

THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN RACE.

EXTRACT FROM THE FUNERAL DISCOURSE OF REV. DR. J. M'ILVAINE, AT ROCHESTER, N. Y., ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE LEWIS H. MORGAN.

MR. MORGAN was a remarkable philosopher; in philosophy what Daniel Webster was in statesmanship. And it is said with great pleasure that he took the side of the Bible and the Christian religion. "My heart (he said) is with the Christian religion."

"His labors covered an immense range, yet he was a patriot in the purest sense of the word. He was heart and soul an American. He had an utter hatred of despotism in Church and State, in every shade and form; he was a believer in the theory that human liberty is essential to the life and progress of the race. He firmly believed—in the words of an eminent publicist, now deceased—that everybody is wiser than anybody. I cannot refrain upon such an occasion from saying something about the growth of our friend's mind and his studies. It was a very peculiar growth, and I had the happiness to follow it every step through its whole development, after I became acquainted with him in 1848.

"The first stage of it was a casual connection with an Indian tribe in which he had become interested. In his intimacy with this aboriginal race he was struck with the peculiarity of their relations and affinities. People called those their brethren who were not their brothers; they called those their sisters who were not their sisters; they called those their fathers who were not their fathers, and they called those their mothers who were not their mothers. It was a subject that attracted him so powerfully that it lasted through a lifetime. This system of relationship had been noticed before by writers, but had looked like confusion. When one of the papers upon the subject was read in Rochester, before the club, one of the most distinguished members exclaimed: 'All I can say of it is that it convinces one of the utter depravity of the human mind.'

“The next stage was as follows: He found that this system of relationship was identical with that of the Dakotahs, west of the Rocky mountains. This led him to his first grand generalization, for generalization in its highest power was one of the distinguishing features of our friend’s mind. It occurred to him that this system of relationship belonged to the whole Indian population of North and South America. Then followed ten years of travel to verify all this, and the result was there was no doubt but the system was universal. Thus he secured one of the greatest arguments ever formed of the unity of the Indian race on this continent—a resolution subsequent investigation constantly tended to confirm. Now, when he had verified this great generalization, a second generalization occurred to him—broader and still more comprehensive. He found this same system of relationship existing among the tribes of the old world—from the anti-Brahminical races of India to the Tartar nations of Central Asia. Then followed another ten years of investigation, through the medium of the Smithsonian Institute, which had entered heartily into his views, and the result was that it was verified, strange as it was. When the second generalization occurred to him he was nearly overpowered. He entered my study one day and said: ‘It exists among the Tomal people of Southern India.’ I remarked that he had enough with the American Indians, and urged him to let the old world people go. ‘I cannot do it!’ was the reply.

“The third stage was this: He thought that possibly these relations might be found among the Semitic and Aryan races and nations, as well as among the American and Turanian tribes. I was appalled. But with his almost superhuman energy and enthusiasm he applied himself to the investigation, and the result was the same. He found that the same relationship had been prevalent among your ancestors and mine. His investigation had now extended over almost three-quarters of the human race. This last discovery is equalled only by the

theory of Newton in regard to gravitation. With this discovery he found thousands of facts, hitherto inexplicable, quite clear. Now the mystery was unlocked. With it he proceeded as Newton did in the physical world, to his discoveries. Precisely as Newton argued by his process of ratiocination so our friend reasoned from his original hypothesis. He said: 'If this has existed, I shall find thus and thus.' Thus he was enabled to carry back the history of the human race thousands of years further than had ever been done before. He was able to evolve the society and the condition of humanity in the relation of man to man. These were properly characterized as the origin and development of man, of kin, of social organization, of political institutions, of morality and of civilization. The germs and maturity of this are found in his work published by the Smithsonian Institute. Until near the close of his work on 'The Relations and affinities of Mankind,' this mode of relationship was regarded by him as artificial; invented. For many years he did not have a gleam as to how it originated. He had been over the whole ground before he found the glimmer of light. Then came to him the conception that all this must have some foundation in human nature, that it had come to prevail by natural causes; in other words, the reason men called women sisters was that either they were their sisters or were indistinguishable from their sisters; the reason they called men fathers was that they either were their fathers or were indistinguishable from their fathers; and the reason they called other women mothers was that they were their mothers or were indistinguishable from their mothers, as wives of the same man who was their father. Thus was brought out the fact, which I affirm does not admit of contradiction, that the human race has come up, through progressive steps of thousands of years, from a state of society in which this relationship existed. In other words, marriage between one man and one woman was almost unknown. They lived in a moral degradation absolutely inconceivable to us. There is no con-

flict in our friend's most advanced ideas and the Holy Scriptures. His 'Ancient Society' placed him as the leading mind in the departments of archæology, ethnology, anthropology, sociology and political philosophy. Owing to the revolution produced by his work, it is no longer an insoluble problem how a people can have passed out of a state of barbarism to civilization.

"Our friend had the happiness, as his end drew near, to see around him a body of disciples who are pledged to carry on his work. He had felt at times annoyed with the small degree of appreciation which his labor seemed to gain from the world of thought and science, but when at last letters from younger inquirers came pouring in upon him daily, 'why,' said he, 'my labors do indeed at last begin to bear fruit.'

"Two great results of his labors I can only mention. First—The unity of the human race; it is one race, derived from one stock. There had been so much diversity of thought upon this point that even Agassiz, at the time our friend first began his labors, expressed some doubt. Second—The demonstration that progress in morality, in thought and knowledge, in all things tending to or resulting in civilization, is a fundamental law of human society from which it never varies. He was accustomed to say that the human race made more progress before there was any history of it than it has ever since; that the actual progress made in pre-historic times was greater in actual amount than it has been since. But he looked forward to an unmeasurable amount beyond what had already been reached. He was ahead of his age, although he reached a world-wide reputation.

"He had a profound sympathy with animated nature and was very tender toward animals. This led to his work upon the beaver. He thought the word 'brute' had a bad sense as applied to animals; he would say, instead, 'the mutes.'

"What were his relations to the world to which he has gone? I am glad to have an opportunity to say a word upon this

point. He was misrepresented and misunderstood on account of his extreme reticence. His was a character that could only have been formed by the influences of the Christian religion. I have never known a man more delicate and pure minded. An unseemly word was unknown to his mouth, and when an unseemly suggestion was made by others he simply turned his back upon them. In all his writings there is not a word that can be construed otherwise than in conformity to the Christian religion. In this respect he forms the most striking contrast to the skeptic scientists with whom he stood in such close relations. It is a wonder that they produced so little effect upon his mind. He had no sympathy with the materialistic hypothesis of evolution. He was a man who had the most profound reverence for Christian piety wherever he found it. He was in constant and regular attendance on the preaching of the gospel. He was reticent on the subject of his spiritual relations, even to me. Last spring I said to him; 'My friend, you owe me a debt which you have never paid; you owe it to me to tell me about your relation to God and the eternal world.' He said he was not in a state of health to discuss the matter. I replied I did not want a discussion. He thereupon said: 'I have not been able to free my mind from all skeptical doubt, but'—these are his very words—'my heart is with the Christian religion.' I venture to think that God judges us rather by our heart than by our head. 'My heart is with the Christian religion.' Those are words which might well go upon his tomb, because they are confirmed by his work and by his life. A great man has passed away from us. He will meet with us no more, but as long as it shall endure, the memory of this man will remain fresh and green."

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