

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

Religion

For centuries, scripture and theology were the focus of prodigious amounts of scholarship and publishing, dominated in the English-speaking world by the work of Protestant Christians. Enlightenment philosophy and science, anthropology, ethnology and the colonial experience all brought new perspectives, lively debates and heated controversies to the study of religion and its role in the world, many of which continue to this day. This series explores the editing and interpretation of religious texts, the history of religious ideas and institutions, and not least the encounter between religion and science.

From Comte to Benjamin Kidd

Robert Mackintosh (1858-1933), a professor at the Congregationalist Lancashire Independent College, traces the influence of biology and evolutionary thought on the study of human ethics and society during the second half of the nineteenth century in this 1899 book. He begins with Comte's founding of sociology, and continues with the renewed appeal to biology for the understanding of human affairs found in the work of Darwin, Spencer and their circle. He then looks at Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*, published in 1894 (and also reissued in this series). Fifty years after Comte, Kidd argued that sociology required further grounding by a new recourse to biology. Mackintosh supported Kidd's view. If biological clues are to afford guidance for human conduct, Mackintosh contended, they must be supplemented by a clearer moral and religious vision, and in philosophy by some scheme of metaphysical evolutionism. His work marks a transition from Darwinism to a new Hegelianism.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection will bring back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

From Comte to Benjamin Kidd

*The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human
Guidance*

ROBERT MACKINTOSH



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108004534

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2009

This edition first published 1899

This digitally printed version 2009

ISBN 978-1-108-00453-4 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

FROM COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

FROM
COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

THE APPEAL TO BIOLOGY OR EVOLUTION
FOR HUMAN GUIDANCE

BY
ROBERT MACKINTOSH

B.D. (EDIN.), M.A., D.D. (GLASG.)

PROFESSOR AT LANCASHIRE INDEPENDENT COLLEGE; AUTHOR OF
'CHRIST AND THE JEWISH LAW,' ETC.

London
MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1899

All rights reserved

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

DEDICATED

WITH WARM REGARD

TO

The Reverend Principal Scott,

B.A., D.D., LL.B.,

AND TO

RECENT AND PRESENT STUDENTS OF LANCASHIRE

INDEPENDENT COLLEGE

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE

THE historical sketch and criticism here attempted had its proximate origin in two consecutive years' work with a senior class of sociology at Lancashire College. In 1896-97, essays were prescribed on topics suggested by Mr. Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*; while the seniors of 1897-98 attended lectures covering rather more ground. The material thus collected has been again revised and again considerably added to. The literature of the subject is always growing. Some books of consequence, old or new, must have been overlooked. Still, it is hoped that the subject itself has well-defined limits. The appeal to biology, outlined by Comte, newly defined and emphasised by Darwinism, has now been stated in the most extreme form logically possible. Mr. Kidd's book holds that significant position.

In studying the questions raised, the author has found himself, though with certain grave reserves, more and more thrown back upon philosophical principles learned at Glasgow, above twenty years ago, from the present Master of Balliol College.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

I wish to express thanks for kind help on different points; to Professor Henry Jones of Glasgow University; to the Rev. A. Halliday Douglas, Cambridge; and, among others, very special thanks to Professor J. Arthur Thomson and Mr. Norman Wyld. Both Mr. Thomson and Mr. Wyld, while busy with important work on the theory of natural selection, found time to give an amateur valuable information bearing on the meaning and merits of Weismann's doctrine of Panmixia.

R. M.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY	1

PART I

COMTISM, WITH SOME SCATTERED PARALLELS

CHAPTER II

COMTE'S LIFE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF HIS TEACHING	9
---	---

CHAPTER III

THE APPEAL TO BIOLOGY	25
Note A. <i>On "Natural Law in the Spiritual World"</i>	32

CHAPTER IV

THE APPEAL TO HISTORY	34
---------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V

