

THE DARWIN CRAZE.

"A GOSPEL OF DIRT."—*Thomas Carlyle.*

FOR THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION,
SWANSEA MEETING, 1880.

On the Plumage of Birds and Butterflies:

BY THE

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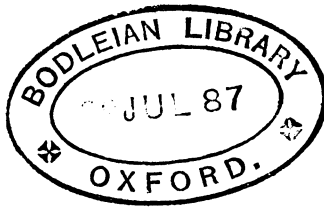
*Author of "A History of British Birds," dedicated, by permission, to Her Most
Gracious Majesty the Queen, &c., &c.*

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The following is the abstract of the Paper, which was duly sent in beforehand, as is always required in such cases.

In this Paper the writer first laid down the axiom that every cause has its effect, and that no effect is produced without a previous cause. With reference, then, to the subject of the plumage of birds, and, so to speak, of butterflies, the question is, what was the cause of which it is the effect? Until recently the answer would have been that all the several kinds are as they always have been since they were created by the "First Great Cause;" and so all naturalists have heretofore held. Of late, however, the notion has been taken up by Darwin, in the attempt to account for it, that it all came, in every individual instance, from the admiration of female birds, in "thousands of generations," for some chance pretty feather in the males; that this was the cause of all the varied colours we see in the many thousand kinds of birds, and the hundreds of thousands of species of butterflies and other insects. From the like cause, too, the varied songs of birds.

The writer put it, in contradiction to this view, that as many as are the kinds of birds, so many are their eggs; and these, like the former, no two of them alike. And is it to be supposed that all the varied colours of eggs we see have been produced by the admiration of one egg for another! Their colours have to be accounted for, some way or other, as well as those of the birds that lay them. On which horn of the dilemma is the argument to be hung? Will it be said that they were produced by the gazing of one at another? It cannot be seriously contended that it was so. If not, the notion as to the birds must fall to the ground.

Further than this, the like applies to the case of the varied hues of butterflies, which the "Use of the Imagination in Science" has accounted for in a similar way. If so, have the caterpillars, numbers of them of extreme beauty and most vivid colours, acquired their tinted dyes in the same way? And, further, the chrysalides, and even the eggs from which they come, all differ, and many of them of great beauty of form and colour themselves.

P R E F A C E .

THIS Paper was written for the Meeting of the British Association at Sheffield, last year, 1879. It was duly sent in, according to the usual form, and in due course I had a note from one of the Secretaries, telling me that it was declined. But I afterwards had a private letter from an eminent member of the Committee, informing me that they had not been unanimous, but that a majority had suppressed it.

For this I was by no means unprepared—though two papers against Darwinism had been read by me at the meetings of the Association in previous years, namely, at Norwich and Exeter—having seen plainly enough, from what had long been before the public, that for some years a clique of the freethinkers had leagued together to have their own way in such matters in the Association.

They will, however, gain nothing by their conduct, but, I hope somewhat the contrary; for I then first had the paper printed in the "Leisure Hour," (which I believe has a circulation of some hundred thousand, or more,) and have now published it separately, with a few additions, as follows.

Not only so, but I have also added to it, by way of preface, the following "Elegant Extracts" from Darwin's book "On the Origin of Species," falsely so called, even on his own showing, for he gives no account, none whatever, nor even makes any attempt at giving any, of the origin of his supposed origin, of his self-created "monad" itself.

Here these extracts are, word for word, from his own most illogical book, all contained in a single octavo volume, a tessellated pavement of

mere guess-work, fit for nothing but to be trodden under foot. I may well call them

“CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.”

“Almost inevitably; I think; I think; it seems pretty clear; I am
 “strongly inclined to suspect; my impression is; may; I think; seems
 “probable; almost compels us; perhaps; I think; may be; makes me
 “believe; I believe; we may safely conclude; not improbable; I think;
 “I think; I do not believe; I believe; I cannot doubt; I do not think;
 “seems to me; highly probable; it seems to me unlikely; I should
 “think; I am doubtfully inclined to believe; we must admit; probably;
 “I cannot doubt; who can believe? there can be no doubt; I can hardly
 “believe; I am fully convinced; seems to me; may be; seems to me;
 “may perhaps; may have; has probably been; I think; I cannot
 “doubt; I cannot doubt; I think; as I believe; perhaps partly; I
 “think; I think; probably; I believe; I do not believe; I believe; I
 “am convinced; I am inclined to suspect; I believe; we may believe;
 “probably; probably; I suspect; I think; can it be thought impossible;
 “can one doubt; we may conclude; we have reason to believe; as I
 “believe; nor do I believe; we may safely conclude; it may meta-
 “phorically be said; we must believe; I can see no reason to doubt;
 “probably; I can see no great difficulty in this; probably; probably;
 “might be; might be; probably; if so; might; perhaps; may be;
 “may be; I can see no reason to doubt; might; I strongly suspect;
 “as I believe; as I believe; let us suppose; I can see no reason to
 “doubt; might be; would probably; might be; would probably;
 “might be; might be; reason to believe; probably; might still be;
 “might; we may believe; if we suppose; we may suppose; I can see
 “no reason to doubt; probably; might be; might be; might slowly
 “become; I am strongly inclined to believe; I think; I suspect; I am
 “strongly inclined to suspect; as I suspect; I believe; I believe; I
 “believe; might; have reason to believe; I am convinced; probably;
 “may sometimes; I am inclined to believe; probably; probably; I do
 “not believe; I do believe; I further believe; may be; probably; I
 “think; as I believe; I believe; I cannot doubt; we may at least
 “safely infer; we may, I think, assume; it is probable; we have only

