



DARWIN

DAY



*On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection
or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*

by Charles Darwin

*Fellow of the Royal Geological Society, etc. etc.; Author of Journal of Researches during
H.M.S. Beagle's Voyage round the world. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1859*

WHEN on board H.M.S. Beagle, as naturalist, I was much struck with certain facts in the distribution of the inhabitants of South America, and in the geological relations of the present to the past inhabitants of that continent. These facts seemed to me to throw some light on the origin of species - that mystery of mysteries, as it has been called by one of our greatest philosophers. On my return home, it occurred to me, in 1837, that something might perhaps be made out on this question by patiently accumulating and reflecting on all sorts of facts which could possibly have any bearing on it. After five years' work I allowed myself to speculate on the subject, and drew up some short notes; these I enlarged in 1844 into a sketch of the conclusions, which then seemed to me probable; from that period to the present day I have steadily pursued the same object. I hope that I may be excused for entering on these personal details, as I give them to show that I have not been hasty in coming to a decision.

My work is now nearly finished, but as it will take me two or three more years to complete it, and as my health is far from strong, I have been urged to publish this *Autobiography of the Malley archipelago*, has arrived at the origin of species.



South
Pacific
Ocean

