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ANNUAL ADDRESS.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

THE first thought on this occasion is, I doubt not, the same in your mind as in mine. We have sustained a great loss. I feel that the Council has asked me to stand here to-day to discharge a twofold duty—address you as a Philosophical Society, and refer also to that loss. The duty is not an easy one, though in attempting it I am secure beforehand of all your sympathies.

Our friend James Reddie has been suddenly taken from us. To him more than to any other man this Institute owes its existence. To his profound faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ,—I must not shrink from saying—every one may attribute our combined action here in defence of the foundations of Christianity against assaults from without, especially some which assume a disguise of science. I well remember how, with that clearness and originality which distinguished him, he urged to me in private, long before he pressed it on the public, the need there would certainly be of a philosophical union among all "who name the Name of Christ," our common Lord, to confront the devastating literature which, in new and various forms, ultimately denies that Name.

Not that he had any fears concerning the faith itself: but he observed that there was a growing assurance of superficial opinion, in itself very perilous; while the hasty assertions of incipient science, even when contradictory and transient, shook, and at times destroyed, the faith of the thousands who are led by the few. He pointed out, that the reputation of being "scientific,"—though in the highest rank very hardly won,—is attained with curious facility by numerous coteries, who with little knowledge and no true investigation reflect the latest crudity of the hour. Unthinking, admiring, and willing crowds, whose consciences are sometimes eager for liberation, find flattering relief in the persuasion that credulity as to matters of science indicates a philosophical temper. Then the mischievous vanity of some must, he thought, be already sufficiently irksome to men of real knowledge; while not a few make themselves specially offensive to religious minds. The resolve came thus to be steadfastly formed by

our friend, that alleged science, in its ambitious or theoretical state, should be reduced to modesty by being openly brought face to face with fact and reason; while at the same time the advances of true knowledge should be satisfactorily recorded.

Such was the work to which he resolutely set himself. For this, henceforth, he gave up time, health, and much of worldly prosperity, nobly fulfilling in his early death the chosen motto of his life—"*Ad majorem Dei gloriam.*"

How special his qualifications were for the inauguration of a work like this, though all associated with him were conscious of them, none perhaps could testify more distinctly than myself, contemplating the movement, as I long did, without otherwise sharing in it than as a member of the Institute from the first. For I had known our friend at least half his life; and I can surely say,—nor ought I to withhold it here, though elsewhere the press has rightly honoured him as a public servant of high mark—but I feel bound to say, that so much fearlessness in truth, so much scorn of artifice, and inborn abhorrence of wrong, so much purity, rectitude, and confidence in God, I have rarely known, as in JAMES REDDIE.

His intellectual capacity, we all know, was unusual;—much vigorous thinking in his *Fresh Springs of Truth* will remain to attest it, even for those who, with the freedom usual here, may question some of his views; and his industrial energy and integrity were of that kind which the world is apt to account for by the term "genius": while the explanation to those who knew him was that he was supremely conscientious in every work that he undertook. His character had in it that impatience of all treachery to right which reminded one of certain severe tones in the Psalms of the Hebrews—his favourite book of devotions — (words there uttered as by an ideal denouncer of wrong, leading the chorus in life's solemn drama). But this only partly describes him; nor may I now add what might seem unfit for the occasion, that which I myself know of the unselfishness of his friendship, its gentleness and warmth, manly yet unobtrusive, in any time of need.

There is much to sadden and subdue in the loss of such a man; and yet he had not failed to reach the object of his life. For myself, I feel like some soldier in a wide battle-field gazing on the face of a younger comrade struck down by my side in the midst of a well-sustained effort. And as I gaze I have a cheerful look imprinted on my heart, and words seem to reach me, as from the Voice that shall award the future crowns to the moral conquerors,—"Faithful unto death!"

It is now our duty to estimate our present position as an Institute, and the work which is more immediately before us. The problems which vitally interest men are always the same; but they are presented from time to time in various aspects.

Review of our position.

I. Five or six years ago (when we began) some alleged "difficulties," wearing an air of urgent importance, and claiming to be scientific, were importunately besetting the supposed position of Christianity. Much more was hinted, indeed, than openly said, but the "difficulties," such as they were, had very free discussion at once among us; and in what spirit, and with what results, the *Journal of our Transactions* will show. Every one, we trust, will recognize the resolute fairness of the Council on all occasions, in the breadth and variety of opinion expressed, which they refused to restrain.

The progress of the Institute hitherto.

Regarding as primary the fact of our Responsibility for thought and action, a large space was conceded to the fundamental inquiries respecting it, and, it is hoped, not without fruit.—Questions of Ontology have not yet occupied us, though they must be forced on attention sooner or later. The "difficulties" of so-called science claimed practical precedence.

Some "theories of the world" were then discussed, which appeared formidable to many persons, but they are now becoming more than "nebulous," while others seem to be already as literary fossils. The omission, for instance, in Genesis of a particular cosmogony which was still in high favour as recently as 1860, may not bring down on Moses, in 1871, the supercilious title of a mere "Hebrew Descartes." Things have moved on, and other theories are in process of formation. Naturalists, too, in their department, have certainly advanced. Some who had thought Cuvier sufficiently sound, or who at most were content to trace the animal pedigree of man to the "old-world monkey," have now a yearning to the jelly-fish as our probable ancestor, and even hint, to those who have at least moral doubts, that they may go farther and fare worse.

Our immediate future.

Many other changes are indeed thought to be imminent in the progress of opinion, of which it may suffice to say that we must here be prepared as Christians to deal with them as they arise. Whenever we are brought to the knowledge of fresh facts, we shall prize them; but we shall have to look closely after what may be termed

theories on their probation, for theories are apt to travel so fast that ordinary logic has difficulty in overtaking them. Mr. Herbert Spencer has an essay exposing "illogical Geology"; but there are other wanderings from right reason, in the pursuit of which we should be glad of the powerful assistance, if we might have it, of so acute a writer.

We must not complain of the position; for there is much reality in the work of our day, amidst its many insincerities. Earlier generations had their religious and intellectual trials; and let us not be sure that those same trials may not reappear, nor yet doubt that, if the spirit of Celsus and Porphyry revive, some Origen and Methodius will be ready in the defence of truth. Meanwhile, our own duty is marked out for us; and our one thought must be to do it.

II. The subject which occupies us is, as we have said, really the same always. Whatever may detain men's thoughts as they move on, they always return to inquire as to the Origin of the World and of Man. They may even resolve, like Comte, to have nothing to do with metaphysics and scoff at theology; but they come back to us. Scientific or unscientific—though Comte is not ranked among the former by Professor Huxley, nor wholly consigned to the latter by us,—all find unfailing interest in musing at length on our Beginning and our End. It is this ever-engrossing subject which gives all its importance to our Institute. But we do not approach it with the blank uncertainty which is unprovided with principles, or unready to affirm them. That distraction is not ours expressed in the earnest lines, descriptive of too many,— Our subject is ever the same.

> "What is our life?—a sense
> Of want and weariness:
> We are, and yet we know not whence;
> We stay not, we are hurrying hence;
> And whither?—who can guess?"

No, that is not the outset of the Christian philosophy; and we shall try to be explicit in explaining what it is.

We are precluded in this Institute, and very properly, from Theological disquisition or Religious conference strictly so called; though it is possible that a department of a special kind, limited to the criticism of fact, and some inquiries of scholarship, may become a necessity. But, without venturing on debatable grounds, we must aim at some exactness of treatment. Men of science and theologians must alike remember that if the relations of two subjects are to be compared, we must have a fair view of both. Without this there

will be mere bickering, not reasoning—a carping at details, but no apprehension of principles, no grasp of conclusions. There is a sort of wrangling which, being nearly aimless, is tiring, and becomes between opponents a poor sort of persecution, rivalling that in the stock story of Galileo and the pope, in which—though the pope has been unjustly treated—it is hard to say which side has been most unfair to the other; while the story is likely to remain for the use of speakers and lecturers of narrow historical resources.

III. We must indeed state our principles, if it were only to decline the statement or supposition of them by others. For it is obvious that many a flourish against Christianity is occasioned by an entire mistake of the ground we hold. Details, for instance, of some theological exposition are threatened at times, and then it is imagined that our religion is at stake. Let it be distinctly understood what it is we have to defend, and much trouble will be saved, as well as much irregular zeal. That which is distinctive of our position cannot, of course, be any subordinate doctrine or investigation; clearly it must be the principle which we hold as to the Origin of Being and Life. We cannot be too plain in asserting this, and marking openly the ground which we mean to defend as logically certain; and, therefore, to use a phrase of our day, "thinkable." We by no means decline the defence of what seem to be legitimate inferences from our principle, though we cannot regard them as equally certain with the principle itself; but, as to all expositions (beyond those deductions which are necessary), we have a right to claim the largest individual liberty.

Principles of the Christian philosophy must be stated.

