

# **MAN IN THE LIGHT OF EVOLUTION**

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## PREFACE

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ALMOST fifty years ago Mr. Darwin published the "Origin of Species." His "Descent of Man" followed some years later. A host of books have since been written on evolution, Darwinism, and natural selection. But comparatively few zoölogists have attempted to show the bearing of the theory of evolution on man's history, progress, and life. They have generally left this problem to the sociologist and archæologist.

This need not surprise us. All problems of life are exceedingly complex. Nature is, or seems, very illogical. Why, then, attack the problem in its most difficult form in the highest and most complex living being until we have gained an approximate solution of the questions involved in the life of the lower and simpler? The zoölogist wisely hesitates before the difficulties of the attempt.

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his kingdom has injured the zoölogist in many ways. If man is the product of evolution, and all life belongs to one grand series, though with many branches, the lower and incomplete manifestation should be viewed in the light of man's structure and powers as well as the converse. Failure to recognize this truth has sometimes made our science one-sided and narrow.

Meanwhile many have discussed the evolution of family, society, morals, and religion who have not fully recognized the complexity of the problem. Some have looked at man entirely in the light of lower animals, almost as if he were a mere clam or worm, and have formed theories of human evolution adequate only to these lower forms. We have had many "gladiatorial theories" in spite of Professor Huxley's warning. Others, recognizing more clearly man's unique position, have practically discarded all laws of evolution applicable to lower forms. Some such writers have almost neglected the power of natural selection.

The great body of thinkers and workers have little interest or care for facts or theories of zoölogy which do not seem evidently related to human life. The anatomy of worms and the

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number and structure of chromosomes unfortunately does not appeal to them.

Hence many, seeing the diversity of theories of evolution, find little in any of them which is clear and sure and of practical importance. It is too academic for their tastes. Hence we hear of the inadequacy, decline, or failure of Darwinism, or even of evolution. Even when Darwinism is not denied, it is often not accepted with the cordiality and enthusiasm which it deserves. The "splendor of truth" has not been recognized as widely and clearly as it should be.

In presenting this brief study of "Man in the Light of Evolution" I am well aware of the difficulties and hazard of the attempt. Questions of great complexity must be handled in a few pages. Many very important theories must be neglected, if one would present the subject to those who have made little or no special study of zoölogy. And this attempt is made chiefly for the benefit of lay readers. The multitude of trees must not be allowed to hide the forest—to borrow a German proverb.

I have attempted to mark out a straight, if somewhat narrow, path through the forest, and one which leads to some of the most important

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viewpoints from which a wide outlook may be gained. I hope that some may be tempted to explore more widely by the aid of the brief bibliography at the end of the volume. The subject is surely worthy of our closest attention and thought.

I make no apology for emphasizing throughout the study the importance of the moral and religious powers, as well as of social and family life. These are the most marked and important human characters. To leave them in the background of any study of man is to present the play of "Hamlet" with *Hamlet* left out.

I have viewed animals and men more from the physiological than from the anatomical standpoint. Much is said of functions, powers, actions; less of organs and structure. I know neither the location nor structure of the organ of fellow-feeling or hate, of morals or religion, and of many other mental powers, provided they have a special center in the brain. A first or second association area even does not help a great deal here, though I would be the last to undervalue Professor Flechsig's great work. And yet we must talk of these powers.

One who does not believe in the inheritance of