

sible. Let the holders of public places see that they must hold themselves capable of fulfilling the duties of their offices in order to be elected, and not capable of stooping to the tricks and dodges so commonly resorted to by politicians of the present day.

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*IS COMPARATIVE PHILOLOGY A  
PHYSICAL OR A MORAL SCIENCE?*

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**T**HE ever widening domain of human knowledge has grown so replete with a wonderbearing store, that the liveliest intellect surely cannot want for satisfaction, and yet, the restless energy of thought, that will not be content with the triumphs of the past, but turns, like the daring pioneers from the fixed bounds of civilization, to wrest from the borderland its hitherto unknown wealth, penetrates ever deeper into the mysteries that altered our existence. While the material world, the physical life, the nature, origin, and destiny of man, have formed the theme of innumerable eloquent and spirited discussions, the medium by means of which all knowledge and ideas are spread abroad has but recently won attention to its claims upon the philosophical research of scholars. The science of language is one of the latest, if not the latest, born of the children of knowledge, and while yet in its infancy, is fostered by scholars whose claims to our respects are of no mean order; but, though all are agreed in ranking their protege among the sciences, they are divided on one point, which, if it affects not the value of the study, at least concerns the kind of consideration which it should receive: it is yet a debatable question whether comparative philology is entitled to be classed as a physical or a moral science.

Miller, advocating the former theory, claims, that originally language consisted of a number of roots, and says that all succeeding changes have been those of forms, and that no new root or radical

has ever been invented by later generations, as little as any single element has ever been added to the material world in which we live, and hence argues that language is an organic growth that unfolds its powers from within. If this be true, and the argument seems strong, must it not be admitted that language controls the mental development of races?—for its richness corresponds to the amount of intellectual activity that is manifested;—must it not be admitted, that thought never precedes speech, but follows always in the track of its unfolding; and that some of the grandest conceptions that awaken in the mind are due to the activity occasioned by the budding forth of new elements of speech, and not that they are themselves the predecessors and originators of the new words required for their expression? Does not this fact of the limited number of radicals rather argue, that the mind of man is constituted on such a plan, that it admits of a fixed range of primary conceptions, and that all subsequent knowledge, and ideas, are so related, and so combined from simple cognitions that they require for their expressions naught but combinations of radical elements of speech? and hence that the nature and extent of language are determined by the nature and requirements of the mind? All natural growths of which we are aware follow laws of order; but if language is an organic growth that unfolds its life by unalterable processes, then it would seem that the less conscious is man's instrumentality, the more nearly would language preserve its uniform and orderly aspect; and yet Miller informs us in regard to the children who are left alone in North Africa, that, from this infant Babel proceeds a dialect of a host of mongrel words and phrases, joined together without rule. Surely the wild blossom that grows by the wayside never presents that monstrous construction that belongs to the hybrid of the greenhouse. Those children who have nothing but the innate desire of communication, certainly do