And let no one suppose that we are "driven" into this position by the encroachments of antagonists. On the contrary, that which we are prepared to maintain on principle as the "Christian Philosophy" is all that we ought on any account to desire, whatever might be the wishes of enthusiasts on either side. If first principles are few, their consequences are not the less far-reaching. Nor do we, in marking these limits, vindicate for further exegesis any other kind of liberty than is conceded necessarily in the field of science. And before we advance a step further we must make good this claim—we say not to "private judgment," for that would be unsuitable in subjects where none could long afford to stand alone—but to an intellectual and religious freedom, bound to no *à priori* details.

And liberty vindicated.

IV. That such freedom belongs to the very life, for instance, of all science, cannot need a moment's proof; yet one or two illustrations may clear our meaning.

There is confessedly a need at present of a popular and accurate explanation of the theory and laws of Gravitation, affected as we know it is by so many causes. Are we unfaithful to the law of gravitation, if we point people, in connection with this first principle, to a book like Mr. Proctor's, *The Sun Ruler of the Planetary System*, for a statement of certain questions still awaiting solution? Are we to upbraid men of science if conclusions should be arrived at different from those to which they had accustomed us? Above all, ought we to try to prejudice the expected conclusions by appeals to old astronomical bigotry? Rather we should say, in proportion as we are sure of our principles, we hold ourselves free to meet all facts.

The same kind of liberty as in science.

Or, again; Questions will soon be raised in connection with the ensuing pair of transits of Venus in 1874 and 1882. Eight years have elapsed since the astronomers assured the public not only, as we knew, that Encke's observations and calculations had been imperfect, but that science had been very materially in error, in consequence, as to the mean distance of the earth from our central luminary, the sun. An error amounting to about four millions of miles, as Mr. Hind pointed out, could not imply changes of slight importance.

But other changes, beyond what are thus indicated are looked forward to. People, then, who had relied with implicit faith on the modern astronomy, having practical proof of it in the predictions of the almanacs—forgetting, however, that the old astronomers, from Thales downwards, had in their way foretold eclipses, and that certain lunar calculations are still made on the Ptolemaic hypothesis—are waiting for the revelations of the next transits of Venus.

Anticipated changes in science.

The position is this: we have been told that the reduction of our distance from the sun, as mathematically estimated, changes the circumference previously assigned to our orbit by twenty-six millions three hundred and sixty thousand miles; our mean hourly velocity being also less by sixty-five thousand four hundred and sixty miles than previously determined. We are assured that the diameter of the sun is really less by thirty-eight thousand miles than the books told us ten years since; and that the velocity of light is less by eight thousand miles *per second* than previous calculations had reckoned; and as the astronomers were trusted before, they must be now. The distances, velocities, and dimensions of the whole planetary system, when revised by them on this basis, must, however, await the further disturbances. We remember with

interest the early chapters of *Terre et Ciel*, and almost feel, with a kind of shock, that they must be considerably re-written. The ordinary manuals must, of course, one would think, pause for a while at the statement of Mr. Hind in the public papers, that the mean distance of Neptune, for instance, is less by one hundred and twenty-two millions of miles than the calculations of Adams and Le Verrier had supposed. Very few are prepared to take the whole subject into their own hands.

Changes in theological interpretations hold a parallel place.

V. It is fair to ask—Are astronomers disheartened by all this, as to the foundations of their science? Surely not. Yet it is to be feared, from some past experiences, that had any errors of like gravity been canvassed among us as to the interpretation of some passages in Genesis in connection with past geological ages, a loud chorus of very unworthy banter would have been heard.

Ours, at all events, is another feeling. We have referred to these things to show what we mean when we claim a free exposition of the details of our knowledge, even when they seem to be of widely extending import. To us, these grand and fearless examinations of nature and truth, in a word all honest explorations of fact, are subjects of both admiration and gratitude. We cannot look upon what prove to be sublime failures of earnest searchers into the laws of being, without a feeling akin to reverence.

Perhaps, however, the parallel which we are claiming may be disputed; though in general terms, and in suitable matter, the claim to liberty might be conceded, as indeed, it cannot be withheld. We may be told that we could not, as rational beings, decline the facts around us, or refuse to own mistakes respecting them when pointed out. The parallel then only holds good where real facts are dealt with. We are content with this. For there is a moral order of being (to which all Religion belongs), indirectly perceived perhaps, but powerful, active, real; and its abiding facts can no more be denied than those directly taught us by the senses. The irrational fancy of a former day that a religion, with a philosophy like ours, was all "invention of priestcraft," might be sufficiently answered by the words, "When?" "Where?" "How?"—as we shall see; but Mr. Herbert Spencer frankly bids unbelief to rely on no such flimsy plea. (*First Principles*, p. 14.)

There is a moral order of things, the whole of which demands examination.

We point then to great facts in that moral order, and primarily to a great tradition penetrating the moral life of man more widely and deeply than any other, and different in

kind from all else. That tradition, comprising with much besides a philosophy of our origin, is condensed in a Record which has a character peculiarly its own, challenging inquiry. This, we shall show, is a fact to be faced in the world of moral reality. It deals too with the question to which "nature" has nothing to say.

Position of the Bible, in the moral order.

For if by the study of nature we had even attained to a minute examination of all the facts of present existence, there would still be anterior questions, in which we are so interested that we are constantly and naturally turning to them. Science may call them "unknowable," but there is that within us which will not here be put off with any mere terminology; and we have here also a fact.

We can no more close our minds against facts of the moral than facts of the visible nature. We find too a correlation of human nature in its truest and noblest essence, and the great Tradition enshrined in that mysterious record, viz., the Bible. That Book, when you steadily look at it at all, is a *Fact*, far too venerable and surprising to be passed by without some attempt, at least, to give account of it. That it is often difficult, we fully grant; but so is nature: so is many a truth slowly and carefully spelt out. Nature we say is true; but we do not understand it all. The Bible we also say (for no reasonable alternative is shown) is true; though now we "understand but in part."

The Bible a fact to be examined.

VI. They who have but slightly examined the Bible need of course that we should give some reason why we claim for it this position. Their moral world seems to be their inner self compared with society. They have confronted it but little with this fact which comes from without; and they are sometimes apt, too, to look on those who recognize it as theorists only. They would not deny that a true theory is the *rationale* of certain facts, but they look not at our facts. Mr. Herbert Spencer complains in one place that some rest on the negation of other men's theories, without pointing to the realities which belong to their own. Well, then, we will ask men now to look to certain very broad facts, patent to every eye that is turned on them. And when we have made them look at the Bible as what it actually is, we will appeal to them, whether it betrays credulity in us to accept the only conceivable *rationale* of assured facts, uncontradicted by anything within our knowledge, and corresponding to our moral nature's ineradicable tendencies?

First, then, this Book, the earlier portions of which are older

The Pentateuch. than any other Book in the world, deals at once, as we have said, with that problem of our origin to which we turn so perpetually, notwithstanding our being baffled in every appeal elsewhere for its solution. How this most ancient volume has power to interest us, as it deals with our Beginning and our End, when later teachings on the same subject are valueless?—is an inquiry that at once arises. We look perhaps again, to be quite sure of its date; and there is no impeaching the fact that the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, and a widely-scattered nation of unwilling witnesses, carry back its antiquity to times immediately following the fall of Babylon; that is, some generations at least before Herodotus, "the father of history," had written his dim account of what he could gather of the past. Frame some idea, if possible, of the civilization of that era; look at its best relics, in some uncouth inscription of a stone dug up at Nineveh, or a Greek anecdote or two about Egypt. Then turn to the Pentateuch. Already you cannot help perceiving that this Book unaccountably exceeds all that existed in the world, all that has survived of its history, law, religion, and thought, down to the fifth century before Christ. But go on:—

The rest of the Scripture. VII. The Pentateuch is only the beginning of the volume before you. You do not find it, even at the date we first meet with it, unaccompanied by other documents. Psalms, Prophecies, and religious tractates of various name accompany it, full of incident and allusion, touching at a thousand points, physical, ethnological, social, and moral, the previous course of the world for many centuries. Still more urgently rises the inquiry, What will account for this book? No Zoroaster or Confucius will be equal to it. Prone as men are to assign to some intellectual chief everything ancient that surpasses average human capacity, the facts do not admit of it. It begins with its own account of the world's beginning; it selects its own line of events, keeping to it with a surprising unity that never diverges, and it reaches on and on to the future which it tells of; and all with a steadily advancing precision. How wonderful, could you see that book as Ptolemy saw, or could you get sight of it as when first the outer world gained a trace of it, in the possession of the old Babylonian captives two thousand four hundred years ago! Only then, perhaps, would any one fully feel at this time how entirely the Bible stands alone. But further:—

Its previous history. VIII. Can you trace its history back from that time through the millennium from Ezra to Moses? Search well, for this is the book the *rationale* of whose

existence you have to find. Others have sought it, but there is not even a theory that pretends to cover the case as yet. Criticism itself, for age after age, has stood poring on this mysterious fact—this mighty Bible,—if so be its literary *origines* could be explained,—and still in vain it muses, as if silently gazing on the granite of the everlasting hills.

