XXVII.—*On the Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man.* By Sir John Lubbock, Bart., F.R.S., Pres. Ent. Soc.

[*Read Nov. 26th*, 1867.]

Side by side with the different opinions whether man constitutes one, or many species, there are two opposite views as to the primitive condition of the first men, or first beings worthy to be so called.

Many writers have considered that man was at first a mere savage, and that our history has on the whole been a steady progress towards civilisation, though at times, and at some times for centuries, some races have been stationary, or even have retrograded. Other authors, of no less eminence, have taken a diametrically opposite view. According to them, man was, from the commencement, pretty much what he is at present; if possible, even more ignorant of the arts and sciences than now, but with mental qualities not inferior to our own. Savages they consider to be the degenerate descendants of far superior ancestors. Of the recent supporters of this theory, the late Archbishop of Dublin was amongst the most eminent.

In the present paper I propose briefly to examine the reasons which led Dr. Whately to this conclusion, and still more briefly to notice some of the facts which seem to me to render it untenable. Dr. Whately enunciates his opinions in the following words:*—

"That we have no reason to believe that any community ever did, or ever can emerge, unassisted by external helps, from a state of utter barbarism unto anything that can be called civilisation." "Man has not emerged from the savage state; the progress of any community in civilisation, by its own internal means, must always have begun from a condition removed from that of complete barbarism; out of which, it does not appear, that men ever did or can raise themselves."

One might at first feel disposed to answer, that fifty cases could be cited which altogether discredit this assertion; and without going beyond the limits of our own island, we might regard the history of England itself as a sufficient answer to such a statement. Archbishop Whately, however, was far too skilful a debater not to have foreseen such an argument. "The

* Whately, *Political Economy*, p. 68.

ancient Germans," he says, "who cultivated corn,—though their agriculture was probably in a very rude state,—who not only had numerous herds of cattle, but employed the labour of brutes, and even made use of cavalry in their wars, . . . these cannot with propriety be reckoned savages; or if they are to be so called (for it is not worth while to dispute about a word), then I would admit that, in this sense, men may advance, and in fact have advanced by their own unassisted efforts, from the savage to the civilised state." This limitation of the term "savage" to the very lowest representatives of the human race, no doubt, renders Dr. Whately's theory more tenable, by increasing the difficulty of bringing forward conclusive evidence against it. The archbishop, indeed, expresses himself throughout his argument as if it would be easy to produce the required evidence in opposition to his theory, supposing that any race of savages ever had raised themselves to a state of civilisation. The manner in which he has treated the case of the Mandans, —a tribe of North American Indians,—however, effectually disposes of this hypothesis. This unfortunate people is described as having been decidedly more civilised than those by which they were surrounded. Having, then, no neighbours more advanced than themselves, they were quoted as furnishing an instance of savages who had civilised themselves without external aid. In answer to this, Archbishop Whately asks,—

"1st. How do we know that these Mandans were of the same race as their neighbours?

"2ndly. How do we know that theirs is not the original level from which the other tribes have fallen?

"3rdly, and lastly. Supposing that the Mandans did emerge from the savage state, how do we know that this may not have been through the aid of some strangers coming among them, —like the Manco-Capac of Peru, from some more civilised country, perhaps, long before the days of Columbus?"

Supposing, however, for a moment, and for the sake of argument, that the Mandans, or any other race, were originally savages, and had civilised themselves, it would still be manifestly—from the very nature of the case—impossible to bring forward the kind of evidence demanded by Dr. Whately. No doubt he "may confidently affirm that we find no one *recorded* instance of a tribe of savages, properly so styled, rising into a civilised state without instruction and assistance from a people already civilised." Starting with the proviso that savages, properly so styled, are ignorant of letters, and laying it down as a condition that no civilised example should be placed before them, the existence of any such record is an impossibility: its very presence would destroy its value. In another passage,

