

# The Echo.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

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## THE ANGEL OR THE APE?"

DESCENDED from the Conqueror" sounds in many ears; it is more than eight years ago. But what are Garter-Arms or Sir Bernard Burke as pedestrians compared with Mr. Darwin? The book of "the Descent of Man" takes us hundreds and hundreds of ages, till we no longer give any account of time, and carries us to our ancestry—a group of animals. As for the monkey, if we believe Mr. Darwin, we were more half way towards manhood when we first assumed that form. We refuse to be master of ceremonies on this occasion; we must leave the distinguished author of "The Origin of Species" to introduce our readers to those who are to be their very earliest ancestry:—

the most ancient progenitors in the kingdom of the animal, at which we are able to obtain an obscurely but apparently consisted of a group of marine animals, including the larvæ of existing Ascidians. These probably gave rise to a group of fishes as lowly as ~~has often been remarked~~, appears as if it had been preparing for the advent of man; and this, indeed, is strictly true, for he owes his birth to a long series of progenitors. If any single link in this chain had been wanting, man would not have been exactly what he is.

Unless we wilfully close our eyes, we may, with the best knowledge, approximately recognise our origin; nor need we feel ashamed of it. The most advanced organism is something much higher than the dust under our feet; and no one with an unimpaired mind can study any living creature, however lowly, without being struck with enthusiasm at its structure and properties."

What will Mr. Disraeli say to this? In preparation for the now Bishop of Winchester he put the question to himself which stands at the head of the article, and replied that "he was for the

But an aquatic animal, and that too in a low form! Mr. Darwin says:—Don't be alarmed. Between a clever monkey and a eel there is a much wider gap than that which makes the pride of manhood than that of the latter and some of those lowest forms of humanity of whom Dr. Livingstone

speaks. The bases of Mr. Darwin's researches are well known. The intermediate position at which Mr. Darwin arrives

"Man is descended from a hairy quadruped (furnished with a tail and pointed ears) arboreal in its habits and an inhabitant of the Old World." But no one can rush off to St. James's Park in the belief that he will meet a relative, however strong may be his faith in Darwin. For, says he:—

In regard to bodily size and strength, we do not know whether man is descended from some comparatively feeble creature, like the chimpanzee, or from one as powerful as a gorilla; and therefore we cannot say whether he is to become larger and stronger, or smaller and weaker in comparison with his progenitors."

Science, of course, can affirm the truth of Mr. Darwin's theories; yet if they were proved, they would not be so derogatory to the dignity of man as we suppose, because they would show a downward path of progress of which he is the most advanced inheritor, and which will lead him to the same Creative influence, he knows not to what stage of worthiness of his

Mr. Darwin asks: If the progenitor of man had not pointed ears, why is there a point in the folded margin of the human ear? The foundation of his theory is that the progress of animals is accomplished by the same process as that of man—by the need under various circumstances of supplying certain wants.

We must allow Mr. Darwin to be his own master. He ends his work with these words:—The main conclusion arrived at in this work, namely, that man is descended from some lowly-organised form, is a great and great to think, be highly distasteful to many

For my own part I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey who dived into the sea to save his mate from that old baboon who, descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade, as from a crowd of astonished dogs—as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practices infanticide without remorse, treats his slaves as beasts, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions."

Man may be excused for feeling some pride at having risen, though not through his own exertions, to the summit of the organic scale; and the fact of his having risen, instead of having been aboriginally there, may give him hopes for a still higher position in the distant future. But we are not here with hopes or fears, only with the truth as far as reason allows us to discover it. I have given the best of my ability; and we must judge, as it seems to me, that man with all his faculties, with sympathy which feels for the most wretched with benevolence which extends not only to the lowly, but to the humblest living creature, with his intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system—with all the varied powers—Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin."

# The Echo.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25.

THE JOURNALS OF THE REV. DEAN OF WESTMINSTER, 1727.

## "THE ANGEL OF THE APEN."

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... years ago. But what are your  
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... compared with Mr. Darwin? The  
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..." to illustrate our readers to those who  
... to be their very earliest memory—

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... Mr. Darwin says to this? In your  
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... the form of Mr. Darwin's ...  
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... at which Mr. Darwin ...  
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