

So it is evidently only right that a being which has no other qualities than those of the species, should make no claim to any other existence than that confined to and conditioned by the species.

I have already several times explained[14] that whilst animals have only the generic character, it falls to man's share alone to have an individual character. Nevertheless, in most men there is in reality very little individual character; and they may be almost all classified. \_Ce sont des espèces\_. Their desires and thoughts, like their faces, are those of the whole species--at any rate, those of the class of men to which they belong, and they are therefore of a trivial, common nature, and exist in thousands. Moreover, as a rule one can tell pretty exactly beforehand what they will say and do. They have no individual stamp: they are like manufactured goods. If, then, their nature is absorbed in that of the species, must not their existence be too? The curse of vulgarity reduces man to the level of animals, for his nature and existence are merged in that of the species only. It is taken for granted that anything that is high, great, or noble by its very nature stands isolated in a world where no better expression can be found to signify what is base and paltry than the term which I have mentioned as being generally used--namely, \_common\_.

\* \* \* \* \*