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THE NEW ANTHROPOGENY: TWENTY-FIVE STAGES OF VERTEBRATE EVOLUTION, FROM SILURIAN CHORDATE TO MAN

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The subject of anthropogeny, as it was developed at the hands of Ernst Haeckel, involved an attempt to read the earlier stages of prehuman evolution largely from the data supplied by human and comparative embryology. Thus its main postulate was the so-called "law of recapitulation." But the attacks of modern zoologists on this "law" seem to have led, in this country at least, to a loss of confidence in Haeckel's chief conclusions. In certain quarters there has sprung up a regular epidemic, which may be named Haeckelophobia.

Meanwhile the new anthropogeny has been gradually taking shape. But before speaking of its origins and tentative results to date, it might be well to note that a humble exponent of the new doctrine is liable to experience a slightly guilty feeling if he finds himself obliged to speak in any official gathering of his scientific brethren. For example, the brethren of the orthodox anthropologist sect are always piously busy, wielding their magic measuring wands and ringing the bells on their magic calculators, or thinking machines, while the poor anthropogenist stands idly by and must confess that he is not primarily bent on measuring or counting anything, but only in piecing together the broken story of the "big parade" that nature has staged across the ages.

Another contrast between the anthropogenist and...