
DARWIN'S DESCENT OF MAN.

(A Few Thoughts and Queries Suggested on Reading Darwin's Introduction to his fifth edition of "The Origin of Species, and Descent of Man").

BY J. H. PEPPER.

Darwin commences by begging the question and talks at the commencement of "*prejudices against his views*;" as much as to say that he alone is right, and that other people are so stupid and bigoted, they will not change their minds on a subject that nature alone can teach them, and the knowledge thus acquired appears to ignorant observers to be all against Darwin, because no one has yet heard or read of a monkey being anything but a monkey, a codfish a codfish, a jelly fish a jelly fish, a cell a cell, &c., &c., &c.

Darwin says "man must be included with all other organic beings in any general conclusion respecting his manner of appearance on this earth." Granted as we allow (at least a large section of the Christian world) that Father, Son and Holy Ghost is one God, but each separate and distinct, as we allow that red, yellow and blue waves come from one wave of white light, but all distinct and having separate qualities. "Species are the modified descendants of other species." Very true again, but each species belongs to its species, and you cannot raise a continuous species by uniting a horse and a donkey, and if you do it the result is a mule, which can no longer generate its species,

but ends as a mule. Mules do not and cannot increase and multiply. If you name three species, A, B, C:

A—Monkey,	{	A cannot generate with B,
B—Dog,		B with C, or
C—Man.		A with C.

It is Darwin's business to get over this great and fundamental difficulty, and he must be able to prove that the reverse of the story of the confusion of languages at the building of the Tower of Babel must happen to living animals, viz: that the multiplicity of organisms and varieties of animal life possessing the common instincts of their species, must be all as the people were said to be before the confusion of languages, i. e., all speaking one language, or in other words having "*one common seed*" of generation, so that the seed of a jelly fish is really by some refined and long time process, gradually to evolve itself from an humble and ignoble condition to the more glorious and perfect estate called man. Darwin's postulate seems to be that the story of the "Tower of Babel" may be paraphrased into that of the "*Tower of Mental Activity—Man*," the confusion of languages, the confusion or differentiation of species, did not occur in nature, but that the Architect of nature used only one language, one seed, out of which came all living things from the jelly fish to man. "Natural Selection" meant that the weakest or least perfect seed was destroyed, the strongest as most perfect, only lived.

Darwin allows he may have overrated the importance of "Natural Selection," and he compliments the old and honored chiefs in natural science and says: "*Many unfortunately are still opposed to evolution in every form.*" Darwin admits that he has never deliberately applied these views to *a species taken singly*.

"When we confine our attention to any *one form* we are deprived of the weighty arguments derived from the nature of the affinities which connect whole groups of organisms, their geographical distribution in past and present times, and their geological succession. The homological structure, embryological development, and rudimentary organs of a species, whether it be man or any other animal to which our attention may be directed, remains to be considered, but these great classes of facts afford us, it appears to me, ample and conclusive evidence in favor of the *principle of graded evolution.*"

First it may be noted that Darwin obtains no proof of evolution by studying *one species*; he then begs the question again,

and asks to be permitted to argue on "groups." Very good; let him do so, and still group A is different from group B, and that from C. If he can prove that the seed of group A will beget B, and B beget C, we must then pay strict attention to this great and awful fact, and say that it may then be possible to conceive the world peopled only with monsters such as the Pagan Satyrs or Centaurs, and in process of time by the degradation, or rather in this case the evolution of species, we may realize semi-animals—half dog half man, half horse half cow; but fortunately this imaginary cataclysm is arrested by the stubborn, incontrovertible obstinacy of nature in declining to permit a mule to generate with another mule.

It would appear that the world is more likely to become degraded than elevated, if Darwin's doctrines are to be paramount, and as we proceed with the analysis of his pleadings, we perceive that like a drowning man he snatches at straws.

Darwin is undoubtedly a great philosopher, but like other monomaniacs appears to be insane on one point, viz: that man came from the seed of a jelly fish by "Natural Selection," (the strong destroying the weak) occurring through millions and millions and millions (make your left hand figures stand well in this discussion) of years.

Darwin states that "the sole object of this work is to consider firstly, whether man like any other species, is descended from some pre-existing form? Secondly, the value of the differences between the (so-called) races of man." Ye gods! so-called!! as if a negro (so-called) was not different from a white man. When human beings of weak intellect have escaped into the forest wilds, it would appear that they become in certain cases covered with hair almost like an animal, they tear their food with hands and teeth, and live on berries, or whatever they can masticate, swallow, or digest.

This is the degradation of the species called man. The idiot is one of a degraded species, and may have sprung from some incestuous connection, or from the intermarriage of relations too closely connected and within the ties of consanguinity, as usually happens when first cousins marry. Even the same seed in the same species, man, is fatal to longevity—the offspring being weak, languid, and die early.

