The Man who is to Come

BY BENJAMIN KIDD

HOWEVER interesting in itself may have been the application of the Darwinian hypothesis to the study of the lower forms of life, it is not amongst these, but in human society, that we have the most important theatre of the operation of the law of natural selection. It is in its application to human development that the doctrine of evolution must be expected in the end to give its most significant results. The increasing importance of the doctrine of evolution by natural selection in the study of society, and more particularly in the elucidation of the principles underlying the development of peoples, of institutions, and of types of civilization in the slow, long-sustained rivalry in which they are matched against one another as the cosmic process unfolds itself in history, renders it not unfitting that some endeavor should be made to give a brief account of the current position of the doctrine and of the modifications of it which have taken place since it left the hands of Darwin.

The principle of *natural selection* is thus stated by Darwin: "As many more individuals of each species are born than can possibly survive, and as, consequently, there is a frequently recurring struggle for existence, it follows that any being, if it vary, however slightly, in any manner profitable to itself, under the complex and sometimes varying conditions of life, will have a better chance of surviving, and thus be naturally selected. From the strong principle of inheritance, any selected variety will tend to propagate its new and modified form."

One of the first matters to be noticed in considering the later developments of the theory of natural selection is the character of the cause which first suggested it to the minds of its authors. Darwin had been reading Malthus on the struggle which goes on amongst savage races, and on the natural checks, such as war, pestilence, and famine, which tend to keep population within fixed limits. Being well prepared, as he said, to appreciate the struggle for existence which everywhere goes on, from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants, it at once struck him that under these circumstances favorable variations would tend to be preserved, and unfavorable ones to be destroyed. "Here, then," said Darwin, "I had at last got a theory by which to work."

Wallace, the co-author of the theory of natural selection, formulated it almost simultaneously under the same stimulus of the speculations of Malthus. It was in Ternate in 1858. "I was lying," said Wallace, "on my bed (no hammocks in the East) in the hot fit of intermittent fever when the idea suddenly came to me. . . . I was led to the theory itself from Malthus—in my case it was his elaborate account of the action of 'preventive checks' in keeping down the population of savage races to a tolerably fixed but scanty number. This had strongly impressed me, and it suddenly flashed upon me that all animals are necessarily thus kept down—'the struggle for existence'—while *variations* on which I was always thinking must necessarily be often *beneficial*, and would then cause those varieties to increase, while the injurious variations diminished."

In taking account of these events it is important to notice two things. The doctrine of evolution by natural selection thus in reality took its origin from a study of the facts of human society. But that study, it has to be observed, was largely concerned with society at a low stage of evolution. It is now generally admitted that Malthus's grasp of the principles of social development was to a considerable degree elementary.

The system of prudential checks which he wished to see introduced into civilized society, so as to counterbalance (as in savage society) what he considered to be the undue increase of population, is one which it is perceived cannot be usefully discussed solely from the narrow stand-point from which he considered it, while it constitutes a considerable danger to many modern peoples who have actually practised it as he desired. The evolution of society is, in short, seen to be governed by more organic causes than Malthus had any conception of.

When we turn now to the doctrine of natural selection as Darwin propounded it, there is a fact which is unmistakable. It is obviously this early conception of Malthus which has been applied to life in general. Just as the political utilitarians who afterwards adopted Malthus's views saw the whole theory of society through the principle of utility confined within the consciousness of the existing state, so the early Darwinians saw the centre of gravity in the evolutionary process in the struggle for existence in the present. It was the qualities contributing to efficiency in relation to current environment which they beheld determining the course of evolution throughout all the forms of life. They conceived that — to quote words in which Mr. Wallace has put the matter very clearly in correspondence with the present writer on this point—"the interest of the fittest individual for the time being *is* the interest of the species." That was the early Darwinian position in a nutshell.

When, however, the mind has been made well acquainted with the details of the evolutionary process it becomes evident that even when allowance is made for every qualification that can be urged in extension of this view, it cannot be taken to represent more than a partial conception of the mechanism of the evolutionary process in life, and that the Darwinian hypothesis itself in this original form is probably destined to undergo as great development as the earlier Lamarckian conception of evolution underwent at the hands of Darwin.

