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THE HARTFORD HERALD.

"I COME, THE HERALD OF A NOISY WORLD, THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS LUMBERING AT MY BACK."

VOL. XI. HARTFORD, KENTUCKY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1885. NO. 38.

Table with columns for advertising rates: Yearly, Half Yearly, Quarterly, Monthly, Single Copies. Includes a note: 'For a shorter time at proportionate rate'.

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IRRATIONAL RATIONALISM. An Address Delivered Before Hartford College and Business Institute, Monday Night, Aug. 31, 1885, and Published by Request.

BY REV. JOHN M. CROW, A. M., LOUISVILLE CONFERENCE. Mr. President, Fellow Students, Ladies and Gentlemen: It was with ineffable pleasure and a deep sense of gratitude that I accepted the honor accorded me by your worthy president two months ago to address you on this occasion.

It is with ineffable pleasure and a deep sense of gratitude that I accepted the honor accorded me by your worthy president two months ago to address you on this occasion. Indeed I feel myself highly congratulated in being called hither to the place of my boyhood, to form new friendships, to renew old ones, and in the presence of such an array and assemblage of physical, intellectual and moral beauty champion the cause of christian truth in its conflict with modern science.

Let us exchange congratulations on this scholastic occasion. To all the noble sons and nobler daughters of our fair Southland we have a hearty greeting as they come with elastic step and vigorous mind, to tread these shining aisles of reason and bow at these sacred altars of virtue. Long may they keep whirled and ward by these fireworked shrines of truth and holiness! Let us turn our thought upon our theme-- Irrational Rationalism. This is an age in which there is nothing too sacred to pass unassailed. The Sabbath is desecrated, the Sacred Oracles mutilated and disregarded, manhood degraded, selfishness disowned, doubted and denied.

It is well to keep silent at times and thereby show the fool according to his folly. But our silence has been mistaken for weakness. However convenient therefore it would be to ignore all such arguments, it is not wise so long as such errors trouble the minds and imperil the faith of many unthinking, unsuspecting young men. In our discussion to-night we ask no quarters and claim none, we think and let think, adopting the motto of Christendom: 'In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity.'

From its motions his thoughts are song. The realm of space are the choir have been. And the music notes the sun and stars. The universe is not governed by law. It is governed by intelligent agency according to law. Law is merely a mode of action, a rule of conduct. It implies a Legislator, a government, and subjects or objects governed. The failure to recognize this distinction has been fruitful of much irrational thinking and verbal mysticism. Let us see distinctions where there are vast and vital differences and we are saved from much that is mere assumption, falsely called argument. The nearest tyro in dialectics perceives that law is an assumed agency and requires the continued presence of that agency which conceived it to execute it. There is no such thing as law without a law-giver. Moral law is a moral mode of operation. But by whom? Material law is a physical mode of action. But, what acts? A philosophic law is a philosophic mode of mental activity. But, whose mind thus acts? In every instance the abstract is necessarily and logically involved in the concrete. All actions imply an actor, all movements an originator, an author. It is misleading and unmeaning to speak therefore of a law of nature operating per se.

First--It denotes a uniform order of facts. All birds are oviparous, is an instance. Again, the right and left sides of all vertebrate animals correspond in their organs; the offspring is of the same species as the parent. This use of law does not convey the idea of causality but merely an established order of facts. The facts give the law, not the law the facts. Second--It denotes the properties of matter. In nature there are some sixty elementary substances. The property of any substance is its power to change or be changed by any other substance. All matter attracts all other matter with a force that is in proportion directly as the mass and inversely as the square of the distance. This is called a Law of Gravity. Law, in this sense, means a statement of the forces in action and not the forces themselves. Third--It denotes the action of two or more substances so as to produce an effect. Fourteen parts of nitrogen plus eight parts of oxygen equal to protoxide of nitrogen. Notice, that the combinations give the law, the law does not make the combinations. Even the

gradual assimilation of species into species. It ought not to be so slow and uncertain because the relics of organisms are so numerous from the Post-tertiary way down to the Cambrian age. Surely in two thousand years one line ought to have been found. In the wonderful progress and prowess of mind, man has harnessed fire and water to the chariot of science and wheeled his way to the outposts of the astronomic dome and driven with Jehuic boldness down the petrean declivities of the geologic highways and speeded his restless, reckless voyage amid the perils of the deep, deep blue, bedecked his scientific mitre with peary gems out of old ocean's deep, rolled by the very portals of the asper walls where could albat be heard the paeans of undying rapture, and down the gales of dreamless doom, where could albat be heard the wailings of unmitigated despair. Yet, alas! his fruitless search of centuries extorts the confession 'not by transmutation but substitution do species follow species.' Each species comes suddenly and in full perfection, remains substantially unchanged during life and passes away in full perfection.

