ARTICLE VIII.

THE STORY OF EVE'S CREATION.

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THIS story is now commonly relegated to the same class as the creation myths of the Greeks, Hindus, South Sea Islanders, and others. But it seems rather to be in a class by itself, inasmuch as some of them have the nature of folk-lore, or stories fancifully invented to explain facts, and others are based on a superstitious exaltation of natural forces. The account of creation, or accounts, in Genesis, seem rather to be a sober, reasonable narration, with nothing fanciful, at least until the appearance of Eve. This part, as usually understood, appears unnatural and almost bizarre; and yet the narrator, whoever he was, seems to have meant what he said and to have been fully assured that he was narrating fact. This being the case, it would be interesting to discover, if possible, the ground for his soberness of style as well as confidence of manner. Let us see if Imagination, based on facts and restrained by Reason, cannot help us in this case, when she has been so helpful in the progress of the sciences and the arts. We are compelled to admit evolution as a fact of method. However unsatisfactory it may be as an explanation of the forces that have caused the progress manifest in the history of the world before man, there can be no question but that it has been the method that God employed, and that the various species of plants and animals have been derived from simpler and lower forms. We who recognize teleology and Providence find no difficulty in accepting a Divine overruling, or control, in all Nature, so that all events

work together for good to those who love God, and that all history moves on to one divine far-off event. In the evolution of species, the Divine Evolver, by an interference in Nature similar to that which he is continually exercising in Providence, as we can see day by day, might exercise a control like that by which breeders and gardeners secure highly developed varieties of animals and plants according to their desire, and so secure various species of plants and animals, which not only fill a useful place in the scheme of Nature, but also point forward to the perfect animal, man, which the animals at least, each in its place, typify and prefigure. That this must have been the process, the unmistakable evidences of design compel us to admit. But leading evolutionists confess the necessity of outside forces brought in to account for man's rational nature, and so agree with the Bible statement, that man's spirit is a gift from God, as I have pointed out in a previous article.

Evolutionists have been fond of trying to discredit the Bible in the line of chronology, demanding many billions of years for the process of evolution; but leading scientists, notably Lord Kelvin, assert that the rate of cooling of the earth will not admit of the time demanded. So they are "hoist with their own petard"; science corrects science; while the Bible, not being committed to any definite chronology, is unconcerned, and may well be called in to help scientists out of the pit which they digged for it. For only as this supernatural Providential control is conceded can the process of evolution be brought within the limited time. Evolutionists rely upon environment and heredity. The Bible implies both of these. The words "the earth brought forth" signify environment, and "after its kind" is heredity; while the expression "formed" suggests the action of a potter shaping a vessel on his swiftly revolving wheel, or God controlling the development through circling generations. The gift of a spirit to the first man is poetically

described as an inbreathing into man's nostrils. The gift to each man is described in almost the same words. Job says, "The spirit of God is in my nostrils" (Job xxvii. 3), and "The breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (xxxiii. 4).

This being the case, we must understand that the gift to the first man was the same as to each one of his descendants, i. e. a spirit given at the initial moment of individual existence. This means that the first man was born of parents who must have been animals, i. e. without the rational endowment. This is not strange, seeing that every man inherits from his parents only his animal nature, while his spirit is a gift direct from God. If, as we must suppose, God's chief purpose in the development of the ascending series of animals was to attain ultimately to an animal species of sufficiently high organization to be a suitable abode, instrument, and companion for a rational spirit, i. e. to be endowed with a rational nature, he attained his end when but one pair was secured capable of being parents of such beings. There would be no object in having more, and so we cannot suppose that there were more. Furthermore, to start the human race, one pair of human beings is sufficient, and anthropological evidence points to the conclusion that there was but one pair. "Occam's razor," or the law of parsimony, which forbids our seeking a further cause when we have already sufficient cause, prevents our supposing that there was more than one pair of animal parents of human beings, or more than one pair of human beings born of animal parents. Then those first human beings called Adam and Eve, must have been brother and sister.

Our revulsion against the marriage of a brother and sister does not prevent our admitting the necessity of the children of the first human pair intermarrying with each other. This revulsion is based, not on any inherent idea of sin or

immorality in the act, but on the importance of discriminating the love of kin from conjugal love. This is perhaps reënforced by an instinctive recognition of the physiological law, illustrated so strikingly among plants, that "Nature abhors perpetual close fertilization." This importance of discrimination must yield to the inevitable under the circumstances. Thus far we have come on solid ground. Now let us call in the scientific imagination, which has so often built a bridge of hypothesis from solid observed fact to solid admitted fact in the progress of the sciences. Admitting that the first man and the first woman were brother and sister, there is nothing unreasonable in supposing them to have been twins. Nor is it unnatural to suppose that the twins were united by a cartilage as the Siamese twins, Chang and Eng, were. Such double persons are not as rare as we might suppose. They are common enough to require a scientific name, as *Omphalopagus*, i.e. "joined by the umbilicus," or *Xiphopagus*, i. e. "joined by the ensiform cartilage," or breastbone. There are records of six or seven such couples.

