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PROSPECTIVE REVIEW;

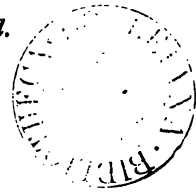
A QUARTERLY JOURNAL

OF

THEOLOGY AND LITERATURE.

Respice, Aspice, PROSPICE.

St. Bernard.



VOL. VI.

(CHRISTIAN TEACHER. VOL. XII.)

LONDON:
JOHN CHAPMAN, 142, STRAND.

1850.

ART. II.—THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE
VARIETIES OF MAN.

The Natural History of the Varieties of Man. By R. G. Latham, M.D., &c. London: John Van Voorst, Paternoster Row. 1850.

WE cannot pretend, in any critical sense, to *review* the elaborate volume before us, abounding as it does in learned detail; but we may briefly pen down remarks which occur to us, and point out what may serve to excite the reader's curiosity.

The author regards the subject as so much the grander and the worthier of pursuit, because it is a growing one; and while admiring highly the great work of the lamented Prichard, yet desires to show his admiration by helping the science onward, not by resting on Prichard's attainment.

Dr. Latham, in many respects, writes like a Frenchman. His perpetual effort is after scientific and even mathematical form, as well as scientific accuracy. A sharp brevity of sentence, and a systematic arrangement of details, is perhaps natural to him, even when he does not aim at it. We presume that this really tends towards the perfection of the science; if it be not always altogether in conformity with English taste. Opening at random, we take a sample of his *small type* paragraphs, in which he is accustomed to present to the reader condensed results. But it must not be supposed that more than a fraction of the book is in this style.

“ THE POLYNESIANS.

“ *Area.*—From the small islands to the west of the Pelews, to Easter island, west and east. From the Mariannes and the Sandwich Islands north, to New Zealand south.

“ *Physical Conformation.*—Modified Protonesian. Stature, perhaps taller; tendency to corpulence more common; colour oftener approaching that of the European; hair often waved or curling; nose frequently aquiline.

"*Nutrition*.*—But little azotised; saccharine and amylaceous.

"*Aliment*.—Pre-eminently vegetable, the coco-nut, the taro, and the banana. Fish.

"*Negative Characters*.—Little or no use of the bow and arrow; considered to be a differential point between Polynesia and Kelaenonesia.

"*Conditions of Social and Physical Development*—Absence of large animals, either as beasts of burden or as food. Nearly general absence of rice and pulse. Intercourse entirely by means of canoes. Between Polynesia and Protoonesia little or none. Between the different portions of Polynesia little or partial. Malay and Hindu influences obscure. Present influences European: of recent date.

"*Religion*.—Paganism, apparently indigenous. Uniform in its general character over a great extent.

"*Languages*.—Allied to each other, and mutually intelligible over large areas. Grammatical structure akin to the Tagala. Malay words numerous and evident.

"*Divisions*.—1. Micronesian branch; 2. Proper Polynesian branch."—P. 183.

This is certainly a kind of writing which aids to expose our ignorance, and in so far excites us to fill up the gaps in our knowledge.

Such names as Kelaenonesians, Micronesians, Protoonesians, Amphinesians, like the words which Mathematicians invent, denote a progress of combining and generalizing beyond the wants or thought of the common geographer. Latham, like Prichard, is diligent in enriching our scientific tongue with terms that embody the results of abstraction, and facilitate farther advances. In this volume he has imitated Zoologists by introducing the Greek termination *-idae*. Thus the Indo-Europeans with him are *Iapetidae*.

He enumerates the whole human race under the following heads: Mongolidae, Atlantidae, and Iapetidae. Under the Mongolidae he includes not only the Mongols proper, and the Chinese, the Turks and Hungarians, but the *Georgians and Circassians*, the Malays and Southern Indians, and all the native American tribes.—Under the Atlantidae he groups together all the Africans with the Arabs, Jews, Babylonians, &c.

* We have turned to numerous similar paragraphs, but do not again alight on this use of the word *Nutrition*, as distinguished from *Aliment*; which probably will seem very strange to most readers.

The Mongolidae are of so vast extent, that perhaps it may be well to exhibit here the author's own subdivision. They are, 1. The Altaic (including Mongols proper, and the Tartar-Turk races); 2. Dioscurian, *vulgo* Caucasian proper; 3. Oceanic, *vulgo* Malay, Polynesian, Papuan, Australian, &c.; 4. Hyperborean (of Siberia); 5. Peninsular (viz. Koreans, Japanese, Kamchatkans, &c.); 6. American (who occupy 174 pages); 7. Indian (including even the Gangetic, nations, and, if we understand him, the Brahmins; as certainly the Gipsies!).