"to suppose; probably; extremely probable; I think; I see no reason;
 "may have been; I think; I think; I believe; I believe; I believe;
 "to believe; my impression is; I think there can be no doubt; we
 "may imagine; as I believe; I think; I can see no reason to doubt;
 "I think we may conclude; I do not doubt; I do not doubt; I
 "suspect; I presume; we can perhaps see; I believe; seems to me;
 "may be; I think; I think; we may conclude; we might expect; I
 "am convinced; I can see no reason to doubt; I believe; we might
 "surely expect; I attribute; it is not probable; it is probable; I
 "think; I think; and may; it is highly probable; I conclude; I
 "presume; we may, I think; might be; the most probable; I can see
 "no more improbability; it might further be expected; it does not
 "appear probable; perhaps; probably; might have been; I do not
 "doubt; I think; as I believe; probably; I think; I can see no
 "difficulty; I see no difficulty in supposing; no insuperable difficulty;
 "in further believing; we perhaps see; it is conceivable; if this had
 "been; we may conclude; it does not seem probable; I can see no
 "great difficulty in believing; we ought in imagination; we must
 "suppose; we must suppose; may we not believe; may be; there
 "seems to me to be no great difficulty in believing; I can indeed
 "hardly doubt; it is conceivable; might have been; it is probable; I
 "think; I do not doubt; I am inclined to believe; may have; may;
 "may; may be; may possibly; we may infer; probably; possibly;
 "would probably; might; we have some reason to believe; reason to
 "believe; probably; no doubt; may; may safely; no doubt; we may
 "believe; may further venture to believe; we may infer; might have
 "been; may be viewed; I think; possibly; apparently; we may con-
 "fidently believe; we may also believe; I think; it is at least possible;
 "might be; I can see no difficulty; as I believe; I do not doubt; I
 "believe; may; we may; which might; I think; it is scarcely pos-
 "sible to doubt; if; if; would lead me to believe; would be; would
 "be; I believe; could be; I can see no difficulty; might become;
 "might; I can see no difficulty; I think; if; would; probably; if we
 "could; we must suppose; this would not be very surprising; we must
 "suppose; we must further suppose; somehow; we have further to
 "suppose; but there is no difficulty; I believe; I do not see that there
 "is any difficulty; nor does there seem to me any great difficulty; it is

“even conceivable; I think the answer is not difficult; let us suppose;
 “probably; let us further suppose; I can see no very great difficulty;
 “but I must pass over this preliminary difficulty; I can see no real
 “difficulty; this difficulty is lessened, or, I believe, disappears; I
 “believe; I believe to be quite possible; we may safely conclude; did
 “not, probably; I fully believe; I believe; as I believe; I can see no
 “difficulty; to my imagination; we may infer; I think; I doubt; the
 “most probable; I am inclined to believe; I think; it may be con-
 “cluded; I think not; appear to me; by no means seems to me; as I
 “believe; I suspect; I think; I believe; it seems; if this be so; this
 “seems to me; it seems to me; I do not think; does not seem to me;
 “does not seem to me; I think seems; do not seem to me; may have;
 “it is not improbable; I suspect; may have been; it cannot be doubted;
 “as it seems to me; it is not probable; probably; probably; it would
 “seem; we may reasonably suspect; the probability is; probably;
 “on this view; there is reason to suspect; improbable; reason to
 “believe; I suspect; I believe; it may be doubted; probable; leads
 “me to believe; may elsewhere have; probably; might have been;
 “I cannot see that it would be an insuperable difficulty; might for-
 “merly have had; might have; it seems to me; I cannot doubt;
 “probably; probably; somehow; we may infer; we may, perhaps,
 “infer; in all probability; we may fairly conclude; if, then, we may
 “infer; we may infer; may not? may have; it might well happen;
 “might have; seemed to me; we may, perhaps, believe; I have rea-
 “son to believe; may; on this view; there is some reason to believe;
 “we have reason to believe; seems to me; may, perhaps; it is just
 “possible; might make; we have every reason to believe; we may
 “believe; as I believe; probable; may have been; as it seems to me;
 “we may doubt; it might, at least, have been inferred; if this be so;
 “there can, I think, be little doubt; might; we can, I think; as it
 “seems to me; believing; I suppose; we have reason to believe; it is
 “probable; if; and if; in this case; probably; but I apprehend;
 “seems to me; supposing them; it is quite possible; if; were to be;
 “would have to be; seems to me; on this same theory; they could
 “hardly fail; supposing; might; if; I do not doubt; may have; we
 “may believe; we may doubt; may be said; may be true; may be;
 “if; we may conclude; probably; probably; hypothetically; may

