

*The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex.* By CHARLES DARWIN, M.A., F. R. S. With Illustrations. Vol. I. 12mo., pp. 409. New York: Appleton & Co. 1871.

Mr. Darwin's previous volumes have treated his theory, applicable as its principles are to all living beings, solely in application to the animal world. He had long been collecting materials on *human* development, but had not the courage to publish them until the bold avowal of his views by less timid pupils, especially Carl Vogt, of Germany, braced his nerves to the enterprise. The present volume, though exhibiting the amiable and pure scientific spirit and eminent genius of the author, strikes us as inferior in style and ability to its predecessors. Darwin and Wallace are free from the trenchant pugnacity of Huxley and Maudesley; and distantly removed from the coarse blatancy of Büchner, who exults, apparently, in the thought of reducing humanity down to brute conditions. This spirit of blasphemy is illustrated by the very title of a Darwinian book (quoted by Darwin) by Dr. Barrago Francesco: "Man, made in the image of God, is made also in the image of the ape." Darwin's spirit is reverent; he maintains the transcendental nature of conscience; and, if we rightly understand him, the immortality of man.

Mr. Darwin traces the human animal to the Old World ape, finding his probable residence in Africa. Thence through the lemur, down through bird and fish, to some low marine form. He admits that, though our pedigree is thus very ancient, it is not very noble. He contents himself with the reply that "the most humble organism is something much higher than the inorganic dust beneath our feet;" forgetting that even by his theory our pedigree takes its very earliest origin from the primordial inorganic matter biblically represented by the word "dust." Nor is it true that living natures may not be both more detestable and more disgusting than pure lifeless matter.

On this matter we may suggest:

1. Darwinism cannot get over the threshold of vital existence without a miracle. How did the system of life first begin? The experiments in "Spontaneous Generation" at every repetition confirm the doctrine that *from life only can life proceed*. How, then, without a new creation, a creation however minute in its magnitude, yet most stupendous in its nature—an origination of that wonderful reality, *Life*, in the universe—could our pedigree take its primordial start?

2. If Darwinism admits the immortality of the soul we must have a second instantaneous, yet most stupendous, miracle. At some

point in the long pedigree *man ceased to be mortal*, and became immortal. This amazing transition from the finite to the infinite must have taken place at an indivisible instant, for there is no intermediate. And so, in contradiction to Mr. Darwin's statement that there was no time in which man became man, we may positively say man became man "in the twinkling of an eye." There was a moment when man was formed, in the highest sense, "in the image of God;" as the son of Sirach says, "in the image of his Eternity." The race, therefore, has certainly had its *Adam*; for the Hebraic word *Adam*, be it not forgotten, means *Man*. There was an immortal Adam enthroned at a miraculous epoch over animate and inanimate nature, endowed with conscience and responsibility, and installed beneath the government of God. Even then from Darwin himself, we come to a conception so amazingly the type of the old Hebraic history as to impress us with its true divinity. And thus both scientific geology and anthropology, while they at first present a variation from the Mosaic record quite alarming to the believer, do terminate in a strange typical resemblance quite confounding to the skeptic.

3. While Mr. Darwin denies that the similarities of pattern between man and other animals can be solved on the principle of positive creation after "an ideal plan," he is too candid a reasoner to deny that somehow *plan*, model, intellectual shaping, does exist. We then think that most readers would deny that "ideal plan" can exist without antecedent mind to plan it. If we assume that matter can exist without creation, we are not quite obliged to admit that motion of matter could exist without mind to select the direction of the motion. But even if we should admit that matter might move by blind mathematical laws, and so pass through countless evolutions, we can never admit that any thing less than mind can construct, outside of rigid mathematical law, an adaptive "ideal plan."