THE DOCTRINE OF ALTRUISM	45
------------------------------------	----

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

CHAPTER VI

	PAGE
COMTE'S LAWGIVING	55

PART II

SIMPLE EVOLUTIONISM—SPENCER, STEPHEN

CHAPTER VII

DARWINIAN AND SPENCERIAN CONCEPTIONS OF EVOLUTION— DARWIN	60
--	----

CHAPTER VIII

DARWINIAN AND SPENCERIAN CONCEPTIONS OF EVOLUTION— SPENCER	71
---	----

CHAPTER IX

MR. SPENCER'S THREE DOCTRINES OF HUMAN WELFARE	86
--	----

CHAPTER X

MR. LESLIE STEPHEN'S "SCIENCE OF ETHICS"	95
--	----

PART III

DARWINISM, OR STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

CHAPTER XI

"DARWINISM IN MORALS"—MISS COBBE'S PROTEST	110
--	-----

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xi

CHAPTER XII		PAGE
DARWINISM IN POLITICS—BAGEHOT	115	115
Note B. <i>On Professor Ritchie's "Darwinism and Politics"</i>	122	122
CHAPTER XIII		
DARWINISM IN ETHICS—PROFESSOR ALEXANDER	124	124
CHAPTER XIV		
REACTION FROM DARWINISM—HUXLEY	137	137
CHAPTER XV		
REACTION FROM DARWINISM—DRUMMOND'S "ASCENT OF MAN"	143	143
CHAPTER XVI		
REITERATION OF DARWINISM: ELIMINATION MADE ABSOLUTE— MR. A. SUTHERLAND	157	157
CHAPTER XVII		
THE METAPHYSICS OF NATURAL SELECTION	171	171
PART IV		
HYPER-DARWINISM—WEISMANN, KIDD		
CHAPTER XVIII		
A "FAIRY TALE OF SCIENCE"?	215	215

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

CHAPTER XIX

	PAGE
HYPER-DARWINISM IN SOCIOLOGY: STRUGGLE MADE ABSOLUTE—	
MR. KIDD	238

CHAPTER XX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	256
-----------------------------------	-----

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ANALYTICAL CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Science offers to supersede religion as guide to conduct—In form of *theoretical* sociology—Appealing to biology and evolution—Sociology distinguished from politics—From economics—From social philosophy—Akin to evolutionary ethics—Our point of view ; morality taken for granted.

PART I

COMTISM, WITH SOME SCATTERED PARALLELS

CHAPTER II

COMTE'S LIFE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF HIS TEACHING

Comte as founder—His life—His books—The term "Sociology"—"Statics" (cf. Spencer)—"Dynamics"—Divisions of the *Polity*—Comte's religion—The term "Positive"—Four authorities superseded—Comte on psychology—And on ethics—Law of the three stages—Criticism—Transition to the study of Comte's relation to science—He repudiates dogmatic atheism and materialism—His scale of values in the hierarchy of the sciences—Spencer's criticism.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

CHAPTER III

THE APPEAL TO BIOLOGY

The "social organism" in other writers—In Comte—Idealist supplement to the biological appeal—Professor Mackenzie's statement of the idealist view—Intuitionist criticism of the appeal—Comte uses a biological parable—Consistent phenomenalism means (if not evolutionism) hedonism—Comtism and hedonism two half truths.

[Note A. On Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*—"Biological religion," according to Finlayson—Drummond appeals to biogenesis—His religion is Calvinistic, rather, or Gnostic—His noble zeal for continuity in knowledge.]

CHAPTER IV

THE APPEAL TO HISTORY

In Dr. Hatch—Criticism—In Ritschl, how far Comtist—Other appeals; to *historic parallels*—Example from Comte—To the *whole tendency of history*—More usual in Comte; examples—Criticism—Mr. Mackenzie's criticism—Guidance to be gained from history is limited—Comte's varied and capricious appeals to it.

CHAPTER V

THE DOCTRINE OF ALTRUISM

A fragment of ethics—On a *psychological* basis—Opposes psychological hedonism—Healthily, but incompetently—Fitzjames Stephen's objection to it; we cannot alter nature's forces!—That is good determinism but bad morals—*Ethically*, is a new conception of virtue—Scientifically worthless [Mr. Baldwin]—"Balance" is preferred to altruism by Butler at times—By Spencer—Criticism.