“have; may now all be; may; seems to me; we can understand; we
 “can understand; we can understand; we can clearly see; we can
 “clearly see; may account; if, then; might have been; I believe in
 “no; there is not much difficulty in believing; have reason to believe;
 “as I believe; it seems to me; is the most probable; we cannot ex-
 “plain; rendered probable; seems to me; probably; probable; must
 “have; must have; may have been; possibly; it seems to me; as I
 “believe; as I believe; I do not believe; seems to me; seems to me;
 “would have been; might; might be; we may conclude; might be; I
 “do not doubt; safer to assume; could hardly be; we may, I think,
 “safely assume; might; can we doubt; I can hardly doubt; it is, at
 “least, possible; it would, I think; I do not doubt; as it seems to me;
 “we may suppose; seems to me; we may almost conclude; it is not
 “likely; in all probability; as I believe; must have been; I believe;
 “we have good reason to believe; we may suppose; believing; to
 “infer; as I believe; on this view we can understand; we can further
 “understand; must have been; will account; I think; we may infer;
 “may have; it seems to me probable; probable; it is difficult to avoid
 “believing; on the belief; probably; perhaps; it seems to me possible;
 “I do not doubt; I believe; I suppose; as I believe; we have reason
 “to believe; may have been; it is probable; I suppose; must have;
 “must have been; I believe; I believe; seems to me; I am inclined to
 “look; I suppose; as I believe; I believe; may be said; I think; I
 “am inclined; seems; I think; may have; probably; makes me
 “believe; probably; might be; a good chance; probably; a better
 “chance; we have reason to believe; the probability; I believe; I
 “think; we must, I think; reason to believe; almost certainly; might
 “be; apparently; I believe; might; may have; more likely; the pro-
 “bability; this difficulty almost disappears; I do not doubt; I think;
 “probably; might; probably; the probability; probably; we may
 “safely infer; and we may infer; no doubt; I think; probably; I
 “believe; I believe; some reason to believe; I think if; if; if; then
 “I think the difficulties not insuperable; must have; if; I do not think
 “that the difficulties are insuperable; I am fully convinced; if the
 “difficulties be not insuperable; then, I think; we can thus under-
 “stand; we can thus understand; we can understand; we can see; we
 “can see; we can clearly see; we can see; as I believe; in my judg-

“ment; seems; seems to me; I believe; almost shown; as we have every reason to suppose; I think; seems to imply; I think; seems to me; seems to be; if I do not greatly deceive myself; I think; it might be; I apprehend; I think; may not? I believe; we may feel almost sure; we may at once infer; I think; in all probability; are almost sure; we must suppose; may be strongly suspected; we can understand; by the belief; I believe; we can understand; we can understand; we can clearly see; probably; we may hope; might be; might have; if we suppose; it is conceivable; might become; possibility; we may readily believe; it is quite probable; probably; would probably; I believe; may be; it is quite possible; probable; appears to me; seems to me; probable; might; might; might; we may feel assured; may be; may; as it seems to me; I doubt; I doubt; I believe; might become; might be; might be; we can understand; good reason to believe; probably; might even have been; no inexplicable difficulties; if we admit; extremely difficult even to conjecture; how this difficulty may be overcome; which seem to me; we need not feel surprised; can hardly fail; have reason to believe; a good chance; may often be accounted for; we have reason to believe; probably; I am inclined to believe; probably; hypothesis; in my judgement; we may safely infer; we have reason to believe; why should we doubt; I can see no limit to this power; probable; we can understand; we can plainly see; as it seems to me; would be more likely; in my view; we might expect; if we admit; on this view we can see; we can clearly see; we can clearly see; I cannot believe; I see no good reason; I cannot doubt; I believe; probably; might become; probably; may have been; we may feel certain; we may look; almost implied.”

“Ohe! jam satis est!”

It is with such idle and vain imaginations as these that the shallow-minded allow themselves to be duped by those who ought to know better. This is the bugbear that the “wise in their own conceit” have been seduced out of their senses with.

Surely, “The Force of Folly can no further go!”

It reminds one of the old school-saying,

“If ‘ifs’ and ‘ands’ were pots and pans,
“There would be no work for tinkers’ hands.”

Does the good man think that we are simpletons, to be befooled by such trifling as this! And it is with it, and such as it,—a “scientific” book, forsooth!—that our “professors” and “men of science” would, if they could, beguile Believers, and overturn Religion!

Yes, this is the book that has been belauded and bepraised, *usque ad nauseam*, by our “philosophers” and “professors,” so styled and so dubbed among themselves, as if built upon the most elaborate argumentation, and perfectly unanswerable!

This is the book that has been the will-o'-the-wisp that has led away the weak-minded into the Slough of Despond of a shallow and contemptible Infidelity.

But, *Magna est Veritas, et prævalebit!*

Shades of Aldrich, and of Whately, of Bacon, and of Euclid, of Newton, and of Butler, can you rest in your graves?

F. O. M.

ON THE PLUMAGE OF BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES.

(From the "*Leisure Hour*," with a few brief additions.)

EVERY cause has some effect, and every effect must have had some cause.

We see, as a matter of fact, that the many thousands of species of birds that have been described, and the far more numerous thousands of butterflies and moths, to say nothing at present of the four or five hundred thousand species of other insects, have each and every one of them a plumage, so to call it, of as many different sorts as they are in number themselves, no two of them alike, in every variety of beauty and every degree of plainness.