If man generating with his species, and intermarriages in one community or family, may breed idiots or other people of weak

bodies and intellects, what would it be if the *same seed* permeated all living things belonging to the mammalia? Why gradual decay, and the earth should be empty and void of human beings by this time.

Darwin says "the high antiquity of man has recently been demonstrated by the labors of a host of eminent men." Very true—let that pass. Why not very ancient? when a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday.

And this, the distinguished author goes on to say, is "the indispensable basis for understanding his origin." One would have thought the contrary, because antiquity shrouds much that is ordinarily regarded as historically in comparative darkness, and "as distance lends enchantment to the view," so distance of time provokes the most fascinating narratives, which, unhappily, like the "Evolution Fairy Tale," cannot be proven—and yet are most amusing because they wear a rag of probability of truth about them. It seems that this vaunted antiquity shuts the door and hides the key that might open the domain of knowledge respecting the actual date of the origin of man. Darwin continues, "Nor shall I have occasion to do more than allude to the amount of difference between man and the ape, for Professor Huxley says the opinion of the most competent judges has conclusively shown that in every single visible character man differs less from the apes than these do from the lesser members of the same order of primates." True again, in all time man has observed the remarkable similarity between himself and his "poor relations," the monkeys. There is a great similarity between a horse and a mule or a donkey, but "the difference" just makes the two perfectly distinct. Man and apes are alike "with a difference" profound and immense; no monkey has ever been tried in a court of justice for a crime or conduct unbecoming a gentleman; they are irresponsible members of the animal world, endowed with remarkable instincts and a great imitative faculty, but there it ends; individual apes, chimpanzees and ourangs, with continued kind treatment may perform remarkable acts, and by these and facial expressions simulate their lord and master, man; the record is full of such cases, with the usual sequel of attempted civilization of the poor wild animal viz: death, as the ape dies of consumption; whereas, if allowed to roam its own native forests and feed in its own way, the poor relation (as Charles Lamb called the monkey) shifts for himself and lives his appointed time.

So, on the contrary, when man is turned adrift in the forest, as has happened with children of weak intellect, they have hardly been able to sustain life, because they require the opposite conditions of life to the monkey; if by accident they are of the family of Esau, i. e., hairy, and nature has furnished this natural suit of clothes or skin covering, they may manage to exist. When hair does not grow profusely, death probably ensues from exposure, unless it be in a warm or temperate climate.

Darwin is a most sincere and truthful enthusiast; it is not disrespectful to call him a monomaniac in the sense one would speak of the "perpetual motion" inventors, or "Biblio-maniacs," or other men who harp so long upon one string that a slight lesion of the brain apparatus probably takes place.

Darwin's modesty charms the thoughtful reader—thus he says: "This work contains hardly any original facts in regard to man; but, as the conclusions at which I have arrived after drawing up a rough draught, appeared to me interesting, I thought that they might interest others." Very nice, very prettily put, and quite refreshing as compared with the self-assertion of Tyndall and others.

"It has often and confidently been asserted that man's origin can never be known, but ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge, it is those who know little and not those who know much who positively assert that this or that problem will never be solved by science." True, very true, an undoubted truism.

The conclusion that man is co-descendant with other species of some ancient, lower and extinct form, is not new in any degree. See Haeckel's remarkable work, a book so perfect that even Darwin says his own essay should not have appeared if it, the book, had appeared before his own was written.

Possibly true again. We need not oppose the idea of the gradual improvement of the race of man, although we are entitled, with Agassiz, to reverse the process of "Evolution" reasoning, and say that the first creations called "man" were more perfect than anything we now see, more beautiful, and cast in the mould of the Apollo Belvidere and Venus of Milo.

Out of tens of thousands of horses only one wins "the Derby." Out of tens of thousands of men and women, only one here and there is perfect in form and conspicuous from intellect.

Were the first creations of man Apollos and Venuses? or were

they ugly, brutal, and simply animal, with or without a wild and scanty form of language? How did the divine gift of speech originate? The answer to these simple questions is impressive, because silence is the result—except we say because man was originally endowed with the organs of speech. Then if man had the vocal organs, why did not the monkeys have the same gift? Can we cultivate a monkey's voice to speak like a Washington or or to sing like a Kellogg or a Titiens?

Darwin says that "Sexual Selection has played an important part in the differentiation of the races of man." Of course it has, or we should not be able to recognize the pluck and endurance of the Anglo-Saxon race as distinct from that of other races of white men. We know that intermarriage, and mixture of varieties of white men, climate and food, work great changes, as we speak of a beef-eating Englishman.