Archbishop Whately says, indeed, "If man generally, or some particular race, be capable of self-civilisation, in either case it may be expected that some record, or tradition, or monument, of the actual occurrence of such an event, should be found." So far from this, the existence of any such record would, according to the very hypothesis itself, be impossible. Traditions are short-lived and untrustworthy. A "monument" which could prove the actual occurrence of a race capable of self-civilisation, I confess myself unable to imagine. What kind of a monument would the archbishop accept as proving that the people which made it had been originally savage? that they had raised themselves, and had never been influenced by strangers of a superior race? Evidently the word "monument" in the above passage was used only to round off the sentence. But, says Archbishop Whately, "We have accounts of various savage tribes, in different parts of the globe, who have been visited from time to time at considerable intervals, but have had no settled intercourse with civilised people, and who appear to continue, as far as can be ascertained, in the same uncultivated condition"; and he adduces one case, that of the New Zealanders, who "seem to have been in quite as advanced a state when Tasman discovered the country in 1642, as they were when Cook visited it one hundred and twenty-seven years after."

We have been accustomed to see around us an improvement so rapid that we forget how short a period a century is in the history of the human race. Even taking the ordinary chronology, it is evident that if in 6,000 years a given race has only progressed from a state of utter savagery to the condition of the Australian, we could not expect to find much change in one more century. Many a fishing village, even on our own coast, is in very nearly the same condition as it was one hundred and twenty-seven years ago. Moreover, I might fairly answer that, according to Whately's own definition of a savage state, the New Zealanders would certainly be excluded. They cultivated the ground, they had domestic animals, they constructed elaborate fortifications and made excellent canoes, and were certainly not in a state of utter barbarism. Or I might argue that a short visit, like that of Tasman, could give little insight into the true condition of a people. I am, however, the less disposed to question the statement made by Archbishop Whately, because the fact that many races are now practically stationary, is in reality an argument against the theory of degradation, and not against that of progress. Civilised races, say we, are the descendants of races which have risen from a state of barbarism. On the contrary, argue our opponents,

savages are the descendants of civilised races, and have sunk to their present condition. But Archbishop Whately admits that the civilised races are still rising, while the savages are now stationary; and, oddly enough, seems to regard this as an argument in support of the very untenable proposition, that the difference between the two is due not to the progress of the one set of races,—a progress which everyone admits,—but to the degradation of those whom he himself maintains to be stationary. The delusion is natural, and like that which every one must have sometimes experienced in looking out of a train in motion, when the woods and fields seem to be flying from us, whereas we know that in reality we are moving and they are stationary.

But it is argued, "If man, when first created, was left, like the brutes, to the unaided exercise of those natural powers of body and mind which are common to the European and to the New Hollander, how comes it that the European is not now in the condition of the New Hollander?" I am, indeed, surprised at such an argument. In the first place, Australia possesses neither cereals nor any animals which can be domesticated with advantage; and in the second, we find even the same family, among children of the same parents, the most opposite dispositions; in the same nation, there are families of high character, and others in which every member is more or less criminal. But in this case, as in the last, the archbishop's argument, if good at all, is good against his own view. It is like an Australian boomerang, which recoils upon its owner. The archbishop believed in the unity of the human race, and argued that man was originally civilised (in a certain sense). "How comes it then," I might ask him, "that the New Hollander is not now in the condition of the European." In another passage, Archbishop Whately quotes, with approbation, a passage from President Smith, of the college of New Jersey, who says that man, "cast out an orphan of nature, naked and helpless, into the savage forest, must have perished before he could have learned how to supply his most immediate and urgent wants. Suppose him to have been created, or to have started into being, one knows not how, in the full strength of his bodily powers, how long must it have been before he could have known the proper use of his limbs, or how to apply them to climb the tree," etc. etc. Exactly the same, however, might be said of the gorilla or the chimpanzee, which certainly are not the degraded descendants of civilised ancestors.

Having thus very briefly considered the arguments brought forward by Archbishop Whately, I will proceed to state, also very briefly, some facts which seem to militate against the view advocated by him.

Firstly, I will endeavour to show that there are indications of progress even among savages.

Secondly, That among the most civilised nations there are traces of original barbarism.