The reader will probably object to the eccentric name *Atlantidae*;—which must be deduced from *mount* Atlas, not from the Atlantic *ocean*, since it is really equivalent to Afridae. Indeed, while he was about it, we think the author might as well have styled his three classes, Asidae, Afridae, and Europidae. It will be seen that in his view the Syro-Arabian (otherwise called, Shemitic) races are merely a portion of the vast African stock. If he may name them from Mount Atlas, why may he not from Africa? Similarly he would be justified in naming the Asiatic Indo-Germans from Europe. We must add; of the Indo-Europeans he is at a loss to find any true representatives in Asia. This is one of the most paradoxical parts of his volume. We have shown that he does not allow any of the races in India to be Indo-Germanic: but he even declares his doubt what modern nations are descended from any of those who of old spoke "Sanskrit, Pali, Zend or Persepolitan" (p. 545); so that he may seem to believe the old Persian race to have been extirpated!

"The nation that is at one and the same time Asiatic and Indo-Germanic remains to be discovered."—P. 546.

"I abstain from any positive expression of opinion as to the quarter from which the Sanskrit language originated. That the language which stands in the same relation to it as the Italian does to the Latin, has yet to be discovered, I firmly believe: to which I may add, that, *except in Asia Minor or Europe, I do not know where to look for it.*"

Since he thus regards Indo-Germanism to be exceedingly rare and *exceptive* in Asia, as Shemitism is, there would seem to be the greater propriety in calling the race simply Europidae. *Iapetus* is a personage, concerning

whom we have no definite ideas. Because his son Prometheus, in the Greek legend, saved or created mankind, are therefore Indo-Europeans more than others Iapetidae?

It appears to us, however, that Dr. Latham is over-refining concerning language, so as to misdirect inquiry. He cannot doubt that a nation, once West of the Indus, invaded India and carried thither its language, so as to *produce* Sanskrit in India, if it was not fully developed previously. The foreign tongue either supplanted the older language in Bengal, and (what is the common notion) became degraded into Bengalee by the process, as the Latin was degraded in Gaul, and as, probably, the Saxon in Britain; or else it threw an enormous dash of words into the old Bengalee, (as Norman has done into our British Saxon,) and then was itself lost. The latter view is that to which Latham must drive us, when he maintains that the modern Bengalee grammar cannot have *grown out of* Sanskrit. Grant it: then Sanskrit apparently has perished in India, leaving no descendant. Why look about for a descendant in Asia Minor and Europe? In any case, it is ostensibly a fact, that the Gangetic population is mixed of invaders and invaded. Such mixture between any two human races being notoriously possible, it seems to be a waste of science to contest to which of the two heads they are to be referred.

If the old or the modern Persian Grammar differs greatly from that of Sanskrit, in spite of the likeness of its words, so does the modern Arabic verb of Cairo, of Aleppo and of Bagdad differ. Illiterate tongues are perpetually in progress, and may arrive at diversities so great as the Welsh and the Greek, without losing the marks of common origin. Besides, the relations of Persian to German constitute a fact, the significance of which can never be impaired by any difficulties concerning the Sanskrit; which has no necessary concern in the argument. When an Englishman hears a Persian say:

In bad ist—(hoc malum est):

In better ist—(hoc melius est):

he surely does not need to look through a Sanskrit eye-glass in order to decide that Persian has something fundamentally Teutonic in it.

If the place where each race most abounds were necessarily the primitive source, we should look on Europe as the origin of Indo-Europeans, and Africa of Syro-Arabians. But of course this is an illusion; and it may be objected that the termination *-idae* in *Asidae*, *Afridae*, *Europidae*, might give rise to that error. Perhaps so. But there is a great advantage in a name with a geographic basis:—indeed, *Atlantidae* is geographic, but uninstrucively so:—*Mongolidae*, if geographic, is too limited. It occurs to us also, in the name of Biblical historians to complain that our author studies the art of ingeniously tormenting. He grants them *three* stocks of the human family,—Shem, Ham and Japheth, as they will immediately suppose. He even calls one of them *Iapetidae*; which every simple-hearted Biblist will interpret to be,—children of JAPHETH. The *Atlantidae*, being African, must apparently be children of HAM. So far well: but then,—he cruelly leaves no progeny for SHEM but Mongols, Tartars, Malays and other *Paganidae*, and makes the Chaldaean Abraham one of the *Ham-idae*!—However, he can reply, that the book of Genesis itself confesses Canaan to be a son of Ham, and Hebrew is the tongue of Canaan. Certainly, it is strange, that two nations talking languages so allied as Chaldee and Hebrew were ever put under different patriarchs.