It may be seen that while it would of course always be necessary for a form of life which was to continue to be able to hold a place effectively in the present, it must have been the qualities identified with the larger interests of the future rather than those contributing only to success in a free fight in the present which must always have weighted the tendencies of development in life from the beginning. For instance, "the fittest for the time being" might be simply fit and nothing else—as amongst the lowest forms of life which have remained unchanged and unchanging through all the eons of time that life has existed. Or the fittest for the time being might be complete and efficient in respect to the present, and yet bear in addition in varying degrees the burden of qualities useless and even disadvantageous in relation to current environment, but contributing to a higher efficiency in the future. The evolutionary process as the future became the present would discriminate between these forms, and the winning types of life in the end would be those which had borne the burden of the future in addition to fitness in relation to current environment. As long views tell in every-day life, so it would be the interests in the future which would in the end dominate the development towards higher forms of life. Progress from lower to higher types would, in short, follow the line of variations in which efficiency "for the time being" included *more* than adaptation to current environment. In other words, so far from it being a fact that the interest of the fittest individuals for the time being is one and the same thing as the interest of the species, the truth would be that it is out of the margin of qualities contributing to higher efficiency in the future, but always borne at first by successful forms as a burden over and above the qualities contributing to fitness for the time being, that the whole sum of progress in life has been evolved.

The subordination of the present to the future in the case of offspring is so evident a fact of every-day life, and has indeed been so frequently recognized in many relations in the study of the evolutionary process, that the first tendency of elementary criticism of the position here defined is to take it as involving the statement of a truism. It must not, however, be forgotten that this was the tendency of the first criticism of the law

of natural selection itself, and when the mechanism of the evolutionary process is closely regarded it will be seen how far the principle in reality carries us. For the law of progress in life cannot, it would thus appear, be stated, as the early Darwinians imagined, simply in terms of qualities connected by the principle of utility with current or past environment. What appears to be in view is the fact that in the evolution of life toward higher forms natural selection itself has been, as it were, shut up from the beginning within this principle of projected efficiency.

When the principle here stated is applied to the evolution of human society the method of its working is readily perceived. When Darwin proceeded to apply the principle of natural selection in the form in which he had conceived it to human society, the result was in many respects remarkable. For instance, when the evolutionary process in society came to be viewed principally through the medium of qualities which contributed to success in the present or in the past, it may be observed that Darwin found himself confronted with a difficulty which was radical in character. In the evolution of life as he had conceived it among lower forms natural selection was regarded as weeding out with great stringency all qualities but those which contributed to success in the current struggle for existence. In the *Descent of Man* we see him therefore struggling with the fact that, as he says, "we civilized men do our utmost to check the process of elimination: we build asylums for the imbeciles, the maimed, the sick; we institute poor-laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of every one to the last moment." As we see the matter now, these facts have to be regarded as controlled by a far deeper and more organic principle of social evolution. But we do not observe that Darwin as yet has such a principle clearly in view. With regard to Malthus's principle of population a similar note of perplexity may be said to be evident. It is impossible, he says, not to regret bitterly, but whether wisely is another question, the rate at which man tends to increase. The facts of human society did not, in short, fit in with the restricted view of the principle of natural selection which had so far prevailed. In the absence of any clear view of a larger controlling principle we see Darwin, therefore, actually finding himself driven to the partial abandonment of his own theory of natural selection in the study of human society. The remark, it may be observed, is repeated more than once in the *Descent of Man* that natural selection can affect but comparatively little in advanced society. "With highly civilized nations," he continues, "progress depends to a subordinate degree on natural selection."

As the development of the evolutionary theory continued, the same result was to be witnessed in the case of Mr. Wallace, who had been from the beginning one of the most strenuous supporters of the theory of the direct relationship between all qualities in life and the principle of utility in regard to current environment. In the last chapter of his book, *Darwinism*, published in 1889, we see him similarly confronted by the fact that human faculties could not be all accounted for by the theory which had thitherto prevailed. According to his view, qualities, at all events, like the artistic, metaphysical, and religious in the human mind could not be explained by the Darwinian theory of natural selection. Mr. Wallace therefore also proceeded to the remarkable alternative of practically abandoning the principle as regards these qualities in human society, going on to assume that man, as regards these portions of his mind, must be under the influence of causes different from those that had operated elsewhere in life. The effect of this departure was marked. As the present writer has put it elsewhere:* It is no injustice to Mr. Wallace to say that the effect produced on the minds of the younger school of evolutionists at the time was not so much to convince them that he was right as to make them feel that the theory of natural selection that he had endeavored to apply to human society was still in some radical respect incomplete. Finally, in England, Huxley, the last of the leading group of early Darwinians, reached in the Romanes lecture of 1893 exactly the same

* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 10th edition, Vol. XXIX.

crux in endeavoring to apply the Darwinian doctrine, as it had hitherto been held, to human society. Huxley reached at last the extreme position of asserting that the ethical process in society was irreconcilable with the theory of the struggle for existence and the principle of natural selection. These both belonged, he considered, to what he called the cosmic process in life. "Social progress," on the contrary, he continued, "means a checking of the cosmic process at every step and the substituting for it of another, which may be called the ethical process; the end of which is not the survival of those who may happen to be the fittest in respect of the whole of the conditions which obtain, but of those who are ethically the best."

