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ORDINARY MEETING, FEBRUARY 2, 1885.

THE RIGHT HON. A. S. AYRTON, IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

ON THE EVOLUTION OF SAVAGES BY DEGRADATION. By the Rev. F. A. ALLEN, M.A.

OUR attention has been so exclusively occupied of late years with the Darwinian theory of Development, that the fact of the existence of numerous cases of Retrogression by *degradation* has been very much cast into the shade, and yet the attentive student of history and ethnology finds almost as much evidence for the one process as for the other.

If the illustrious names of Lamarck, Darwin, Sir John Lubbock, Haeckel, Crawford, Tylor, Tyndall, and Huxley can be cited on the one side, the no less illustrious names of Niebuhr, Dr. Doig (who converted Lord Kaimes to his view), De Maistre, Archbishop Whately, and Professor Max Müller can be claimed for the other.

Without going quite so far as Dr. South, who, in a sermon preached at St. Paul's in 1662,* rhetorically declared that "an Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise," we may be permitted

* See South's *Works*, t. i. 32 (ed. 1842).

to hold that the cases in which mankind has fallen from a comparatively lofty and civilised state into a low and barbarous one are *very numerous indeed*,—far more numerous than Darwinian evolutionists care to admit.

They do indeed admit *theoretically* the possibility of such lapses; but they minimise them as much as possible, as very injurious to their pet hypothesis, and assert that they are very exceptional.

But what if it can be proved almost to demonstration by innumerable examples that, independently of Christianity, and the intervention of highly civilised nations, man's progress has not been *upward* and *onward*, but, to a very great extent, the reverse? What if deterioration should almost seem to be the rule, and elevation almost the exception?

Then, the brilliant French writer, De Maistre, who died only some half-century ago, would seem to be largely correct in his surmise, that the belief, that the history of our race had been a history of progress, was the "*erreur mère*" of the eighteenth century.

On the contrary, he maintained the doctrine that the human race once occupied a position of intellectual and moral greatness now inconceivable, in which men were able to discern general ideas of truth directly by the efforts of their own minds, and so descend *deductively* to the truth upon questions of detail, instead of being obliged, as at present, to follow the *inductive* process.

This state of things he considered to have been destroyed by awful catastrophes—moral, intellectual, and physical—which left vestiges behind in the shape of a variety of traditions spread over the whole face of the earth—traditions which can only be understood on the supposition that they are the relics of some higher system of knowledge, so much do they shock all common notions, although unexpectedly confirmed by the highest and widest experience—such as the traditions of sacrifice and expiation.

He lays the scene of this wonderful diffusion of *à priori* knowledge before the flood, and the theory has this in its favour, that enormous and complicated wickedness almost demands a complex civilisation to produce it.

That catastrophe, he thinks, destroyed it, though Noah and his family preserved and transmitted some vestiges of it, which the priests of Egypt and the old kings learned and evinced in the wonderful genius and skill displayed in the Cyclopean architecture of pre-historic days, and the science of the Chaldean and Egyptian priesthood, which they also wrapped up in their mysterious symbols, and, above all, in

the miracles of skill and thought revealed in the composition of language.*

Certainly, recent discoveries as to the high pitch to which the civilisations of Babylonia and Egypt had attained in very early days tend rather to confirm than to refute this view; and this sets us thinking whether we have not, in many cases, been viewing history through an inverted glass, calling the comparative decrepitude of races their youth, and their real youth old age; whether civilisation, in fact, was not their original condition.

That unrivalled logician, Archbishop Whately, worked out the question of "the Origin of Civilisation" very cleverly and suggestively in a lecture, delivered in 1854 to the Young Men's Christian Association.† "It has been very commonly taken for granted," he says, "not only by writers among the ancient heathen, but by modern authors, that the savage state was the original one, and that mankind, or some portion of mankind, gradually raised themselves from it by the unaided exercise of their own faculties. I say, taken for granted," he adds, "because one does not usually meet with any attempt to establish this by proof, or even any distinct statement of it; but it is *assumed*, as something about which there can be no manner of doubt."‡

But, after reviewing all the testimony of tradition and history, he concludes with pointing out that "all agree in one thing, in representing civilisation as having been introduced (whenever it *has* been introduced) not from *within*, but from without,"§—no clear case being adducible of savages, left *to themselves*, having *advanced* one step. "Each one of us Europeans," he adds, "whether Christian, Deist, or Atheist, is actually a portion of a standing monument of a former communication to mankind from some superhuman Being. That man could not have *made* himself, is often appealed to as a proof of the agency of a Divine *Creator*; and that mankind could not, in the first instance, have *civilised* themselves, is a proof of the same kind, and of precisely equal strength, of the agency of a divine *Instructor*. It will have occurred to you, no doubt, that the conclusions we have arrived at agree precisely with what is recorded in the oldest book extant."||

In some very valuable and suggestive articles which

* *Pall Mall Gazette* on De Maistre, circa 1870.

† Published by Nisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street, price 3d.

‡ *Idem*, p. 19. § P. 13.

|| P. 19.

appeared some years since in the *Leisure Hour*,* Principal Dawson, of Montreal, showed how marvellously the past and present condition of the various tribes of the New World illustrated and cleared up most of the difficulties surrounding the study of pre-historic man in the Old World.

There we find, still existing contemporaneously, stone, bronze, and iron ages; there we find, side by side, a comparatively high civilisation and utter savagery; there we find how pertinaciously the use of stone implements may survive, and how little trace is left of extinct tribes of considerable refinement after a few hundred years.

Relative to the Cro-magnon skulls, he says:—[These remains] “tell us that primitive man had the same high cerebral organisation which he possesses now, and we may infer the same high intellectual and moral nature, fitting him for communion with God, and headship over the lower world. They indicate, also, like the mound-builders who preceded the North-American Indian, that man’s earlier state was the best, and that he had been a high and noble creature, *before he became a savage*. It is not conceivable that their high development of brain and mind could have spontaneously engrafted itself in a mere brutal and savage life. These gifts must be remnants of a noble organisation, degraded by moral evil. They thus justify the tradition of a golden and Edenic age, and mutely protest against the philosophy of progressive development as applied to man.”†

He thus sums up: “We are now prepared, by the help of American analogies, to give a common-sense answer to the much-agitated question of the primitive barbarism of man and the origin of civilisation. Sacred history and the materialistic archæology of the day concur in the belief that man, *at first*, was destitute of the arts. But from this point they diverge. The former teaches that man without arts was pure and holy, and in unison with his Maker, and that, falling from this condition, one part of mankind simply sank into barbarism, the other (the main body) grasped at arts and civilisation, introduced by great inventors as a substitute for, or in connexion with, a higher spiritual life.

The latter (*i.e.*, Materialism), knowing no God and no spiritual nature in man, supposes him at first a mere animal, in whom the life of intellect and of higher tastes and

* Entitled *The Old World and the New; American Illustrations of European Antiquities*.

† P. 702.

feelings has been *struck out* by physical causes acting on his organism.