We perceive that the Philistines are regarded by our author as doubtfully related to the Canaanites, and as perhaps speaking a foreign language;—although he confesses a difficulty about this. The Biblical narratives always leave on our minds the impression, that the Hebrews and the Philistines understood one another; and we find Winer (*Real-Wörterbuch*) expresses himself decisively as follows: “The language of the Philistines was of the same stock as the Phoenician and Hebrew. At least the proper names of Towns and Persons are all Shemitic, and most closely explicable from Hebrew. Still, they may in course of time have gained some distinction of dialect, Neh. 13, 24.”

The *Mongolidae* occupy 468 pages of this book, the *Atlantidae* 56, the *Iapetidae* 28. These numbers at once show how the author has concentrated his work on the great continental populations of Asia, America and Australia with the islands of India and of the Pacific. In fact, Europe less needs the additional discussion, and Africa has

not afforded so ample new information. The following remarks may interest the reader :—

“*The true Negro area* (in Africa), the area occupied by men of the black skin, depressed nose and woolly hair, is exceedingly small ;— *as small in proportion to the rest of the continent as the district of the stunted Hyperboreans is in Asia, or that of the Laps in Europe.*”—P. 471.

“The Negro of Sennaar has his closest relations, in the way of language, manners, and [therefore ? of] blood, with the Africans of Kordofan, Abyssinia, and the parts about his own country. Not so, however, his physical conformation. These are with the Africans of Senegambia and Guinea ; a fact brought about by the common conditions of heat, moisture, and a low sea-level : conditions however, which render the group artificial and provisional, rather than natural and permanent. *The same would be the case, if we threw all the mountaineers of Europe in one and the same class . . . simply on the ground of their exhibiting certain common phenomena of colour, stature and habits.*”—P. 472.

The last paragraph will show Latham to be fully agreed with Prichard, that climate and circumstances suffice to bring about great typical changes of physical form, independently of race. But he is not engaged in maintaining the point, and never repeats Prichard's arguments concerning it. He is well aware of the fallacies by which the opposite prejudices concerning the unchangeableness of race and unchangeableness of language are upheld by their respective advocates ; and endeavours to introduce stricter rules of reasoning. Thus he will never allow admixture of race to be inferred from a change in physical type ; but if there is substantive ground for believing an admixture of race, he will then allow it to be used in accounting for the change of types. Accordingly, he deserts Prichard in the question of the Ottoman Turks, and attributes their European features to intermarriage with women of those countries, because he thinks such intermarriage *à priori* probable. We find it harder to follow him when he applies the same remark to the Hungarians ;—first, because several specimens of Hungarian *men*, whom we have seen, have enough of Tartar aspect to satisfy any one ;—secondly, because we are informed by Germans who have lived in Hungary, that the women of pure Magyar race are singularly beautiful, and far surpass either German or Slovak women.

This circumstance however reminds us of another,—that the learned Hungarians firmly believe their progenitors to have migrated from Circassia and the neighbouring regions. Indeed the *last* migration, that of the Cumanians, was so recent, and the declaration of the people themselves, that they derived their name from the river Kouma (on the northern side of Caucasus), so positive, as to seem more like testimony than mythical opinion : and the *first* Magyar immigrants of whom we know, the Iazygs, are called a branch of the wandering Sarmatians, while in the days of Herodotus the Sarmatians notoriously had their seat among the northern roots of the Caucasus. Now the women of Circassia and Georgia are celebrated for their beauty : so indeed are the chiefs of Georgia ; but Dr. Latham informs us that the common men are very coarse-featured. This may perhaps be a point acquired by them, in common with the Hungarians, on the Caucasian district, a general beauty of the women, co-existing with a prevalent Tartar aspect in the men.

In passing, we spoke of the Iazygs as Magyars. It is a fact, that one branch of the true Magyars still style themselves Iazygs ; and since they live (as nearly as can be made out) on the same area as the Iazyges in the days of Tacitus, it will need some very clear proof to make us doubt of their being the same people. Latham however follows his predecessors in inferring that they cannot have been Magyars, *because* they were a branch of the Sarmatians. But we think this unduly assumes that “Sarmatians” was a term designating a single race. As the Greeks said Scythians, so did the Latins *Sarmatians*, to denote all the roving tribes of the great country north of the Black Sea. When Tacitus, for instance, speaks in one place of the Iazyges, in another of the Rhozolani, as Sarmatian nations, he shows his belief that both came from Sarmatia, but not that they were both of the same blood or language, about which he perhaps knew nothing.

