

THE MENACE OF DARWINISM

By WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

When the mainspring is broken a watch ceases to be useful as a timekeeper. A handsome case may make it still an ornament and the parts may have a market value, but it cannot serve the purpose of a watch. There is that in each human life that corresponds to the mainspring of a watch—that which is absolutely necessary if the life is to be what it should be, a real life and not a mere existence. That necessary thing is A BELIEF IN GOD. Religion is defined as the relation between God and man, and Tolstoy has described morality as the outward expression of this inward relationship.

If it be true, as I believe it is, that morality is dependent upon religion, then religion is not only the most practical thing in the world, but the first essential. Without religion, viz., a sense of dependence upon God and reverence for Him, one can play a part in both the physical and the intellectual world, but he cannot live up to the possibilities which God has placed within the reach of each human being.

A belief in God is fundamental; upon it rest the influences that control life.

First, the consciousness of God's presence in the life gives one a sense of responsibility to the Creator for every thought and word and deed.

Second, prayer rests upon a belief in God; communion with the Creator in the expression of gratitude and in pleas for guidance powerfully influences man.

Third, belief in a personal immortality rests upon faith in God; the inward restraint that one finds in a faith that looks forward to a future life, with its rewards and punishments, makes outward restraint less necessary. Man is weak enough in hours of temptation, even when he is fortified by the conviction that this life is but a small arc of an infinite circle; his power of resistance is greatly impaired if he accepts the doctrine that conscious existence terminates with death.

Fourth, the spirit of brotherhood rests on a belief in God. We trace our relationship to our fellowmen through the Creator, the Common Parent of us all.

Fifth, belief in the Bible depends upon a belief in God. Jehovah comes first; His word comes afterward. There can be no inspiration without a Heavenly Father to inspire.

Sixth, belief in God is also necessary to a belief in Christ; the Son could not have revealed the Father to man according to any atheistic theory. And so with all other Christian doctrines: they rest upon a belief in God.

If belief in God is necessary to the beliefs enumerated, then it follows logically that anything that weakens belief in God weakens man, and, to the extent that it impairs belief in God, reduces his power to measure up to his opportunities and responsibilities. If there is at work in the world today anything that tends to break this mainspring, it is the duty of the moral, as well as the Christian, world to combat this influence in every possible way.

I believe there is such a menace to fundamental morality. The hypothesis to which the name of Darwin has been given—the hypothesis that links man to the lower forms of life and makes him a lineal descendant of the brute—is obscuring God and weakening all the virtues that rest upon the religious tie between God and man. Passing over, for the present, all other phases of evolution and considering only that part of the system which robs man of the dignity conferred upon him by separate creation, when God breathed into him the breath of life, he became the first man, I venture to call attention to the demoralizing influence exerted by this doctrine.

If we accept the Bible as true we have no difficulty in determining the origin of man. In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God, after creating all other things, said "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God, created he him; male and female created he them."

But the materialist has always rejected the Bible account of Creation and, during the last half century, the Darwinian doctrine has been the means of shaking the faith of millions. It

is important that man should have a correct understanding of his line of descent. Huxley calls it the "question of questions" for mankind. He says: "The problem which underlies all others, and is more interesting than any other—is the ascertainment of the place which man occupies in nature and of his relation to the universe of things. Whence our race has come, what are the limits of our power over nature, and of nature's power over us, to what goal are we tending, are the problems which present themselves anew with undiminished interest to every man born in the world."

The materialists deny the existence of God and seek to explain man's presence upon the earth without a creative act. They go back from man to the animals, and from one form of life to another until they come to the first germ of life; there they divide into two schools, some believing that the first germ of life came from another planet, others holding that it was the result of spontaneous generation. One school answers the arguments advanced by the other and, as they cannot agree with each other, I am not compelled to agree with either.

If it were necessary to accept one of these theories I would prefer the first; for, if we can chase the germ of life off of this planet and out into space, we can guess the rest of the way and no one can contradict us. But, if we accept the doctrine of spontaneous generation, we will have to spend our time explaining why spontaneous generation ceased to act after the first germ of life was created. It is not necessary to pay much attention to any theory that boldly eliminates God; it does not deceive many. The mind revolts at the idea of spontaneous generation; in all the researches of the ages no scientist has found a single instance of life that was not begotten by life. The materialist has nothing but imagination to build upon; he cannot hope for company or encouragement.

But the Darwinian theory is more dangerous because more deceptive. It admits, or permits one to believe in, a God, but puts the creative act so far away that reverence for the Creator is likely to be lost.

Before commenting on the Darwinian hypothesis, let me refer you to the language of its author as it applies to man. Professor Darwin, on page 180 of his *Descent of Man* (Hurst & Company Edition 1874) says: "Our most ancient progenitors in the kingdom of the Vertebrata, at which we are able to obtain an obscure glance, apparently consisted of a group of marine animals, resembling the larvae of the existing Ascidians." Then he suggests a line of descent leading to the monkey.

