

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF
EVOLUTION. (AN
ACTONIAN PRIZE ESSAY)**

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The Philosophy of Evolution. (An Actonian Prize Essay) by B. Thompson Lowne

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF EVOLUTION.

IN 1837, HANNAH ACTON of Euston Square, in memory of her late husband SAMUEL ACTON, invested one thousand pounds in order to carry out her husband's wish, that "The Royal Institution of Great Britain should be enabled to extend and diffuse useful knowledge," with the condition that a prize of one hundred guineas should be given every seven years for the best essay "illustrative of the Wisdom and Beneficence of the Almighty, in such department of science as the Committee of the Royal Institution should select," leaving it in the discretion of the same Committee to withhold the prize if no essay be presented entitling its author, in their opinion, to such a reward.

At the last septennial period the prize was withheld; and hence two prizes were offered for the two best essays presented in 1872. The present essay was one of those selected by the Committee at that time. The other successful essay was written by the Rev. George Henalow.

THE
PHILOSOPHY OF EVOLUTION.

(AN ACTONIAN PRIZE ESSAY.)

BY

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ALLEN FLAMMAN.



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PREFACE.

IN presenting the following pages to the public, the author wishes it to be understood that he does not expect to convert any to a belief in evolution. He addresses those who accept the doctrine in some form or other as established, although he has endeavoured, as concisely as possible, to present the reader with the reasons for accepting it. Those who remain unconvinced by the elaborate works of Darwin, Spencer, and others will probably not accept the views enunciated in these pages, which, however, it is hoped, will not be unacceptable to many who wish to reconcile the theory of evolution with the highest aims of human thought.

Neither does the writer of the present essay claim a place for it with the more solid works of original research quoted by him. The facts are, with few exceptions, widely known, and will be found in the works referred to. Many of the views are perhaps original, or

have not, at least, been published to the author's knowledge; and for these he alone is responsible. To some, the chapters on the mode of evolution of the higher forms will appear too hypothetical; but they are presented only as hypotheses, and the reader will be enabled to judge how far the facts referred to in corroboration of the views expressed justify them.

The author has endeavoured to give the theory of evolution from the point of view of a physiologist as well as of a naturalist. He has attempted (it is to be feared insufficiently) to acknowledge his obligations in a list of works referred to as well as in footnotes, but would not omit on the present occasion to thank those numerous friends who have for years aided him in the prosecution of his favourite studies. Acknowledgments are especially due to Sir James Paget, Mr. Savory, Dr. Hooker, and Professor Flower, for their past teaching and ever ready advice.

Colville Gardens, W.

May 12, 1873.

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