"There can, I think," he adds, "be no hesitation in affirming that our old Biblical doctrine is *the more complete and scientific of the two*, and also that which is most in accord with the evidence of history and archæology."*

Observe, that we by no means deny, as some represent, that the history of man has been one of gradual progress on the whole, especially since God's latest revelation of his mind to man; but we assert the extreme frequency of cases of degradation, and doubt man's power of spontaneous elevation to a higher plane. M. Michelet well says: "Nature has not progressed *with a continuous flow*, but with retrograde movements and stoppages which allow her to harmonise everything."†

What are savages, then? Let us hear some opinions of experts. "Savages," says Sir A. Grant, "are swamps and back-waters of the streams of noble humanity." Not *springs* and *sources*, observe.

"All savages," says Niebuhr,‡ "are the degenerated remnants of more civilised races, which had been overpowered by enemies, and driven to take refuge in woods (whence the name *silvaggio*, savage), and there to wander, seeking a precarious subsistence, till they had forgotten most of the arts of settled life, and sunk into a wild state."

Again, Professor Max Müller says: "The most degraded jargons contain the ruins of former greatness and beauty." In the most degraded of all races, the Andaman Islanders, the Tasmanian and Australian aborigines, the Fuegians, the Digger Indians of the Rocky Mountains, the Veddahs of Ceylon, the Negrittos of the East India Islands, and the Bushmen of Africa, we see these "waifs and strays" of humanity harried, persecuted, and pushed back into savage woods or sterile deserts, and almost denuded of the first elements of civilisation, and yet retaining the Promethean spark of humanity, which contact with higher races alone can kindle into a flame.

They are not races in early infancy, but in worn-out decrepitude; their ancestors were, doubtless, once far more highly civilised, and accordingly we are astonished to find amongst many of them stranded relics of lost arts, and very often a somewhat complicated code of etiquette.

* Pp. 814, 815.

† *L'Insecte*, pp. 128, 1058.

‡ Quoted by Archbishop Whately, p. 22.

The process of gradual degeneration is easy enough to imagine. At first, according to the evidence of all history, men kept together in great masses, and so kept each other cultured. Then, as divisions arose and population increased, emigrant bands would begin to go out. In the days of Peleg the earth was "divided."

Then would come hardships, and utter pre-occupation in the struggle with wild nature and wilder beasts of prey for subsistence. Each generation would become more *savage*, and each generation would be less able to teach the next, and so each must see some art forgotten or lost, especially if, as must have occurred in the early world, the bands were isolated for many successive centuries.

The author of *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada*, p. 110 (C. King), says: "The conspicuous *retrograde* seemed to me an example of the most hopeless phase of human life. If, as I suppose, we may all, sooner or later, give in our adhesion to the Darwinian theory of development, does not the same law which permits such splendid scope for the better, open to us also possible gulfs of degradation, and are not these chronic emigrants, whose broken-down wagons and weary faces greet you along the dusty highways of the Far West, melancholy examples of beings who have for ever lost the conservatism of home and the power of improvement?"

Here is the same law operating to-day which in times of yore reduced the Bushmen and Tasmanians to what they became, only that its operation is now checked by the increased density of population and facilities for intercourse and locomotion.

It was apparently only in Mesopotamia—always densely peopled—that civilisation preserved a nucleus and a head-centre from which to civilise the whole world.

There can be no doubt that this view of the early, and, perhaps, Divine origin of civilisation and of the subsequent origin of savages, is extremely distasteful to the Development school.

As Dr. Whately says: "The view we have taken of the condition of savages breaks the water-pitcher (as the Greek proverb expresses it) at the very threshold."

"Supposing the animalcule safely conducted by a series of bold conjectures, through the several transmutations, till, from an ape it becomes a man, there is, as we have seen, a failure at the last stage of all; an insurmountable difficulty in the final step from the savage to the civilised man." *

“So far as we can learn,” he adds, “no savage tribe does appear, in point of fact, to have ever civilised themselves.” Every alleged case breaks down on inquiry. Catlin’s Mandans were never savages, but probably survivors of the Pueblo Indians, who appear once to have inhabited a far wider area.

The Cherokees, who have invented a native alphabet, have been long in contact with Europeans. The Hawaiians and Maoris have been long under the influence of missionaries, and so have the Fuegians, whom they have turned from brute beasts into men once more.

Mr. Herman Merivale, late Professor of History at Oxford, says, in his work on *Colonisation and the Colonies*, p. 294: “Two important lessons may, I think, be drawn from the history of the Spanish missions, and especially those of Paraguay. The first is this: that history has no example to offer us of any successful attempt, *however slight*, to introduce civilisation amongst savage tribes in colonies, or in their vicinity, except through the agency of religious missionaries.” And yet even this tendency to degradation has limits, as is pointed out in *Life, Wanderings, and Labours in Eastern Africa*, by Charles New (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1873), where he says, pp. 94, 95:—

“We talk of races degenerating, and races have degenerated and do degenerate fearfully, *but there would seem to be a point below which human nature cannot sink*. Admitting the possibility of unlimited degeneration, the wonder is that the Wanika, and the peoples of similar character, have not become downright idiots. Yet, they are further removed from idiocy than from a high intellectuality. The great Creator would seem to have placed an impassable barrier to utter degeneracy; but, on the other hand, there is no such barrier in the way of improvement. Is it not astonishing that ages upon ages of neglect, abuse, stagnation, and depravity should not have crushed *the man* altogether out of these people? Yet so it is, *men cannot become brutes, do what they will*; they remain *men* in spite of every degrading influence and however long such influences may continue to operate. The Wanika are a most demoralised and uncultivated people; letters, science, art, philosophy, and religion are altogether unknown to them, yet they possess all the elements of a mental and moral constitution similar to ourselves. In all that regards the affairs of every-day life they are as keen and sharp-witted as the more cultivated, and can hold their own against all comers.

“The precocity of the children is very remarkable. They learn with wonderful ease and quickness, at least equal to, if not surpassing, that displayed by European children. It must be admitted, however, of the uneducated child that as he grows up he becomes much duller, and that by the time he gains maturity his mind settles down into the normal condition of inertness and obtuseness. But we are disposed to think that this would be the case with all people more or less. The mind requires to be educated while it possesses elasticity; in maturity it becomes hard, rigid, and unyielding.”

Savages are small isolated communities, situated usually in out-of-the-way continents, or lonely corners of the earth's surface, just where the weak would be driven by the strong. They have no settled habitations, few weapons, few traditions, lead a wandering life, and gain a scanty and precarious existence by eating everything that can be eaten.

So far as we can see, they never invent anything, and cannot be easily persuaded to adopt superior weapons, or tools, or better modes of life, even when they dimly realise their advantages.

Neglected in infancy, and old age, and sickness, much exposed to the weather, and insufficiently nourished, they are dwindling down to the point of extinction. How, then, we ask, could they have gained the knowledge they at present possess of the manufacture of rude weapons,—some with strange scientific principles, like the boomerang; of subtle poisons lurking in insignificant plants, like the "woorali" of Guiana; of the way to produce fire; and a few other processes, simple and necessary to life, and yet not intuitive?