The archbishop supposes that men were, from the beginning, herdsmen and cultivators. We know, however, that the Australians, North and South Americans, and several other more or less savage races, living in countries eminently suited to our domestic animals, and to the cultivation of cereals, were yet entirely ignorant both of the one and the other. It is, I think, improbable that any race of men, who had once been agriculturists and herdsmen, should entirely abandon pursuits so easy and advantageous; and it is still more improbable that if we accept Usher's very limited chronology, all tradition of such a change should he lost. Moreover, even if the present colonists of (say) America or Australia were to fall into such a state of barbarism, we should still find in those countries herds of wild cattle descended from those imported; and even if these were exterminated, still we should find their remains, whereas we know that not a single bone of the ox or of the domestic sheep has been found either in Australia or in America. The same argument applies to the horse, as the first horse of South America does not belong to the domestic race. So again in the case of plants. We do not know that any of our cultivated cereals would survive in a wild state, though it is highly probable that, perhaps, in a modified form they would do so. But there are many other plants which follow in the train of man, and by which the botany of South America, Australia, and New Zealand, has been almost as profoundly modified, as their ethnology has been, by the arrival of the white man. The Maoris have a melancholy proverb, that the Maoris disappear before the white man, just as the white man's rat destroys the native rat; the European fly drives away the Maori fly; and the clover kills the New Zealand fern.

A very interesting paper on this subject by Dr. Hooker, whose authority no one will question, is contained in the *Natural History Review for* 1864:—"In Australia and New Zealand," he says, "for instance, the noisy train of English emigration is not more surely doing its work, than the stealthy tide of English weeds, which are creeping over the surface of the waste, cultivated, and virgin soil, in annually increasing numbers of genera, species, and individuals. Apropos of this subject, a correspondent W. T. Locke Travers, Esq., F.L.S., a most active New Zealand botanist, writing from Canterbury, says, 'You would be surprised at the rapid spread of European and foreign plants in this country. All along the sides of the

main lines of road through the plains, a *Polygonum* (*aviculare*), called cow-grass, grows most luxuriantly, the roots sometimes two feet in depth, and the plants spreading over an area from four to five feet in diameter. The dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), or *R. crispus*) is to be found in every river-bed, extending into the valleys of the mountain-rivers, until these become mere torrents. The sow-thistle is spread all over the country, growing luxuriantly nearly up to 6,000 feet. The watercress increases in our still rivers to such an extent as to threaten to choke them altogether.' " The Cardoon of the Argentine Republics is another remarkable instance of the same fact. We may therefore safely assume that if Australia, New Zealand, or South America had ever been peopled by a race of herdsmen and agriculturists, the fauna and flora of those countries would almost inevitably have given evidence of the fact, and differed much from the condition in which they were discovered. We may also assert, as a general proposition, that no weapons or implements of metal have ever been found in any country inhabited by savages wholly ignorant of metallurgy. A still stronger case is afforded by pottery. Pottery is not easily destroyed; when known at all it is always abundant, and it possesses two qualities,—those, namely, of being easy to break and yet difficult to destroy, which render it very valuable in an archæological point of view. Moreover it is, in most cases, associated with burials. It is, therefore, a very significant fact, that no fragment of pottery has ever been found in Australia, New Zealand, or the Polynesian islands. It seems to me extremely improbable that an art so easy and so useful should ever have been lost by any race of men. Moreover, this argument applies to several other arts and instruments. I will mention only two, though several others might be brought forward. The art of spinning and the use of the bow are quite unknown to many races of savages, and yet would hardly be likely to have been abandoned when once known. The absence of architectural remains in these countries is another argument. Archbishop Whately, indeed, claims this as being in his favour; but the absence of monuments in a country is surely indicative of barbarism, and not of civilisation.

The mental condition of savages seems also to me to speak strongly against the "degrading" theory. Not only do the religions of the low races appear to be indigenous, but according to almost universal testimony,—that of merchants, philosophers, naval men, and missionaries alike,—there are many races of men who are altogether destitute of a religion. The cases are, perhaps, less numerous than they are asserted to be; but some of them rest on good evidence. Yet I feel it difficult

to believe that any people, which once possessed a religion, would ever entirely lose it. Religion appeals so strongly to the hopes and fears of men, it takes so deep a hold on most minds, it is so great a consolation in times of sorrow and sickness, that I can hardly think any nation would ever abandon it altogether. Moreover, it produces a race of men who are interested in maintaining its influence and authority. Where, therefore, we find a race which is now ignorant of religion, I cannot but assume that it has always been so.

