

which it has gradually spread over the rest of the earth. Instead of this, Agassiz assumes each species to have been created at several points of the earth's surface, and that in each case a large number of individuals was created.

The "natural system" of organisms, the different groups and categories of which arranged above one another—namely, the branches, classes, orders, families, genera, and species—we consider, in accordance with the Theory of Descent, as different branches and twigs of the organic family-tree, is, according to Agassiz, the direct expression of the divine plan of creation, and the naturalist, while investigating the natural system, repeats the creative thoughts of God. In this Agassiz finds the strongest proof that man is the image and child of God. The different stages of groups or categories of the natural system correspond with the different stages of development which the divine plan of creation had attained. The Creator, in projecting and carrying out this plan, and starting from the most general ideas of creation, plunged more and more into specialities. For instance, when creating the animal kingdom, God had in the first place four totally distinct ideas of animal bodies, which he embodied in the different structures of the four great, principal forms, types, or branches of the animal kingdom; namely, vertebrate animals, articulate animals, molluscous animals, and radiate animals. The Creator then, having reflected in what manner he might vary these four different plans of structure, next created within each of the four principal forms, several different classes—for example, in the vertebrate animal form, the classes of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibious animals, and fishes. Then God further reflected upon the individual