This fact we all have before our eyes. How did it come about? We see the effect; there must have been some cause for it. What was the cause? Until very lately the question would only have been answered in one way. It would have been said that they are all as they were created at the beginning by the "First Great Cause," just as we see them now, and just as we always have heretofore thought that we were ourselves.

This has been the opinion of naturalists, such as Linnæus, Cuvier, and many before and since, till the other day—a great number in all.

Now, however, they are all discovered by Darwin to have been in the wrong. He knows all about it. He has found out that the birds, with all the rest of the creatures, came from some one original—a monad, he calls it, the name and the creature alike of his own creating—and that all the so-called species have come one from another in the "sequence of events," a term he has also invented to fit in with the rest of his theory.

But how came all the ten thousand species of birds by their varied hues of colour? no two of them alike! Whence the gay painting of the goldfinch, and the resplendent hues of the bird of paradise, the

bright gold of the canary, and the vivid green of the kingfisher, the gorgeous tints of the bee-eater, and the brilliantly-burnished dress of the pheasant, each and every of them *mille trahens varios adverso sole colores?* And then the elegant pencilling of the snipe, and the graceful toilette of the hoopoe?

All came of the admiration of the females for the males! Yes, all came of the admiration of the females for the males!—of their admiration for some chance brighter feather than ordinary in this or that cock-bird! It fairly turned his head and his coat at one and the same time, in the course of untold billions upon billions of ages.

I may also ask how it has come to pass that so many birds change their bright summer plumage for a dull winter garb, and how it is that the feathers of the young bird are so totally different from those it has when it is grown up? Also, why the mallard assumes the plumage of the duck in the summer?

And there are also white birds and black birds; these, too, different in their tints from each other; the snow-white campanero of the remote south, and the ivory gull of the far distant north, the raven and others. No two birds, as I have said, the same.

This seems somewhat of a difficulty in the way of any other explanation than the old one; but he soon gets over it by the notion that they all came to their plumage one after the other, as just said, by the admiration of some female bird or birds here and there, in the course of billions upon billions of years, for some male bird—that is to say, for some pretty stray feather, a “feather in the cap”—which “somehow,” to use his own expression, “flashed into existence.” He does not tell us when, where, or how; these are trifles which must not stand in the way of such a grand idea. Certainly not. It was so; that is to say, he says that his “Imagination” fancies that it “might” have been so, and therefore it was so; and that proves his point, and this withal in the face of his own *dictum*, that Natural Selection has nothing to do with beauty in any shape or way; and that if it were so, it would be “absolutely fatal” to his theory.

Whence then did these female birds derive their admiration of a beautiful feather in this or that bird? How did they come by this “fatal gift”? Whence had they the eye for this or that engaging and attractive colour? Echo answers “Whence”! The only answer, I

am afraid, we shall get to so plain and simple a question. They contradict him flatly, or rather he flatly contradicts himself. Why and how, if it all came from the coquetry of some one or more female birds, who had such an artistic eye to beauty of colour—why are some so dingy still, after all the countless ages he imagines.

It used to be supposed that in Science facts would have something to do with such conclusions, but that is all exploded in these times. The "Use of the Imagination in Science" nowadays does it all, and makes the deduction of conclusions from known facts, and effects from known causes, quite unnecessary, at all events in the case at present under consideration.

Here are Darwin's own words, his own *ipsissima verba*: "I see no good reason to doubt that female birds, by selecting, during thousands of generations, the most melodious or beautiful males, according to their standard of beauty, might produce a marked effect."

So thus we are indebted to this wonderful invention, to this "I see no reason to doubt," and this "might," for all the beautiful songs of our birds, the trill of the nightingale, and the sweet warble of the lark, down, I suppose, to the caw of the rook, the screech of the owl, and the croak of the raven.

Now this is no doubt very conclusive, and very satisfactory, it is to be supposed, to his own mind; but it is not quite so much so to the minds of a number, a very large and increasing number, of persons. At all events a few difficulties must be removed before his notion can be treated by persons of ordinary common sense as anything else than an idle dream.

One such difficulty which does not seem to have occurred to Darwin's mind has occurred to mine, and I proceed to state it.

The eggs of birds are certainly as various as the birds themselves, for those of no two species are alike, not even those that are white all over. The egg of the kingfisher is quite different in its glossy whiteness from that of the ringdove, as is the egg of the latter from that of the dabchick.

But, further, the point I have before me, the eggs of birds are not only as various, but quite as beautiful in their way as the birds themselves, most elegant in colour, as in marking, every one of them. How

came these all by their colours, by their numberless shades of varied dyes?

According to Darwin, if his theory of the way the colours of the birds themselves were acquired is to be accepted, there is nothing else to be believed but that the egg of every kind of bird derived its markings from the admiration of one egg for another. That is plain. If not, how else?

Otherwise, was the colour of the egg derived from the admiration of the female bird for her mate, or has the colour of the egg anything to do with the colour of the bird, or the colour of the bird with that of the egg? Not much, I should say, for they are altogether contrariant, and the gorgeous kingfisher and the parti-coloured woodpecker comes, each of them, from a white egg, while the sombre dunnock comes from a lovely green one.

