

What's Become of the Monkey?

Prof. Henry Osborne, of the American Museum of Natural History, made some singular statements at Cornell last week, if the papers are to be believed. Prof. Osborne has been one of the foremost press agents of the Missing Link, and his third edition of "Men of the Old Stone Age" was advertised in 1921 as "the most important and complete work on human evolution since Darwin's "Descent of Man." It was he who assembled the series of "restorations" depicting man's tail-swinging ancestors.

His new statement is that the spiritual qualities of man cannot be accounted for "by purely evolutionary processes;" and he enumerated the mathematical and artistic faculties of man as "new attributes to the human race without antecedents and not to be accounted for by evolution." (The engineer, then, has not evolved.) That's what we've said all along.

He then goes over some "outstanding irrefutable facts", which are to our purpose:

1. Man as such has been on earth for at least 500,000 years.
2. The human family, or hominidae, has been with us with its own independent history for at least two and a half million years.
3. This family has developed into more or less progressive races.
4. Anatomical and cultural unity proclaim the descent of all the branches of the human race from a single human stock.
5. "Convincing evidence of these outstanding facts of early human history rests on the indestructible flint and stone industry and upon absolutely consistent anatomical evidence clearly interpreted by four generations of expert, conscientious observers drawn from the ranks of laymen, of learned professions and of the clergy, especially of the Catholic Church." He makes particular mention of Louvain.

What's become of the monkey? Professor Osborne has made no mention of him. What's become of the mechanist theory that the only difference between life and non-life is one of physical and chemical changes? He doesn't say a word about it.

The answer, not to be uttered above a whisper, is this: At the meeting of the British Academy for the Advancement of Science in 1924 (the Society before which Huxley declared, in 1874, that the primitive nebula contained everything we find in the world today, including the mind of man) mechanism met its doom. The president of the Zoological Section stated that "to an increasing number of biologists life becomes an ultimate natural category, sharing, with matter and energy, our conception of the universe." And Prof. McDougall, of Harvard, President of the Section of Psychology, maintained that "no intelligent discussion of human affairs is possible without the use of such terms as motive, intention, desire, will, responsibility, aspiration, ideal, striving, effort, interest." Mechanism does not account for life it does not account for the spiritual side of man; it must go.

Prof. Osborne wants to get on the band wagon. The British Academy has completed the circuit and is back where it started from, at the Scholastic theory of life and the soul. Some other British scientist will collapse the 500,000 years theory to 25,000 years, and Osborne will again climb aboard. When you want to be convinced...

Prayers: Eugene Young's nephew was killed in an accident Monday. An act of thanksgiving is reported for a favor granted on the ninth day of a Novena to the Little Flower. Edward McGuire, of Freshman Hall, lost his father in an accident Sunday. Ray Doyle's father is sick. Bob Ovington, ex '17, dies yesterday morning. Three special intentions are recommended.