I will now proceed to mention a few cases in which some improvement does appear to have taken place. According to MacGillivray, the Australians of Port Essington who, like all their fellow-countrymen, had formerly bark canoes only, have now completely abandoned them for others hollowed out of the trunk of a tree, which they buy from the Malays. The inhabitants of the Andaman Islands have recently introduced outriggers. The Bachapins, when visited by Burchell, had just commenced working iron. According to Burton, the Wajiji negroes have recently learned to make brass. In Tahiti, when visited by Captain Cook, the largest morai, or burial place, was that erected for the then reigning queen. The Tahitians, also, had then very recently abandoned the habit of cannibalism. Moreover, there are certain facts which speak for themselves. Some of the North American tribes cultivated the maize. Now the maize is a North American plant; and we have here, therefore, clear evidence of a step in advance made by these tribes. Again, the Peruvians had domesticated the llama. Those who believe in the diversity of species of men, may endeavour to maintain that the Peruvians had domestic llamas from the beginning. Archbishop Whately, however, would not take this line. He would, I am sure, admit that the first settlers in Peru had no llamas, nor, indeed, any other domestic animal, excepting, probably, the dog. The bark-cloth of the Polynesians is another case in point. Another very strong case is the boomerang of the Australians. This weapon is known to no other race of men.* We cannot look on it as a relic of primæval civilisation, or it would not now be confined to one race only. The Australians cannot have learnt it from any civilised visitors for the same reason. It is, therefore, as it seems to me, exactly the case we want, and a clear proof of a step in advance,—a small one if you like, but still a step made by a people whom Archbishop Whately would certainly admit to be true savages. The rude substitutes for writing found among various tribes, the wam-

* With one doubtful exception.

pum of the North American Indians, the picture-writing and Quippu of Central America, must be regarded as of native origin. In the case of the system of letters invented by Mohammed Doalu, a negro of the Vei country in West Africa, the idea was no doubt borrowed from the missionaries, although it was worked out independently. In other cases, however, this cannot, I think, be maintained. Take the case of the Mexicans. Even if we suppose that they are descended from a primitively civilised race, and had gradually and completely lost both the use and tradition of letters,—to my mind, by the way, a most improbable hypothesis,—still we must look on their system of picture-writing as being of American origin. Even if a system of writing by letters could ever be altogether lost, which I doubt, it certainly could not be abandoned for that of picture-writing, which is inferior in every point of view. If the Mexicans had owed their civilisation, not to their own gradual improvement, but to the influence of some European visitors driven by stress of weather, or the pursuit of adventure, on to their coasts, we should have found in their system of writing, and in other respects, unmistakable proofs of such an influence. Although, therefore, we have no historical proof that the civilisation of America was indigenous, we have in its very character evidence, perhaps, more satisfactory than any historical statements would be. The same argument may be derived from the names used for numbers by savages. I feel great difficulty in supposing that any race which had learnt to count up to ten, would ever unlearn a piece of knowledge so easy and yet so useful. Yet we know that few, perhaps none, of those whom Archbishop Whately would call savages, can count so far. No Australian language contained numerals for any number beyond four; the Dammaras and Abipones use none beyond three; some of the Brazilian tribes cannot go beyond two.

In many cases where the system of numeration is at present somewhat more advanced, it bears on it the stamp of native and recent origin. Among civilised nations, the derivations of the numerals have long since been obscured by the gradual modification which time effects in all words: especially those in frequent use, and before the invention of printing. And if the numerals of savages were relics of a former civilisation, the waifs and strays saved out of the general wreck, though we could not expect to trace them up to that original language, which in such a case must have existed; yet we certainly should not find them such as they really are. I cannot, of course, here give to this argument all the development of which it is capable, or bring forward all the cases in point; but I will