It is amusing to see the Nemesis of Logic scourging the upholders of the *Caucasian* theory. The proud believers in the immaculate and inimitable European blood scorned the idea that the Ottoman Turks had become beautiful by the effect of fine climate and healthy habits, and insisted that it was from intermarriage with beautiful *Caucasian*

females. But lo! the greatest authorities we have,—Dr. Latham and Mr. Norris,—pronounce these Caucasians to be Mongolidae, more nearly akin to Chinese than to Europeans. Latham alleges, that all the error on the subject was produced by the skull of *one* Georgian female, which, happening to be the finest in Blumenbach's collection, seemed to that excellent investigator a sufficient reason for bestowing the epithet Caucasian on all well-skulled races. The next step was, to infer that all men with good skulls were of a single race, fitly called Caucasian: and the last,—that these races had been diffused from the Caucasus as their centre!

The Armenians, according to Latham, are a sort of link or transitional race, which may ultimately perhaps explain the relations of Mongolidae and Iapetidae. The Albanians, whom Prichard unhesitatingly makes Indo-European, Latham to our surprise is disposed to connect with the old Iberians, as members of old Europe *before* the Iapetidae flooded it. If this view has much support, it may be hoped that the Albanian will help to understand the transition from the Iberian to the Iapetic tongues.

We hardly think that Latham is as conscious as he ought to be, of the lame conclusion in which his science for the present leaves us. It teaches that the great Iapetids who have filled Europe and affected the world far beyond all other parts of the human family, did not originate in Europe, but came from Asia: yet it scarcely allows to Asia any power of generating Iapetids. In Persia itself, Latham imagines, the race has died out! There is certainly something wrong here. It has been seen that Latham, with Prichard, believes in the power of climate and habits to change the type of human races:—we also believe it; under the condition of *ample time*. But if this be the correct view, then the Iapetid peculiarities are to be more anxiously referred to localities; and we are to believe that in long time Europeans would have become what they are, had Europe been peopled by Mongolians. In fact, we are not aware that the old Iberians, who are *not* Iapetids in language, were in talents or beauty surpassed by them. Persia also, in spite of its vast infusion of Tartar population, continues in all its warmer valleys to produce the same handsome type of men and

women as Persepolitan sculptures exhibit and as Xenophon praised.

In an article on Pickering in our February number, we expressed our dissent from the arbitrary (indeed *false*) assumption, that the unity of the human species *means* descent from a single pair. We are sorry to see Latham reproduce this among his apophthegms as a definition of species, justifying it on the ground that it "has the advantage of being founded upon a fact *capable of being ascertained.*" Strange! when this is precisely what no one can ascertain;—that the Creator did *not* produce at once a thousand human pairs, for mutual defence and comfort, and to promote the development of mind, *but* left one to multiply under all risks. But we cannot admit that the unity of our species is a phrase which any one may define at pleasure. Does not every dog in the street know all other dogs to be of the same species with himself, and all men to be of the same species one with another? Does any dog who has lost his master ever hesitate what what sort of animals may, and what may not, furnish a new master for him? And shall it be pretended that man does not know man to be of the same species with himself by a direct perception? The popular heart here judges more certainly than scholastic intellect:—

“As the clear sky seen in a waveless river,
As the green leaves above and grass below,
As o'er the fly-shaped flow'r the fly's wings quiver,
And as twin stars each other's motion show,
As with one wind two distant palm-trees shiver,
Both eyes keep time, both cheeks together glow;—
Thus in the single nature of mankind
Heart beats with heart, and mind responds to mind.”

John Sterling.

Of the condensed learning contained in the book before us, we have scarcely given the reader an idea; but we may add, the reasonings are almost entirely those of literature, not of physiology, and although it is a worthy addition to Prichard, it is essentially supplementary, and does not attempt to work out great principles from the foundation. Nor does he (as far as we see) attempt to grapple with the difficult inquiry concerning the order of migrations,

and the relation of the Sanscritical to the Egyptian and Assyrian populations which has of late received a new impulse. But the author honestly professes only his contribution (and it is a large one) to a large subject.

At the same time we sometimes wish that he would exhibit his arguments more fully. Once or twice he refers us to what he has written for the Philological Society of London; but the books of that Society are not to be bought, and a short paper might well be reprinted. When he argues that the Slavonic area in the east of Germany has not increased since the Christian era, we cannot understand, even from his paper in the Philological, what reason he has to reject the very distinct testimony of Velleius Paterculus and of Strabo, that under Maroboduus their contemporary the Marcomanni were masters and occupants of Bohemia. He seems to *assume* that this is a mistake; otherwise he could hardly urge the mere absence of records of the Tchech invasion as any proof that the Tchechs were in possession of Bohemia before the Christian era. Altogether, Dr. Latham is too concise and abrupt in his mode of arguing; so that he is apt rather to surprise and perplex than convince. But he is rich in suggestion, fresh and searching in his theories, eminently learned, and of untiring enthusiasm. With such abilities, the longer he lives and writes, the more he will overcome a certain over-dryness of style which rises out of his effort at scientific exactness.