

old gaucho friends and former neighbours at their ranchos, attending cattle-markings and partings, dances, and other gatherings, and also made longer expeditions to the southern and western frontiers of the province, living out of doors for months at a time.

Despite my determination to put the question off, my mind, or subconscious mind, like a dog with a bone which it refuses to drop in defiance of its masters' command, went on revolving it. It went to bed and got up with me, and was with me the day long, and whenever I had a still interval, when I would pull up my horse to sit motionless watching some creature, bird or beast or snake, or sat on the ground poring over some insect occupied with the business of its little life, I would become conscious of the discussion and argument going on. And every creature I watched, from the great soaring bird circling in the sky at a vast altitude to the little life at my feet, was brought into the argument, and was a type, representing a group marked by a family likeness not only in figure and colouring and language, but in mind as well, in habits and the most trivial traits and tricks of gesture and so on; the entire group in its turn related to another group, and to others still further and further away, the likeness growing less and less. What explanation was possible but that of community of descent? How incredible it appeared that this had not been seen years ago—yes, even before it was discovered that the world was round and was one of a system of planets revolving round the sun. All this starry knowledge was of little or no importance compared to that of our relationship with all the infinitely various forms of life that share