The people in whose hands this volume is first found had been slaves four hundred years in very remote times, and made their escape in a body. One of themselves was their leader, who in the desert, to which he conducted them, began this Book, about seven hundred years before Homer and Hesiod. That people, in some way, have kept what their great lawgiver gave, and other writings which were gradually added to it; and at this time, after the lapse of more than three thousand years, they cherish the whole, under the most difficult circumstances. How it was originally written, by what means preserved, part by part, through the ages between the dynasty of the Pharaohs and the reign of Cyrus the Persian, they really know not. There it is in the hands of that isolated people (of whom, indeed, it gives no flattering account), and its reception is by no means limited to them.

For that Book has influenced the hearts and minds of untold millions of men, and of various nations, for ages, by its own inherent power. Not in the sense in which all the past may be said to tell on the present; not in the sense in which old civilizations reappear in the new, by transitions and associations. No, it entirely holds its own, as absolutely as a kind of outer conscience for man. It changes not. As representing an old civilization, it would only be a witness of what is past. It is by its truths, both explicit and implicit, that it lives now. "Greater nations and mightier" had philosophies, literature, and gods; and their story has passed into archæology, and their science scarcely excites the curious; while the Psalms and Prophets of the people "trodden down of the Gentiles" have power to stir deeply the inmost conscience of man, and to kindle in thoughtful hearts anxieties altogether different from everything that ancient times have transmitted.

Its present influence.

We who affirm the only possible explanation of this Fact—viz., that it transcends merely literary scrutiny, and stands by its own felt TRUTH, ask all opposers for their *rationale*—some account of it, which they are prepared to try as a theory—while we shall look on, with a sense of the solemn and inexorable triumph of Fact.

IX. This "Bible made for man," of human materials and earthly form, but with more than human and earthly power,

upholds its influence over the actual present, and over our hopes of the future; an influence which it is quite useless to ignore. If men will refuse to trace in this Record the strata of a moral world long since departed, they must, at least, see the quick reality which is ever on the surface, and may compare it with the enigmas exhumed at Nineveh or Thebes, or with the morally useless dust of India. For here, whatever men's opinion pretend to be, is the basis of the best present civilization and progress of our race; and here, too, some find an unfailing source of the deathless hopes, to which our purest nature will ever aspire. We know, indeed, that this Book has a teaching which strangely lights up all other knowledge; it quickens with some meaning the perishing religions and histories of elder times, and gilds even the dead mythologies of the world with some reflected rays. We know that it gives marvellous direction to us in exploring the most difficult problems of human nature now, and therefore is studied with profound interest by the best and the wisest in their best and wisest hours: but far more than this, amidst the moral toils of this weary time, in countless spheres of purest duty, this Bible is a fountain of daily refreshment and unfailing solace to man, a very river of water of life.

It is a power.

Surely they who impute to us too easy a faith in its TRUTH, when we assert it as the only *rationale* of its existence, might more justly acknowledge our forbearance, while we endure at times the insufferable manners of those who will not study this unexplained fact, who do not even read, except in the poorest way and with sidelong carelessness, "that most august handwriting traced for us along the wall of the ages,"*—characters which shall yet surprise the unthinking world.

X. It is now time that from this brief outline of fact, we proceed to formulate the Principle, and its corollaries, which we defend as "the Christian Philosophy," learned from this sacred volume, leaving minor questions for the *exegesis* of the future.

The first truths of the Christian philosophy thus founded.

(1.) The eternity of the world, or its self-origination in any way, is inconceivable, and, as Mr. Herbert Spencer admits, involves a contradiction. (*First Principles*, p. 30.) Nature contains no intimation of self-creating power. On the other hand, Nature teaches us a principle of causation *suggesting*, at least, the idea of creation by external agency,

* See the *Bible and its Interpreters*, pp. 112 to 119, &c., for the fuller illustration of the mysterious and indeed supernatural history and influence of the Divine Word.

since something has always existed. This cannot involve a contradiction, unless two distinct opposites can both be "unthinkable" *eâdem materiâ*, which can only be here supposed by imagining that Nature itself suggests a contradiction, which is an idea wholly "unthinkable." They who have affirmed it, must be at fault in their ontology. The Bible then opens with this:—"In the beginning GOD *made* the heavens and the earth." The existing facts of the world, and our interest in them and their origin, are assumed, and God, the Creator, is pronounced. No definitions, no axioms, no arguments introduce this revelation. Here is Super-naturalism; and it must be frankly asserted on the one side, and denied on the other, by those who differ; else they are not dealing fairly with each other.

This cannot be thought a mere opinion, or the isolated utterance of a debatable passage introducing the sacred volume; for it entirely pervades the Bible. It is so interwoven with its majestic monotheism throughout, that to deny God to be the Creator of all things, is to deny the foundation of the Christian Philosophy. And not only is there nothing whatever in nature or reason opposed to it, but its harmonious acceptance by our moral agency, and congruity with its needs, will give a direct answer to certain paralogisms as to *à priori* truths which are directed against it. There is a fine sentence of a writer already quoted which well completes all that we could wish to express as to our convictions here,—a sentence which may almost stand for a philosophical definition of Faith itself—"Besides that definite consciousness of which logic formulates the laws, there is also an indefinite consciousness which cannot be formulated,"*—and we have it here.

XI. (2.) Of course no other principle stands precisely on the same ground as this, but there are some which are scarcely less vital to the Christian position. We find that this Divine Creative Act proceeded gradually, and included in its series not only phenomenal and structural being, but forces or powers "invisible" save in their acts; so that while it is distinctive of some created beings to remain inert, it is an endowment of other beings to be, according to their nature, active, and that probably in countless ways; for this "life" is undefined. We have the dry ground on the one hand, and the "moving thing that hath *life* on the other." It is represented to us, that this production and arrangement of our world and its present occupants proceeded, out of previous "darkness" and "confusion," on to unconscious being set in a certain

* *First Principles*, p. 88.

order; and then onwards to the highest forms of conscious being at last. As to the manner and duration of these processes directed by the "Maker of all things visible and invisible," much may remain for exegesis; but the principle of Gradual Progress onward to the present fixed Order of things seems unequivocal.

The reasons *why* The Creative Power thus showed itself, not as one momentary forthgoing, but step by step, leaving traces in the past of all the marvellous advancements, each depending on the supernatural (though some modally differ from others even in this), we have not here to inquire. Divine and moral reasons of it are abundant in the Christian Philosophy.

XII. (3.) But in this Order of things, when finally reached, we recognize the indwelling Activity of some creatures, as an endowment distinct from the visible structure. It is called "life"; and here we are told of "movement" as a primitive sign of "life"—the word being used *generically*. Then next, this generic term is made specific in such phrases as, "the living thing that hath seed *within itself*;" and acting "after *kind*"; showing a localization of life, and *difference* of *its* kinds.

Whether this created life was at first latent, whether its earliest activity was uniform and mechanical, whether perpetual or intermittent, or liable to obstructions, and so on; are subjects of legitimate inquiry. We are bound to this only,—that both lifeless things, and things that have "life" in every "kind," and the special endowments of each, are equally creatures of God; their origin is Supernatural.—Some developments of this principle we may glance at by-and-by.

XIII. (4.) But there is one further principle which seems unquestionably taught in the sacred Scriptures, and, indeed, it prevails throughout: viz., that among the many specific forms of life there is one, in the *Kosmos*, which dominates the inferior; and has the requirement laid on it by the Creator, that in some things it *ought* to dominate. In whatever degree the highest being created here, viz. Man, resembles in visible character the inferior creatures, yet a life breathed into him by the Creator was distinctly his own. He has the "image," the "likeness" of God; is made a "little lower than the angels." He has cognizance of "Good" *as* good, and personal consciousness, which can compare with his own thoughts the matters which are presented. Man can choose, in a sense peculiarly his own.

Here also, however, lie questions on which inquiry must be free, and others where it cannot be so. This conscious being, man, has power to investigate and judge; that is, he is a thinking being. That

A prior being is a fact implied in the phenomenal.

interior judgment, which is the very condition on which any investigation must proceed, is a preceding reality, which by no means depends on our understanding it: our *à priori* self, our permanent being, may be hidden; but is *a fact* to begin with. Our earliest thought assumes it. It is anterior to the phenomenal by the very nature of the case; and its being is not merely relative, for it exists prior to relation. And hence we must refuse the philosophy of the "Relativity of all knowledge," and the philosophy of "the Regulative"; for it is a contradiction of all metaphysics, a basing of the moral world upon nothing, if not also a superseding of the real by the phenomenal.