CHAPTER VI

COMTE'S LAWGIVING

Its principles—The separation of the temporal and spiritual powers—*Political* character of Comte's *sociology*—Details—Summary.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ANALYTICAL CONTENTS

xv

PART II

SIMPLE EVOLUTIONISM—SPENCER, STEPHEN

CHAPTER VII

DARWINIAN AND SPENCERIAN CONCEPTIONS OF EVOLUTION—
DARWIN

Evolution came as a surprise—Darwin deals with biology—With species only—Taking “Struggle” from Malthus, he perceives in it (Natural) “*Selection*”—A true cause, but minute; an immensely slow process—Compare the replies to Malthus—*Sexual Selection* accelerating—Or *Use-Inheritance*—But too much Lamarck, making variation not “casual,” but purposeful, would render unnecessary the “Selective” action of “Nature”—Recent doubts as to use-inheritance.

CHAPTER VIII

DARWINIAN AND SPENCERIAN CONCEPTIONS OF EVOLUTION—
SPENCER

A cosmic philosophy—Resting on correlation of forces—And on hypothesis of organic evolution—Emphasising natural (physical, material) law—Darwinism as a cosmic philosophy? Alexander—Cf. Lotze—Cf. Fiske—Spencer values true use-inheritance as accounting for *a priori* knowledge—But natural selection is *not* the source of his *laissez faire* doctrine; he looks forward to a future “balance”—His relation to embryology—*Evolution* means growing complexity—In terms of matter—Two other phases—*Dissolution* as death—As catastrophe—*Equilibrium* is theoretical and prophetic—Spencer’s sequence of the three phases—Criticisms: on the assumed *beginning* of the process—On its *isolation*—On *equilibrium*, as involving a different point of view—Reason is more than a new phase of complexity—The whole process breaks up into a series of separate evolutions in complexity.

CHAPTER IX

MR. SPENCER’S THREE DOCTRINES OF HUMAN WELFARE

Goodness is *more evolved* conduct, *i.e.* is “wisdom”—An appeal to (cosmic) history!—It is *balance*, of egoism and altruism—An appeal to

b

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

economics and to (hedonistic) psychology—It is *individual freedom*—An appeal to rights, and to (human) history, emerging from militarism—For which Spencer feels an exaggerated dread—Spencer masses facts rather than unifies knowledge—The “social organism” is only a phrase with him.

CHAPTER X

MR. LESLIE STEPHEN’S “SCIENCE OF ETHICS”

Stephen a utilitarian—Who came to believe in evolution as a scientific fact—Begins here with facts; ethical judgments exist—Organisms seek maximum efficiency—If social “tissue” is “organic”—Then ethical laws may be the conditions of maximum social efficiency—(Nature cares for individuals)—Nature says, “Be strong!”—Ethics says, “Society, be strong!”—The ethical is the *typical* society, and *therefore* ethical judgments are binding—But the type is actual, not ideal!—Society is a complex whole, changing while its parts are unchanged—Criticism—Sanction for individual goodness lies in sympathy merely—Sometimes we are too good for our own interests! Compared with Comte, lacks *authority*—With Spencer; calls “health” the ideal, and ridicules “balance”—With Darwin; not struggle of individual with individual, but of individual with society—With Utilitarianism; discourages the calculation of consequences—Most of his positions may be accepted in a deeper sense.

PART III

DARWINISM, OR STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

CHAPTER XI

“DARWINISM IN MORALS”—MISS COBBE’S PROTEST

Darwinism may be applied to morals by analogy—Or, as here, by explaining man’s evolutionary origin—Miss Cobbe attacks Darwin’s explanation of the rise of morals out of intelligence *plus* sympathy—And the hypothetical palliation of murder—Little trace of *natural selection* in Darwin’s ethical statement—Darwin’s analysis may be accepted, not his view of reason.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ANALYTICAL CONTENTS

xvii

CHAPTER XII

DARWINISM IN POLITICS—BAGEHOT

Applies Darwinism by analogy—Evolution *transforms* imperceptibly—By nerve tissue in our case; but nothing depends on this assertion of use-inheritance by Bagehot; it is a mere illustration—Not *ethnological*, but *political* questions—Problems both of *progress* and of *differentiation*—1st, Custom as the remedy for primitive wildness in the “fit”—Criticism—2nd, Customs winnowed by the test of war—3rd, Free discussion—Race-blending, etc., as minor factors—Three limitations on the Darwinian principle in Bagehot's application of it.