In like manner if we pass from these to the colours of the hundreds of thousands of species of insects, every one of them, according to Mr. Belt, a disciple of Darwin, was the result of the admiration of the female for this or that eccentric chance spot or two on the wing or wings of the male—at some “Butterflies’ Ball and Grasshoppers’ Feast,” I suppose—the “Painted Lady” butterfly one of the party of course, if not the “Old Lady” moth. No doubt about it, none at least on the Darwinian theory.

But whence came these spots? And how is it that the males and females of some butterflies—and the same applies to vast numbers of other insects—are so much alike that they cannot be told by their colours from one another.

Then, again, some are as plain-coloured as need to be. The female ancestresses of these must have been devoid of taste, I suppose, and their descendants have to take the consequence. So much the worse for them.

In some cases the female moth is white and the male black, as in the muslin moth (*Arctia Mendica*)—that is to say, as different as light is from darkness—but the “Use of the Imagination” cannot help us much in this case any more than, as appears, it did the female moth in the case of the sable-clad “Mourning Widow” moth, it may be supposed.

Then, some female butterflies—and the same applies to many moths—are perhaps, in some points of view, much handsomer than the males.

Others, again, as I have said, exactly like them to all appearance, and some as plain as it is possible to be, all white or all black, all brown or some other dull colour.

How is this? What is the rule? Which are the exceptions?

Next we come to the caterpillar.

Here, again, we have colours as bright as there are in any of the perfect insects, and that even in this country; all produced, on the Darwinian doctrine, by the admiration of one caterpillar for another. Many, no doubt, are very plain; but so there are many equally so in foreign and tropical countries.

Where are brighter and more lovely colours to be seen than in the caterpillar of the very common moth, *Liparis chrysorrhæa*, and disposed in the most exquisitely elegant manner, the wings of the moth itself being, as just stated, devoid of any colour whatever—plain, though a most beautiful white? How is all this to be reconciled with the Darwinian theory that the gorgeous tints of foreign birds and insects are solely owing to their living in the blaze of tropical light? Even there there are countless insects and great numbers of birds, to say nothing of animals, as plain-coloured as any of ours, as there are those among us of hues as bright and gay as in them.

How, too, about the chrysalides, numbers of them of the most beautiful tints, and studded and bespangled with golden and silver stars, than which the diamond itself is not more bright and glittering? Did all come of the admiration of chrysalis for chrysalis?

Then there is, again, in due time, the egg of the insect. Even these have their “line of beauty,” and many a varied colour to set it off. How with these? Egg, I suppose, admiring egg!

But to go a step lower in the scale of Creation—to the lowest of the low.

In the account of the last expedition to endeavour to reach the North Pole, we read that while the snow on the floes sparkled and glittered with the most beautiful colours of the rainbow, the ground was made bright with lichens, as if with the lustre of resplendent gems—rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and others.

All come of the “Loves of the mosses,” no doubt.

Is it not a *reductio ad absurdum*?

And this, be it remembered, with such scant daylight and under the extremity of cold.

Even in our own climate we have in the north some mosses of the most vivid colours, one powdered with bright yellow, others frosted with green; some olive green; others pale primrose-yellow; and the farther north the brighter. Others, again, with their blossoms of soft sulphur-colour, decked round the edge with brilliant scarlet wax, and some, splendid orange on the lower side, with the upper of a most lovely green.

Nay, even without any light at all, to go no farther than one's own garden, let such a common plant as the *Rheum* be covered entirely up, to force it forward, and we shall find that in a short time the stem has become a rich red, and the young leaves a deep yellow.

I had a letter not long since from an Oxford first-class man and fellow of Oriel, in which he told me of a new theory as to heat, propounded by another of these wise men. He wrote to me—"It appears, according to the philosophers, that the heat of the sun is due to the action of gravitation in condensing and contracting the original nebula; and supposing the nebula to have extended as far as the orbit of Neptune, the contraction would give heat enough to last for twenty million years.

"But this is wholly inadequate to the demands of the biologists, so the wise man" (one Croll) "conceives, by the 'use of the imagination in science,' the happy idea of making his nebula *hot to start with!*"

"But where does he get his heat? If I understand the account of his theory, he 'prolongs his vision back'" (Tyndall's valuable invention) "to a time long before the existence of the nebula and, imagines that all the matter in the solar system was aggregated in two enormous masses on the opposite sides of space, and that then 'somehow'" (Darwin's satisfactory expression and explication of his notion) "they came into collision, and were thereby dissipated into nebulous matter!"

But, further, yet, to return to the birds. If anything can be more supremely ridiculous than the guess-work about their colours—for in the nature of things it cannot possibly be more, and no real proof of it has ever been even attempted to be given—it is the make-believe notion that the sense of appreciation of colour, to render the use of it by females for the admiration of males possible, has come by degrees

to one creature after another in the illimitable ages, which the whole idea is obliged to beg for itself, and that in face of the fact that Astronomers have proved that in such imaginary times no kind of life could possibly have existed upon the earth in its then state.

