

some zoologists will be more in favour of the supposition that all placental animals are derived from a single pouched animal; others will be more in favour of the opposite supposition, that several different groups of placental animals have proceeded from several different pouched animals. In regard to the human race itself, some will prefer to derive it from a single form of ape, while others will be more inclined to the idea that several different races of men have arisen, independently of one another, out of several different species of ape. Without here expressing our opinion in favour of either the one or the other conception, we must, nevertheless, remark that in general *the monophyletic hypothesis of descent deserves to be preferred to the polyphyletic hypothesis of descent*. In accordance with the chorological proposition of a single "centre of creation" or of a single primæval home for most species (which has already been discussed), we may be permitted to assume that the original form of every larger or smaller natural group only originated *once* in the course of time, and only in *one part* of the earth. We may safely assume this simple original root, that is, the monophyletic origin, in the case of all the more highly developed groups of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. (Compare vol. i. p. 353). But it is very possible that the more complete Theory of Descent of the future will involve the polyphyletic origin of very many of the low and imperfect groups of the two organic kingdoms.

For these reasons I consider it best, in the mean time, to adopt the *monophyletic hypothesis of descent* both for the animal and for the vegetable kingdom. Accordingly, the above-mentioned six tribes, or phyla, of the animal kingdom