## THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

## ON THE RELATIONS OF MAN TO THE LOWER ANIMALS

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Multis videri poterit, majorem esso differentiam Simiae et Hominis, quam diei et noctis; verum tamen hi, comparatione instituta inter summos Europae Heroes et Hottentottos ad Caput bonae spei degentes, difficillime sibi persuadebunt, has eosdem habere natales; vel si virginem nobilem aulicam, maxime comtam et humanissimam, conferre vellent cum homine sylvestri et sibi relicto, vix augurari possent, hunc et illam ejusdem esse speciei.-'Linnaei Amoenitates Acad. "Anthropomorpha."'

THE question of questions for mankind—the problem which underlies all others, and is more deeply interesting than any other—is the ascertainment of the place which Man occupies in nature and of his relations to the universe of things. Whence our race has come; what are the limits of our power over nature, and of nature's power over us; to what goal we are tending; are the problems which present themselves anew and with undiminished interest to every man born into the world. Most of us, shrinking from the difficulties and dangers which beset the seeker after original answers to these riddles, are contented to ignore them altogether, or to smother the investigating spirit under the featherbed of respected and respectable tradition. But, in every age, one or two restless spirits, blessed with that constructive genius, which can only build on a secure foundation, or cursed with the spirit of mere scepticism, are unable to follow in the well-worn and comfortable track of their forefathers and contemporaries, and unmindful of thorns and stumbling-blocks, strike out into paths of their own. The sceptics end in the infidelity which asserts the problem to be insoluble, or in the atheism which denies the existence of any orderly progress and governance of things: the men of genius propound solutions which grow into systems of Theology or of Philosophy, or veiled in musical language which suggests more than it asserts, take the shape of the Poetry of an epoch.

Each such answer to the great question, invariably asserted by the followers of its propounder, if not by himself, to be complete and final, remains in high authority and esteem, it may be for one century, or it may be for twenty: but, as invariably, Time proves each reply to have been a mere approximation to the truth—tolerable chiefly on account of the ignorance of those by whom it was accepted, and wholly intolerable when tested by the larger knowledge of their successors.