The author of this extraordinary fancy of the origin of the colour-sense—for nothing but fancy is it or can it be—his name is Allen—takes it into his head that the first animal could only just distinguish light and darkness. How it first came by the “nerve sensitive to light,” which Darwin invents for his help, neither he nor Darwin has told us. All the latter does is to borrow a receipt of Mrs. Glasse’s well-known “Cookery Book,” and he hunts up a “thick layer of transparent tissue” to begin with. Whence it came, or what brought it to where Darwin wanted it to be, and how came all the after-processes on to the 24,000 lenses in a single eye, he has not found it convenient to say. Then, in some few billions of years, more or less, there came the capacity to perceive colour, and this handed down from marine creatures to fishes, and then to reptiles, and from them to birds, and then to animals! This colour-sense, he fancies, would strengthen, and the possessors of it all the more, by degrees, take pleasure in the exercise of it, and gratify themselves by a choice of bright foods and gaily-coloured partners!

In due time it came to man, and hence, no doubt, one must suppose, the paintings in the National Gallery and in the Royal Academy.

“*Unde datum sentit,*” this dreamer does not tell us.

A Mr. Lowne, too, has distinguished himself by some wild speculations as to the nests of birds, to wit, that they only came by degrees to learn how to build them.

Another, no less than a President of the British Association, has accounted for the existence of life on the earth by the supposition which he has gravely propounded to us, that a bit of moss adhering unsinged and unscathed to a red-hot thunderbolt shattered off from some wrecked world in the illimitable and unknown realms of space, fell to the earth millions upon millions of years ago, and became the “promise and potency,” in the words of another of them, of every single species of the whole of the vegetable and animal kingdoms—of body, soul, and spirit.

And this nonsense, not from some obscure “man of science,” some

mere "professor," some conceited "man of science," but, as I have said, from a President of the British Association, at one of its annual meetings, and repeated either by him or some one else, I forget which, at the following anniversary.

Only the other day, at a meeting of the Anthropological Institute, a paper was read from a Mr. D. Macallister, another of these would-be wise men, on the aborigines of Australia, and I give it as a specimen of the way the new theories are hatched.

After various remarks about the people, he concluded that *he!* had "no doubt" (which does not prove much), that "*if*" the continent of Australia had remained undiscovered a few thousand years longer, changes of climate and intercourse with other savages "*would have*" created an "environment"! more favourable to progress than any which has ever existed, and improved the people!

As it was, the absence of wild beasts, and the abundance of their food, "*may have been*" a potent cause of their "non-progressive character!"

What is all this but the merest and most idle speculation? It appears, however to have been acceptable to the society with the high-sounding title before whom it was delivered, and it is to be hoped they may derive much benefit from such a lucubration.

So, again, Professor Huxley, only the other day, evolved out of his inner consciousness a new nondescript, from which I know not what amount of strange notions were to be broached.

But what came of it? *Nil!* Nothing but this, that at the last meeting at Sheffield, the "Professor" had to come before the public, in British Association assembled, and own, with the best face he could put upon it, that it was all a myth, the mere creation of his own brain; and so the wonderful creature had to be relegated to the depths of the "vasty deep," out of which it had been evolutioned as the "promise and potency" of the wildest doctrine of Darwinism.

What next?

"The Andalusian merchant, that returns
 "Laden with cochineal and China dishes,
 "Reports how strangely Fogo burns,
 "Amidst an ocean full of flying fishes.
 "These things seem strange, but much more strange am I,
 "Whose heart with fear doth freeze, with love doth fry."

Percy's Reliques.

Stranger still is the submarine "*Bathybius*," (*Anglice*, "High life below seas,") summoned up from the "dark unfathomed caves" of the ocean's bed, to be made into humble pie for the food of a "Philosopher."

Yes, a Philosopher who has had the assurance to tell the world that his great boast is, that he always writes simply and plainly; but who was brought to book for such *ampullas et sesquipedalia verba* as the following.

"In itself it is but of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in terms of matter."

"The extension of the province of what we call matter and causation, and the concomitant gradual banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity."

"Traced back to its earlier state, the nettle arises as the man does from a particle of nucleated protoplasm."

A Philosopher, who tells us that there is a good deal to be said for the "hypothesis" that animals are "mere machines," "as much so as if they were mills or steam-engines," that they have "no feeling," that they "do not hear, see, or smell," and that their "apparent states of consciousness," as they seem to us, are only the "results of a mechanical reflex process."

A Philosopher who follows Darwin, and therefore claims to be descended from a monkey.

He either believes what he says, or he does not. If he does, he is, on his own shewing, a man-monkey, and as such can have "no feeling."

Let him offer himself then on the shrine of science, to be experimented on *ad libitum*. We shall very soon see and hear whether, as an animal, he has feeling or not.

These doctrines, and such as these, have to answer for the cowardly barbarities practised on helpless animals in the much-abused name of Science, "falsely so called."

Let him and such as he be told what good men and true think of these abominable practices.

Here are a few examples out of any number of the opinions they have expressed.

