

descended (or more rightly ascended) from a creature that was not higher than a baboon, does it follow that man is *still* nothing but a highly developed baboon? No, indeed! "A man's a man for a' that." But you are not such materialists as to look upon yourselves as *only* so much animal organization. Though we have an animal nature, *we* are something higher and nobler, of which our bodies are but the outward clothing—the material manifestation—the temple in which *we* dwell.

It is no more degrading for this body to have been formed from something even lower than an ape, than for us again to obtain covering for it, from the sheep, the silkworm, or the cotton plant.

According to this theory of development, our bodies have been made by a very slow and gradual creation; and it is by an immense amount of work, extending over vast ages, of which we can form no conception, that such a wonderful and perfect structure has been produced. This, surely, is not a degrading idea!

We are quite willing, sometimes, to speak of ourselves as "worms," and to acknowledge that we are made of the dust; but when Mr. Darwin says that we are *very* very highly developed worms, and that the dust passed through a long preparatory process before it was fitted to become part of our composition, we pretend to think that he insults us!

(2) It destroys our faith in the Bible.

It has been said that Englishmen take their orthodox ideas of the creation from Milton's description of it in his "Paradise Lost."

If we could read the account in Genesis, without taking to it any preconceived interpretations or ideas, we should find far less in it to support the orthodox theory of creation than we imagine.

I remember, when a child, being much perplexed by hearing that the book of Job was poetry, for I thought, if the Bible is all true, when we read that Job and his friends did so and so, it must mean that they used the very words that are recorded. If they have, however, been changed to a poetical form, they are very different words; and how can we tell that the right meaning has been maintained?

This does not perplex me now. The spirit is more important than the letter, and I have learned that poetry is one of the highest

forms in which truth can be presented to the human mind.

Years after, when somewhat older, I heard an eminent scientific lecturer speak of the first chapters of Genesis as "Hebrew mythology," and I thought it very wrong of him to do so; and yet, if mythology be—as is now generally believed—an early way of teaching and telling things under a symbolical form, partly made necessary by the limited nature of early language, then there may be inspired mythology as well as inspired poetry; and the Bible (as some commentators have maintained) has every form of human literature and composition represented in its pages.

There have been many efforts to reconcile the account in Genesis with the discoveries of modern science, but they have not, on the whole, been very satisfactory.

"It is surely better," writes one celebrated divine, "to accept the narrative as the writer gives it, regarding it as in its main features true though not in all its details capable of being scientifically verified, and using it for the ends it was evidently designed, to serve as a grand assertion of the Divine agency in the creation and arrangement of the physical universe."

Look at a few verses in this light, and we can surely learn something from it, without unjustifiably twisting or turning, either the facts of Science, or the words of Scripture.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form and void." Yes: He creates, but when He first begins, it is without much form, and we see little in it to show what it will eventually become.

"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Yes: these things have no power by themselves to improve; it is only as His Spirit moves upon them that they can grow and develop into something higher.

Then we read that for six days the commands go forth, which will perfect and complete what has been begun.

Days! yes: because His works appear in regular and orderly succession—not by sudden impulses and starts, but, as day slowly melts away into night, and darkness again gradually breaks into brightness; so species have been born and flourished, given birth to new varieties, and then slowly died away; and other species have arisen and gradually taken their places—coal forests have grown up, spread far and wide, and then slowly sunk