Being so joined at birth, they might have been broken asunder, by accident, or by the rude intention of their animal parents, under the protective care of a wise Providence. At least three such couples have been separated by surgical operations, two of them successfully. Where the union is mere cartilage, it is a very simple matter to break it before it hardens into bone. It is worthy of notice in this connection, that the Jews have a tradition that Adam was created double-sexed, and that the two sexes were afterwards separated. The tradition might have been derived from the Genesis story, but its difference from that seems rather to confirm the above supposition. Similarly the Hindus have a story that the first man was of both sexes, and divided himself in order to people the earth. This Hindu story is mixed in with other details that indicate the

same origin as the Genesis story, although fancifully elaborated. In the Zodiac of Dendera, the sign usually represented by the twins, Gemini, or Castor and Pollux, appears as a man and woman, and there is evidence going to show that they were called Adam and Eve. Also the old Coptic name for this sign is *Pi Mahi*, which is said to signify "the united" or "the completely joined." Do not these diverse stories, agreeing in this respect, furnish a strong confirmation of the supposition made above?

To explain the form of description found in the record, let us carry our supposition a little farther. What more natural than that Adam's children of the third or fourth generation should ask him to tell of himself as early as he could remember, and that he should say, 'The earliest I can remember was when I was a boy like one of you at seven or eight years of age. I had no father or mother or any one else to care for me. What I remember most is that I was very lonely. There were no other children to play with, as you have, or to talk with. I thought that God was very unkind not to make me any companion. I tried to teach the animals to talk; but, although they came to know the names I gave them, they could not talk. Then I understood that God had made me different from them, and that when he formed me he put into me a breath of life which he did not give to them. I knew that they were formed out of the ground (Gen. ii. 19), because, when they died, they in time became the same as the ground in which they were buried; and I know that I was made of the same, because when Abel, who was like me, died, he turned into earth in the same way. Only I think that I was formed of finer earth than they, so I called it "dust" (ii.7). After some years had passed, which I kept record of by making a mark on the bark of a certain tree I was very fond of, every time that it bore fruit, I was rejoiced to see a being coming to me who was not like the animals around me. I could see at

once that she had the breath of life from God, such as I had. When she came near I noticed a bone sticking out of her side, and then I observed that it just corresponded to a hollow in my left side where the bone was gone, and its place was filled up with soft flesh. Then I knew that the Lord God had not neglected me as I thought, but had provided a suitable companion for me by taking a rib from my side and building it up into a woman. When I saw this I said, "She is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."' Here the children ask if it did not hurt very much to take out a rib, and Adam replies, 'No; I did not know about it. I must have been asleep.' They say, 'Wouldn't it wake you?' and he replies, 'The Lord must have made me fall into a very deep sleep.'

This story of Adam would need to be repeated but a few times to reach Noah, who, according to tradition, left written records that escaped destruction in the flood. It is quite possible that Adam supposed that he was formed directly by the hand of God, and that the rib was taken from him to build up Eve after he was fully formed, but he does not say so. It is not unusual in Scripture to find a person making a statement which he does not rightly understand, which yet, although stated according to his apprehension of the case, agrees with the real state of the case in a striking way.

Caiaphas said that it was expedient that one should die for the people, but he did not understand the true application of his words. The writer of the Nineteenth Psalm spoke of the sun's going forth from the end of heaven, and probably thought only of its daily apparent orbit, and as poetic language it was true. But in a literal sense it is true as applied to the actual path of the sun among the stars. The apostles repeatedly find a meaning in the Old Testament writings which the writers probably never had. So Adam's report would be true in one sense as he understood it, and

also literally true in a way he may not have known. His deep sleep was the state of unconsciousness before birth, continued for a time after. Moreover, biologists tell us that such double births originate from a single germ, or blastoderm, as it is technically called; and Von Jhering maintains "that the origin of multiple embryos from a single ovum is the primitive and normal condition." It is well to notice that the record does not follow the chronological order. The naming of the animals (ii. 20) is mentioned before the deep sleep (ii. 21), but is not asserted to have taken place before it. Also, the forming of the animals (ii. 19) is described after the creation of man (ii. 7), but is not said to have come in that order. Admitting the possibility of the sequence of events as described above, is there not a certain grotesqueness about it which makes it improbable? Perhaps so; but may it not be that the moral lessons taught by the occurrences, as brought out by Christ (Matt. xix. 4, 5), and Paul (1 Tim. ii. 14), and others, give sufficient reason for the strangeness, which perhaps is more due to our unfamiliarity than anything else?

Since the above was written, we learn of the successful separation, by a surgical operation at Paris, of the Hindu twins at the age of about ten years. A prominent divine recently said, that what Paul said, that "Adam was first formed (*plasso*) and then Eve" (1 Tim. ii. 13), is not true, because it conflicts with Gen. i. Paul's statement is evidently based on the account in Gen. ii. If what has been suggested above be true, there is no conflict, and the meaning is made more plain in 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9. According to divine declaration, the woman is the helpmeet for man, therefore made for man, therefore logically second to him; which would justify the language used. It is possible also that the protoplasm of the primal germ was that which became man, from which that which became woman was separated in forming; not that Paul could

have understood this, but his naturally mistaken understanding of Gen. ii. was controlled to keep him from stating error, while making a correct inference.

Thus we have a consistent explanation of the Genesis story of the creation of Eve, harmonious with science and with evolution divinely controlled. The story is itself a fact which calls for an explanation. It is not enough to say that it came from the Babylonians. Where did they get it? Can we suppose that some one imagined it? On the face of it, the story is not plausible enough for us to suppose such an origin. If it is a record of actual occurrences, that would sufficiently account for it. But the usual objection to taking it as such, has been that it is unnatural and improbable, and in conflict with evolution. Taking it as at one time usually understood it would be so, and the objection would be valid. But seeing that the literal meaning, when explained as above, is both natural and probable, and in harmony with evolution, are we not permitted to accept the above as the most probable explanation of an otherwise unexplainable fact?