Here are some few of the terms applied to the places, persons, and practices referred to by many eminent men:—A “Hell,” (SIR ARTHUR HELPS): “Abominable and atrocious,” (LORD SHAFTESBURY): “Hellish,” (DR. KITCHING): “Atrocious crimes,” “Barbarities,” “Wickedness,” “Worse than the worst Inquisitors,” “Dens of torture,” “Disgrace to Science,” “Never surpassed in impudence,” “Polluters of the minds of School Children,” “Ruffians,” “Young reprobates,” “Perpetrators of atrocities,” “Spouters of Blasphemy and Infidelity,” “Professors of Brutality,” “Worse than Heathen persecutors,” “Deceivers of the people,” “Scientific crimes,” “An outrage to the moral sense of every human being who is not as depraved as themselves,” “A few brutalized physiologists,” “Who go whining about the country with the importunity of beggars, because every right-minded man and woman in the country is not compelled by law to contribute his or her hard-earned wages to support the perpetration of crimes which they abhor,” (DR. W. B. A. SCOTT): “Disgraceful butchery,” “Devilish,” “Loathsome,” “Fiendish,” “Would disgrace the lowest type of savages,” “Merciless and unpitying,” “Demons,” “Devilry,” “Wretches,” “A depraved instinct,” “Frightfully horrible,” “Disgraceful butchery,” “Devilish torment,” “Horrible,” “Abominable devilry,” “Brutal beyond conception,” “Useless beyond belief,” “All most horrible,” “A disgrace to the profession,” “Brutal deeds,” (A London Surgeon, MR. WALDRON BRADLEY, in the *Echo*): “Detestable villainies, protracted butcheries, degrading the operator far lower than the brute on which he exercised his fiendish skill, soiling the hands in blood, and grovelling in torture for hours, aye for days together,” (The late LORD CARNARVON): “Who have made a path over the bodies of writhing animals to seats of most questionable honour,” (J. F. B., in *The Hour*): “A damnable process,” “Nothing can justify it,” “No discovery worth the name has been logically due to it,” “I close my ears to their heartless sophistries,” (DR. HALL, in the *Medical Gazette*): “Many of the facts alleged are so hideous, that it is better only to hint at them,” “The bare statement of the charges seems to stain the imagination, (*Cornhill Magazine*, April, 1876): “Their practice as various as their theories,” “Much in the aspect of school-boys, playing with weapons of which they understand neither the use nor nature,” (ROYAL COMMISSION): “A set of young devils,” (DR. HAUGH-

TON): "A new horror," (PROFESSOR F. NEWMAN): "Cruelty in its worst form is the ultimate result of Science," "Cruelty in the garb and pretences of Science," "Now, Science has become the rival of the tortures of the Inquisition, and by increase of learning has learned to torment still more ingeniously," "Ancient Paganism may well put it to shame," "To cut up a living horse, day after day, in order to practise students in dissection, is a crime and abomination hardly less monstrous from his not having an immortal soul," "An inevitable logic would in a couple of generations unteach all tenderness towards human suffering—if such horrors are endured—and carry us back into greater heartlessness than that of the worst barbarians," "A new oppression," "The scientific Torquemadas of the day," "The inseparable companion of the vilest impurities and vices to which flesh is heir," (*Saturday Review*).

Surely the cries and the looks of the poor animals will haunt the beds and the dying beds of those who have thus, for a time, hardened their hearts against every feeling of mercy and compassion, as some of them had before now to own to in terrible remorse.

This is a sample of the way these pseudo-philosophers go to work.

Well might the "Times" call Darwin's speculations mere "complicated guesswork," and tell him that he appears "quite out of his element;" that his hypothesis is "utterly unsupported by observed facts;" that his "ringing the changes" on "can have been," "would have been," "might have been," and then "must have been," is a "mere veil for ignorance;" and that "to bring a single practical proof of one species passing into another, is what he has not done. 'There was a certain King of Bohemia,' said Trim to my Uncle Toby, 'but in whose reign, except his own, I am not able to inform your honour.' In almost similar language, 'there was a certain monkey,' says Mr. Darwin, of that he is quite sure; 'but in what period or country, except his own, I am not able to inform my readers.' The certainty, unfortunately, is hypothetical, and the particular monkey unknown." "The history, however ingenious, is purely imaginary from beginning to end." "It is impossible to maintain unbroken gravity in discussing such a dream." "We fear that the truth is that the study of mental philosophy, under the disastrous influence of one or two popular writers, has of late years become extremely loose and superficial, and Mr. Darwin

does but illustrate the general vagueness of thought which prevails on such subjects."

In a letter to me from a Lord Chancellor of England, he wrote, speaking of a copy of my "All the Articles of the Darwin Faith," which I had sent him: "I have received your valuable exposure of Darwinism, and most heartily thank you for it. I believe that your mode of treating the preposterous fictions of Darwin is the only way to shake the self-confident tone of would-be philosophers. Newton's grandest saying, after '*Deus non est Æternitas sed Æternus,*' was, '*Hypotheses non fingo.*' Newton kept back his '*Principia*' for years, because a mistake had been made in an arc of the meridian, so closely did he keep to experimental truth. Now, the crude fancy, nothing like so ingenious as the Ptolemaic cycles, because really the Darwin fancy stumbles at every step, is exalted to a rank exceeding that of the discovery of gravitation. In a clever sermon by Pritchard, now Savilian Professor at Oxford, and formerly President of the Royal Astronomical Society, preached before the British Association when Grove presided, he exposes the folly of this stuff, and in his appendix to a print of it proves that the chances against the eye being formed by development are more in number than Darwin's work being taken by the printer to pieces and tumbled into a bag, and then thrown back on the table in the same order that they came."