quote a short passage from a very interesting lecture, delivered before the Royal Institution, by my friend, Mr. Tylor, in which some of the facts are clearly stated:—"Among many tribes of North and South America and West Africa are found such expressions as—for 5, 'a whole hand,' and for 6, 'one to the other hand;' 10, 'both hands,' and 11, 'one to the foot;' 20, 'one Indian,' and 21, 'one to the hands of the other Indian;' or for 11, 'foot one;' for 12, 'foot 2;' for 20, 'a person is finished;' while among the miserable natives of Van Diemen's Land, the reckoning of a single hand, viz. 5, is called *puganna*, 'a man.'" For displaying to us the picture of the savage counting on his fingers, and being struck with the idea that if he describes in words his gestures of reckoning, these words will become a numeral, perhaps no language approaches the Zulu. Counting on his fingers, he begins always with the little finger of his left hand, and thus reaching 5 he calls it "a whole hand"; for 6, he translates the appropriate gesture, calling it *tatisitupa*, "take the thumb"; while 7, being shown in gesture by the forefinger, and this finger being used to point with, the verb *komba*, "to point", comes to serve as a numeral expression, denoting 7. Here then, surely, we have just the evidence which Archbishop Whately required. These numerals are recent, because they are uncorrupted; and they are indigenous, because they have an evident meaning in the language of the tribes by whom they are used.

Again, we know that many savage languages are entirely deficient in such words as "colour", "tone", "tree", etc., having names for each kind of colour, every species of tree, but not for the general idea. I can hardly imagine a nation losing such words, if it had once possessed them.

Other similar evidence might be extracted from the language of savages; and arguments of this nature are entitled to more weight than statements of travellers, as to the objects found in use among savages. Suppose, for instance, that an early traveller mentioned the absence of some art or knowledge among a race visited by him, and that later ones found the natives in possession of it. Most people would hesitate to receive this as a clear evidence of progress, and rather be disposed to suspect that later travellers, with perhaps better opportunities, had seen what their predecessors had overlooked. This is no hypothetical case. The early Spanish writers assert that the inhabitants of the Ladrone Islands were ignorant of the use of fire. Later travellers, on the contrary, find them perfectly well acquainted with it. They have, therefore, almost unanimously assumed, not that the natives had made a step in advance, but that the Spaniards had made a mistake; and I

have not brought this case forward in opposition to the assertions of Whately, because I am inclined to be of this opinion myself. I refer to it here, however, as showing how difficult it would be to obtain satisfactory evidence of material progress among savages, even admitting that such exists. The arguments derived from language, however, are liable to no such suspicions; but tell their own tale, and leave us at liberty to draw our conclusions. I will now very briefly refer to certain considerations which seem to show that even the most civilised races were once in a state of barbarism.

Not only throughout Europe,—not only in Italy and Greece,—but even in the so-called cradle of civilisation itself, in Palestine, and Syria, in Egypt, and in India, the traces of a stone age have been discovered. It may, indeed, be said that these were only the fragments of those stone knives, etc., which we know were used in religious ceremonies long after metal was in general use for secular purposes. This, indeed, reminds one of the attempt to account for the presence of elephants' bones in England, by supposing that they were the remains of elephants which might have been brought over by the Romans. But why were stone knives used by the Egyptian and Jewish priests? evidently because they had been at one time in general use, and there was a feeling of respect which made them reluctant to use the new substance in religious ceremonies.

There are, moreover, other considerations which point very decidedly to the same conclusion. It is well known that among various savage tribes female virtue is looked on with a very indifferent eye. Some savages have not—I will not say have not arrived at—the idea of marriage. I need not here bring forward the evidence in support of this statement; everyone who has taken any interest in the lower races of men, will admit that a savage's wives are in many races a mere part of his property, as much so as his dog or his male slaves; and hence, when a man dies, his brother takes possession of the widows, together with the rest of the property. In those cases, where women are treated with rather more justice, the first results are, according to our ideas, of doubtful advantage. Among the Andaman islanders, for instance, the man and woman remain together only until the child is born and weaned, when they are free to separate and pair with others. In other cases, marriage may be terminated at the wish either of the husband or wife. In others, again, the tie is of such a nature that it affords not even a presumption as to parentage. The result of this is, that many savages have no idea of any relationship by paternity; they recognise kinship through the female line only. Traces of this occur among the Australians,

the Fijians, and indeed the South Sea islanders generally, the ancient Celts, Greeks, the Kasias, Nairs, and other tribes in Hindostan, some of the Cossack hordes, many Negro tribes, etc., etc., and, in short, all over the world. For the same reason, a man's heirs are not his own children, but those of his sisters; while probably again from the same reason, the Wanyamwezi have the (at first sight inexplicable) custom,* that a man's property goes to his illegitimate children, and not to his lawful offspring.