It will be noted, first, that he begins the summary with the word "apparently," which the Standard Dictionary defines; "as judged by appearances, with passing upon its reality." His second sentence turns upon the word "probably," which is defined; "as far as the evidence shows, presumably, likely." His works are full of words indicating uncertainty. The phrase "we may well suppose," occurs over eight hundred times in his two principal works—(see *Herald & Presbyter*, Nov. 22nd, 1914). The eminent scientist is guessing.

After locating our gorilla and chimpanzee ancestors in Africa, he concludes that "it is useless to speculate on this subject." If the uselessness of speculation had occurred to him at the beginning of his investigation he might have escaped responsibility for shaking the faith of two generations by his guessing on the whole subject of biology.

Having given Darwin's conclusions as to man's ancestry, I shall quote him to prove that his theory is not only groundless, but absurd and harmful to society. It is groundless because there is not a single fact in the Universe that can be cited to prove that man is descended from the lower animals. Darwin does not use facts; he uses conclusions drawn from similarities. He builds upon presumptions, probabilities and inferences, and asks the acceptance of his hypothesis "notwithstanding the fact that connecting links have not hitherto been discovered" (page 162). He advances an hypothesis which, if true, would find support on every foot of the earth's surface, but which, as a matter of fact, finds support nowhere. There are myriads of living creatures about us, from insects too small to be seen with the naked eye to the largest mammals, and, yet, not one is in transition from one species to another. Every one is per-

fect. It is strange that slight similarities could make him ignore gigantic differences.

Probably nothing impresses Darwin more than the fact that at an early stage the foetus of a child cannot be distinguished from the foetus of an ape, but why should such a similarity in the beginning impress him more than the difference at birth and the immeasurable gulf between the two at forty? If science cannot detect a difference, KNOWN TO EXIST, between the foetus of an ape and the foetus of a child, science should admit its incapacity and not libel man. If the follower of Darwin will go back a little further he will find, as Drummond tells us, (see Price's "New Light on the Doctrines of Creation"), that science cannot detect any difference between the single cell of a child, an elephant, an eagle, a worm and a plant, and yet we are asked to substitute the inferences, the presumptions and the probabilities of science for the word of God.

Science has rendered invaluable service to society; her achievements are innumerable—and the hypotheses of scientists should be considered with an open mind. Their theories should be carefully examined and their arguments fairly weighed, but the scientist cannot compel acceptance of any argument he advances, except as, judged upon its merits, it is convincing. Man is infinitely more than science; science, as well as the Sabbath, was made for man. It must be remembered, also, that all sciences are not of equal importance. Tolstoy insists that the science of How to Live is more important than any other science, and is this not true? It is better to trust in the Rock of Ages than to know the age of the rocks; it is better for one to know that he is close to the Heavenly Father than to know how far the stars in the heavens are apart. And is it not just as important that the scientists who deal with matter should respect the scientists who deal with spiritual things, as that the latter should respect the former? If it be true, as Paul declares, that "the things that are seen are temporal" while "the things that are unseen are eternal," why should those who deal with temporal things think themselves superior to those who deal with the things that are eternal? Why should the Bible, which the centuries have not been able to shake, be discarded for scientific works that have to be revised and corrected every few years?

The two lines of work are parallel. There should be no conflict between the discoverers of REAL truths, because real truths do not conflict. Every truth harmonizes with every other truth, but why should an hypothesis, suggested by a scientist, be accepted as true until its truth is established? Science should be the last to make such a demand because science to be truly science is classified knowledge; it is the explanation of facts. Tested by this definition, Darwinism is not science at all; it is guesses strung together. There is more science in the twenty-fourth verse of the first chapter of Genesis (And God said, let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so.) than in all that Darwin wrote.

It is no light matter to impeach the veracity of the Scriptures in order to accept, not a truth—not even a theory, but a mere hypothesis. Professor Huxley says, "There is no fault to be found with Darwin's method, but it is another thing whether he has fulfilled all the conditions imposed by that method. Is it satisfactorily proved that species may be originated by selection? That none of the phenomena exhibited by the species are inconsistent with the origin of the species in this way?—If these questions can be answered in the affirmative, Mr. Darwin's view steps out of the ranks of hypothesis into that of theories; but so long as the evidence adduced falls short of enforcing that affirmative, so long, to our minds, the new doctrine must be content to remain among the former

NOTE.—Dr. Etheridge, Fossiliologist of the British Museum, says: "Nine-tenths of the talk of Evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation and wholly unsupported by facts. This museum is full of proofs of the utter falsity of their views."

Prof. Beale, of Kings College, London, says: "In support of all naturalistic conjectures concerning man's origin, there is not at this time a shadow of scientific evidence."

Prof. Fleischmann, of Erlangen, says: "The Darwinian theory has in the realms of Nature not a single fact to confirm it. It is not the result of scientific research, but purely the product of imagination."

Prof. Haeckel admitted in his old age that he stood practically alone and that "most modern investigators have come to the conclusion that the doctrine of evolution, and particularly Darwinism, is an error and cannot be maintained."—*Fundamentals*, Vol. 8, page 29.