If all savages were pretty nearly equal, then we might plausibly assume that the Creator had implanted just that amount of knowledge in their minds necessary to maintain life; but the reverse is the case.

Almost every conceivable gradation is observable between savagery and civilisation; and, as we have shown that they never improve *of themselves*, this must be the result of various degrees of degradation from a higher state of knowledge.

Sir John Lubbock, in his opening address to the British Association at Dundee, in 1862—an address subsequently elaborated into his interesting work on *Pre-historic Man*—opposed Archbishop Whately's view, which he dubs "the degradation theory," stoutly.

The view of the evolutionists is strongly put by Sir Francis Galton, in his work on *Hereditary Genius*, p. 350, where he says that "the human race were utter savages at the beginning; and, after myriads of years of barbarism, man has but very recently found his way into the paths of morality and civilisation."

Now, as has been frequently pointed out, the difficulty of this view lies in the helplessness of man and the conditions of savage life. "Nature," as President Smith, of the College of New Jersey, U.S., once observed, "has furnished the inferior animals with many and powerful instincts to direct them in the choice of their food, &c.; but man must have been the most forlorn of all creatures. . . . Cast out as an orphan of nature, naked and helpless, he must have perished before he

could have learned to supply his most immediate and urgent wants. . . . *Hardly is it possible,*" he adds, "that man, placed on the surface of the world, in the midst of its forests and marshes, capable of reason, indeed, but without having formed principles to direct its exercise, should have been able to preserve his existence, unless he had *received from his Creator*, along with his being, *some instructions* concerning the employment of his faculties for procuring his subsistence, and inventing the most necessary arts of life."*

Sir John Lubbock tries to rebut the almost universal evidence of degradation and to discredit the legends of a golden age by asserting that all cases of national deterioration are due to *exceptional* causes.

This deserves an answer. Now, we ask, Is it not the case that the earliest skulls of primitive man are *by no means* the most degraded or wanting in brain power?† We have already produced evidence to this effect.

Layard says that "in Assyria, as in Egypt, the arts do not appear to have advanced after the construction of the earliest edifices with which we are acquainted, *but rather to have declined*. The most ancient sculptures we possess are the most correct and severe in form, and show the highest degree of taste in the details";‡ and a writer on Egypt says: "The *more remote* the antiquity of the records which have been preserved to us, *the greater* is the skill, the power, the knowledge, and the taste which they reveal."

The researches of Mr. Geo. Smith, Sir G. Rawlinson, Mr. Rassam, Mr. Chas. Boscawen, and of the Egyptologists, prove the same thing.

Even the sites of Babylon, Nineveh, and Thebes, and many other great cities of antiquity are to-day utterly desolate or inhabited by mere savages; while China and India, which appear to have received the main body of emigrants from the plains of Mesopotamia, are gradually but surely losing their aboriginal culture, or remaining at best stationary; but the nations of the West, aided by Christianity, are vastly surpassing those whose ancestors were sages and philosophers when the Britons and Gauls were painted savages.

M. Huc, the Jesuit missionary, in his work on *The Chinese*

* Quoted by Dr. Whately, p. 22.

† We find little trace of the time "when wild in woods the noble savage ran."

‡ Layard's *Nineveh*, vol. ii. p. 157.

Empire, bears witness to the gradual deterioration of the porcelain, silk, and other ingenious manufactures of the Chinese. J. T. Cooper, in his *Travels of a Pioneer of Commerce*, says that he observed, *wherever he went*, Chinese art *visibly on the decline*, and the state of the imperial public buildings shows how great is the contrast between the present and former governments. The network of canals and public works connecting Hankow with Shasu is a monument of the ancient industry and declining vigour of the Chinese race, now falling into decay.

The modern Persians dwell in vastly inferior houses to those of the Persians who built Persepolis and conquered Babylon.

Respecting Dr. Schliemann's supposed discovery of the site of Troy, we are told that "of these five towns, the *two undermost* were by far the most advanced in civilisation, which fact, as well as the presence of numerous stone implements in all the strata, *side by side* with tools, arms, furniture of all sorts, in copper, lead, and the precious metals, runs counter to all ideas of archæology of the approved Scandinavian school."

In Afghanistan, again, and in Swat, Dr. Leitner has discovered marvellous relics of the former Bactrian civilisation existing in what is now a desolate country. We read of "colossal idols, caves, and other records of the existence of a race of men unknown either to history or tradition."* At Bamian, in Afghanistan, near Kaffiristan on the river Kunduz, and again at Kaffir-kote, on the river Indus, in the Punjab, of ruins of a castle, like many to be seen on the summits of inaccessible mountains in these countries. "But where," Wood asks, "are now those giants of the earth, those sons of Anakim's generation? Gone for ever, and a moral catastrophe, antecedent to Alexander's invasion, seems to have blighted science, and thrown backward the intellect of man." †

The former civilisation of Khiva, and Bokhara, and Central Asia generally, far surpasses, it is needless to say, the present condition of these countries. Sir Peter Lumsden bears witness to this.

The history of Spanish America, again, reinforces this melancholy tale of retrogression. As a recent writer says ‡ of Peru, "I call it (*i.e.*, the Spanish conquest) *untoward*, because there was under the Incas a better government, better protection for life, and better facilities for the pursuit of happiness

* Wood's *Journey to the Source of the Oxus*. † *Ibid.*, p. 57.

‡ *Peru; Incidents of Travel and Exploration in the Land of the Incas*. By E. George Squier. Macmillan, 1877, p. 573

than have existed since the conquest or do exist to-day. The material prosperity of the country was far in advance of what it is now. There were greater facilities of intercourse, a wider agriculture, more manufactures, less pauperism and vice, and—shall I say it?—a purer and more useful religion.” Truly a home-thrust for us Christians!

Even in Patagonia, which we think entirely barbarous, traces of higher civilisation are found—of a golden age.

We read in Captain Muster’s *At Home amongst the Patagonians*,* that “ancient bolas (lasso-stones) are not unfrequently found. These are highly valued by the Indians, and differ from those in present use by having grooves cut round them, and by their *larger size* and *greater weight*.” Here again is deterioration. Also, he adds, “Casemiro informed me that *formerly* the old men were in the habit of singing the traditions of the tribe, and also some sort of prayer.”† *Now they have forgotten* these. This does not look like *improving*. Without writing and depending only upon oral tradition, man must deteriorate.

In the Yenissei Province, in Siberia, is the district of Minsk, most interesting to ethnologists on account of the numerous mementos it offers of primitive inhabitants, altogether different from those of the present day.‡ That people, almost entirely unknown as yet, were the Tchonds, and the numerous objects of sculpture and inscriptions on the enormous blocks of stone, of which their tumulus-monuments had been composed, are proofs of a certain culture where all is now uncivilised. They were probably driven out of their original country; other inscriptions are found on the banks of the Yenissei and Traba.

The sacred books of the Hindoos speak of powerful states existing in remote antiquity, where the British merchant-pioneers only found savage chieftains. The voyages of the ancient Javanese, Japanese, and Malays, also, appear to have extended in former ages to far greater distances than their modern descendants attempt.

