

## Contemporary Literature.

THE DESCENT OF MAN, AND SELECTION IN RELATION TO SEX. By Charles Darwin, M. A., F. R. S., etc. Two volumes. 12mo. Pp. 409, 436. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Cincinnati: Robt. Clarke & Co.

With the fame and general theories of Mr. Darwin our readers are acquainted, and we have on hand from an esteemed contributor an able *critique* of his doctrines, so that we need give but little more than a passing notice here. The present volumes are devoted to an application of the author's doctrines with regard to the "Origin of Species" to the origin and descent of man. According to Mr. Darwin, species of animals are not separate creations by the Creator, but evolutions and developments out of other forms of animal life. With him, man is only a species of animal, and, therefore, can not be a separate creation, but is the final, or rather the present, result and form from variations, slow modifications, gradual losses and acquisitions, from an inferior order of animal life. Nearest to man in this series of variations are the monkey and ape tribes, and, of course, these are the more immediate progenitors of the human race. Man is an improved species of anthropomorphous ape; by natural selection, by accidental and incidental advantages of form gained, maintained, and improved, he has become what he is; he has lost the hair, except a meager pilosity scattered over the body, and certain tufts on the head and other parts of the body, all plainly indicating that he was once a hairy animal; he has lost the tail—the rudiment still existing, however; he has ceased to be four-handed, two of his hands having been transformed into feet; his long ears have become folded and shortened, a little pimple, or projection, still occasionally found on the outer rim, being the remains of the point; he has gained by long exercise and practice, and the gradual conformity of the bones to the necessity, the erect attitude; the jaws have receded and become less prominent, through less use, as he gained more wisdom; from throwing a stone, and cracking a nut, he has acquired the art of war, and the skill for manufacturing various tools and instruments; his new wants and habits made him a thinker; thinking developed his brain, and thereby enlarged and changed his skull; his enlarged life made it necessary that his chattering should be developed into artificial language; he always has been a gregarious animal, and his social instincts and his sense of certain things being necessary for the common good of the community, developed a system of morality; his fears and his enlarged imagination originated worship; all these things matured and developed through countless ages, and under an infinite variety of circumstances, give us the perfect man of the highest civilization of the nineteenth century.

This is not a caricature, but an honest statement of the author's doctrine; with the question of a Creator lying back of all the immeasurable series through which man has been evolved, he has nothing to do, nor with the immortality of man's future destiny; he is simply a scientist, unconcerned about God or religion, but about facts. Mr. Darwin is proud of his origin. He says, "For my own part, I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey, who braved his dreaded enemy in order to save the life of his keeper; or from that old baboon, who, descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade 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 wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstition." We do not see, however, what Mr. Darwin gains by this, as certainly that heroic little monkey, or that brave old baboon, did not spring up into such a man as Mr. Darwin, without passing through the lower stages of "the savage who delights to torture his enemies." First the four-handed, hairy, long-tailed monkey, on all fours; then the tailless, leaping ape; then the sometimes erect and shambling gorilla; then the cave man, still sharing his life with wild animals; then the naked, and bedaubed, and long-haired savage; then the stone-aged barbarian; then the bronze-tooled wanderer; then, perhaps, the Indian; then something like a man. You must take it all, Mr. Darwin. Your facts, if they prove any thing, prove the series.

But what are these facts? Nothing very new, nor many more than have been known for centuries; the same kind of facts as we find in the theories of Lord Monboddoo a hundred years ago, or in the "*Zoonomia*" of Mr. Darwin's grandfather; the facts are of the same class, though of course more of them. They all cluster around the central fact, always known and always admitted, that man has an animal body, created after the type of other animal bodies, and that he lives an animal life, under the general modes and laws of other animal life. That there should be many points of agreement between him and other animals in anatomical structure and physiological action, is not strange; he has organs like them, he lives, breathes, eats, digests, absorbs, secretes, grows, sleeps, dies like them. In addition to these great facts that every body knows, Mr. Darwin points out minor facts, that, to him, are very significant; much stress is laid on "analogues," being organs or parts present in the human body, having no very obvious use in man, but being perfect and useful organs in certain inferior animals; monstrosities, as we used to call them, are recognized as re-appearances in man of organs which he formerly possessed in the lower life;

rudiments are parts of organs still not entirely passed away.