[Note B. On Professor Ritchie's *Darwinism and Politics*—Inconsistency between the different essays—One interesting hint.]

CHAPTER XIII

DARWINISM IN ETHICS—PROFESSOR ALEXANDER

Fusion of idealism and naturalism—Moral judgments are facts, but the assertion of free-will is absurd—Criticism; capricious; ignores the content of moral judgments and the germ of a system in them—Punishment grouped with dynamics?—*Statics* are truly, though imperfectly, moral—Goodness is a twofold “equilibrium”—This doctrine is enforced against other definitions—In the *Dynamics* equilibrium is revealed as endlessly changing, and is called “compromise”—Ideals compete like organisms for survival—Criticism; not (*a*) true Darwinian struggle, nor (*b*) true extinction—The new ideals are not wholly new—Ideals are complementary—So far as he Darwinises he is false to morality.

CHAPTER XIV

REACTION FROM DARWINISM—HUXLEY

Reaction as to ethics—Due to the vision of *struggle* and *pain*—Not sympathy, but justice is essential—It must suspend *outright* the cosmic process—Older evolutionism (Greece, India) gave no guidance—Criticism; nature and spirit are opposed—Yet connected, and reason fulfils the cosmic process by transforming it.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xviii

COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD

CHAPTER XV

REACTION FROM DARWINISM—DRUMMOND'S "ASCENT OF MAN"

His precursors—His sympathy for Spencer—His Comtist terminology—Seeks a *biological basis* for altruism—Corrects Darwin—Not like Miss Cobbe—Largely like Huxley—But seeks a fairer statement of the facts—Brings in a second biological function (out of three !), viz. reproduction—Wallace on the selection of reason—Leads up to doctrine of "*Arrest of the Body*"—Cf. Cleland on the human skull—Emphasis on *maternity* and weakness of human infant—Criticism; "egoism" and its struggle purely evil?—Or male sex with its justice?—Is domesticity = sociality?—Has Drummond shown a *factor* in progress?—A better philosophy claims *all* nature for God.

CHAPTER XVI

REITERATION OF DARWINISM: ELIMINATION MADE ABSOLUTE—
MR. A. SUTHERLAND

A strong book with some weaknesses—Works out the origin of moral feeling by natural selection—Restates Drummond-like position as Darwinian (?)—And exemplifies "arrival" of forms—*Biology*; fitness to survive—*And* to breed *and* rear—Quantity first relied on—Then quality—This develops sympathy—Which becomes serviceable—*Anthropology*; everything depends on the approaches to monogamy—*Sociology*; progress is by elimination of the inferior—Even when it *seems* to find more rapid means—(Yet he allows *some* progress by imitation!)—*History*; retrogression is possible!—For he hates all militarism—On the whole he does not believe in history—Or in reason—*Ethics*; Has dealt only with one-half of goodness!—Egoism must balance sympathy!—Balance will grow automatic!—Criticism; no right to call sympathy *moral*, if only half of morality—Nature does not select one quality at a time!—Selection said to have worked—Not *true* natural selection though—Why is goodness not automatic already?—Do beauty and goodness exist, or do they not?—"Yes and no!"

