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UNDER
THE
SUPERINTENDENCE
OF



CLERGYMEN,
OF
THE ENGLISH
CHURCH.

"THE FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

JUNE 29, 1872.

CHAPTER ON DARWIN'S DESCENT OF MAN.

That grand old book, still revered in English hearts and homes, we find the following account of the creation of man: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Such is the history of our origin as told us in the word of God. In we read our lowliness and our greatness. We are sprung from earth, but allied to heaven; we are formed of dust, but that dust is animated by the Divine breath of life. Made to be lord and master of this world, man was called into existence after the lower creatures, but not in succession from any of them.

Such is the simple but sublime history which the modern school of evolution seeks to set aside as false to nature and to science. Of this school Mr. Darwin is the originator, and, as yet, the principal teacher in it. He proposes to give to man a much longer genealogy than the Bible allows him. He supposes him to have derived his being from one of those lowest organized forms which came into being when life first appeared upon our planet, perhaps hundreds of millions of years ago. From this form—no higher, if so high, than the larva of the Ascidian—he supposes him to have developed in some mysterious manner into a fish of the Ganoid species; from the fish he advances him to an amphibian; from the amphibian to the reptile; from the reptile to the marsupial; from the marsupial to the ape; from the ape to an ape-like creature; from the ape-like creature to man as he now exists.

Such is our genealogy, according to Mr. Darwin—a genealogy far more endless and fabulous than those against which Paul warned Timothy. And yet teachers of this kind have their numerous disciples; their works are repeated in successive editions; they boast to have established their theory upon a basis which cannot be overturned; they call upon us tauntingly to

interpret or to correct our Bibles by the new light which they have shed upon the history of man.

We propose, in a brief chapter, to draw our readers' attention to one stage—the last one—which Mr. Darwin has given in his account of the long descent of man. We will show in a plain and popular manner what it is which he describes as having to be done. We will then point out the manner by which he says it must and can only have been accomplished. We will then show that the very agency which he has himself selected as efficacious would actually hinder the process of evolution which he supposes it would effect. Our readers will, we think, see, even from this brief paper, how vain-glorious is the boasting of Mr. Darwin's school of evolution. We have not the smallest doubt from what we know of it that it will end in confirming the authority of that Book, which at present it claims to have superseded.

At the period to which we now refer, Mr. Darwin has brought us to our last stage ere we develop into our perfect manhood. He hesitates to call his extraordinary creature *man*. More than ape, or monkey, less than man in his lowest savage condition, he calls him ape-like, semi-human, man before he had attained to manhood! Our early progenitors of this period he describes as covered with hair, both sexes having beards. Their ears he supposes to have been pointed and capable of movement. Their bodies were duly provided with tails, having their proper muscles. Their feet were prehensile, so as to enable them to climb trees and hold by their branches. They were arboreal in their habits, frequenting some warm, forest-clad land, finding their food on the trees, and spending their existence among the woods. They were of great strength, and the males were provided with large canine teeth, like those of dogs, with which to defend themselves from their enemies. In intellect they were

little advanced beyond that of the ape tribe. Of a moral sense, or the idea of a God, they were wholly unconscious. Such is the extraordinary creature whom Mr. Darwin is to develop into man. The researches of geology have as yet failed to discover traces of him in the rocks. This, however, he attributes to the imperfection of that new science. He expects, when it examines the primeval localities of our race, that it will supply the present geological gap between the ape and man. Till then, as its existence is essential to his theory, he supposes that it must have existed. At an evident loss where to fix upon as the birthplace of semi-human man, he at first selected the warm and well wooded island of Borneo. Subsequent reflection, however, seems to have induced him to alter man's original habitat, and, if we understand him correctly, the forests of Central Africa are the scene where the immediate progenitor of now existing man first drew his breath.

Into the evolution of the mental and moral qualities of this creature into those which now distinguish our race we have not here time to enter. While it lost its original instincts, it was to become possessed of a reason which was to subjugate the world, of a moral sense which was to introduce the novel idea of a right and a wrong, of belief in a Supreme Being which was to raise the thoughts from earth to heaven, of hopes and aspirations based on this faith of an everlasting life to be enjoyed when all those lower creatures, to whom yet it was itself once no whit superior, were sleeping the sleep of an eternal and unbroken death. How all this was to be accomplished we have not space to tell. We can but dwell upon the process by which Mr. Darwin would develop his arboreal animal in its physical qualities to the form and organization of man as he now exists.