The weakness of all these positions is now fully apparent, and would probably have excited keen discussion at an earlier stage if it had not been for the prestige of the names associated with them. For thus to remove human society as regards its most characteristic features from the operation of the principle of natural selection could only have one meaning. It must have involved some fundamental and far-reaching incompleteness in the theory of social evolution which had so far prevailed.

When the centre of significance in the evolutionary process in society is regarded as not in the present at all, but in the future, the change which is effected is gradually made apparent. The fact which becomes more evident in the study of the evolution of society is that, just as in the evolution of life, the highest efficiency is not simply that which includes only the qualities necessary to maintain a place in the free fight in progress in the present, but rather those which are identified with the still higher interests in the future. The evolution of society from the beginning has thus centred round the function of socialization, in the development of which progress has necessarily been towards a more organic type of social order. In this development the characteristic feature is that the mean centre of the life processes of society is undoubtedly tending to be projected ever farther and farther into the future. It is in this supreme rivalry that the great systems of society are being continually matched against each other, and that races, nations, and eventually great types of civilization, have their principles tested in a process of natural selection the principles of which extend far beyond the consciousness not only of the individuals concerned, but even of the political systems in which they are included.

In primitive society the first rudiments of social organization must be considered to have arisen under the sternest conditions of natural selection, the elements of strength which they possessed leading to the disappearance before them of other groups of men with which they came into competition. In the earlier stages of social evolution, as amongst the lower types of life, efficiency in the struggle for existence would be nearly always efficiency in the present—that is to say, it would be military efficiency in the development of society. As military evolution continued, societies liable to be resolved into their component elements on the death of the chief or leader would give place to others of a more organic type in which ideas permanently subordinating the individual to military efficiency prevailed. In this stage social systems, in which authority was perpetuated by ancestor worship, in which all the members were therefore held to be joined in an exclusive citizenship to the deities who were worshipped, and in which all outsiders were accordingly—as in the civilizations of the ancient world—treated as natural enemies, would contain the elements of the highest military potentiality.

Where, however, as throughout the whole of this military stage, all human institutions rested ultimately on force, the full limits of the organic principle in society in this phase also must in time be reached. The basis of the industrial and even the intellectual life of society would be slavery; all human institutions would tend to become closed absolutisms within the state; the state itself, as in the old classic civilizations, would know neither legal nor moral limits to its power; and the ultimate tendencies in ethics, in politics, and in religion must be to ultimately culminate in an ideal of universal conquest and of absolute dominion.

In the next stage a further and still

more organic process of social subordination would bring into view the full outlines of the growing struggle between the present and the future. The enormously higher organic potentiality of a state of social order which, while preserving its efficiency in the present, would be influenced by conceptions that would dissolve all those closed absolutisms in the state by projecting the sense of human responsibility altogether outside and beyond it, would be evident. This is the stage of social evolution which may be said to have begun in the Western era in which we are living. One of its most significant features consists in the fact that the essentially Eastern conceptions of renunciation, of individual subordination, and of responsibility to life extending beyond all claims of the present and the finite, for which no Eastern people has ever been able to supply an enduring stage in history, has at length been provided with a permanent *world-milieu* by the peoples of Western stock, amongst whom the military process in human evolution culminated. The characteristic phenomenon of the historic process as a whole in this phase is such a free conflict of forces as has not been possible in the world before.

