

beautiful earth, and in similar ways of the world's, mightier still, which surround it in space.

We transport ourselves across myriads of centuries, and find that all this twisting and squirming is over, and there is now to be seen a globe, more water than land, and in which another drama is being acted. Deep down in the waters, chance atoms, of nameless substance, are again gyrating, first fitfully, then strongly, gathering others. All size overcome force, and at last lying at rest on the rocky bottom of the primeval ocean. To pursue the *simile* of the stir-about; left at rest, this substance began to decompose, and although we are not asked to believe that absolutely out of and in consequence of this act of decomposition came life, still if we observed closely, we would have noticed portions of this decomposing mass, parting and floating away, till they found resting places, where their attractive powers, drew towards them other chance atoms, whose occasion produced generation of more substance. Thus we have arrived at the first stage in that inexplicable law called evolution, and here we will for a while leave the consideration of this aspect of creation.

Contrasted with this view is that which states that the evident design in nature presupposes a designer, and this designer being superior to our natural powers and nature's laws, is regarded as supernatural, eternal, and almighty.

But between these two ideas, lie many shades of opinion which space will forbid examining in detail, some placing the divine agent so far away, that there is but a slight difference between them and those holding the theory just described; others acknowledging a distinct creation by the divinity, but shutting him out from all other participation in it. And as such views will not greatly impinge on the argument, we will pass on to a consideration of that view which is contrasted with the first theory.

This great designer, at an uncertain period in the past ages, called into existence this world, not as we now see it but substantially the same, and afterwards placed upon it, various forms of life, ending with creating a pair of beings, the first of humanity's great stream. These, not like the offspring of the first theory "an anthropoid ape with a larger cranial development than usual" were formed in the God-like shape which in the perfect human being graces the youth of both sexes.

There are numerous phases of belief in this direct creative act of a God, but most of them in course of time became corrupted by pantheistic or polytheistic ideas, still, in their acknowledgment of a personal designer, they occupy, with regard to the atheistic theory, a similar position to the purer religion of Christianity. Hence we may divide theories as to creation into two classes. The one representing it to be the result of a self-generating principle evolving into thousands of forms, from one of which the animal man has descended. The other, the definite acts of an eternal and omnipotent being, whose power to accomplish is only limited by his own will.

What we have now to consider is, the relation these two sets of ideas bear to our surroundings, to those emotions of the soul which make up the inner life of civilized man, and to those arts and sciences from which result civilization.

Perhaps one may be entitled to consider, as beyond question, that beneficent results have flowed from a belief in God the creator and preserver; but in order to bring the matter more clearly before us, the argument will be extended in this and the following article.

If we allow the absolute truth of atomic and evolution theories, it is evident that we must believe that our boasted manhood, our great powers of reason, are but developments of higher instincts in the one case, and of an ape's brutish form in the other. And that the gorilla, with his hellish features, the chimpanzee with his hideous form, of the fierce and disgusting mandrill, are of our kith and kin, consequently we came from them; like them still, we shall go into the same unknown beyond, in death but equal.

Supposing then, that all this is true, where would the soul of the painter, the poet, or the student rest in inspiring hope? In the contemplation of the protoplastic germ?

Can we imagine a Homer or a Milton, a Michael Angelo or a Raphael, or a Newton, arising in the future, if only *such* ashes, wherewith to feed the fire of their genius.

The material theory of creation not only possesses no elevating motives, by which the contemplative side of man can be reached, but has nothing in it to spur the race on to anything great or good, appealing only as it does to the instinct of self preservation, which is, however good a law for the natural state, by the negation of it in the creeds put forth by many positivists, condemned and cast aside as a clog in the wheels of progress. For is it not written in the books of these wise men, "You ought to sacrifice yourself for the good of others."

And if we throw out of court self-preservation, what is there to fall back upon; for it is evident—he who runs may read—that this negation in these latter days by positivists, of the great quality on which they build up the edifice of their fancied story of creation, is nothing more or less than adaptation of a lesson, formulated by the experience of believers in God.

Thus they stand self-condemned, but the difference between the two theories of the foundation period of the world, will be better shewn forth in the instances and examples which will form part of the next paper.

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Our doubts are traitors,  
And make us love the good we oft might win,  
By fearing to attempt.—*Shakespeare*.