We have been most explicit, we trust, in stating these four principles of the Christian Philosophy — the Supernatural beginning, the Gradual process, the created Varieties of creatures and of life, and the original Supremacy of man over creatures, all good in their kind—man, as a distinct moral being nearest to the Divine; as it is elsewhere expressed, "God made man upright," though he has "sought out many inventions." We are not aware of any ideas of reason, or any facts in nature which even seem to contradict these principles.

What exception is taken to our four principles.

XIV. The point where we suppose exception will be at present taken lies scarcely in the first of our propositions; for the material beginnings of the universe are almost left by our popular teachers for metaphysics to settle. The antagonism begins at the next statement, and there is a demurring to the representation we make that life itself is a definite creature of God, *i.e.*, a being (or multitude of beings) called into existence by a Power above and beyond nature. Our position, of course, implies that where life is not, it is never known to arise from any combinations of other, that is lifeless, beings; and we believe that science confessedly is with us, and so confirms the Christian Philosophy as to leave it not only unassailable on its own ground, but unassailed on any other.

First, as to the beginning of life.

There is, indeed, a sort of persistency in the hope and the hint (which the credulous and ignorant willingly take for fact) that science can trace life to a natural origin, that it seems right to repeat what the first among our men of science, Sir Charles Lyell, Professor Huxley, and others, fully acknowledge thus far on this subject. Their primary statements are such as the following:—

In carbon, in hydrogen, in oxygen, and nitrogen, there is no life. Then, the compounds, carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, are lifeless; that is to say, the union of carbon and

oxygen in the first, or of hydrogen and oxygen in the next, or of hydrogen and nitrogen in the last, will not yield life. As to the imponderable bodies, light, heat, electricity, even if ultimately found to have life in them, they would not *be* life so far as we can now judge; or if they were, or any of them, to be identified with life, they would, in the Christian philosophy, still be creatures of God, taking their origin from beyond visible nature.

Or again—Supposing that protoplasm, as Professor Huxley describes it, simple or nucleated, proved to be the formal basis of life, still, for all that, it is not life. "Clay in the hands of the potter" it still remains, and the life eludes analysis. Take hydrogen and oxygen in certain proportions, pass an electric spark through them, and they become water; the water is of the same weight as those two gaseous bodies, and yet is found to differ from them. Hydrogen and oxygen at freezing-point would not cohere, but quite the reverse; water coheres into ice. Professor Huxley, with the plainness which is becoming, admits, of course, that there is something more than the ascertained constituents,—there is a "modus operandi" of the electric spark which no one understands.

And if this mystery is confessed as to life, even in its simplest, or, as we expressed it, generic form, still more must we expect it in the more specific creations of life, each of which would appear to have its *proprium*. Even conceding, as we freely may, all that is said of a similarity of "visible character" in species very widely different—if we take, as Mr. Darwin does, the physical embryo of the canine and the human body as an illustration of this, it leaves the question of the hidden "life," in each case, just where it was, and even enhances our conception of the power of specific life in directing the development according to the intention of Him who "quickeneth whom He will," and *as* He will. The less the difference discerned in the "visible character" the greater the difference, and the greater the specific power, of the invisible life in each case.

Exception as to species of life.

XV. Thus much, then, as to the origin of life and the exception taken to the Christian Philosophy, that it is a Creation.

As to the Varieties of species, though we are bound to no particular theories, all present knowledge corresponds with the ordinary belief that classes are not only very numerous, but very distinct, even when analogous and below the rank of man. Very often, indeed, they may be difficult to define, or at times seem to lap over, and at times to simulate each other. But the fact is that they all, as a rule, keep ultimately to their own

grooves. Whatever may be imagined or desired by some, we must not be guided by imaginations and desires. The *facts* do not inform us of a genealogical tree of physical life throughout; they rather suggest to us parallels of very distinct vitalities, sometimes influencing, but not passing into, each other, much less forming a chain. The spaces between are such as the discernment of real science feels to forbid at present any such speculation.—But of this also we shall speak further as we advance.

There are other exceptions, doubtless, to the common Christian belief as to the first ordering of our world; but they ought not here to detain us, because they are not on points of principle, and are open to fair debate among us all. As, for instance, questions concerning "the separation of the light from the darkness," and the elemental arrangements, as shown to the seer on Horeb, "evening and morning," day after day. But we must pause a moment on one topic, viz., the alleged "Antiquity of man," because it bears on Christian doctrine very usually received. The inquiry which here concerns us simply is, what is the doctrine which the Christian Philosophy has to defend in this respect?

XVI. Supposing—so it is put—the induction of facts led men of science hereafter not merely to the guess, but to the reasonable conviction, that improvable human nature of a lower type than any now known had existed at a very far remoter date than could be reconcilable with any version of the Bible chronology, what is our position as Christians accepting the Sacred Book as true?

Exception as to the antiquity of man.

Our answer is a very direct one. There are, as every one knows, two representations in the Bible of the Creation of man; one in the first chapter of Genesis (vv. 26—30), and one in the second (vv. 7, 8, 15—25). Every one, too, is aware that these two passages had been found of difficult interpretation long before people had any idea of scientific speculation as to the "antiquity of man." What we have to say, then, is not consequent on any pressure of opponents; nor do we say at all for ourselves. But every one ought to know that in interpreting these two passages (which, it has been thought, may afford elucidation of the position of this difficult subject), much latitude has always been allowed, both among Jews and Christians. We are precluded in this place from exegesis; but historical facts are not forbidden, we trust, anywhere.

XVII. Three different opinions are mentioned in the Ordinary Gloss, as held among the Rabbins; and there are certainly several more. "Both Jews and Christians," says Warburton,* concur in this, "that Eve was not created

Differences of opinion here.

* *Div. Leg.*, B. ix. p. 51.

till Adam was put in possession of the garden of Eden"; and he refers to Le Clerc and Hooker, while he refutes this doctrine in favour of one of his own. He considers the representation in the second chapter to be intended to separate man, even his creation, from all other beings, and to take him, if we may so say, (at least in that civilized state in which we find him in Paradise), out of the ranks of inferior beings: and St. Augustine says the same. Warburton affirms that we may gather also from the Bible representation, as a whole, that human beings were not, immediately on their creation, put into Paradise, but had a state and condition on earth preceding, what he and the Fathers generally term, "that Supernatural establishment."—We are bound to no such expositions, and by no means acquiesce in them; neither is it easy to adopt St. Augustine's words as to the first state of human creation when he says, in the Gloss, "quamvis mulier nondum esset à viro divisa, sed materialiter præseminata." (But see *Peyreyrius*, in the same sense, who wrote in 1655. See also Möhler's *Symbolik*; and Bellarmine, there referred to.)

The conclusion, then, to which as Christians we are bound, forecloses no inquiries as to the human state *previous* to that time when our first parent was placed by God in a cultivated home. That state, whatever it be thought,—which Warburton describes as "not only prior to but different from his state in Paradise,"—may not hinder our faith in the teachings of Scripture as to our descent from "man, the image and glory of God," placed by His favour in a home of noble existence from which by transgression he fell. Supposing certain claims to extraordinary, yet human-looking, antiquity to be made good, they could but reach his "visible character," not his Divinely breathed "Life." But there really are no signs,—no traces found of a creature of our entire outward form, even in the newest tertiary beds (except those nearest to our present surface). Not that any such creature even then would be, necessarily, what *we* are. The great assertion of Genesis remains yet unshaken, that *our* first parent was placed by his Creator in Eden, with mental, moral, and physical powers amply developed—able at once not only to move and breathe, to sleep and wake, but to work, and think, and speak, and know.

The opponents of our principles are to hear our exceptions also.

XVIII. Such, then, are the Principles of the Christian Philosophy, briefly stated, and vindicated against exceptions which might *primâ facie* seem to lie against them. But we do not intend to have them sheltered from the strictest examination of reason, or spared from comparison with all the facts of nature,

which, however far they exceed, we steadily repeat they never contradict. Neither shall we consent that those theorists who, in the name of science, affect to deny the philosophy of our Origin, shall themselves be unexamined. The newly formulated scheme of Lamarck and others, put forth with so much skill and attractiveness of style by Mr. Darwin, must submit to be questioned as closely as the rejectors of super-naturalism would question ours. We deny that their scheme is reason; we deny that it is science.

We first would ask distinctly what it *means?*—for though there are some passages fearfully plain indeed in Mr. Darwin's last book, there is so much of hint, guess, and pretension pervading it, that its drift is generally slightly veiled. If the book were all as outspoken as a few passages are, the reader would not be unawares influenced towards a conclusion hostile to his whole faith as a believer in the Scriptures. He would pause, and make his choice, and not allow himself to treat as innocent or generally useful a work which to the mass of readers must be misleading, even when to others instructive and amusing.