These remarkable facts seem to endorse the opinion of the ancient poets, who, since the world began, have sung of golden, silvern, and leaden ages, and have attributed to the past the brightest passages in the history of mankind.

* P. 166.

† P. 172.

‡ See *The Land of the Czar*, by O. W. Wahl. Chapman & Hall, 1875. Pp. 183-4.

Examine the principal countries in the old and new worlds, and there will be found evident traces of a prior and generally superior civilisation to that now existing, of antiquities and structures whose origin and uses are clouded in mystery.

India and Ceylon are covered with ancient cities, temples, caves and roads, dating from Bhuddist times, and even in the forests of Java and Sumatra, and in the wildernesses of Cambodia, similar relics, deserted and often forgotten, are found.

In the northern island of Japan, *i.e.* Yesso, which is inhabited by a very primitive race, called the Ainos or "hairy men," and which has only been subject to Japanese rule since 1854, there are numerous vestiges of large cities, roads, canals and mines skilfully worked, and other traces of towns and castles imbedded in the primeval forest.*

Possibly these may have been constructed by the Aztecs, of Mexico, whose traditions relate that they passed into America by way of the Aleutian Islands (which commence at Yesso) about the eleventh century.

Polynesia is full of relics of pre-historic civilisation,—temples, pyramids, and gigantic idols,—as I have pointed out in a paper read before the Americanist Congress held at Copenhagen.

In Sofala, in South Africa, Herr Mauch has discovered ruined cities, possibly relics of the time of Solomon. All these relics of antiquity and civilisation were manifestly the work of civilised or semi-civilised races, who have now perished from the earth.†

It is a curious fact that nothing is more difficult than to trace the real authors of the civilisation of those ancient states which formerly constituted the ruling powers of the world; but it is impossible to conceive that this would have been the case if arts and sciences had really originated with certain individuals, instead of coming from a primitive nation, *i.e.*, the survivors from the Flood.

If you attempt to discover who were the founders of Roman civilisation, you find amidst a cloud of legends that the greater part of it came from the mysterious Etruscans or Pelasgi who preceded them in Italy; question the ancient annals of Greece, and you will be similarly told that Greek culture was

* See *The Leisure Hour*, on "The Ainos of Yesso," by H.M. Consul at Hakodadi.

† In our own land are Stonehenge and Abury, whose construction remains a mystery.

not home-born or self-evolved, but derived from Phœnicia or Egypt, and so you arrive at last at the primitive race in the plains of Shinar.

Whilst all nations are thus unanimous in referring the origin of civilisation to strangers and aliens, they ought, according to Sir John Lubbock, to have gradually built it up for themselves.

Mr. Tylor, in his work on *Primitive Culture*, considers that "The master-key to the investigation of man's primeval condition is held by pre-historic archæology, that key being the evidence of the Stone Age, proving that men of remotely ancient ages were in the savage state."*

All this may be fully allowed, and yet Archbishop Whately's theory may be true.

Pre-historic archæology tells at least as much on our side as on theirs.

It shows how immensely the age of the world has been under-estimated, but in no other way alters our belief.

The division of antiquity into stone, copper, and iron ages is by no means unanimously received by archæologists, but, even if it were, it precisely tallies with our hypothesis—that whilst in the centres of population and culture a portion of the divinely-communicated gift of civilisation was kept up, in the remoter countries, the more isolated communities fell into the depths of barbarism, only to be recovered from thence by contact with superior races, the introduction of metals, and acquaintance with the truths of Christianity, for, without the latter, the contact of superior with inferior races almost invariably produces rapid extinction.

I believe, then, the relics of the Stone and other ages to be very ancient, but the civilisation and monuments of China, India, and Egypt to be fully as ancient, perhaps even more ancient still; and I am supported in this belief by a vast array of historical and archæological evidence.

An inquiry into the antecedents of (so-called) savage races will often evoke clear evidence that they are not in what Sir John Lubbock and his friends would be pleased to call "a state of nature."

Thus the Rev. Jas. Shooter, in a work upon *The Kaffirs of Natal*, says that they are "no savages."

They have a tradition of a former worship of "one god," which has now almost died out.

* *Athenæum* Review, May 6, 1871.

They will not worship their god in the presence of soldiers or arms—a curious fact in so military a race.

This reminds us of Quetzalcoatl, the white god of Mexico, who “stopped his ears when they told him of war,” and surely it implies a dim recollection of a purer theology.

Their language, also, exhibits traces of refinement strangely out of place in so barbarous a race.

Mr. Taylor, New Zealand missionary, relates, in his work on *New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, that the Maories had traditions of a time when they were far more numerous than when discovered by Europeans, when universal peace prevailed, and the tribes met annually in a large central temple of wood.

Also, that the name of the man who first began cannibalism by way of revenge, barely fifty years before Tasman landed, was well remembered.

Alas, how rapidly had deterioration spread in these islands!

The kindred races in Tahiti and the Sandwich Islands did not generally practise this fearful custom, and seemed horrified at it.

The large double-canoes of the Maories, in which they performed long voyages, have gradually fallen into desuetude.

With regard to the Esquimaux, polar voyagers find everywhere traces of deserted houses and settlements.*

Dr. Hayes, in his interesting work on *The open Polar Sea* (p. 385), says: “Kalutunah’s first question was, whether I had found any Esquimaux?”

“Before starting I had frequently spoken to him concerning the extension of his people to the north, and he recited to me a well-established tradition of the time, that the Esquimaux once extended to the north and south; and that, finally, the tribe, now inhabiting the coast from Cape York to Smith Land, were cut off by the accumulation of ice as well above as below them; and he believed that Esquimaux were living at this present time in both directions.

“That there was once no break in the communication of the natives of the region about Upernavik with those on the shores of Melville Bay, there can be no doubt; and Kalutunah appeared to think the same would hold good in the opposite direction.

“The ice has accumulated in Smith Sound as it has in Melville Bay; and what were evidently once prosperous hunt-

* The recent German Arctic Expedition discovered the same thing.

ing grounds, up to the very face of the Humboldt Glacier, are now barren wastes, where a living thing rarely comes."

At various places along the coast Dr. Kane found the remains of ancient huts, and lower down the coast, towards the mouth of the sound, there are many of more recent date.

Near Cairn Point, there is a hut which had been abandoned but a year before Dr. Kane's visit in 1853, and has not been occupied since.

"In Van Rensselaer harbour there are several huts which had been inhabited by the last generation. . . . I talked to the oldest hunter of the tribe . . . about the future of the tribe. The prospect was the same as to Kalutunah—'our people have but a few more suns to live.'"

Mr. Merivale observes: "Habitual complaints of diminution of numbers, legendary records of a past golden age, heard amongst all savages, even when never previously visited by whites (such as by Major Pike, in his journey to the Rocky Mountains more than forty years ago; by Dr. Kane, from the Esquimaux; and by the first settlers in New Zealand), prove that they (*i.e.*, savages) are but the dwindling remnants of great nations.