Again, Fourthly--Why the scientific whine that distinguished naturalists persist in rejecting the metamorphosis theory? Because as there are great organic chasms without the bridge of linear connection, so there are great organic leaps, and according to the Development Hypothesis there should be neither. When natural science (should be termed unnatural science) accounts for these facts and phenomena, we will be ready to yield, willing to abide the results.

Again, Fifthly--If the Evolution theory be true, as we trace the genealogy of the species back in time, organisms ought to grow more and more simple until we come to mere sessile cells, in the tepid shallows of prehistoric seas. But such is not the fact. Christian scientists in geologic chariots have traversed every path back toward the night of ancient chaos, their journey measured by millions of years, bidding adieu to verdant earth, down through vast formations of the earth, beyond the limits of historic time, where the lapse of time is marked, not by successive seasons, but repeated creations and at no period in the mystic tour was there to be found a fading away of complex animal structures into simpler forms. Take the Animal Kingdom, from the age of man, down through the age of reptiles, through the age of fishes, to the age of corals, the lowest. Take the Rock Kingdom, from the post-tertiary, tertiary, cretaceous, carboniferous, devonian, silurian, to the cambrian, the lowest. Take the Plant Kingdom, from the age of palms, of pines, of acrogens, and to the last, the age of algae, in none of these three domains do we find the clue upon which to follow the development. Nowhere, however, have the advocates of 'natural selection,' 'spontaneous generation' shown a single fact in support of the assumption that the earth has been peopled with all varieties of living creatures by 'fortuitous variations.' Mere fancies and analogies dexterously woven together to give the appearance of consistency and plausibility will not suffice on a question involving interests so vital and momentous. Nature's plan, the system of animal types, the symmetry of organization, the order of age and stature, all bespeak intelligent design in refutation of accidental accretions, or fortuitous variations. As to the origin of man, one reply to the evolution theory must be given as sufficient. Merely because of similarities of forms between man and any animal is not sufficient to convince a candid mind that they had the same prehistoric origin. There must be identity. Because there is similarity in the shapes of heads is no proof that they were made in the same shop, by the same hands.

Again, this theory of identity of the human with the forest brutes teaches suicide, infanticide, crimes so shocking prevalent. 'The Survival of the Fittest' means this. Prof. Darwin, Descent of Man, Vol. 1, page 161. There is reason to believe that vaccination has preserved thousands, who from weak constitutions would formerly have succumbed to small pox. We civilized men build asylums for the imbecile and sick. Thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. This must be highly injurious to the race of man. What do you think of that? 'Might is right.' I see why indelicately builds no asylums. Kill the weak in mind and body. Let the strong survive. 'Survival of the Fittest' indeed! Would Prof. Alexander use such a text book in his school? Are there parents who would have such stuff taught their children? Progress! progress back to heathenism! These are dangerous men if they but dared to act their theory. Finally answer this: How can you evolve that out of a thing that is not involved in it? The Oldest and the Old Testaments agree. Man has always been man, the monkey was never a monkey. But to another part of my subject. Man has a body, but he is spirit. There are two universes the seen and the unseen mind and matter. Further: The world of sense is the product and manifestation of the world of spirit. All the vital forces of nature are inconceivable by bodily senses. The most apparent owes its existence to causes which do not appear. There is a seeing and a seeing. Even if we could fabricate a world by human hands such a world would not be rid of its spiritual quantity, could not be