We have a right to know, for instance, whether the "evolution" and "natural selection" spoken of, would be meant to deny a Supreme Cause of all, Who is above and beyond all? If this be not the meaning, what is Mr. Darwin's philosophy? Would he by these terms persuade us of an eternal cycle of ever-revolving being, proceeding from nearly nothing, up to the highest moral and intellectual life, and back again to nothing? His own instructor apparently, in some things, whom he not unjustly calls "our great philosopher," would not support him here. Mr. Herbert Spencer has exposed, as thoroughly as a careful thinker could possibly do it, the tendency of both philosophers and men of science to mistake analysis for synthesis. He, at least, is not guilty of ignoring the problem of pre-phenomenal being, and would be the first to rebuke the shallow fancy that to accumulate facts, and hint about them eloquently, is philosophy.

XIX. It may be useful, as we too must select, to dwell more fully perhaps on Mr. Darwin's hypotheses than on some others at the present moment, as they have a popularity among an extensive class of readers. It is well to show, at all events, that so far as this able naturalist attempts a history of our Origin and Descent he fails. Let us, then, hear the great writer to whom he sometimes appeals.

Mr. Darwin's appeal to "reason" examined.

"An entire history of anything" (says Mr. Herbert Spencer) "must include its appearance out of the imperceptible, and its disappearance into the

imperceptible. Be it a single object, or the whole universe, any account which begins with it in a concrete form, or leaves off in a concrete form, is incomplete; since there remains an era of its knowable existence undescribed and unexplained. Admitting, or rather asserting that knowledge is limited to the phenomenal, we have, by implication, asserted that the sphere of knowledge is co-extensive with the phenomenal—co-extensive with all modes of the unknowable that can affect consciousness. Hence, wherever we find being so conditioned as to act on our senses, there arise the questions —how it came to be thus conditioned? and how will it cease to be thus conditioned?" (*First Principles*, p. 278.)

Extracts in proof of our position, as philosophical.

Again:—"We cannot take even a first step without making assumptions; and the only course is to proceed with them as provisional until they are proved true by the congruity of all the results reached" (p. 552).

Again:—The philosopher, "being fully convinced that whatever nomenclature is used, the ultimate mystery must remain the same, he will be as ready to formulate all phenomena in terms of matter, motion, and force as in any other terms; and will rather anticipate that only in a doctrine which recognizes the Unknown Cause, as co-extensive with all orders of phenomena, can there be a consistent Religion *or a consistent Philosophy*" (p. 557).

Again:—"If we admit there is something uncaused, there is no reason to admit a cause for anything."

Now we are far from wishing to imply that this careful writer thinks the "theory of creation by external agency an adequate one," or the idea of a self-existent Being "conceivable," but we point out that he shuts up himself and Mr. Darwin to the dilemma that without a Supreme cause antecedent to Phenomenal being, he has "no Philosophy."

"A change without cause," says Mr. Herbert Spencer, "is a thing of which no idea is possible:" and to our mind a philosopher who so speaks is not "far from the kingdom of God"; and we may be forgiven for adding that a revision of his Ontology (deeper and truer than in the quotation he gives) may ultimately lead him to see that the self-existence of the Supreme is not "unthinkable."*

* The Ontology of the schools, which is so often summarily dismissed by a tradition as to its uselessness, was really displaced by the impatience rather than the reason of the Renaissance and the Reformation. The same inquiries as to pre-phenomenal being which were then discarded by the religious world, are being vindicated now by reappearing in an avenging form among non-Christian thinkers. Whatever the defects of the great schoolmen, their Ontology will yet have to be examined, especially as it appears among the

XX. One other passage of Mr. Spencer's which we cannot forbear quoting, from its intrinsic value in relation to our subject:— A general defence of that position.

There is a "consideration which should not be overlooked—a consideration which students of science more especially need to have pointed out. Occupied as such are with established truths, and accustomed to regard things not already known as things to be hereafter discovered, they are liable to forget that information, however extensive it may become, can never satisfy inquiry. Positive knowledge does not and never can fill the whole region of possible thought. At the uttermost reach of discovery there arises, and must ever arise, the question—What lies beyond? . . . . Throughout all future time, as now, the human mind may occupy itself, not only with ascertained phenomena and their relations, but also with that unascertained something which phenomena and their relations imply. Hence, if knowledge cannot monopolize consciousness, if it must always continue possible for the mind to dwell on that which transcends knowledge, then there can never cease to be a place for something of the nature of Religion; since Religion under all forms is distinguished from everything else in this, that its subject-matter is that which passes the sphere of experience."

This may well suffice to dispose of the appeal of the mere Naturalist to reason. But we are by no means content to leave the subject where the hereditary unreason of a self-satisfied collector of details might be apt to intrench itself, viz., in the assumption that he is practical, and strong in his facts. The facts are also ours; they are common property, invaluable, though they may need a great deal of sifting. It may be convenient to opponents to forget that the Christian Philosophy asserts a complete plan or scheme of distribution in all nature, only that it claims to have also the clue to that which "lies beyond," and so is more, not less, complete than other philosophy. Not only by an appeal to reason, but to fact.

XXI. Creation, according to its very idea, in the Christian Philosophy, is a projection into finite being from Him who essentially is. Any other conception might easily become pantheistic, and so, involving a contradiction. Finite being, whether merely phenomenal, or also active, still stands, however, in some relation to the Supreme. Not that God is ever person- Some relation of the Supreme to the phenomenal must still continue,

Thomists. A translation of the *Contra Gentiles* of Aquinas, long partially prepared, and compared with the tracts *Contra Averroistas* and *de Potentiâ*, may yet appear as a contribution to the great work of Theistic defence, if the present writer should ever be at leisure to complete it. Meanwhile, it is right to point attention in this direction. (See the *Complutensian Questions* of the school of St. Thomas, on the Eight Books of Aristotle's *Physics*.)

ally interfering, to do all that is done in the Universe, for that would be a denial that He has really given to the phenomenal a law, or any fixed order: it would deny that life was an activity, and creation a reality truly accomplished and done. Yet, on the other hand, the sustaining of the created thing as created, and the "upholding of our soul in life," are implied in the creating act of the Supreme; since the contrary thought dispenses with the Supreme as soon as He has created; in which case He would not be Supreme. Thus, self-upholding is a contradiction, as great as self-originating; as any one will find who attempts to form the idea. Our business then should be to question the facts as they are presented to us, and mark the answer they give; especially those that concern "vitality."

in generic life,

The "Generic Life," which, according to our Philosophy, God has made and now upholds in its ever-acting energy, is shared, we fully admit, in certain ways, by the highest moral agent as well as by the lowest organic growth. But this is not the sum of our vital being, otherwise all would be alike. Plainly, however, a vitality which we inhale bodily is also in the field-flower which we gaze on. Our life of limb, and lung, and brain, is constantly kept up by our acquiring and assimilating that unseen generic reality which acts towards us on fixed laws, or (to speak more exactly) in the same ways.

and in specific.

But higher and stronger forms of life,—facts which are distinguished by the term "specific,"—Life which is not only active but volitional, and not only volitional but conscious, undoubtedly dominates, so as frequently to change the direction of generic life. The lower and wider life acts more blindly, though here there may be countless varieties. It may force its way at times by sheer activity, even where it is of no known use, as if abhorring a vacuum. It seems to be its nature to energize always, though arrested by specific agency not unfrequently, and by the *inertia* of phenomenal being at other times. So also inferior forms of more specific life may briefly exceed themselves; but have to fall back again when met by higher specific life. Their own tendency, indeed, seems to be, immediately they find a check, to recover their own form. Though no two individuals of a species may be entirely alike, yet in the whole groove of a certain kind of life the same type is ever ready to produce itself. In departures from that type there is no fecundity. Now, neither Professor Huxley nor Sir Charles Lyell will be suspected as unfair witnesses—indeed, they are appealed to, and would here agree, that no evidence has ever been produced that any group of

animals has by self-variation, or by selective breeding, given rise to another settled group of a higher and distinct kind.

XXII. It will be observed then that the Christian Philosophy rests on every known fact of the physical, as well as the moral life; and of this latter much more indeed ought to be said than our present address would allow. Mr. Darwin's estimate of facts.

Naturalists who know nothing of theology, and theologians who know nothing of nature, may not sympathize with our enthusiasm for both. But the subject is far too grave to be dealt with in any other than an earnest spirit. We should be culpable if we shut our eyes to the issues raised by such a popular work as *The Descent of Man*. How the writer can profess that he is "driven to his conclusions," it is painful to think. Facts being as they are, it seems to us, whatever it may be to others, as if nothing but eagerness to be rid of the thought of God could lead to such interpretations. To turn away from that thought,—is it not to blind the conscience?—but only "draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you."