"Breeding in and in will never suffice to occasion this decay, or the lonely parts of the earth would have been long since depopulated.

"There are portions of the Scottish Highlands, the Swiss and Italian Alps, and doubtless other mountain tracts, in which the constant intermarriage of kindred has prevailed for ages from the necessities of the case, and yet finer races are not to be found. The gradual loss of comforts and refinements; the obscuration of religious and moral truths; constant wars between tribes; their sanguinary customs, particularly infanticide; the frequency of deaths at an early age; and the inferior productiveness of marriages, caused apparently by the hardships peculiar to their mode of life, are the true causes of the decay of all savage tribes."

Yet, according to Sir John Lubbock, they ought to be increasing and advancing rapidly!

But this is never found to be the case, not even amongst the fine Maories; but only in the exceptional instances of the Chippeways, Creeks, and races of Spanish America, who are either carefully protected from encroachment by legislation or confronted with weak and inferior white races.*

* Most of these have much white blood in them also.

In the *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, edited by Washington Irving, we read with regard to some of the Indians near the Rocky Mountains:—"Simply to call these people religious would convey but a faint idea of the deep tone of piety and devotion which pervades the whole of their conduct. They are more like a nation of saints than a horde of savages."

Dr. Martius, the distinguished German ethnologist, gives it as his deliberate opinion, "that the nations of the New World are *not* in a state of primitive barbarism or living in the original simplicity of uncultured nature; but that they are, on the contrary, the last remains of a people once high in the scale of civilisation and mental improvement, now almost worn out, and perishing, and sunk into the lowest stage of decline and barbarism." Dr. Pritchard also says:—"Attentive observers have been struck with manifestations of greater energy, mental and vigour, of more intense and deeper feelings, of a more reflective mind, of greater fortitude, and more consistent perseverance in enterprises and all pursuits, when they have compared the natives of the New World with the sensual, volatile, and almost animalised savages who are still to be found in some quarters of the Old Continent. They have been equally impressed by the sullen and unsocial character, by the proud, apathetic endurance, by the feeble influence of social affections, by the intensity of hatred and revenge, and the deep malice-concealing dissimulation so remarkable amid the dark solitude of the American forests."

Squier, in his *Travels in Central America*, vol. ii. p. 331, says:—"The state of separation,—*disruption*, as it is sometimes called,—in which the American race was found, has been variously attributed to a radical physiological defect in its character, to extraordinary natural phenomena To me, however, this separation and subdivision of the aboriginal race, and the exclusion of its different families, in respect to each other, seem rather due to long periods of time, and long-continued migrations of single nations and tribes from one portion of the continent to the other."

Probably no country more distinctly bears in its history proofs of the facility with which a comparatively civilised country may become reduced to barbarism, in a short space of time, than Ireland. In the time of the Anglo-Saxons, it was known as the "Isle of Saints," the abode of learning and the arts, and the school of the youth of France and Britain; but, after the Danish and Norman invasions had passed over it, it became a mere battle-field of conflicting parties; its churches

were laid in ruins, and its people became barbarous and ignorant. Thus, too, Rome was overwhelmed by the northern tribes, and civilisation, though preserved amongst the Arabs, did not reappear until Christianity pervaded the West.

Loss of the conception of a Deity—so extraordinary a characteristic of some savages—is paralleled by the revelations occasionally made of the condition of our street arabs, showing that it is by no means incompatible with a former state of civilisation.

Sir John Lubbock's objections to Archbishop Whately's theory appear very unsatisfactory and shallow when critically examined; for instance, he stated, at Dundee, that the Andaman Islanders were an instance of a race which had spontaneously improved, having invented or adopted "the outrigger" within the past few years.

Now, if he will refer to Dr. Mouatt's interesting work on the Andaman Islands, he will find that the Burmese have long been in the habit of frequenting the group to obtain the prized edible nests for barter with the Chinese; and, as the Burmese, Cingalese, and other inhabitants of these seas are well acquainted with the principle of the "outrigger," it appears much the most probable theory that they (the Andamaners) copied them, instead of inventing a principle already well known.

Besides this, these very Andamaners appear to afford a striking example of the process of deterioration which Sir J. Lubbock particularly singles out for attack!

Not long since, they habitually visited the Nicobar group, some distance from them, on predatory excursions, and the old Mohammedan geographers mention their piracies in the *Straits of Malacca*. Surely their canoes must have deteriorated, instead of improved (like those of the New Zealanders)! The presence of long-civilised plants, such as the banana, which only seeds in one spot on earth, *i.e.*, the Andamans, seems also to prove former intercourse with the main land.

Sir J. Lubbock also stated that the following circumstances seemed to argue against the truth of the "degradation theory," *i.e.*, that in many communities of savage islanders and others there were no traces of a former civilisation, no remains of pottery (which it was almost impossible to destroy in any lapse of time), buildings, or other arts; Australia, the South Sea Islands, and America being destitute of antiquities, or even the bones of domestic animals.

But these assertions, if capable of proof, do not appear to me to necessarily invalidate Whately's theory.

It is, I suppose, quite possible for a savage nation to emigrate, and nobody pretends to imagine that the *whole world* was brought under cultivation after the "confusion of tongues and the dispersion of mankind."

The chief traces of primitive civilisation would occur, naturally, in man's oldest colonies, and where he has been least disturbed; and, accordingly, we find them existing in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and India.

I cannot agree with Sir John Lubbock that our domestic animals are a necessary concomitant of civilisation; for the civilisation of the Aztecs, and probably also the still higher refinement of their predecessors, the Toltecs, was achieved without the aid of a single domestic animal; and the Peruvians had only one perfectly unknown to the ancients—the llama—and yet the refinement of both these races was fully equal to that of ancient Greece and Rome.

Again, how can Sir John Lubbock say that no traces of civilisation are to be found in America or in the South Sea Islands?

Does he not know that the whole continent of America, from the Great Lakes to Bolivia, is thickly studded with ruined towns, pyramids, forts, tombs, sculptures, temples, and earth-mounds of vast antiquity?

Does he not remember the discovery of upwards of fifty-four ruined cities in Central America, and the assertion of Humboldt, that the ruined cities on the River Gila alone would accommodate 80,000 inhabitants?

Has he not heard that, to this day, ancient pottery is found thickly strewn over the whole State of Arizona and North Mexico?

Then, as to the South Sea Islands, there exist, in Hawaii, Tahiti, and Easter Island, Cyclopean relics of civilised races which have been already alluded to.

Sir John Lubbock's conclusions respecting the South Sea Islands are peculiarly unfortunate, for a high authority, Mr. Crawfurd, concludes, from the evidence of language, that there was in ante-historic times a great Polynesian nation, *whose speech lies at the basis of all the Malay and Polynesian languages at the present day.* The massive ruins and remains of pyramidal and terraced structures date probably from this primeval race.

H. C. von der Gabelentz, after a careful investigation of the languages, corroborates this. The inference is, that "the whole vast population of black and brown peoples,—the Malays, Polynesians, and Melanesians,—may be referred to *one source*, and, in all probability, be joined with the Turanian

race of Asia."* The researches of Max Müller and others prove the same affinities to exist.