viewed as absolutely material. I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say. A world of our own creation would embody ideas superior to it, independent of it. Given such a world and the thing that made it is unto it as God is unto his creatures. Taken a man whose beliefs are wholly governed by what he calls his 'senses.' Even such a man, believing only in material civilization, is forced to confess, in his better reasoning, that after all what he admires in art and architecture was a thought before it was a fact. Educate the rudest, boldest, boldest materialist away from the sensual into the elementary propositions of philosophy--such as 'the densities of different substances are as their specific gravities,'--and he will begin to see what is the motor and master power: a thought. He now begins to see that a wrong thought could not build a correct bridge. He begins to applaud the process of thought, and to see some meaning at least in praying as well as in slandering. Wonderful to tell, yet we challenge a denial of the charge, that so soon as a scientific doctrine becomes practically beneficial, these would-be wise men abandon it to the populace. So long as it is a fine theory, it is the creed, but when it becomes practical, it is deserted and damned.

But our skeptical friend may answer: I admit all you demand. There is a spiritual side to all material facts, but the one is knowable, the other unknowable. Ah, indeed! Why and how unknowable? Do you mean that man has no power to know God? We grant it! But does it follow that God has no power to make himself known? Mark you, now, if there is any rational hope that God may reveal himself, the world will build on that hope. Is it not rational to do so? You prove that man cannot know God, and aside from the Bible the question remains, Can God make himself known? If you are disposed to discredit the Christian consciousness of all ages, surely you dare not do violence to the laws of thought, and reject a philosophic thesis discerned from the standpoint of natural reason! You assert that nothing whatever can be known concerning the origin of things. What do you mean by 'origin of things'? J. S. Mill denies that God is the author, because some one may ask, Who made God? Indeed! Then, all high inquiries must stop. For to ask, who holds this book? is to start the question, who holds him that holds the book? Suppose we should find that the psychological difficulty, yes, impossibility, of man knowing God is taught in the Bible, would you not accredit a book with such a suggestion as something that philosophical and worthy of all acceptance? Here it is: 'Canst thou search finding out God? ... Suppose that our faith goes out in the direction of meditation, admitting that 'the Lord of lords dwells in light which no man can approach unto,' admitting that 'no man hath seen God, nor can see him,' our faith exulting in the fact that 'the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him,' is it rational in us to withhold our worship, because there may be beyond our conception a 'thunder of power'? Seeing that man only knows so much of himself as is manifest and yet therewith is content, why should he fall out against his ignorance of God and because, moreover, he may not, cannot, know all of God, and his ways reject the whole revelation? You insist that seeing is believing. True, but what is seeing? What is it that believes? How does it believe? You deny God's existence. The very fact of denial implies the existence of that denied. There can be no negation without an affirmation. With God there is the mystery of light. Without God there is the mystery of darkness. We leave you to choose. You cannot be neutral if you were to try. David Hume tried to be a nihilist, that is, 'denying everything and affirming nothing,' but he at last burst out: 'We can have no sensation of efficiency, therefore no idea of it.' The philosophic postulate of materialism is: 'sensation is the only source of knowledge.' No act of man is really spontaneous. It is due to what they call 'molecular changes.' According to Mr. Stuart Mill, 'the mind is a voltaic pile, giving shocks of thought.'

If we must interpret the abstract by the concrete, and we must, we find that personality becomes doctrinal, and to criticize character is to criticize logic. Many of the upholders of material philosophy, not to say all of them, took counsel with prudence and used the hands of Esau to bribe a church who creed they, in their hearts, contemned. Hobbes was crafty and cowardly. He said 'worship was due to God,' and in the next breath said: 'all religion is ridiculous.' Follow such a man! Excuse us. When dying, Hobbes said: 'I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of the world.' But, you say, I intend to die without a fear. Indeed! So do dogs and dogs, without hope and without fear. You say I will answer God for myself. I will tell him that I was honestly mistaken. Honestly mistaken! What do you mean by that? A man is driving recklessly through Hartford streets and runs over a child and kills it. Can the plea, 'I did not mean to do it,' excuse him? No, indeed. He ought to have meant not to do it, and then his driving would not have been so reckless. All his after-pleas make no repair of the wrong he has done in the grief wrung from a mother's broken heart. Mean to be on the right side and you are an honest man, otherwise, I am free to aver that any man who is conscientiously in error after all the evidence is in from all

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