We have frankly stated our own views and principles, and we will, with equal plainness, state Mr. Darwin's in his own words:—

"Man is descended from a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in its habits, and an inhabitant of the Old World. This creature, if its whole structure had been examined by a naturalist, would have been classed among the Quadrumana, as surely as would the common and still more ancient progenitor of the New and Old World monkeys. The Quadrumana, and all the higher mammals, are probably derived from an ancient marsupial (kangaroo) animal, and this through a long line of diversified forms, either from some reptile-like, or some amphibian-like creature; and this, again, from some fishlike animal. In the dim obscurity of the past, we can see that the early progenitor of all the Vertebrata must have been an aquatic animal, provided with branchiæ, with the two sexes united in the same individual, and with the most important organs of the body (such as the brain and heart) imperfectly developed. This animal seems to have been more like the larvæ of our existing Ascidians than any other known form."

Such is the result, such the conclusion to which Mr. Darwin says he is "driven." And he declares that "any longer to believe that man is the work of a separate creation" is to adopt the ignorant hypothesis of a "*savage*"! (*Descent of Man*, vol. ii. pp. 386, 389, 390.)

XXIII. As to the direct, not to say rough, antagonism to the Christian Philosophy here avowed, we apprehend there will be no question. Some persons might yet be curious to see traces of the progress which has "compelled" so dire a result.

Mr. Darwin's present work, it should be remembered, is one of a series. It is preceded by the *Origin of Species*, and is to be followed by the *Expression of Emotions* in animals; and facts of natural history are here placed in quasi-progressive order, to suggest what is termed the doctrine of "Evolution"; a doctrine, he owns, to which "many of the older and honoured chiefs in natural science are opposed in every form" (vol. i. p. 2); and who are exposed, therefore, to the suspicion (ii. 386) of being intellectual "savages."

Antagonism to Christianity in "Evolution of Man" as thus propounded.

The writer says that he *takes for granted*, as the indispensable basis of his doctrine, the "high antiquity of man." Some theologians (§ xiv.) have done the same; and we will only remark that "taking for granted," though allowable for a time, is not necessarily a sound argumentative process. It is singularly open, too, to the delusive influence of those inexhaustible *ignota sæcula*, the foregone ages, in which theorists find so secure a refuge from the pursuit of logicians. He then relies on a second assumption; viz., that every other species is *descended* from some pre-existing form. His method in venturing on this assumption is worthy of note.

Professor Huxley and Sir Charles Lyell are quoted for the statement that in the "*visible* character," *i.e.*, we suppose, the bodily conformation, "man differs less from the higher apes than those do from the lower members of the same order of primates." Taking this as a first premiss, the next should surely be that "the lower members of the same order of primates have been found to advance themselves into higher apes," and then the conclusion would be, "therefore, higher apes may be expected to advance themselves into the visible character (= bodily shape) of man"; a conclusion which, if reached, would leave all that is distinctive of our race—the conscious personality, the divine sense of all-commanding duty—as remote as ever. But Mr. Darwin has no minor premiss in his argument that will avail him. If he had it, if Professor Huxley and Sir Charles Lyell could assure him that they had specimens such as his argument needs, so that he could arrive at his desired conclusion that some higher visible organizations may permanently develop from the lower, still might the Christian Philosophy be long untouched, since we already know that "out of the ground" was every "beast of the field" (and we know not all

Illogical treatment of facts.

their shapes), and also every "fowl of the air," as well as man, —"the life," always acting according to the will of that Higher Power "by Whom and for Whom" they exist. At present, however, any such physical derivation, or even apparent evolution, as here suggested with so much haste, is in want of proof. One single fact of the self-advancement of a species into a higher order would have saved the speculation from the ignominious position in which it now stands—as a conclusion in search of its premisses.

XXIV. Let no followers of this theory flatter themselves then that we at all consider them as "reasoners" who are "going too far," misled by "the pride of intellect," and so on. It is just the reverse. We say to them, "Reason to the utmost of your power, (as St. Augustine did), none of your mere theories for us; facts and hard logic, if you please; keep to *it is*, and be a little less given to *it may be*, and you need not part company with us; we may be good friends even yet."

Mr. Darwin's terminology.

It must be observed that we have not complained of Mr. Darwin's terminology, though the terms "natural selection" and "evolution" are open to evident misapprehension. We only find fault with his aversion to sound reasoning. Abstract terms like "selection" and "evolution" are always liable, of course, to mislead, and no carefulness in adopting them will altogether obviate this. The best way of guarding ourselves against latent mischief in abstractions is to get into the habit of translating them sometimes, and seeing how they look and what they mean in the concrete. "Selection," perhaps, suggests too much as to a power of conscious choice; but if we said "tendency," it might (at times) cover the idea of "intention," and that would be little better. There is no use in disputing terms which are approximately best for the meaning. When it is said that Nature "selects," it is language familiar to us in other connections, as when we are told that the stomach rejects and "selects" food in certain conditions, and distributes its elements, implying thereby no volition, but life and law of another kind. We speak, without rebuke, of the "deterioration" of certain species under certain conditions of food, air, clothing, and general treatment; and in so speaking we assume the activity of natural powers, according to certain laws. So as to "evolution." All "growth" is a kind of evolution; and such Biblical phrases as "after his kind" and "seed within itself" concede the idea. Whether the evolution permanently escapes certain grooves and moves upwards, and to what extent, are simply questions of fact, to be ascertained on inquiry, like other alleged facts.

XXV. The facts at present assure us that multitudes of species lie close to each other in the visible order of Nature. Mr. Darwin however, *assumes* that there is derivation of the more perfect from the less perfect. —Now to the scientific logician this theory in any form is almost a self-contradiction, since a cause must needs be adequate to the effect. If the lower *generate* the higher, in what respect was it lower? It may have existed *among* the lower, but was potentially higher. And how its potentiality was acquired in the lower group of beings where it was found, would still lead to the unsolved question. It is, perhaps, always more conceivable that vitality from a higher rank may first cast its force beneath, and thence re-act in the upper direction. But where is the proof of either assumption? Anyhow a careful thinker will perceive that the passage of life upwards would imply a new and special element of power in the individual of a seeming lower class that led the ascent. So that, logically, the theory of "evolution from below" answers itself, and rather establishes the truth it sought to deny. The utmost that any evolutionist could say would be, that in a lower groove of being some individual appeared who, from some cause unexplained, *was* potentially higher than the rest, and proved it by rising to the higher sphere—a fact which confirms rather than opposes the original distinction of the grooves, the species themselves.

Mr. Darwin's theory a logical contradiction.

Perhaps, too, another part of this notion, viz., that the beings of a lower order, *i.e.* countless differing individuals, remain the same, till an abnormal individual of a higher power *somehow* appears, assumes more than philosophy recognizes at present; for we have no right to say that there would be no degeneration to a *lower* rank, even in the same species; experience rather points in that direction, perhaps, when all the facts come to be tabulated.

There is no doubt something imposing in the arrangement of his subject which Mr. Darwin adopts, and it may lead either the unsuspicious or willingly credulous reader to suppose a more exhaustive induction of facts than we find. Yet all his facts might be arranged, and his book as a set of naturalists' observations, be re-written entire, from the point of view of the Christian Philosophy. The chapter on Homological structure might have been reasonably enlarged with advantage. It might have been of use when afterwards the writer speaks of the liability to variation in certain occasional and rudimentary structures; and we should there also have been glad to read more of what Archbishop Sumner regards as a "tendency of

Facts do not become philosophy by any arrangement of them.

nature," within certain limits, "to run into and even perpetuate varieties of configuration, size, and colour"; or (in other cases) to drop varieties and descend to a lower character. And then, again, the art of producing some varieties is well known, and a statement of it would have been useful.

We wish from the naturalist all the facts we can obtain, to assist our knowledge. He may put them in what order he likes: it will make no difference to the facts—really such; but as to his "reasoning" upon them, after what we have seen, we must not concern ourselves. It is of the same kind throughout Mr. Darwin's books;—a simple putting of the *post hoc* for the *propter hoc;* though sometimes accompanied by suggestions which simply induce a smile.

One illustration may suffice as to this. His theory would seem generally to imply that some utility to the species would mark the "survival" in the higher of any peculiarities which had been possessed in the lower. In some of our inferior "progenitors" the faculty of hearing is found very much more acute than in ourselves, and is plainly connected with their power of erecting their ears to catch sound. Strictly speaking, it looks as if this physical advantage ought not to have been lost to us. Mr. Darwin, while "coveting" the erect ears, distinctly suggests in explanation of the untractable fact that we have them not, that possibly, "during a lengthened period" (that never-failing resource!) some of our "progenitors" moved their ears but little, and "thus gradually lost the power of moving them"!