The principal changes to be effected are the following. Our progenitors were to lose their hairy covering while as yet they were unprovided with any artificial clothing to supply its place; they were to absorb in some way their tails as not to be required in the condition to which they were advancing; their feet were to lose their prehensile force, and to alter into feet capable of walking and unsuitable to climbing; they were to change the character of their food, and to find it chiefly from the ground instead of from trees; they were to exchange their former dwelling places among the branches, whether for association or for refuge, for dwelling places on the ground, while as yet they had no tools for building the rudest houses and no architectural ability of the lowest kind; and, lastly, while they were in this transition state they were to lose their former natural weapons of offence and defence, viz., their great canine teeth, while they were wholly unprovided with any artificial weapons in place of them, unable as yet from their conformation to throw with any accuracy the missiles which in the shape of stones lay at their feet, and still exposed to the attacks of their former enemies from whom they had hitherto defended themselves with their teeth or from whom they had taken refuge in the branches of the forests. And all this change, be it remembered, was not to take place rapidly, in a gene-

ration, or in a dozen generations. It was, according to Mr. Darwin, to take place slowly; countless generations, thousands and tens of thousands of years were to elapse ere the semi-human arboreal creature was to be developed into perfect man.

And how was this wonderful process to be effected? Mainly by what Mr. Darwin calls "natural selection." We find, he truly observes, in every species of animal, in some to a very considerable degree, under human care, a *capacity of variation*. There are varieties of colour, of strength, of speed, of beauty constantly occurring, which distinguish one or more individuals of a species from others. Some of these variations would, he observes, render individuals thus distinguished better able than the rest to sustain life at periods which every now and then occur; whether from scarcity of food, from epidemic, from the attacks of enemies, there is a struggle for existence in which the weaker perish and the stronger survive. Thus the more favourably distinguished individuals live to hand down an improved race, and through such a process, continued through vast ages, one species becomes developed into another, the fish into an amphibian, the semi-human creature into perfect man. Natural selection, he carefully informs us, rejects all such variations as are unfavourable to a creature in its struggle for existence, and retains only such as are aids and helps to it in such a struggle.

Now, it is for this very reason that we say that if there were in nature such a power as natural selection is supposed by Mr. Darwin to be, instead of helping on his evolutionary process, it would absolutely forbid the first step towards it, and rigorously stamp it out; for the very first step, and every succeeding step in evolution until it was all but concluded, would be most unfavourable to the existence of the individuals who were being thus evolved. The more severe the struggle for existence, the more difficult to provide food or to escape from enemies, exactly in the degree of all such difficulty would Mr. Darwin's natural selection obliterate and extinguish every such variation as he describes to be necessary in the great march of human evolution. The loss of the natural covering of hair when unsupplied by any other clothing would deprive those who lost it of that warmth which their hair supplied, and so injure their bodily power. The absorption of their tail would deprive them of one of the most useful instruments in climbing trees, in finding food, in escaping from enemies. We know the use it is put to for all these purposes in such members of the monkey tribe as possess this appendage. The loss of the prehensile power of their feet would exercise a far more injurious influence upon them in all these respects. Where food was scarce these unhappy individuals advancing to manhood would be utterly unable to compete with their less favoured brethren who still possessed tails and prehensile feet. Forced to descend from the trees if they would avoid starvation, they are there met with enemies from whom heretofore they had been able to escape into the trees, or to defend themselves

with their formidable teeth. Alas! they are now unable to climb swiftly, and they have lost, or nearly lost, their canine teeth. As yet they are not able even to walk firmly upon their feet. It is quite plain that in the struggle for existence individuals, varying as Mr. Darwin makes some to vary, in order to advance them to perfect manhood, would and must of necessity perish long ere they had reached half way on that long march of evolution which he tells us they have to take. The purely arboreal creature, warmly clad and tailed, with prehensile feet and formidable teeth, would certainly be the survivor in those struggles for existence which take place in nature. Natural selection would exterminate all such individuals as departed in any material degree from the original type. In fact, if we had ever been, as Mr. Darwin supposes, hairy, well tailed, and arboreal creatures, then, by the very agency which Mr. Darwin suggests to guide our researches into animal genealogy, we should have remained creatures of this kind to the present day.

