

cerning organic creation, and the coming into existence of the many animal and vegetable species. In doing this I have no intention of entertaining the reader with a statement of all the innumerable stories about the creation which have been current among the different human species, races, or tribes. However interesting and gratifying this task would be, from an ethnographical point of view, as well as in a history of civilization, it would lead us here much too far from our subject. Besides, the great majority of all these legends about creation bear too clearly the stamp of arbitrary fiction, and of a want of a close observance of nature, to be of interest in a scientific treatment of the history of creation. I shall therefore only select the Mosaic history from among those that are not founded on scientific investigation, on account of the unparalleled influence which it has gained in the western civilized world; and then I shall immediately take up the scientific hypothesis about creation, which originated with Linnæus as late as the commencement of last century.

All the different conceptions which man has ever formed about the coming into existence of the different animal and vegetable species may conveniently be divided into two great contrasted groups—the natural and supernatural histories of creation.

These two groups, on the whole, correspond with the two different principal forms of the human notions of the universe which we have already contrasted as the *monistic* and the *dualistic* conception of nature. In the usual dualistic or teleological (vital) conception of the universe, organic nature is regarded as the purposely executed production of a Creator working according to a definite plan. Its adherents see in