With the growth of that sense of responsibility towards life, which Darwin thought he saw interfering with the operation of the law of natural selection by filling the asylums with the maimed and less capable, we have not indeed the suspension of natural selection in society, but the first basis of a social process, the intensity and efficiency of which have, under the influence of natural selection when viewed from a wider stand-point, begun to tell to an increasing degree in competition with all other types of society whatever. The projection of the sense of human responsibility outside the limits of all the creeds and interests which, in previous stages, had embodied it in the state, has resulted in the gradual dissolution of the closed absolutisms in the state within which human activities had previously been confined. The dissolution of the conception upon which slavery rested; the growth of the conception of the native equality of men, and of their right to equal voting power in the state, irrespective of status or possessions; the undermining of the absolute position of the occupying classes, and of the ideas by which civil and religious opinion was previously supported by the power of the state; the tolerance of parties; the right of free inquiry in every direction; the long movement towards political enfranchisement; with finally the growth of that conviction which constitutes a standing challenge to all existing absolute tendencies in the economic conditions of the modern world, namely, that the distribution of wealth in a well-ordered state should aim at realizing political justice—are all features of an integrating process in Western history. They are all the marks of a type of society of higher organic potentiality than has existed in the world before,—a type of which the characteristic feature is that the sense of human responsibility has been at last projected outside the state and beyond the present.

As social evolution continues, it is evident that to an increasing degree the entire range of the processes of the human mind is being gradually drawn into the vortex of this supreme conflict between the present and the future. As the present writer has put it elsewhere, we stand in it at the very pivot of the evolutionary process in human history. The whole content of systems of thought, of philosophy, of morality, of ethics, and of religion must in time be caught into its influence. It is in the resulting demiurgic stress that the rival systems of society are being unconsciously pitted against each other; that nations and peoples and great types of civilization will meet and clash and have their principles tested. And it is in respect of the controlling principle of the conflict—the degree of efficiency of the subordination of the present to the future—that natural selection is continuing to discriminate between the living, the dying, and the dead, as progress continues in the modern world.

Tike

BY SALEM JOHNSON

HIS old master, the station agent at Flossiedell, Massachusetts, told this about "Tike." The dog was a liver-splotched bull-terrier of large size, considerable age, and many signs of having achieved that which appears to be highly prized in certain very smart human sets—a lively and interesting past. Tike's record, however, was publicly legible upon his body and not upon his soul. It took the form of as many decorations for active service as even Lord Roberts can boast.

Tike may have come from the moon or Montreal. No one knows more of his early life than that he must once have been a noted dog duellist. He arrived at Flossiedell in a manner highly original and characteristic, by falling from a Pullman at the end of a sixty-mile-an-hour express train. He shot along over the gravel in a series of somersaults and a cloud of flying sand, as a mail-pouch is flung from the cars. And seldom has such a pouch contained matter of more interest than was the period of his life which he dedicated to that popular, green and white Bostonians' summer resort.

"Tike limped into the station without an unnecessary word," said the station-master, "merely remarking: 'I've come to be your assistant during the summer rush, and as the train did not stop here, I was obliged to make a flying switch! Kindly spade over the trough I dug through the side of the road-bed with my nose. I may forget the incident if the marks of it are destroyed.' That was every last word he said, and then he settled himself on a settee in the ladies' waitin'-room, where he rested up for two or three days. In makin' his dayboo he had absorbed quite some gravel, small stones, and bits of wood and iron. What he took in through his back come out through the hide of his belly, and what he rubbed in t'other way come out through his back.

"After he had shed all of the railroad and State of Massachusetts for which he had no immediate and pressin' need he begun makin' himself agreeable to the travellin' public. He didn't visit none with anybody, bein' aware that it ain't good form for a railroad man to mix up with the public none too much while on duty. He set to work, first, to clear the station of loafers, and broke up the local habit of folks takin' their vacations in front of my office winder and shuttin' off the little light which the railroad allows with my small salary. Real serious folks that come in, business-like, half or three-quarters of an hour ahead of the train they wished to take—for fear it might come along that much ahead of time,—he would allow to visit with him, and never bit or growled at one on 'em. It must be remembered, though, that he didn't have no office of his own, with double locks on the door and a window too small for the sufferin' public to climb through and wreak its anger on him. The most punctilious and practised railroad man that ever snapped at people for annoyin' him with questions about tickets and trains might have been a shade less touchy if he was 'bliged to set right out in the open like Tike had to.

"But Tike was a credit to the business when it come to the disagreeable ways he had with his own kind. He used to argue that he would not be earnin' the keep the railroad paid him if he did not lick every dog that ambled 'round the station before noon of each day. He come back more or less damaged every time he done this duty, and he took the afternoons to rest up. He called this 'lickin' the other dogs,' and whatever satisfaction it gave him to lie like that was all the comfort I could see that he got out of this tryin' branch of his duties.

"One time he'd come back to work with an ear haugin' by two hairs; another time he'd report himself short a