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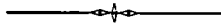
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wide diversity of opinion as to many details. We may in some cases come to take a broader view of things than that of the good men of earlier generations; we may refuse to judge those to whom Sunday gives the only chance of a sight of green fields and flowers and trees, which God made so fair. The contemplation, with the fullest enjoyment, yet with reverence, of the beauties of nature is in itself a worship, and our worship in God's house is quickened, not checked, by such innocent enjoyments.

Yet the Sunday "recreation" (often how falsely so called, if the true meaning of the word be regarded) is too often becoming one which entails heavy work, and needless work, on others, is an amusement which is in no sense a true rest, an amusement in which it is impossible to see at all how God is glorified. The bad example set by too many in high places cannot be too urgently deplored; it is mere selfish disregard of a God-given privilege; it is a practical denial of any Divine intention of a day of rest at all.

ROBERT SINKER.



ART. IV.—EVOLUTION AND THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD.

(*Professor Drummond's "Ascent of Man."*)

"WHICH was the son of Adam, which was the son of God." With this impressive declaration St. Luke at once concludes and crowns his genealogy. If the statement be regarded as a revelation with respect to the origin of man as a spiritual being, it settles finally and incontrovertibly the great doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God. No subsequent moral catastrophe, no doctrine of the "fall," however strongly conceived, can neutralize this fundamental fact, that every human being is descended from a Divine Parent, and that there is, therefore, a "vital spark of heavenly flame" in every human breast.

The attention called to this great fact has been one of the most remarkable theological features of the period, and there is no doubt that the general acceptance of the truth thus strongly witnessed to has borne fruit in a very widespread modification of view on other subjects. Particularly it has affected our eschatology. Thoughtful men of every school have learnt to feel sure that, whatever may be the true theory of future retribution, no theory can be true that ignores altogether this primary eternal relationship between God and man. Hence the doctrine of future punishment, whatever form it

may assume (whether "orthodox" or otherwise), is seldom now presented by intelligent Christians as it used to be during the earlier part of the century.

One would naturally expect to find this belief in the Divine Fatherhood exercising a very considerable influence on the attitude of Christian men towards the scientific theories and speculations of our day. No doubt it has done so, and perhaps will do so even more, when the bearings of these theories have been more fully recognised. But I confess that to my own mind the state of the case in this respect is not without its surprises. The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God has occupied in the teaching of the Broad Church school a place quite as prominent as was assigned to "justification by faith" in the Evangelical system, or to "Sacramental grace" by High Churchmen. One might have supposed, therefore, that those who represent that school would have been even unduly biased against any theory of the origin of our race that might seem inconsistent with this great central truth to which they have borne such forcible and eloquent witness.

As a matter of fact, however, be the explanation what it may, it is not in this quarter that any intellectual or moral resentment has been displayed against the evolutionary theory; and it is quite a common thing to meet with teachers of that school, who hold with equal strength of conviction the doctrine of our descent from God and the theory of our ascent from protoplasm; who regard man as an improved animal, while at the same time they invest him with an inherent and indefeasible immortality, and would scarcely admit that he is adequately described by Coleridge as

Sister spirit to the Seraphim.

It is a curious coincidence that the strong enunciation of the doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood by the leaders of the Broad Church party should have synchronized so closely with the propounding of the evolutionary theory; but I believe that I am right in saying that the most important works of F. D. Maurice and Frederick Robertson's "Sermons" appeared in the same decade that gave to the world Darwin's "Origin of Species." Within that period voices eloquent and influential in no ordinary degree bade us recognise the Divine element in man, and endeavour to waken in every human heart a proper sense of its native dignity; while yet another voice from a high priest of science, claiming to speak as the exponent and interpreter of the inmost secrets of nature, bade us recognise our exceeding lowly origin, and suggested, if it did not affirm, the conclusion, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return!"

Does it not seem passing strange that these two views of man did not almost at once come into fierce collision with each other, and that we should not have been called upon to make our choice between conclusions so mutually exclusive as to what man is? "You are a son of God, however degraded!" exclaims the one voice, representing the most advanced *theological* thought of the day. "You are an improved ape, however exalted!" exclaims the other voice, representing the most advanced *scientific* thought of the day. Can there be even a truce between these two positions? is it not to affirm the one to deny the other?