Captain Moresby, in *The Voyage of the Basilisk* to South-West New Guinea (now British), speaks of Malay-Polynesian inhabitants there having the arts of pottery, weaving, &c. (A gentleman from Brazil states that the cheap tiles used for roofing there easily crumble into dust, being imperfectly baked.) There is another clear proof of degeneration in the history of the aborigines of Formosa. In the seventeenth century the Dutch held Formosa for thirty-eight years, until driven out by the pirate Coxinga, who, in turn, had to cede it to the Chinese. It is said that during their stay the Dutch civilised the aboriginal tribes, which, however, have now turned to complete savagery, and it is even said cannibalism, resembling somewhat the Dyaks of Borneo and Malay-Polynesians. Curiously, however, in 1871, 210 years after the Dutch exit, Mr. Legendre, the American Consul at Amoy, found amongst the Baksa tribe, inhabiting a district twenty-eight miles east of Takow, documents written in the Roman character; and another traveller, Mr. J. B. Steere, of the University of Michigan, found about the same place a number of papers, apparently deeds and contracts, written in the same manner. These are much treasured by their owners, *although the art of writing and the language in which they are written have been wholly lost.*†

From the dates it appears that some of these were written a century and a half after the Dutch left, showing how long their teaching had survived *among* these wild tribes, and also showing the *possibility* of degeneration when secluded from civilising influences.

Thus even the dying out of arts once flourishing is well attested.

The Rev. J. G. Paton, of the New Hebrides Mission, reports, in *The Southern Cross*, that earthenware is now only made on Santo, although remains prove that it used to be made also on the other islands of the group. *Pace* Sir John Lubbock, the art may die out, and all trace disappear, as native pottery (for instance, in Fiji and elsewhere) is very fragile, and crumbles easily to dust.

In speaking of the manufactures of the Otuans—a Malay race inhabiting the Disappointment Group in the South Pacific—Dr. Pickering says ‡ :—

* See Bruce's *Manual of Ethnology*, pp. 158–160, 162, 167, 168.

† *Times*' Article, February 9, 1885, on Formosa and its Pirate Chief.

‡ See his *Physical History of Man*, p. 52.

"If we examine the handiwork, we shall perceive an apparent *aiming* at *former arts*, as though the knowledge were present, and the materials only wanting." Here is clear *evidence of retrogression!*

That acute thinker, Mr. Greg,* is puzzled by the numberless instances of degeneration met with in the world, and does not see that the two processes—rising and falling—may have gone on contemporaneously, just as the trunk may be warm and the extremities cold at one and the same time.

"I should be sorry," he concludes, "to express a confident conviction on either side. All I can say is, that on the one hand the proof that man cannot have been originally civilised is logically almost irresistible; while all evidence, monumental or documentary, above the earth's surface, or disinterred from whatever depths, show us everywhere civilisation antecedent, in time at least, if not in actual causation and historic progress, to barbarism. . . . Ages before the barbarian the civilisation existed on whose relics he trampled: the forests of uncounted centuries cover the graves, the temples, the fortresses of empires whose very names are lost for ever."

In the January (1885) number of the *Nineteenth Century*, Professor Max Müller, in an article on "The Origin of Savages," whilst resenting the question whether man began his career as a savage or a child—probably because it lands him in a dilemma—clearly proves that the theory which would identify the modern savage with primitive man is untenable, as also he deems Darwin's idea that he could be the child of non-human parents.

In support of Archbishop Whately's theory, I beg to call attention to the opinion of that veteran African traveller, Dr. Livingstone, as recorded in his last work, *A Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries*. On pp. 508-510 he says: "Since we find that men, who already possess a knowledge of the arts needed by even the lowest savages, are swept off the earth when reduced to a dependence on wild roots and fruits alone, it is nearly certain that if they ever had been in what is called a state of nature, from being so much less fitted for supporting and taking care of themselves than the brutes, they could not have lived long enough to have attained even to the ordinary state of savages. They could not have survived for a sufficient period to invent anything, such as we who are not savages, and know how to make the egg stand on its end, think that we easily could have invented.

* In his *Devil's Advocate*. Trübner, 1876.

“ The existence, therefore, of the various instruments in use among the Africans, and other partially-civilised people, indicates the communication of instruction at some period from some Being superior to man himself.

“ The art of making fire is the same in India as in Africa. The smelting furnaces for reducing iron and copper from the ores are also similar.

“ Yellow hæmatite, which bears not the slightest resemblance, either in colour or weight, to the metal, is employed near Kolobeng for the production of iron.

“ Malachite, the precious green stone, used in civilised life for vases, would never be suspected by the uninstructed to be a rich ore of copper, and yet it is extensively smelted for rings and other ornaments in the heart of Africa. A copper bar of native manufacture, four feet long, was offered to us for sale at Chinsambas.

“ These arts are monuments attesting the fact that some instruction from above must, at some time or other, have been supplied to mankind; and, as Archbishop Whately says, ‘ the most probable conclusion is that man, when first created, or very shortly afterwards, was advanced by the Creator himself to a state above that of a mere savage.’

“ The argument for an original revelation to man, though quite independent of the Bible history, tends to confirm that history.

“ It is of the same nature with this, that man could not have *made* himself, and therefore must have had a Divine *Creator*. Mankind could not have civilised themselves, and therefore must have had a super-human *Instructor*.

“ In connection with this subject, it is remarkable that, throughout successive generations, no change has taken place in the form of the various inventions.

“ Hammers, tongs, hoes, axes, adzes, handles to them; needles, bows and arrows, with the mode of feathering the latter; spears for killing game, with spear-heads having what is termed “dish” on both sides, to give them when thrown the rotatory motion of rifle-balls;* the arts of spinning and weaving, with that of pounding and steeping the inner bark of a tree till it serves as clothing; millstones for grinding corn into meal; the manufacture of the same kinds of pots, or *chatties*, as in India; the art of cooking, of brewing beer, and straining it, as was done in ancient Egypt; fish-hooks, fishing and hunting nets, fish baskets and weirs, the same as

* The same is seen in American arrows—*rifled* arrows. Article 6, Principal Dawson’s “ Old World and New,” in *The Leisure Hour*.

in the Highlands of Scotland; traps for catching animals, &c., &c.—have all been so very permanent from age to age, and some of them of identical patterns, are so widely spread over the globe as to render it probable that they were all, at least in some degree, derived from one source.

“The African traditions, which seem possessed of the same unchangeability as the arts to which they relate, like those of all other nations, refer their origin to a superior Being, and it is much more reasonable to receive the hints given in Genesis, concerning direct instruction from God to our first parents or their children in religious or moral duties, and probably in the knowledge of the arts of life (Gen. iii. 21–23, ‘Make coats of skins and clothe them.’ ‘Sent him forth to till the ground,’—implying teaching), than to give credence to the theory that untaught savage man subsisted in a state which would prove fatal to all his descendants, and that, in such a helpless state, he made many inventions, which most of his progeny retained, but never improved upon, during some thirty centuries.”