We do not feel ourself in the least convinced by all that we find in these volumes, or our faith in the old doctrine of the special creation of man by God in his own likeness, in the least shaken. Of course, Mr. Darwin can make out a plausible case from the simple fact that, in his physical life, man is an animal, and, of course, has many things in common with the animals. He starts out with a theory, and accumulates facts to sustain it; he is able to gather many plausible facts from the resemblance of man's life to that of the inferior beings. The facts are, however, just as consistent with the theory of man's special creation with an animal body subject to the laws and influences of other animal bodies. The serious part of the book is that it saps the foundation of all morality and religion. If this book contains the true theory of human life, we do not see how we could help being an atheist. Intelligence, language, morality, religion, are all mere animal evolutions; intelligence itself is bereft of certainty, morality is a mere selfish calculation of the best good and safety of the community, and religion is organized fear and superstition; there may or may not be an impersonal, pantheistic deity lying somewhere away off at the beginning of these infinite series of evolutions; and as for any future of immortality, we can see no possible ground for the idea that this process of mere evolution, or development, could evolve an immortal man out of a mortal and perishing monkey.

The redeeming feature of the volumes is the vast collection of curious and useful facts about men and animals. Mr. Darwin is a scholar of vast information in all departments of knowledge bearing on his theories; he has spared no labor or pains in collecting his facts; and facts they are too, of a most interesting and valuable character; by the value of these the volumes will abundantly repay the reader; of the conclusions to be drawn from them, the reader can judge for himself; scientific facts are one thing—theories to be deduced from them are quite another.

**THE UNCIVILIZED RACES, OR NATURAL HISTORY OF MAN.** *Two Volumes, Royal Octavo.* Pp. 774, 875. By Rev. J. G. Wood, M. A., F. L. S. Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Company. Cincinnati: Nettleton & Co.

We noticed an edition of this great work some months ago, issued by J. B. Burr & Co., of Hartford, and then expressed an opinion of its merits as one of the most valuable contributions to the literature of the age; it is, indeed, a perfect library of knowledge with regard to the uncivilized races of men; it deals only in facts and supports no theories; the compiler possesses peculiar talents for this kind of work, has been laborious and discriminating in collecting his facts, and combines them in very systematic order, and relates them in attractive style. The volumes contain a complete account of the manners and customs, and the physical, social, and religious condition and characteristics of the barbarous tribes throughout the entire world. The American edition

contains also a description of the races of Alaska and Siberia. The volumes contain over seven hundred illustrations, and numerous maps. The edition before us claims the advantages over the one previously noticed of being a complete, unabridged edition, containing all the matter, both of text and illustrations, to be found in the original London edition.

**A COMPLETE CONCORDANCE TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT; or, A Dictionary and Alphabetical Index to the Bible.** By Alexander Cruden, M. A. With an Original Life of the Author. Large 8vo. Pp. 856. New York: Dodd & Mead. Cincinnati: George E. Stevens & Co.

The public is thoroughly acquainted with "Cruden's Concordance." It is only necessary to say that this is a complete and well-executed edition, that the Concordance itself has not yet been superseded by a better one, that no preacher's library can do without it, and every family ought to have it.

**BARNES'S NOTES, EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL, ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.** *Designed for Sunday-School Teachers and Bible-Classes.* By Albert Barnes. Revised Edition. *The Gospels, Vol. I,* pp. 456; *Vol. II,* pp. 432. *The Acts of the Apostles,* pp. 418. *The Epistle to the Romans,* pp. 367. 12mo. \$1.50 per volume. New York: Harper & Bros. Cincinnati: Robt. Clarke & Co.

The Harpers are issuing a new and revised edition of these well-known Notes. They originally began to appear in 1832. In 1840 the plates were recast, and various changes were then made. Since then great advances have been made in all the departments of knowledge necessary to a proper illustration of the Scriptures; Palestine has been explored more accurately than before; a better knowledge of Oriental manners and customs has been attained; more accurate maps and illustrations have been published; and the best minds in Europe and America have been employed in illustrating the language employed and the manners and customs referred to in the New Testament. In the last years of his life Mr. Barnes desired to avail himself of these accumulated advantages to revise his whole work. This has been done, and the Notes will now appear with no essential changes in the general plan, which was not desirable, but with such additions and abridgments as will adapt them to the present state of Biblical knowledge and to the present wants of the people. They will still hold their place as convenient, accurate, and sufficiently full notes on the New Testament for all ordinary purposes. The volumes are copiously illustrated, and contain a full supply of maps.

**OUR GIRLS.** By Dio Lewis, A. M., M. D. 12mo. Pp. 388. New York: Harper & Bros. Cincinnati: Robt. Clarke & Co.

"I write about the girls," says the author, "because I want to, and because, after a good deal of self-examination, I candidly believe I have something