But for the strong views that Evangelical Christians usually entertain with regard to inspiration, it would have seemed much more possible for them to accept the new revelation of science. Believing strongly in the necessity of a spiritual regeneration, necessarily productive of very marked moral as well as spiritual results, it would not have been difficult for them on abstract grounds to conclude that probably the naturalist was right, and the new-fangled theology wrong. Even to this day there are many excellent Evangelicals who, because they rightly discern a higher sonship to which man may rise by faith in his risen Lord, wholly ignore and refuse to admit that primary relationship to which St. Paul in speaking to a heathen audience bears witness when he exclaims, "We are all His offspring!" Thirty-five years ago it was a rare thing to meet with anyone belonging to this school who would not have denied that any such relationship existed.

Such a position as this is at any rate capable of being reconciled with the theory of evolution, for the new birth which makes the man a child of God may not unreasonably be regarded as raising him above mere animalism, and as investing him with immortality; but if we are all from our very birth children of God, while our forefathers were anthropoid apes of arboreal habits, well may we ask when, where, how, and in whom was this Divine element first introduced into our nature? Yet, as a matter of fact, it is in the Evangelical school that the most determined hostility to the Darwinian theory has been exhibited.

I am not, however, writing either as the critic nor as the apologist of the Broad Churchmen of our day. Possibly they may believe that they have discovered some solution of the problem; or, indeed, if they are inconsistent in this matter, they can by no means claim a monopoly of inconsistency. We meet with it everywhere in the religious world, and often feel devoutly thankful for it, where we find men so much better than their systems. Nor is it my purpose to discuss either the great theme of the Divine Fatherhood, or the truth of "the

evolution theory." My object is to inquire whether these two views are mutually compatible. If they can be so regarded, it will be all the easier for a Christian to accept conclusions, which have commended themselves to, probably, a majority of the scientific men of the time; if, on the other hand, they cannot be reconciled, it will become necessary for each to endeavour to determine for himself which of the two the love of truth compels him to sacrifice.

A most fascinating book has recently appeared from the pen of one who is at once an earnest and spiritually-minded Christian man and an ardent evolutionist. Professor Drummond does not claim for his latest work that it offers any fresh information to the scientific specialist, or any instruction to the theologian. So far as it has a theological purpose, it would appear mainly to consist in an attempt to show that the evolutionary theory detracts neither from the glory of God nor from the dignity of man.

The first of these conclusions may surely be admitted without much hesitation. We need not pit creation against evolution, as if they represented two opposing theories of the origin of all things. We must cease to be Christians, and, indeed, to be theists, altogether, if we abandon the fundamental truth that God is the Creator, that "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." The conflict does not lie between a theory of creation and a theory of evolution, but (for the Christian, at any rate) between one theory of Creation and another. Whether God created all things by the slow and sure operation of natural forces, acting in accordance with fixed laws, or whether, by a directly personal intervention in the ordinary sequence of phenomena up to that time, He called into existence forms of being altogether new and self-complete from the first, that which has been produced, at any rate, is His work, in whatever way He may have seen fit to produce it.

When we pass to the second proposition, however, that there is nothing derogatory to the dignity of man in the theory of evolution, the case is different. I should perhaps be wrong in saying that Professor Drummond affirms in so many words that the dignity of man "moults no feather" owing to this account of his origin; but this, it may fairly be said, is implied in his treatment of his subject. Now, here everything must depend on the possibility of our being able to reconcile the theory with the Divine Fatherhood, for, failing this, it is hardly too much to say that Ichabod is inscribed on the front of humanity, "The glory is indeed departed."

Whether or no Professor Drummond himself believes in the Divine Fatherhood of man, I have no means of knowing; he

does not refer to the subject, nor does he drop any word to show that the difficulty has occurred to him. On the other hand, in a specially vigorous passage, he inveighs against the mental attitude of those who seem to find particular gratification in discovering "gaps" in the evolutionary chain which seem to call for the special intervention of Deity. "As if," he exclaims almost indignantly, "God lived in gaps!" . . . "If God is only to be left to the gaps of our knowledge, where shall we be when these gaps are filled up? And if they are never to be filled up, is God only to be found in the disorders of the world? . . . If God appears periodically, He disappears periodically; if He comes on the scene at special crises, He is absent from the scene in the intervals."

All this sounds forcible, but when we examine it closely do we not discover, under the brilliancy of epigrammatic phrase, an unconscious and doubtless unintentional *ignoratio elenchi*? The real point in dispute, between the sceptical scientist and the scientific believer, is this: Granted that God does work out His will by the operation of natural forces working according to fixed laws, does He or does He not reserve to Himself, and occasionally exercise the right of, direct personal intervention? If thoughtful Christian men are conscious of a certain feeling of gratification in discovering "gaps" in a process of evolution which science cannot span, and does not seem likely ever to be able to span, it is not because they do not discern the Divine element in the natural process, but because a direct supernatural intervention witnesses to the Divine Personality in a way that nothing else can.