Thus, also, Agassiz: "Geology brings us down to a level when the character of the earth made organic life impossible." "At this point, wherever we place it, the origin of animals by development was impossible because they had no ancestors." "Facts are absolutely wanting." "We cannot consider the development theory proved because a few naturalists think it plausible. It seems plausible only to the few, and it is demonstrated by none." Dr. Carruthers says "that no single case of evolution of one species from another has come within the observation of man;" and Davidson, "Year after year has passed away without my being able to trace the descent with modifications among the *brachyopoda* which the Darwinian theory requires."

A Mr. J. G. Romanes propounded at the meeting at Dublin the year before last some most out-of-the-way fancies about instinct, which were thoroughly well handled in a leading article in the "*Daily Express.*" It told him that "seldom has a person so poorly equipped with the

necessary preparation come forward to enlighten the world upon a subject so vast and so complicated;" with an abundance more of disparaging comments, most richly deserved.

Only a few months ago there was a paragraph in the "*Times*," stating that M. Bonnier had scattered to the winds Darwin's grand notion of the fertilization of plants by insects, and proved what he said by a large collection of conclusive facts derived from an examination of three hundred genera.

In like manner Dr. Virchow, of Berlin, we read, has lately well and wisely laid down the basis, that while facts should be taught, conjecture should only be mentioned as conjecture. He contended that the production of the first organism out of inorganic matter "has never been proved, and that the connection between monkeys and men was unintelligible to those who were content to argue from what came under their observation." It is added, in the "*Times*," "The cold water the Professor (Virchow) dashed into the face of these vain imaginings has sobered public opinion, and contributed to a wholesome reaction."

He also wrote, "Every attempt to form our problems into doctrines, to introduce our hypotheses as the bases of instruction by a religion of evolution—be assured, gentlemen, every such attempt will make shipwreck, and in its wreck will also bring with it the greatest perils for the whole position of science."

"You are aware that I am now specially engaged in the study of anthropology; but I am bound to declare that every positive advance which we have made in the province of prehistoric anthropology has actually removed us further from the proof of such a conviction."

"When we study the fossil man of the quaternary period, who must, of course, have stood comparatively near our primitive ancestors in the series of descent, or rather of ascent, we always find a man just such as men are now. As recently as ten years ago, whenever a skull was found in a peat bog, or in pile dwellings, or in ancient caves, people fancied they saw it in a wonderful token of a savage state still quite undeveloped. They smelt out the very scent of the ape—only the trail has gradually been lost more and more! The old Troglodytes, pile-villages, and bog-people, prove to be quite a respectable society. They have heads so large that many a living person would be only too happy to possess such."

There seems no limit to the idle phantasies of a disordered brain, such as those of which I have spoken.

Truly it is time that these crude notions were consigned to the "tomb of all the Capulets." One "philosopher," or "professor," self-dubbed, makes unlimited use of the "Imagination in Science," and forthwith propounds some outrageous extravagancy. He obtains notoriety, and so "draws away disciples after him," to follow the fate of Theudas of old, and in due time to be "brought to nought."

Is there anything too extravagant to be put forth as worthy of acceptance if only it be asserted in the name of Science!

I have only to add that I make no assertion whatever myself as to the point. I merely put the questions I have asked above.

Well might Mr. Carlyle call "Darwinism" a "Gospel of Dirt!"

A disciple of Darwin, Mr. Lecky, intermeddled, indeed, to deny that he did say so, and attempted to controvert what I had stated in the "*Record*" newspaper, but all he had to go upon was some anonymous letter, and Carlyle himself has never withdrawn the words. They are only "ower true," and that is all that has to be said about them.

Well, might D'Israeli, thus treat these "REVELATIONS OF CHAOS," as he rightly called them. "You know all is development. The principle is perpetually going on. First there was nothing; then there was something; then — I forget the next. I think there were shells, then fishes, then we came. Let me see; did we come next? Never mind that; we came at last. And the next change there will be something very superior to us — something with wings. Ah! that's it; we were fishes, and I believe we shall be crows."

This puerile nine-days wonder must run its course, I suppose, like all other nine-days wonders; but the "Use of the Imagination in Science," to the most fantastic and extravagant extent, will never, in the long run, be able to stand against the A B C of common sense.

We may well say of it as was in its way said by Madame Roland of "Liberty," "O Science, what nonsense is written in thy name!"

Letters to "The Times" about Birds, &c.,

BY THE

REV. F. O. MORRIS, B.A.

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The writer's purpose is altogether admirable. "The thoughtless cruelty of the world," says Sir Arthur Helps, "outweighs all the rest;" and to diminish this cruelty, of which some horrible examples are given, has been the persistent aim of Mr. Morris. No one has written more sensibly or more forcibly against the un-sportsmanlike slaughter of the battue, against the torture of birds by the traps of gamekeepers, against the wholesale snaring of singing birds, and against the wanton destruction of birds which feed chiefly on insects and save the gardener and farmer much more than is lost by their depredations. Mr. Morris is an enthusiast, and writes warmly on a subject about which he feels strongly.

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