Charles Brooke, afterwards Rajah of Sarawak, in his work, *Ten Years in Sarawak* (pp. 48–51), says, with regard to the Dyaks of Borneo, “Among their present *habitats* the remains of former villages, possessing inhabitants of a far higher state of civilisation, are frequently being found.

“Several have been dug up since the publishing of Mr. St. John’s book, in which he describes a few antiquities* which had been disinterred near Sarawak, and not only have they been found there, but also far in the interior, showing that a high state of civilisation once existed. The natives also employ a very ingenious mechanical contrivance for creating fire by means of the exhaustion of air called a ‘besi api.’

“One is surprised,” says Mr. Brooke, “to meet with this and other scientific appliances in common use amongst the inhabitants of these lands, who even eat with their fingers, and possess other habits which give them the name of demoniacal cut-throats.

“They are far superior to the New Zealanders in many of the useful accomplishments; and a question often arises in the mind whether it be the dusky remains of olden civilisation or the dawning of day consequent on an improved and progressing state of spontaneous development. If I were to reason on the subject, the facts produced would tend to support the previous idea—namely, that these tribes are the offshoots of

* Chiefly gold ornaments.

more civilised people, and have inherited customs from their forefathers, most of which are now forgotten; the useful manufacture of weapons and implements for their own employments remaining still known to them.

"It cannot be denied, also, that there are some of their practices much in advance of the appearance they present as a race;—gleams of sunshine showing through a cloudy atmosphere.

"For instance, their forges and ability to manufacture weapons for warfare are of a very superior quality; and some tribes in the interior of Rejang are even able to smelt their own iron, which is second to no other for making arms.

"We find the curious, complex manufacture of short swords, possessing concave and convex blades, which are capable, by this means, of penetrating either wood or flesh to a surprising extent; but much practice is required to use them properly, as a mistake in the angle of cutting would bring the weapon round and often wound the holder."

Mr. Pritchard, in his *Polynesian Researches* (p. 381), speaks of the degeneration of the Fijians and other Polynesians thus:

"The very old men of Fiji—the repositories of their early lore—unanimously maintain that there was a time in their history when neither cannibalism nor war devastated their beautiful islands. . . .

"In both Samoa and Tonga there are somewhat similar traditions, which state that there was a time when war was unknown, and when the people lived happily together, and in greater numbers than at the present day."

Instances of this character might be indefinitely multiplied; and the universality of the traditions of the Creation of Man, the Deluge, the Ark, the Tower of Babel, &c., affords a strong confirmation of the truth of the Biblical narrative, which certainly does not represent primitive man as a savage.

No doubt the manners and customs of many civilised nations do contain, as Sir John Lubbock and others show, relics of former barbarism; but there is no evidence to prove that this barbarism was *primitive*, and that some degree of civilisation had not preceded it.

A calm and dispassionate review, then, of the whole question may teach us to distrust the *à priori* and glib reasonings of those who argue for the *spontaneous* development of civilisation, and incline us to believe that, without "an original impetus" and "a helping hand" from higher powers, man would never have reached his present proud pinnacle of culture and refinement, as well as to authorise us most positively to assert that "savagery" was *not* the primitive condition of man.

THE CHAIRMAN (The Right Hon. A. S. AYRTON).—I will now convey the thanks of the meeting to the author, and invite comments on the paper.

A VISITOR.—May I be permitted to ask a question? It is, whether, among the evidences of the progressive changes of civilisation, there are any evidences of moral as well as physical change—whether in the nature of evolution or degradation, were the earlier races, whose high state of civilisation we have heard of to-night, superior, not only in the material respects mentioned, but also in regard to their moral condition? Were they superior, morally or not?

Mr. ALLEN.—The evidence on this point is conflicting. There is evidence of peoples being split up and deteriorating, but it is not always evident from what causes the decay proceeded; nor is there much to show in elucidation of the point raised. We have no proof of the cave men developing into the people of Europe. They may have existed *concurrently* with more highly civilised races in more favoured localities, as is actually the case in America. We may have hit upon the remains of the outcasts, and not yet discovered those of their civilised contemporaries.

The CHAIRMAN.—In reference to the subject of the paper, I think you cannot assume that man has always been undergoing a process of civilisation, nor of degradation. There does not appear to be any universality of facts—agreeing over the whole of the earth. If you turn to the province of Granada—to which so much attention had lately been drawn by the disastrous results of the earthquakes from which that province has suffered—you will find there, in the present day, cave men living side by side with the Spaniards. It is difficult to say how it comes that it is so, but there is the fact. In some parts of that province instead of a row of houses you see a row of entrances—something not unlike the appearance of a rabbit warren. In these caves the chairs and sofas of ordinary houses are replaced by seats cut out of the soil. Now, here we have cave men living in the same civilised manner as the other inhabitants of the country. Seeing this state of things existing in the present day, we cannot but feel that it is very difficult to speculate upon what happened a thousand or two or three thousand years ago. The fact that the cave men of former days dwelt in caves is no proof of the moral condition they lived in. You find things of a very different character going on side by side, hence isolated facts afford no justification for generalisations. We can recall the demonstration that was given as to the age of the skeleton of a man found on a recent occasion, but that demonstration was upset by the subsequent finding of the buttons of the Queen's service close beside the skeleton. Generalisation from particular instances appears to have been carried to extremes. It is better to begin at the other end. But, when we survey anything we may come in contact with in this world, we can find ample evidence of the creative and preserving influence of a predominating and Almighty Being of the most infinite power. When we assume the existence of a God, we get a basis upon which we can found an intelligent comprehension of the subject. We

have, too, the fact that no two things are ever exactly alike. If you assume that God created man, you have this question to meet, Has a God of infinite wisdom and capacity made man in perfection? The theory that is most consistent with the belief we all hold is, that the work was the most perfect in the first instance. The mind of man works as a whole, though it is made up of many faculties. Various men have various faculties more or less developed. But it is difficult to imagine that our minds are superior to those that the Creator directly made. The Creator gave man all the faculties required to enable him to develop language, and we find the older languages superior in simplicity and completeness of arrangement to the more recent. Man being thus gifted, it may be assumed that language was very soon brought to perfection. Civilisation—or what are commonly regarded as the evidences or tokens of civilisation—is very much a matter of opinion, of custom, of circumstance. Among the Hindoos, the most correct form of dress is a garment made without a seam. Among them such a garment becomes evidence of civilisation. Characteristics of this kind are largely due to hygienic conditions. The whole subject is one involved in the greatest complexity.

Mr. S. R. PATTISON, F.G.S.—I have not much to offer in the way of remarks upon the able paper we have heard. The subject is one of extreme difficulty. The question of the evolution and degradation of man by a gradual process is exceedingly important, and is related to many others of almost equally great importance, and I am very glad that it has been brought under consideration here. The paper which Mr. Allen has read has made some additions to our knowledge of the subject; or perhaps, rather, I should say that the paper has served to put our knowledge in order; and we are thus much better equipped to discuss the question. I would very strongly deprecate the discussion of a subject like this, that would deal with it without the full consideration which it demands. I think the general conclusions of the author have been well sustained; but it is essentially necessary that we should abstain from hasty generalisations, such as have been assumed upon the finding of flint implements—that they are a proof that the people have been in a savage condition. Such arguments should be dismissed. Upon the whole, there is no decisive circumstance that can put the matter beyond dispute. The balance of evidence is in favour of the theory that mankind has fallen from a higher estate. The argument from language is very strong, and is strikingly supported by others.