There is surely a misapprehension here of the position that comes under our author's censure. If science draws a hard and fast line between the organic and the inorganic, and affirms that not-life can never under existing conditions produce life, the believer hails the conclusion, not as a proof that "God lives in gaps," but as an indication of His possessing those characteristics which we associate with the idea of personality. The laws of Nature proclaim the existence of Intelligence—a Divine interposition assures us that this Intelligence is Personal.

Whether or not this belief in a Divine intervention, however, is justified in other respects, clearly it must be an admitted necessity in that which we are now considering. Not less than this is contained in the idea of Fatherhood. When I affirm that God is the Father of man, I am stating something altogether different from the fact that God is the Maker of man. I may not be able to define with any approach to accuracy or completeness what I mean by the words, but I employ the words specially to convey the idea of a relation

subsisting between God and man distinct *in kind* from that which subsists between God and any being of which He is not Father, but only Creator. I imply that something Divine has in some mysterious way passed from God to me, and that I am, what I am not in virtue of a development, under the influence of a favourable environment of capacities originally inherent in me, or in my progenitors (at any rate potentially), but in virtue of some act, on the part of God, similar to, or at any rate analogous to, that which rendered me the child of an earthly parent.

The "anthropoid ape," from whom I am supposed to be descended, was no more a child of God than the gorilla or the chimpanzee, with whom he may have associated or contended; I stand beside him born into the world a child of the great Father. Here is indeed a "gap" where God must directly and personally interpose, or the thing cannot be. Did He thus interpose, or am I not His child?

Let this issue be kept well in view, clearly and sharply defined, if we are to be saved from endless confusion of thought and ambiguities of language. To begin with, the recognition of this will keep us from the mistake of supposing that this relationship can be established by any sort of moral process of development. The change that we are considering in the relations between the Creator and the creature is metaphysical, not moral; it is a change of being, not a mere improvement of character. Of course moral results may be expected to flow from it; but to confuse these with it is to fail to distinguish between effect and cause. Moral development is, of course, measured by degrees, but the filial relationship towards God admits of no degrees. It is impossible for one being to be partially a child of God, while another is a little more a child of God, and a third more than half a child of God, and so forth. To deny this is to turn the supposed relationship into a mere metaphor, and a metaphorical fatherhood is no fatherhood at all.

If this utterly untenable idea of a moral development of this relationship be excluded, as in all reason it must be, what is there left for the evolutionist, who does believe in the Divine Fatherhood, but to reply, "You must not credit us with attributing to evolution what obviously cannot belong to it. It can build up the body, it can even develop the mind, and perhaps it can bring about the formation of moral ideas and sentiments; but besides all this there is in man a spirit-nature which is different from everything earthly in kind, not in degree. Hence we believe it was imparted to the human race at some point in its evolution, and, as a communication from that God who is a Spirit, it constitutes man God's child."

But if he makes this answer (and I fail to see that, for such an one, any other answer is possible) we must first call attention to the fact that here we have an evolutionist not only proclaiming a "gap" and a Divine interposition to bridge it over, but practically resting the true dignity and spiritual capacity of the human race upon this "disorder," as, apparently, Mr. Drummond would call it. For once, at least, God has broken in upon the fixed order of the evolutionary process, and originated a new series of phenomena by a directly personal act.

But, further, this intervention has been of the most amazing and, I would almost say, inconceivable, character. Imagine the world to be already peopled with some millions of "missing-links" (a moderate estimate, considering that evolution demands the multiplication of individuals as one of its conditions!), of whom, oddly enough, no trace has been preserved to us. "In the fulness of times" one of these four things takes place: Either, first, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, all these, old and young, are the subjects of a metaphysical transformation, by virtue of which they all become possessed of a spirit nature, and are thus constituted sons of God; or, second, from a certain date all infants born into the world from these ambiguous parents are endowed from their birth with this spirit nature and its Divine affinities—and this process continues until all the existing race becomes human; or, third, at some particular point in the evolution of the race an election takes place, whether of a single couple or of a larger number of individuals, and these become, either in themselves or in their progeny, the sons of God; or, fourth, this election and adoption began at some definite date, and has been going on in what would seem a desultory fashion for ages. These four hypotheses seem to me practically to exhaust the possibilities of the case.

