms, Crustaceans and Insects.

**Vertebrates** include those having two elongated cavities, one above and the other below a bony axis, called the back bone. The upper cavity contains the spinal cord which enlarges at one extremity into the brain; and the lower, the organs of respiration, digestion and reproduction. This type divides into five great classes—Fishes, Batrachians, Reptiles, Birds and Mammals.

Haeckel, however, divides the animal kingdom into seven types or tribes, to wit: 1, The Protozoa. 2, The Zoophytes (or plant animals). 3, Vermes (or worms). 4, Molluscs (or soft bod
5, The **Echinoderms** (or star animals). 6, The **Arthropoda** (or articulated animals). 7, The **Vertebrata**. (38–1–46).

The division of the classes in each type, runs into orders, families, genera and species. There are wide differences between the types; less wide between the classes; and these differences continue to diminish as we descend to families, genera and species.

The other forms of life are vegetable, commencing in microscopic Diatoms, which furnish food for the humble Moner, and diverging thence to the magnificent growths of the forest.

The vegetable kingdom divides itself into two great branches—Phænogams, or flowering plants and Cryptogams, or flowerless plants. The Phænogamous are of two classes—Exogens and Endogens—the former comprising all plants composed of pith in the centre, bark outside, and wood between the two; and growing by annual additions of concentric rings of wood; and the latter comprising all plants whose stems are not composed of concentric layers, but whose woody substance is distributed through the stems in threads and bundles.

The Cryptogamous comprise all the lowest forms of vegetation; and instead of flowers have some thing analogous thereto, and produce spores instead of seeds. Of these there are three classes—**Thallophytes**, comprising sea-weeds, lichens and fungi—**Anophytes**, comprising mosses and small plants with leafy stems and simple narrow