Thus, then, by tracing up the gradual construction of the idea of marriage, we can fully account for the two extraordinary customs which we find in every part of the world,—that a man is regarded by various tribes as no relation to his own children, and that his property goes not to them, but to those of his sisters. As things improved, and the probability of parentage became greater, kinship through females only would gradually be abandoned. Many savages have not yet advanced so far; others have recently made the change; as for instance, the Ait-Iraten, who did so less than a century ago, and erected a stone pillar in memory of the event. Even, however, among the most civilised nations we find, in early history, traces of this progression. Thus, among the early Jews, Abraham married his half-sister. Nabor married his brother's daughter, and Amram married his father's sister: here we see the system of kinship through females only. These women were not, at that time, regarded as relatives, though at a later period in Jewish history they would have been so. The custom that when a man died childless, his brother married the widow, is another case in point; as also is the touching story of Ruth and Boaz, and the sad history of Tamar. Similar considerations, as Mr. McLennan points out in his excellent book, prove that the Romans were "at one time *in pari passu* as regards the administration of justice with many races, which we find ignorant of legal proceedings, and dependent for the settlement of their disputes on force of arms, of the good offices of friends"; while, as regards marriage, we find customs both among the Greeks and Romans, which point back to the time when those polished peoples were themselves mere savages. Even among ourselves, a man is, in the eye of the law, no relation to his own children unless they are born in wedlock. He is related to his own offspring not by blood, but through his marriage with the mother. If marriage has not taken place, they have no right to his name; and should he leave them any of his property, the State steps in,

* Burton's *Lake Regions of Africa*, p. 198.

and claims one-tenth, as in cases where money is left to those who are no relations.

Thus, then, we can trace up, among races in different degrees of civilisation, every step, from the treatment of woman as a mere chattel, to the sacred idea of matrimony as it exists among ourselves; and we find clear evidence that the gradual change has been one of progress, and not of degradation. Civilised nations long retain traces of their ancient barbarism; barbarous ones, no relics of previous chivalry. As the valves in the veins indicate the direction of the circulation; so can we trace the gradual progress of respect for women, which is one of the noblest features of our modern civilisation.

Before quitting this interesting subject, I may add, that many nations have traditions of the origin of marriage. Among the Egyptians it is attributed to Menes; among the Chinese to Fohi, the Greeks to Cecrops; the Hindus to Svetaketu. If the idea of marriage had been coeval with our race,—if marriage had always appeared as natural, I might say as necessary, as it does to us,—such traditions could scarcely have arisen.

In the publications of the Nova Scotian *Institute of Natural Science* is an interesting paper, by Mr. Haliburton, on "The Unity of the Human Race, proved by the universality of certain Superstitions connected with Sneezing." "Once establish," he says, "that a large number of arbitrary customs—such as could not have naturally suggested themselves to all men at all times—are universally observed, and we arrive at the conclusion that they are primitive customs, which have been inherited from a common source; and if inherited, that they owe their origin to an era anterior to the dispersion of the human race." To justify such a conclusion, the custom must be demonstrably arbitrary. The belief that two and two make four, the division of the year into twelve months, and similar coincidences, of course prove nothing; but I very much doubt the existence of any universal, or even general, custom of a clearly arbitrary character. The fact is that many things appear to us arbitrary and strange, because we live in a condition so different from that in which they originated. Many things seem natural to a savage, which to us appear absurd and unaccountable.

Mr. Haliburton brings forward, as his strongest case, the habit of saying "God bless you," or some equivalent expression, when a person sneezes. He shows that this custom, which I admit appears to us at first sight both odd and arbitrary, is ancient, and widely extended. It is mentioned by Homer, Aristotle, Apuleius, Pliny, and the Jewish rabbis, and has been observed in Florida, in Otaheite, and in the Tonga islands.

