

theory a more definite form in my "biogenetic fundamental law," and worked it out further both in my "Study of the Gastræa Theory" and in my "Anthropogenesis." This fundamental proposition is the most important general law of organic development, *the fundamental biogenetic law*.

In this intimate connection of ontogeny and phylogeny, I see one of the most important and irrefutable proofs of the Theory of Descent. No one can explain these phenomena unless he has recourse to the laws of Inheritance and Adaptation; by these alone are they explicable. And the laws, which we have previously explained, as *the laws of abbreviated, of homochronic, and of homotopic inheritance*, here deserve renewed consideration. As so high and complicated an organism as that of man, or the organism of any other mammal, rises upwards from a simple cellular state, and progresses in its differentiation and perfecting, it passes through the same series of transformations which its animal progenitors have passed through, during immense spaces of time, inconceivable ages ago. I have already pointed out this extremely important parallelism of the development of individuals and tribes (p. 10). Certain very early and low stages in the development of man, and the other vertebrate animals in general, correspond completely in many points of structure with conditions which last for life in the lower fishes. The next phase presents us with a change of the fish-like being into a kind of amphibious animal. At a later period the mammal, with its special characteristics, develops out of the amphibian, and we can clearly see, in the successive stages of its later development, a series of steps of progressive transformation which evidently correspond with the differences of different