XXVI. But we must not altogether omit the views given of mental and moral Evolution. We find Mr. Darwin begins his notions on the "Mental Structure" with these words: "*We have seen* in the last chapter that man bears in his bodily structure *clear traces of his descent* from some lower form." "We have seen"! This probably has not surprised Mr. Darwin's followers, dazzled by his skilful and valuable array of details. But we too "have seen," and have no need to say more of this. If, however, he supposes it to be the interest of any class of thinkers to dispute his anecdotes which follow,—as to the instincts of birds and animals,—he is surely deceiving himself. Far be it from any of us, scientific or not, as Sydney Smith expresses it, "to envy any of the lower creatures the fragments of wit and tatters of understanding with which they are so happily provided." It were not difficult to furnish Mr. Darwin some remarkable examples from the *Curiosities of Literature*, the *Golden Legend*, and the volumes of the Bollandists, to

Supposed evolution, instinct, and reason.

which he possibly has not referred, in which intelligence, and even higher faculties, are said to have been exhibited in the desert by both beasts and birds; and we might do this without exactly regarding the lower creatures as "blood relations." We need scarcely add that there is no pretended case of this lower instinct taking a permanently higher step.

Being ourselves, by constitution perhaps, obstinately rational, we have absolutely nothing more to say to Mr. Darwin's stories than that we are pleased to have them, and to reply once more to his conclusions, that they lack premisses.

A confusion of these terms.

A great deal of confusion has no doubt arisen in this branch of Mr. Darwin's work by the vague and purposeless distinction set up in the popular contrast of instinct and reason; as though there could possibly be a line drawn, assigning the one entirely to the lower, and the other to human creatures. No doubt terminology is a great boon to many, as it provides counters which pass current as thought. But no observer of nature will attempt by mere verbal distinctions of this kind, to deny in the higher species certain lower forms of life combined with their own, though they be variously distributed in the inferior ranks, and some of them the exclusive possession of an individual, or a class of being. Whatever "instincts" may be, their Origin has not been detected, nor their limits defined.

Origin of mind and conscience undiscovered by naturalists.

As to the Origination, or even the first development of mental power, it is the admission of all, that naturalists can give no account (vol. i. p. 36). Even the more advanced assertion of Mr. Darwin, that some complex instincts have arisen from natural selection among simpler instincts, is qualified by the truthful admission that they have arisen from some unknown cause (vol. ii. p. 38), and "independently of intelligence" (that is, we suppose, of their own intelligence). But, apparently, nothing whatever is gained by such distinctions of gifts among classes, towards a solution of the one great problem. The information is of interest to the observer of nature; and so also are all facts of a more than "visible character" accumulated in the creatures around us, and which ought not to be grudgingly recorded. It is important, surely, on many accounts, to treasure up illustrations of the powers of memory, attention, curiosity, and thought, in horses, dogs, and other creatures, as well as anger, love, fear, and other emotions (all as really "facts" as their eyesight and hearing). Perhaps the nearest point of approach to human intelligence in its lowest condition would be the faculty of imitation. Yet this, no less than other faculties, would show that mental and moral characteristics are so limited as

to be distinct from the human, with which they seem to correspond, and in some sense really do. We may compare them, and contrast them with our own; but we cannot identify them. We have heard of an elephant who, as his keeper said, would "bear malice like a Christian." But we may rather say, that the faithfulness of inferior creatures in the use of their faculties may seem to rebuke the unfaithful of a higher degree. "The ox knoweth his owner:—My people doth not know."

XXVII. And this leads us to refer to that highest distinction of our race—the moral; though we could first have wished, if the occasion allowed, to follow some naturalists into their admission of an "Unknown Cause," in order to show how little of the moral and personal they mean by it. Some certainly do not mean a Creating Power beyond Nature; much less a Moral Power; for the philosopher to whom, as we saw, Mr. Darwin refers at times, and who owns an unknown causation at present, regards the hypothesis of special creation as absolutely "unthinkable." He says distinctly (as Berkeley feared it would be said) that the creation of matter "implies the establishment of a relation in thought between something and nothing, a relation of which one term is absent—an impossible relation." But in this the philosopher scarcely has reflected, that the demanded relation of something to nothing is already implied in the idea of something, and *not less implied* by the contradiction than by the affirmation of Creation. But it is not fit here to continue this subject, as the metaphysics of origination, though so close to ethical truth, would need an analysis of Ontology, which may indeed be necessary hereafter, but is not possible now, when, as we have said, moral considerations claim attention.

Evolution in morals still less possible.

While admitting the moral distance of man from other creatures, as a fact, the theory which deduces man from the beast has in it a sensuality which cannot but tend to set him free from the highest morality and from the possibility of religion. Nor is this debasing tendency relieved, but rather increased, by attempts to combine as in one class the instincts of animals and the conscience in man. We are far from wishing, as we have said, to stint our admissions that in creatures beneath the rank of man, there is a rudimentary knowledge that some things *ought not* to be, and that some things *ought*. Let it be analyzed by all means. Yet none but triflers will talk to us of "bees," *e.g.*, as having feelings of "*sacred Duty*"! The generosity and affection of some animals, the faithfulness and bravery of others—(unselfishness we cannot say, for that could not be where there had

The idea is sensual.

been no possible consciousness of the idea of self),—are shadows of the higher things which the human mind can discern, but "not the very image of the things." There is that in man which recognizes what has no definition, and is incapable of analysis. For "Duty," as such, is altogether distinct from interest, it is above all desire, or affection, or utility. It is that which has our reverent homage as supremely right for ever. Yes, Duty is a law above us, as well as within us. It has an awfulness that we cannot outrage without being troubled, and yet a tenderness that reaches to the Divine, and calms and consoles the heart, like the thought of God.

The idea of duty is quite distinct.

We must be forgiven then if we speak out as plainly here as those on the other side; and confess that in the suggestion that this awful sense of Duty in the human soul is evolved gradually out of the emotional aptitudes of dogs and apes, there is a terrible profanity—a profanity to human nature itself, and a breaking faith with all the greatest facts of our being.

XXVIII. It will be seen that we have wholly passed over all the facts and speculations in Mr. Darwin's book as to "Sexual Selection," and its laws. This is not only because we sometimes recoil very deeply from the tone of this part—and it is the largest part—of Mr. Darwin's book, large enough for separate treatment deontologically; but also because our examination of the general drift of the whole excuses us from dwelling on all the subdivisions, when in principle all are alike. In this department of the subject (as in the rest) we are content to know that nothing in zoology, or physiology, confirms the supposition of species morally rising to higher species by selection; and we read with profound amazement, in connection with this subject, and when we consider its Moral aspect, the suggestion of a further improvement of our own race by ascertaining, "by an easy method, whether or not *consanguineous* marriages are injurious to man." We are not sure that we here understand Mr. Darwin; nor in another passage in the same page in which he says: "There should be open competition for all men; and the most able should not be prevented *by laws or customs* from succeeding best, and rearing the largest number of offspring" (ii. p. 403).

Sexual selection and its moral aspect.

We prefer then to conclude this part of our subject with a sentence of a kind which we better understand:—"A moral being is one who is capable of comparing his past and future actions and motives: of approving of some and disapproving of others: and the fact that man is the one being who with certainty can be thus designated, makes the greatest of all

distinctions between him and the lower animals": we will not weaken or neutralize this by following the passage to the end—to find in the "pointer dog" the rudiments of such conscience.

XXIX. The inquiry, no doubt, is a perfectly legitimate one, as to the *rationale* of the facts, both moral and physical, of a world in which no two beings are exactly alike, and in which, nevertheless, there is a graduated order probably of all beings, or a series of orders nearly touching each other, from the most rudimentary forms to the most complicated and perfect. If it had pleased the Author of all Being so to create life at the first, that it should have in it, by His Own endowment, a power so to unfold, no one could think it irreligious to affirm "evolution." (§ xiv.) And though there are no signs to be found of this power of life to exalt itself, the order and plan, the gradual arrangement and fitness, may still be recognized, being plain both in Nature and in Scripture. Our being, as said, "formed from the dust," our being "fashioned beneath in the earth," our "members," all the rudiments of our form, being described as made "secretly," told, and "numbered," by the Author of all Being, would suggest to us much of *process* in the first creative work; while the fact of growth further suggests the bestowal of *power* in some directions, reminding us that creation was not itself all inert, and that the later processes might, some of them at least, be gifted to advance without new interventions of Creative power. Why it pleased the Supreme Cause to create gradually, as He has said, rather than suddenly; why to create lower intelligences and higher—lower moral life and higher, may in some degree be ascertained perhaps by reverent inquiry hereafter; and the whole range of topics is worthy of that kind of approach which the Bible invites, and may be the subject which comes next before this generation—our part, that is, of the problem of the Origin and End of our world and ourselves.

The *rationale* of a graduation of being.

We have affirmed our Philosophy; we have defended our principles. But it is time we should pause.

XXX. The circle of enlarging knowledge presents to us other fields of inquiry, all connected ultimately with the same lofty realities. Into those fields the distinguished members of our Institute are not slow to enter. One who has lately been welcomed to our ranks has effectually strengthened us by his lectures against some sophistries of the time, which were listened to by crowds last year, and are supplemented by his frequent addresses in our Metropolitan

Conclusion.

cathedral. These will, in due course, we believe, be published. We would specify the almost new sciences of Comparative philology and mythology, which must certainly oblige careful examination, tending ultimately toward the same grand theme of vital human interest. We would ask the attention of some of our members to H. Ewald's new book on *The Historical Succession of the Semitic Languages*, and to Renan's *Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques*, in connection, *e.g.*, with the apparent statement of Scripture, that there was a time when "all the earth was of one language and one speech": because preposterous statements are made on this subject just now by the uninformed to the more uninformed. Great social questions are also stirring, and all will stand, of course, in some relation with the Christian Philosophy, which is really a "whole"—(as St. Irenæus says when speaking of the faith itself), and cannot be divided.

