of these provinces, thus conjecturally marked out, is actually inhabited by a distinct nation of quadrupeds."* It will be observed that the language of Buffon respecting "natural barriers" which has since been so popular, would be wholly without meaning if the geographical distribution of organic beings had not led naturalists to adopt very generally *the doctrine of specific centres*, or in other words, to believe that each species, whether of plant or animal, originated in a single birth-place. Reject this view, and the fact that not a single native quadruped is common to Australia, the Cape of Good Hope, and South America, can in no ways be explained by adverting to the wide extent of intervening ocean, or to the sterile deserts, or the great heat or cold of the climates, through which each species must have passed, before it could migrate from one of those distant regions to another. It might fairly be asked of one who talked of impassable barriers, why the same kangaroos, rhinoceroses, or lamas, should not have been created simultaneously in Australia, Africa, and South America? The horse, the ox, and the dog, although foreign to these countries until introduced by man, are now able to support themselves there in a wild state, and we can scarcely doubt that many of the quadrupeds at present peculiar to Australia, Africa, and South America, might have continued in like manner to inhabit each of the three continents had they been indigenous or could they once have got a footing there as new colonists.

At the same time every zoologist will be willing to concede, that even if the departure of each species from a single centre had not appeared to be part of the plan of Nature, the range of species in general must have become limited, under the influence of a variety of causes, especially in the class of terrestrial mammalia. Scarcely any one of these could be expected to retain as fair a claim to the title of cosmopolite as man, although even the human race, fitted as it is by its bodily constitution and intellectual resources to spread very widely over the earth, is far from being strictly cosmopolite. It is excluded both from the arctic and antarctic circles, from many a wide desert and the summits of many mountain-chains; and lastly, from three-fourths of the globe covered by water, where there are large areas very prolific in animal life, even in the highest order of the vertebrate class. But the *habitations* of species are, as before stated, in reference to plants (see above, p. 592.), circumscribed by causes different from those which determine their *stations*, and these causes are clearly connected with the time and place of the original creation of each species.

As the names and characters of land quadrupeds are much better known to the general reader than those of other great families of the animal kingdom, I shall select this class to exemplify the zoological provinces into which species are divisible, confining myself, however, to those facts which may help to elucidate some principle, or rule apparently followed by the Author of Nature, in regard to that "mystery

* Prichard's Phys. Hist. of Mankind, vol. i. p. 54.