ANALYTICAL CONTENTS

xix

CHAPTER XVII

THE METAPHYSICS OF NATURAL SELECTION

- I. Chance in relation to purpose, as *accident*—As *absence of design*—In relation to law ; as *blind* law—As *blind combination of laws*—Compare with the last the scientific or mechanical view of the world ; a number of separate substances ruled by a number of independent laws—Good enough for science, not for philosophy—Darwin ought not to assume things as *really* disconnected, merely because he has not *needed to investigate* their connection—As if organism and environment were accidentally brought together—Or as if organism and organism were *mere* rivals—(They *are* rivals !)—Or as if force and force were disconnected ?
- II. Darwin treats *variation* as casual, *i.e.* as a thing with no bearing in itself on the purpose of the species—His theory *allows* this assumption—But does not *prove* it—We all habitually understand the theory in that sense, *e.g.* in contrasting natural selection with use-inheritance—On the fact, evidence is wanted—Conceivably variation may choose very irregularly between many fixed possibilities—This seems to point back to disconnected laws, as in last section.
- III. Even on Darwin's own view he is hardly entitled to call the process of evolution natural selection—Aggregate range of possible variation is fixed by the nature of the material—Two agencies must be taken together—Of the two the varying organism, not the blindly selecting environment, seems the better to account for rise of new qualities—Summary of I. II. III.
- IV. Kinds of natural selection, A, B, and C—B exists !—If organic evolution is a fact, C exists !—Accelerating any other evolutionary force that may exist, and of course involving B—If A is found *along-side* of C, A must have a separate field where C cannot enter, else inconsiderable—Natural selection (C) lasts as long as nature is nature—Even along with (the more rapid force of) animal intelligence—True reason checks it—Does natural selection ever work by itself (A) ?—Higher animals with fewer births evolve as quickly as lower ; has a new force arisen ? or was natural selection never the leading force ?—[Can we regard *intelligence* as the new evolving force ? Dr. Mellone assumes its operation everywhere !]
- V. Can natural selection apply to men ?—*Biologically*—Struggle with beasts is over—Famine (A) is rare, and of doubtful tendency—Pestilence (C) does harm—Vice (B)—Crime (B)—War (selects the

wrong way)—Religious celibacy (*ib.*)—Summary—*Sociologically*—Mr. Kidd's insistence on struggle is really biological; is unproved; is not an insistence on natural selection—*Ethically*—Mr. Alexander's competition of "Ideals" is exaggerated—And itself implies reason and sympathy—Mr. Sutherland's elimination of evil *doers* ignores positive causes of moral progress—Exemplified typically in Jesus Christ.

- VI. If natural selection does not operate where reason and conscience exist, it yet may *originate* them in the loose and incorrect sense in which natural selection is said to originate things!—If reason, etc., were, as most suppose, evolved and selected—How selected?—Have *adjacent races* died out?
- VII. Other idealist views—Professor Ritchie praises natural selection more fully, in vague terms and in some passages—Mr. Sandeman rejects it, because he believes in the teleological perfection of every organism—But is it possible to get over the impression produced by rudimentary organs?—It is enough if the *whole* of nature is *good*, and its *parts relatively fit*—Dr. Stirling believes the casual variation which makes an individual can never make a type—Is it certain that every individual is born differentiated?—Or that *any* differences are incapable of growing by cumulation into a type?—Possible value of the hypothesis of natural selection, even if a fiction.

PART IV

HYPER-DARWINISM—WEISMANN, KIDD

CHAPTER XVIII

A "FAIRY TALE OF SCIENCE"?

An intenser assertion of struggle—Not on ground of experiment; evidence is ambiguous—On ground of a theory of heredity—Darwin's theory (Pangenes) assumed derivation of embryonic qualities from qualities and tissues of parental organism—Use-inheritance possible or probable on this view—But "Atavism" forced the concession, some "gemmules" had passed on undeveloped from earlier generations till they found their chance—Galton's figures for resemblance to ancestors—Hence theories asserting "continuity of the germ plasm"—Parable of the hierarchy—Galton ("Stirp") does not absolutely deny the