The first of them, as it is the most repulsive, so it would seem the least probable; yet it must be admitted that it is not open to certain objections, of which I shall have to speak in a moment, which seem to me fatal to the others. But does it not stand self-condemned? We are often told that Creation is unthinkable, but what shall be said of this? Surely the most crude and bald presentation of the narrative of Genesis would be distinctly less hard to be received. Let us picture to ourselves, if we can, this sudden transformation of "a wilderness of monkeys"—this elevation of some millions of savage beasts, half human, half simian—by a sudden and supernatural intervention of Divine power to an altogether higher plane of being; the sudden inrushing into their nature of new desires and aspirations; the sudden conscious-

ness of new capacities; the sudden enjoyment of new experiences; the sudden recognition of God without and of their own Divinely-begotten spirit within. No; the claim upon our imagination is too excessive; indeed there is something in it that repels our moral sense and seems to savour of irreverence and impiety. There is nothing here that seems to accord with what we know of the Divine method; it shocks all our spiritual sensibilities to attempt to conceive such a combination of the Divine with the brutal. We cannot accept it.

But if, feeling ourselves repelled by this, we fall back upon any one of the other three conceivable solutions of the problem, we stand face to face with this difficulty: How could the Divine seed be preserved distinct from the mere animals with whom they would naturally associate? If these were not so kept distinct, would the spirit element be indefinitely transmitted throughout a race of hybrids. For, in the natural course of events, the result of the adoption of such a method on the part of the Supreme Being would be that, just as there are in the world of to-day white races and black races, and also mulattoes and quadroons and octoroons; so in that embryonic world there would have been human beings, and "missing-links," and hybrids between these, some of whom might boast the half of human spirit while others would have to be content with the fiftieth part. To put the thing plainly, could a Divine parentage be claimed for a being who, by the ordinary reckonings of descent, was one part man as against one hundred parts "missing-link"? Furthermore, side by side with these human beings owning a Divine parentage there would be flourishing, according to the second and third hypotheses, a much larger population of beings identical in every other respect save the inward absence of this spiritual principle. How, then, could the one class be distinguished from the other; and, therefore, who can be sure to-day that he possesses any Divine element in his composition whatever?

The second hypothesis would not be open to this particular objection, for according to it, from a certain particular time, all new-born infants would by a Divine decree be the recipients of this spiritual endowment. It is exposed, however, to other objections hardly less fatal. It suggests a breach of continuity not less repulsive to the mind of an evolutionist than incredible, on other grounds, to the Christian. The elevation of a race in a single generation *per saltum*, is so unlike all that evolution has prepared us for that to accept such a theory is practically to abandon evolution.

Furthermore, if evolution teaches one thing more clearly than another, surely it is that the degrees of progress in any one species are by no means uniform the wide world over.

These must necessarily vary according to the influence of environment. It would follow, then, that although all previous existence of the nascent human species had been designed to prepare the recipient for this unique endowment, some individuals would be much better prepared than others. Is it to be supposed, then, that this supreme gift was thrust upon all these beings, whether morally and intellectually fitted to receive it or not at one and at the same period? If we cannot believe that this could have been wisely and consistently done, we are forced back upon our fourth hypothesis, with all the fatal objections to which I have shown that, in common with the second, it is exposed.

One last desperate resource remains for him who still clings to the doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood, while he feels himself warned off by inexorable logic from any one of the four hypotheses that I have mentioned. He may assume a direct supernatural intervention in each particular case, and affirm that descent has nothing to do with it. At every human birth, or even before it, he may assert that a fresh miracle occurs, and a Divine element is infused into the thing of clay that evolution has produced, even as Genesis represents a similar transmission of the Divine to have occurred in the case of Adam. Is it so, then, that there is a "gap" where the Divine comes in, not once in the history of a planet, but constantly, in the beginning of every human career. The Professor is great at embryology, and finds in the small process to which each individual owes his existence an analogue of that vast process to which the race is similarly indebted. But where is the analogue here? We begin by excluding the special Divine intervention in the story of the race, only that we may end by introducing a special Divine intervention into every human life. To such shifts are we driven by attempting to cling to two incompatible positions.

W. HAY M. H. AITKEN.

(To be continued.)

ART. V.—MEN'S SERVICES.¹

HOW many clergy have to ask the question, "Where are the great mass of the men of the parish?" In a parish of ten or twelve thousand population one enters a church on a Sunday evening and finds twenty to fifty men, and if the number

¹ A paper on "Men's Services," read at a meeting of the Home Clergy Union on December 3, 1894, at the Chapter House, the Archdeacon of London presiding.