That it is not arbitrary, however, Mr. Haliburton himself shows; and it does not, therefore, come under his rule.

A belief in invisible beings is very general among savages; and while they think it unnecessary to account for blessings, they attribute any misfortune to the illwill of these mysterious beings. Many savages regard disease as a case of possession. In cases of illness, they do not suppose that the organs are themselves affected, but that they are being devoured by a god; hence, their medicine-men do not try to cure the disease, but to extract the demon. Some tribes have a distinct deity for every ailment. The Australians do not believe in natural death. When a man dies, they take it for granted that he has been destroyed by witchcraft, and the only doubt is, who is the culprit. Now, a people in this state of mind,—and we know that almost every race of men is passing, or has passed through this stage of development,—seeing a man sneeze, would naturally, and almost inevitably, suppose that he was attacked and shaken by some invisible being: equally natural is the impulse to appeal for aid to some other invisible being more powerful than the first.

Mr. Haliburton admits that a sneeze is "an omen of impending evil", but it is more; it is evidence which, to the savage mind, would seem conclusive that the sneezer was possessed by some evil disposed spirit; evidently, therefore, this case, on which Mr. Haliburton so much relies, is by no means an "arbitrary custom", and does not, therefore, fulfil the conditions which he himself laid down. He has incidentally brought forward some other instances, most of which labour under the disadvantage of proving too much. Thus he instances the existence of a festival in honour of the dead "at or near the beginning of November". Such a feast is very general; and as there are many more races holding such a festival than there are months in the year, it is evident that, in several cases, they must be held together. But Mr. Haliburton goes on to say, "The Spaniards were very naturally surprised at finding that, while they were celebrating a solemn mass for All Souls, on the 22nd of November, the heathen Peruvians were also holding their annual commemoration of the dead." This curious coincidence would, however, not only prove the existence of such a festival, as he says, "before the dispersion" (which Mr. Haliburton evidently looks on as a definite event, rather than as a gradual process), but also that men were, at that epoch, sufficiently advanced to form a calendar, and keep it unchanged down to the present time. This, however, we know was not the case. Mr. Haliburton again says, "the belief in Scotland and equatorial Africa is found

to be almost precisely identical respecting there being ghosts, even of the living, who are exceedingly troublesome and pugnacious, and can be sometimes killed by a silver bullet." Here we certainly have what seems at first sight to be an arbitrary belief; but if it proves that there was a belief in ghosts of the living before the dispersion, it also proves that silver bullets were then in use. This illustration is, I think, a very interesting one; because it shows that similar ideas, in distant countries, owe their origin not "to an era before the dispersion of the human race", but to the original identity of the human mind. While I do not believe that similar customs in different nations are "inherited from a common source", or are necessarily primitive; I certainly do see in them an argument for the unity of the human race, which, however (be it remarked in a parenthesis), is not necessarily the same thing as the descent from a single pair.

In conclusion then, while I do not mean for a moment to deny that there are cases in which nations have retrograded, I regard these as exceptional instances. The facts and arguments which I have here very briefly indicated, might have been supported by many other illustrations. They however, I think, afford strong grounds for the following conclusions; namely,—

That existing savages are not the descendants of civilised ancestors.

That the primitive condition of man was one of utter barbarism.

That from this condition several races have independently raised themselves.

These views follow, I think, from strictly scientific considerations. We shall not, however, be the less inclined to adopt them, on account of the cheering prospects which they hold out for the future.

If the past history of man has been one of deterioration, we have but a groundless expectation of future improvement; but on the other hand, if the past has been one of progress, we may fairly hope that the future will be so too; that the blessings of civilisation will not only be extended to other countries and other nations, but that even in our own land they will be rendered more general and more equable, so that we shall not see before us always, as now, multitudes of our own fellow-countrymen living the life of savages in our very midst; neither possessing the rough advantages and real though coarse pleasures of savage life, nor yet availing themselves of the far higher and more noble opportunities which lie within the reach of civilised man.