Darwin's arguments fail to show us "that the differentiation of the races of man" brings him nearer to the race of apes.

If it pleased the Creator to form monkeys and men with the same kind of skeleton and external form, it also pleased him to leave great barriers of distinction, by endowing the flesh and blood of man with a nervous system that monkeys have not, and even if they had it, does not give the monkeys the power to express their thoughts in words or to reason upon or indite their ideas. Monkeys may communicate with other monkeys by cries and signs, but they cannot speak to man. Has any monkey learned talk within the period, since the *Antigone* of Sophocles was written, viz: about 450 Before Christ? If any change had taken place in the forms of apes it must have been recorded during the last 2,000 years. The conversion of monkeys into men would have been too startling a fact to have escaped notice in the Greek works published during that period. But then Darwin's reply would be: give me more time, and count the evolution of living persons by thousands of centuries, and the most perfect work of the Creator, viz: man, will be the result.

After reading Darwin one regrets that it is difficult if not impossible to agree with him, and if we take all he says for "gospel," there is still a bond of connection, theoretical of course, like Darwinism, between matter and a first great Creator.

"We may extend our vision backwards," is the high-flown and pedantic language of Tyndall, or in other words dream a dream,

which put into words, suggests the following queries to the "speculative" but "philosophical" readers of this journal:

I. Might not the principles of "evolution" and "natural selection" lead up from cell life to divine perfection?

II. If there is a beginning in "cell life," which is the lowest form of vitalized matter, unless we begin with the chemical compound called protein, whose vitality is doubtful, may there not be an end somewhere in the very highest condition of "vitalized matter"?

III. Do not extremes meet, and may not "cell life" and divine majesty be the two ends of a long chain?

IV. If cell life began the reign of vitality, why should it not be asserted that the highest order of "spiritualized vitality" has started first into "Power," and unrolling itself like a scroll, shows the Powers from whence it, the "Divine Spiritual Essence or God-head" proceeded, but ending in a cell?

V. Upon the "Evolution Theory," we may dream that millions and millions of years ago, matter gradually formed itself into an Essence and Divine condition, i. e., "Perfection." This once achieved would give the control over matter, and constitute a "Divine, Absolute and Perfect Power," which may forever repeat itself in the creation of countless worlds.

VI. As a "moral code" is the basis of true happiness, the same perfect "God-head" that repeated itself in the creation of worlds, would provide for this want. Without a code of morality man would abandon himself entirely to brutal lusts; man would destroy man, ergo, man would destroy himself. It was necessary to subjugate the powers of "Ethereality," viz: "the operations of the mind," by permitting reason to assert itself as a co-existent power with mere animal, nervous, electrical, chemical, and mechanical "cell life."

VII. The ten commandments are the grandest examples of what should constitute a moral code. The civilized world has mainly accepted this code, and embodied nearly all of it in laws. Whoever breaks the laws must in the end bring upon himself or herself unhappiness and misery, as punishment follows the breaking of the laws. The upright and prudent man obeys the laws (if acknowledged by all to be just), and if industrious may enjoy that degree of happiness which our senses can receive; but even the good and industrious may through ignorance break some minor branch of the law, or in other terms

“make mistakes,” and so a lack of knowledge is almost a crime, for it frequently brings the punishment of want and penury, as shown by unsuccessful speculations. Parents cannot too early inculcate and insist upon rigid economy and habits of saving, for without “means” even the best “go to the wall.”

VIII. All denominations are certainly begging for money, declared to be “the root of all evil,” ergo, they ask for evil.

After Moses and the letter of the law, come a still more wonderful “evolution” of “Divine Essence” of highly spiritualized reason and thought to occupy Darwin’s improved and higher order of “cell life,” viz: the marvellous life of “Him who is called the Saviour of the World,” whose code of “Mental Ethernality,” if once firmly established, would end all wars, and destroy forever the love of the “root of all evil,” and lead to sustained, pure, and everlasting happiness, by the angelic purity of the lives of men.

IX. When this last result of “Evolution,” or continual destruction of the weak and evil, takes place, then we must have the uprising of the highest condition of “Mental Essence,” as shown for our example in the “Life of Christ.” And now has arrived the Millenium.

But alas, it is only a dream caused by an attempt to digest the tough theory of good, truthful, learned Darwin.

TURNER.

BY W. E. CHANNING.

“He sat—and talked
 With winged messengers; who daily brought
 To his small Island in the ethereal deep
 Tidings of joy and love.

The measure of his soul was filled with bliss,
 And holiest art, as earth, sea, air, with light,
 With pomp, with glory, with magnificence.”

Joseph Mallord William Turner, was born April 23, 1769, and died December 19, 1851, at Chelsea, England.