Mr. H. C. DENT, C.E., F.L.S.—I am entirely in accord with the views the lecturer has expressed, but the line of thought I have worked out on this subject is not entirely the same. Before reading the few notes I have prepared I may mention one point. I refer to pottery. This is very often found in ancient remains; but in some parts of the interior of Brazil, whence I have lately returned, almost the only pottery used is the tiles on the roofs of the houses, which are sold at about £3 per 1,000. These are so friable that they would inevitably be destroyed, and leave no remains. With regard to the degene-

ration of man, I contend that man is a family with only one genus, *Homo*. Unless we throw over one of the most important statements of revealed religion, that as to the origin of man, we must believe that all tribes in a low condition, physical or intellectual, moral or religious, represent degradation. The Duke of Argyll, in *Unity of Nature*, says, that as the first men could not have been cannibals or indulged in infanticide—or the race could not have been increased—the existence of these two customs alone proves degeneration. The most ancient fossil remains of man that have been found exhibit a very high type, both in physical development and intellectual capacity. None of them display as low types as the existing Australians, Terra del Fuegians, or the bushmen of South Africa, who are degraded Hottentots (Max Müller). Fossil skulls found in the limestone caves of the valley of the Rio Paraopéba, Minas Geraes, Brazil, are of the same type as the Indians of to-day, who are now, owing to the Portuguese settlement, being pushed away into restricted and distant areas. A condition of high mental development, which the fossil men present, does not necessarily represent a correspondingly advanced civilisation, refinement, or progress in arts and sciences. It denotes merely possession of an intelligent will, capable of development, and able to profit by experience. I maintain that man was created noble and pure, with vast capabilities. Then came that mysterious catastrophe which we call the Fall, and synchronously the promise of a wonderful Redemption, which in course of time was effected. Subsequent on the Fall came degradation, degeneration of the ante-diluvian world, of the Israelites, of the Hindoos, Mahometans, and even of Christianity. In the records of the rocks we find always that new forms were introduced in their highest state, full of vigour. They worked out the objects of their creation, and then either became extinct, on the introduction of higher forms, or remain till to-day, degraded, degenerated, and scantily represented. The same argument of degeneration holds good as regards man. As the struggle to gain the necessaries for bare existence increases, so man degenerates. Driven out by stronger tribes, the weaker are forced to live under the most uncongenial conditions, *e.g.*, Eskimos and nations aforesaid. These all now live in countries most unfavourable, with surroundings the least conducive to existence, let alone advancement. Mr. Drummond, in *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, has pointed out that death means “the want of correspondence with the environment,” and that “the organism is but a part, nature is the complement.” The nations of the temperate zones have, at least, an environment conducive to progress; grasses which produce food, *e.g.*, wheat; animals capable of domestication; a climate where excessive labour is, at least, possible during a prolonged period. The people I have referred to have none of these advantages, and so it is with the Indians on the Amazon. On the introduction of a civilised community into the midst of uncivilised nations, the latter cannot come into correspondence with their environment: they either become extinct—as in the case of the North American Indians, who are a race of warlike hunters with no literature, but with a beautiful and complex language—or they become and continue a

subjected and servile race, like the negroes or Malays. I came across, in Brazil, white men, the descendants of the Portuguese, negroes, and a few tame Indians, all Christians, and living together under parallel conditions. Of these races, though the whites are most civilised, the negroes are physically the most highly organised, and the most prolific. I met some mulattoes who were not only intelligent, but very scientific, and especially skilled in modern languages; notably one, a government engineer, who is termed the "Lesseps of Brazil."

Mr. M. H. HABERSHON.—The paper would seem to show that we are now in possession of facts on the affirmative side of the question of more value as evidence than those which can be adduced upon the other side. Max Müller has recently expressed the idea that fetishism is not the basis of religion. Man has had always an idea of the Unseen, and from simple primitive beliefs his many superstitious practices have had their origin. There is abundant evidence that the natural tendency of man has been downward. Buddha, and Zoroaster, and Confucius taught a much purer and more elevated doctrine than that which is now held by their followers. That which we find in the corners of the earth, people degraded to the very lowest condition, corresponds with the downward process which we know to be a fact of history. Bearing in mind the corruptions in religion among Jews and Christians, it cannot be denied that we have obvious facts on the affirmative side of the question to guide our inquiry.

Mr. J. HASSELL.—The paper read expresses my own views. As to the records of the iron, stone, and bronze ages, it must not be forgotten that some of the best authorities have admitted that the bronze implements found *are* bronze, that is, are made of an alloy of tin and copper. So it is clear that the tribes that produced these implements must have had sufficient knowledge to distinguish the ores of metals; some extent of knowledge is required for this purpose; it is equally clear that the people of that age must, therefore, have been acquainted with the method of reducing the ores to the metallic state. This is a proof that these people were not as degraded as some writers assert. I think our thanks are due to Mr. Allen for his orderly arrangement of the facts. It is a most important point that we, who hold the old faith, should be able to show that we have reason and common sense on our side.

Mr. H. C. DENT, C.E., F.L.S.—In confirmation of the remarks that have been made, not only did the ancients know how to obtain the bronze, but they knew the exact proportions now used, the bronze of the past having, at most, a difference of 2 or 3 per cent. in constitution.

Mr. R. J. HAMMOND.—I would call attention to the fact that man may be unacquainted with the arts and sciences and all that is included in the term "modern civilisation," and yet need not be a savage. I hold that such may have been the state of primeval man, a mental and moral child, thriving under the fostering care of God. If there is evidence of civilisation by evolution and of the degradation of man, have we not also some of civilisation by the Divine teaching and control?

Capt. F. PETRIE, F.G.S., &c. (Hon. Sec.)—Those who were in the Pacific Islands in bygone years know that the savages there seemed to have fallen into a thoroughly degraded state, even in islands which have since been found to contain traces of a former considerable degree of civilisation. We find much the same thing in North America. I may add that even now, in some parts of Scotland, there are people who live in caves and are very degraded—people whose progenitors must have been vastly superior in every way.

Mr. ALLEN, in conclusion, said :—I have not much to add. I have tried to call attention to a side of the question which, in my opinion, has been much neglected, but which is necessary *as a complement and supplement* to the Darwinian theory. I have relied largely upon quotations, because they represent facts as opposed to *theories*. Perhaps enough is not yet known to enable us to formulate any certain theory as to the origin of civilisation and the development of savagery ; but the man who accumulates facts is doing pioneer work upon which others can build a durable structure. That was Mr. Darwin's most valuable life-work and title to immortality in science. I cordially agree with Mr. Hammond's remarks, and thank the meeting for listening so patiently.

The meeting then adjourned.