We begin our year with the consciousness that we have no light work before us; yet with thankfulness that we are permitted to join in vindicating that cause which is goodness and truth for ever. The example of the Prelate of this Christian diocese will not be lost on many who have hitherto stood aloof from us, not knowing that it is the "battle of the Lord against the mighty" which may at any moment have to be fought in this arena. All Englishmen, in a word, in these anxious days, who have any grasp of our Christian Philosophy, and love of our Christian ethics, and Christian laws, should be enrolled here. Great works of religious science and thought are waiting to be done, and who among us may not co-operate? None should fail us who own HIM, Who is the "Beginning and End, the First and Last," none who reverently feel in His presence, "all things come of Thee," or hear in the closing words of His Revelation the grand announcement of the Final Cause of all, "for THY pleasure they are, and were created."

The LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.—My lord, ladies, and gentlemen: The very great honour has been committed to me of proposing the fourth resolution, in which I think all present will most heartily concur—"That the best thanks of the members and associates"—and I am sure, I, for one, must add of the visitors, in their name, if any others be present besides myself,—"be presented to the Rev. Dr. Irons for the annual"—I almost thought I read admirable, as it is (Cheers)—"for the annual address now delivered." I am sure, my friends, that my mis-reading, if it was such, would be the only appropriate description of the address we have just heard. For two hours Dr. Irons has engaged the attention of this large and intelligent audience. His address has been truly exhaustive, efficient, philosophic, calm,

poised, temperate throughout—one of those addresses that no one here can have heard without wishing that a great many more had the same privilege as ourselves. Of course it would be simply unreasonable, and indeed in many points impertinent in me, to call any attention to the contents of that very admirable address ; but I may, perhaps, be permitted to say that the concluding portion will be profitably read by very many. There are surely some here—I am one—who are acquainted with the whole system of reasoning of which Dr. Irons has been so able an exponent ; there are others, however, who will profitably read his address, and I must venture to say that the latter part particularly struck me as containing observations and thoughts and arguments which might well be used against thinkers of that school of which Mr. Darwin is a very able representative. Dr. Irons has made us all feel that though such attacks may be made against religion as to baffle many of us who are inexperienced, yet, if we fall back on certain leading principles and thoughts, we shall always find ourselves on very sure and safe ground. The able Doctor has pointed out, that, of such thinkers, we need only ask two or three homely questions, one of which Dr. Irons only approached lightly, though on the other two he dwelt with great force ; and having had the advantage of speaking with many scientific men in this metropolis, I say that where the facts are very striking we do not deny them, but I ask, Whence came language ? How did this arboreal animal shape its hirsute jaws, through any number of ages you please, so as to adapt words to thoughts and suitable acts ? I am told by competent persons, that the explanation of Mr. Darwin is most unsatisfactory. Then, as regards moral instincts, our lecturer has done admirable service in demolishing the theory put forward by this school. We may very seriously and gravely ask, Can we account for the noblest part of our being—that consciousness of right and wrong, that mystery that places us in many respects higher than the very angels round the throne of God—can that be accounted for on Darwin's principles, arguments, and facts ? Then we come to another point which I, as a stranger, may perhaps be permitted professionally to allude to—shortly, but very distinctly : I mean the sense of religion. Is it possible for any one of us to try and account for the sense of religion coming into our hearts ? Exalt morality as much as you please, but between morality and religion there is, and ever must be, the widest possible—I had almost said an impassable—barrier. Look up to the heavens and think, "There is God, the Father of all, who loves His creatures." We know that we learnt that, in one sense, at our mother's knees ; but yet we derived it in a way that makes us feel we must have arrived at it ourselves, and for the truth of it we may appeal to the conscience of the wildest nations, who have their Great Spirit—the God and Father of all. I ask them, Whence came religion ? Whence did that supposed progenitor of our race get these ideas and thoughts ? How can we connect anything so vitalizing as religion with that fabled progenitor ? I believe that all such myths as those which Mr. Darwin has set up—I wish to speak very temperately—must fall completely to the ground. I have been tempted by the admirable paper which we have heard read to go far beyond what I intended when I rose ; but now

in conclusion, permit me to express, as a stranger, a single opinion. I came to your good honorary secretary to-day to ask a question which I now address to you all—How is it that you are not very much more popular? With the able selection of papers which I have read in the list that has been circulated among us, I cannot help asking how it is, when there are lecturers now occupying public attention in crowded halls in our metropolis—how is it that some of the many able lecturers of this metropolis are not found conducting or taking part in similar scenes? I seem to find myself answered; for I see it is stated as the fifth object of the VICTORIA INSTITUTE: "When subjects have been fully discussed, to make the results known by means of lectures of a more popular kind, to which ladies will be admissible, and to publish such lectures." Well, I cannot help thinking that many of us strangers would much more largely rally round this Institute, if it was not only a repertory for these admirable addresses and able lectures, but if some of the competent members of it took their places with some of our present lecturers, and spread abroad some of the many telling facts connected with our Christian religion and Christian evidences, to the hundreds and thousands that would listen to them. I throw out this thought, and I am sure I ought to apologize for it; but if any of your working council should think it worthy of a passing notice, it will not then have been spoken wholly without profit. For myself, let me say there are many prelates who, to speak the plain truth, would gladly be put in connection with such a society as this, and who would give every assistance they could. (Cheers.) We cannot give you our money—it is better to speak the plain truth—I should like to be a vice-patron, but it would cost sixty guineas; but if persons could be taken as a sort of assistants, with no rights and no privileges, and receiving no papers unless they paid for them, but at liberty to give papers to you if you thought them worthy of a hearing, I think the VICTORIA INSTITUTE might become even more popular than it is.* But I have sermonized for myself; and if I have perhaps been, as I sometimes am, a little impertinent, let us forget my impertinence, and thank heartily our able lecturer. (Cheers.)

Admiral HALSTEAD.—My lords, ladies, and gentlemen: I have had the honour of being called upon to second this resolution, and I feel very great pleasure in being so selected. I am a very old member of this Institute, and I have never heard Dr. Irons without deriving great benefit. I am not a contributor to the discussions or to the papers, but am very grateful for being a member, and for all that I hear in the Institute, and will venture to say that every member will join with me in expressing our gratitude to Dr. Irons for the beautiful and touching and truthful way in which he has described the feelings of us all on the death of our founder, the very dear friend of so many of us, and of myself not least among the number. (Cheers.)

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* Papers from such as may not be members or associates are admissible.—ED.

Dr. IRONS having testified his acknowledgments,

Rev. J. B. OWEN.—I have much pleasure in moving "That the thanks of this meeting be presented to the Earl of Shaftesbury for his occupancy of the chair on the present occasion." We have heard a great deal to-night about the formation and nucleation of facts and inferences; but we shall all agree on one point—that it would be a very difficult thing to formulate all the facts connected with the public services of our noble President. So long as his lordship continues to manifest the power and talent and fairness of thought which distinguish his orations in public, it will be difficult to get many people to believe that, after all, we are only descended from a jelly-fish. (Cheers.)

Mr. C. BROOKE.—I have much pleasure in seconding the motion.

The PRESIDENT.—My lord bishop, ladies, and gentlemen: Small thanks are due to me for my services this evening. The lecture we have heard to-night is one that I have derived much instruction from, and I have been delighted with the manner in which Dr. Irons has exposed the false philosophy of a book which I have had little time to study. But I confess that I am filled with astonishment and wonder how it is possible for any man whose mind is a treasury of thought and abstraction, to be so regardless of the great necessities of the human race surrounding him, as to devote a long life, day and night, to the simple and sole purpose of shutting us up to the startling conclusion that we are really descended from a monkey, and are in all probability returning to that state. Much of the power of such a man should have been devoted to the practical duties of life. If many of our abstract philosophers who are employed in this way, would address themselves to the pressing evils of the day, the great necessities of the seething populations of mankind would receive far more attention than they do at present. Let us have philosophy, and speculation, and high intellectual pursuits by all means; but there are high practical dominating duties to be performed also, and of these duties Christianity is one. There is this simple lesson of which Dr. Watts reminds us all—that we must give a good account of every day that we have passed. (Cheers.)

The Meeting then terminated.

NOTE.—The papers read and discussed at the last Meetings of the session (namely those held on the 5th and 19th of June, 1871), were inserted in Vol. V., because they completed, so far as it was possible, an important inquiry begun in a paper contained in that volume.