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ANALYTICAL CONTENTS

xxi

possibility of use-inheritance—But in Weismann's earlier and more consistent views, founded on by Mr. Kidd, amphimixis is the only cause of variation—Extrusion of one of the "polar bodies" securing (?) non-identity of all offspring of same pair—Permutations and combinations of qualities of unicellular organisms—Nature selecting fittest adults, and in them best germ plasm—Parable of the suckers—Of the Nile—No new quality arises, but amount of each telling quality increases—Qualities arose originally, Lamarck fashion, from environment, when unicellular life lay open to its pressure—Unicellular organisms (propagating by fission) and germ plasm are potentially immortal—Correlation alleged between sex and (natural) death; now sex is absent from the unicellular world—Natural selection might account for the *predominance* (if not *origin*) of sex if Weismann would assume the necessary competition—Romanes alleges that natural selection might account for predominance of habit of dying natural death; but would not *death by violence* sufficiently prevent any race (immersed in the struggle) from falling into wholesale decrepitude?—*Origin* of sex and death a mystery; or "chance" variation! or effect of molecular constitution of germ plasm!—Weismann's appeal to "natural selection," while he denies "struggle," is metaphysical in the worst sense—Recapitulation, and note of some of Weismann's changes of opinion before 1893—Especially this change: ENVIRONMENT MAY DO SOMETHING TO MODIFY GERM PLASM!—Making true use-inheritance conceivable, though not inevitable—Mr. Kidd is anachronous—Panmixia, the absence of natural selection, is held to involve indefinite retrogression; important; questionable.

CHAPTER XIX

HYPER-DARWINISM IN SOCIOLOGY: STRUGGLE MADE ABSOLUTE—
MR. KIDD

Resemblance to Comte—Intenser emphasis on biology [cf. Mr. Platt-Ball]—(1) Panmixia = degeneration is inconsistent with dreams of socialism or of final balance—Selfishness, however, may not care for remote consequences—[Ought Panmixia further to imply extinction?] Also, social "statics" are blotted out—And evolution becomes almost identical with progress—Could not Mr. Kidd save many essential positions without this assumption?—(2) Next, if progress implies struggle—And selfish reason makes unwilling to struggle for good of the race, supernatural counterpoise of religion must help, as hitherto—

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00453-4 - From Comte to Benjamin Kidd: The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance

Robert Mackintosh

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Now, Weismann had riddled his own position with qualifications—Kidd also appeals to biology by a doctrine of the social organism ; but everything here depends on philosophy, not biology—(3) First, the doctrine of reason ; reason is formal, as with A. J. Balfour, Darwin, Drummond—For Mr. Kidd also holds that biological law applies without a break to rational man—Yet reason *disturbs* process of evolution—And Bagehot, Stephen, Drummond have noted other changes due to it—Can it be wholly evil?—Balfour and Kidd repudiate Kant or Coleridge's deeper sense of “reason”—But they cannot avoid such sense if it lies in the word and in the fact—(4) Secondly, doctrine of religion as anti-rational—Not = “future judgment” ; that is rational!—Can we believe the irrational?—Does not Kidd tamper with Christian equalitarianism?—Biologically ; variation *may* be purposeful and profressive—Historically ; reason *is* progressive ; by rational methods—Religion its fulfilment—It needs a force to give it motive and constancy.

CHAPTER XX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Self-contradictions—Comte is arbitrary—Biology has been reinforced by evolutionary theories, yielding different forms of sociological doctrine—1. Analogy, without struggle ; Stephen—2. Continuity, without struggle ; Spencer, Alexander (partly)—3. Analogy of Darwinism ; Bagehot, Alexander, Ritchie (?)—4. Continuity of natural selection ; Sutherland, Drummond (?), Kidd—None of these wholly succeed ; old authorities will return !—Or idealism, which is compatible with the old authorities, may give us a more satisfying doctrine of evolution—What have we been taught?—(1) A social organism exists—Idealism reinforces this lesson—(2) Struggle *has* been useful ; *will* it not be ? as discussion ? as competition?—In light of idealism this seems possible—Of fact, probable—Must not exaggerate its place ; it is subordinate in life of reason—[Mallock]—Finally, does *progressiveness* of evolution make it a guide to conduct?—Difficulties in *biology* ; environment constant?—Some forms have stopped !—Some never started !—Differentiation plainer here than progress—Reason makes for progress in *history*—Is it all-sufficient ? (Mill, Buckle)—Ancient civilisation failed—Morality and Christianity must safeguard modern civilisation.