So convinced indeed was even Mr. Darwin himself that the creature whom he was educating to manhood could not exist amid a scene where he was exposed to enemies that, in the earlier part of his great work on "The Descent of Man," he places his habitation in the island of Borneo, where he would have few dangerous foes and would readily find an abundance of food. Why he changes his birthplace from Borneo to Africa we cannot tell, but he does make this important change in a later portion of his book. Overpowering reasons, we feel satisfied, compelled him to this change. But we have his own admission that in a scene of danger his nascent man could not exist, and in the only region where he is enabled to place him at the most dangerous period of his existence, in that Africa abounding with its terrible serpents and the wild beasts of every description, we find the creature of Mr. Darwin's imagination placed by him in the most dangerous of all imaginable situations.

We think, then, that our readers will agree with us that the authority of the Bible is in no great danger from Mr. Darwin's theory of evolution. It has survived much more serious attacks, and it will survive this. Indeed, in one important respect, the vast amount of knowledge of natural history which Mr. Darwin possesses enables us successfully to meet the objection often made to the truth of scripture, because it describes the various races of men as sprung from a common progenitor—Adam.

C.

Weekly Almanac.

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"—ACTS ix. 6.

"Come unto Me."—MATT. xi. 28.

"And he said unto him, Follow Me."—LUKE v. 27.

O God, the protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy, that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal; grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. Amen.

JUNE.	MORN. LESSONS.	EVEN. LESSONS.
30. Fifth Sunday after Trinity	1 Sam. xv. 1-23. Acts ix. 1-22.	1 Sam. xvi. or xvii. 1 John iii. 16-iv. 6.
JULY.		
1. Monday	{ Job iii. Acts ix. 23-43.	Job iv. 1 John iv. 7-21.
2. Tuesday	{ Job v. Acts x. 1-23.	Job vi. 1 John v.
3. Wednesday	{ Job vii. Acts x. 24-48.	Job ix. 2 John.
4. Thursday	{ Job x. Acts xi.	Job xi. 3 John.
5. Friday	{ Job xii. Acts xii.	Job xiii. Jude.
6. Saturday	{ Job xiv. Acts xiii. 1-25.	Job xvi. Matt. i. 18-25.

"The effect of the words, 'Come unto Me,' and 'Follow Me,' is very different. The effect of the first of these words is to draw man to Christ; the effect of the second of these words is to drive men from Christ. Most of those who hear the first of these words think that they obey it—mean to obey it—and come to Christ so far as to call themselves Christians. Most of those who hear the second of these words do not mean to obey it, know that they are not obeying it—will not follow Christ; and the consequence is that those who flock to Christ when He says 'Come unto Me,' desert Christ when He says 'Follow Me.' It was so in Christ's lifetime. There never was so popular—there never was so unpopular a ministry as Christ's. Never was there so popular a ministry. Christ was surrounded often, as He was on the occasion spoken of in our text, by a multitude. They flocked and crowded round Him. They did not give Him time to eat bread. They did not give Him room to move. All classes of men, high and low, rich and poor, Pharisee and Sadducee, saint and sinner, all thronged around Him. Even His enemies, though they came to dispute and to cavil, could not help coming to Christ. He drew all men unto Him. But this was just so long as He said 'Come unto Me'—so long as they heard gracious words proceeding out of His mouth. So long as His gracious words of love were drawing men for what they could receive from Him they thronged around Him; but when He spake His other word—when He said 'Follow Me,' and when He told them what it was to follow Him—when He told the rich man to leave his riches, when He told the poor man to leave his business, when He told the sinful man to leave his sin and bade him follow Him—then the scene changes; the multitude disperses; those who came out of the crowd to join Him go back; the very disciples walked no longer with Him, and at last when Christ for the last time says 'Follow Me' we know they all forsook Him and fled—went every man to his home, and left Him alone—and Christ, Who had had once so many hearers and admirers, had at last not one follower. If the multitude come together at the last, it is not to say 'Hosannah,' but it is to say, 'Crucify Him! crucify Him!' It is so still, brethren. The gospel of Jesus Christ attracts and repels men, as Christ did. There is a wonderfully attractive power in the gospel of Jesus Christ. 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.' It must be so from the nature of the gospel. The gospel of Christ has in itself that that attracts all