

## EVOLUTION AND FAITH.

IN a previous article on Darwinism the present writer contended that the evolution theory was an unproved hypothesis; mainly, a mass of groundless assumptions, and gratuitous assertions, and that its advocates "beg the question," by ignoring Revelation, and by taking for granted the points that are most vital to the theory. The facts alleged by Mr. Darwin and his disciples may be facts, or may be fictitious; but the evolution theory they do not prove. Mr. Mivart, a distinguished Catholic writer, holds, as decidedly as Darwin does, that the higher organisms now existing have been evolved from lower; but his explanation of the system differs much from Darwin's. Mr. Mivart saw clearly, and exposed fully, the weak points in Darwin's theory; and he claims for himself the merit of finding a remedy for them. He says, "the problem then is by what combination of natural laws does a new 'common nature' appear upon the scene of realized existence? i.e., how is an individual embodying such new characters produced." (*Genesis of Species*, p. 2.) And after acknowledging our indebtedness to Darwin and Wallace for enabling us to approximate to a solution of this problem, Mr. Mivart states, that the object of his book is "to maintain the position that 'Natural Selection,' acts, and, indeed, must act; but that still, in order to account for the production of known kinds of animals and plants, it requires to be supplemented by the action of some other natural law, or laws, as yet undiscovered." (p. 5.) This "undiscovered" "unknown" internal "law," which at present science is utterly incompetent to explain" (p. 207) is the principal factor in Mr. Mivart's evolution theory, and he refers to it very frequently, both in the *Genesis of Species*, and in the *Lessons from Nature*. (See *Genesis of Species*, p. 5, 23, 270, 274, 311, 333, and *Lessons from Nature*, chap. ix., &c.)

According to Mr. Mivart, then, "Natural Selection" acts its part in the evolution of new organisms, but that part is secondary. The evolution mainly "depends on some unknown, internal law, which determines variation at special times, and in special directions." (p. 311.) The action of this internal law is not, however, uniform, and long periods sometimes pass without any sensible indication of its energy. But when conditions favourable to the

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evolution present themselves, then sudden changes,— "jumps,"—are noticed, and these are so considerable as to be, "in fact, sensible steps such as discriminate species from species." (p. 275.) Thus do new species arise, according to Mr. Mivart. By this theory does he account for all the organisms that have come into being; the body of the first man among them (p. 319), and he tells us that this theory is, "without any doubt, perfectly consistent with the strictest, the most orthodox, Christian theology." (p. 5).

Now, laying aside for a moment, the theological aspect of this theory, we may ask what is its advantage, from a scientific stand-point, over Darwinism pure and simple? Like Darwinism it has to meet the opinion of distinguished naturalists that species are immutable. It is intended to meet the difficulties of "Natural Selection," and it does so, by rushing into a difficulty quite as formidable as any of those it seeks to evade,—namely, the assumption, in a scientific hypothesis, of a law unknown to science. We know that "Natural Selection" can induce some changes, though they are inconsiderable; but what the alleged "internal law" can do, is, to us, like the law itself, absolutely unknown. It is an assumption, without proof,—a conjecture. If this unknown law be in existence, how strange that it has shown no sign of its energy since man first appeared! How strange that conditions favourable to its operation have not appeared during all that long period! If this "unknown law," plus "Natural Selection," and "favourable conditions" be competent to introduce new species, why is the theory at a stand-still for seven thousand years? Why has evolution stopped with man? The alleged "jumps," are then "few and far between;" and as man has never witnessed any of them, we have reasonable grounds for being sceptical about them. To meet these difficulties evolutionists will have to "try again."

In dealing with Mr. Darwin, and his disciples, the theological aspect of evolution is easily settled. Darwin's theory is not incompatible with the primary creation of matter, though he makes no clear reference to it, and he cautiously avoids the question of the origin of life. But the end and aim of his theory is to refute the idea of intelligent design in the production of any species of organism. He clearly intended his theory to supplant Revelation which he completely ignores. He ignores the existence of the soul. He holds that man's mental facul-

ties and powers differ only in kind from those of the lower animals, and are subject to the same process of evolution as man's body. Between the affection of a dog for his master, and the love, reverence, and adoration we pay to God, he sees merely a difference in degree. For such a theory it is clear that faith can have no toleration. For 1°. To deny intelligent design in creation is to remove the very foundation of faith. 2°. The special creation of Adam's soul is a dogma of faith. 3°. It is practically certain, also, that the special creation of the soul of each individual is a dogma of Catholic faith. It is true that an opinion once prevailed to some extent, according to which the soul like the body was supposed to come from the parents. This view has been revived in recent times by Frohschammer and some other German theologians of very questionable orthodoxy. And strangely enough Mr. Lilly in his recent work *Ancient Religion and Modern Thought*, seems to regard it as still tenable. It is not tenable. It is notoriously opposed to the almost unanimous teaching of the Fathers, and of all eminent theologians; it is set down as an error in a letter of Pope Benedict XII. to the Armenian Bishops, given in Raynaldus, A.D. 1341; and it is clearly opposed to the voice of the ordinary *magisterium* of the Church. The opinion is therefore altogether untenable, and consequently Faith tolerates no evolution theory with reference to man's soul.

But the question still remains, what may, or may not, be held with reference to the bodies of our first parents, and to the other works of creation specified in Genesis. May the evolution theory be applied to them, and if so how far does Faith permit us to go? As already stated, Mr. Mivart holds, that the evolution theory may be applied fully to the bodies of our first parents, and of course to all lower organisms as well. He does not "include in the process of evolution the strict sense of each individual admits the creation in the strict sense of each individual soul, but he does hold that it is allowable to teach that the body of the first man was produced by evolution from some lower animal, and that when the process of evolution had reached the desired perfection, God infused into the species so perfected the human soul. And this theory Mr. Mivart tells us repeatedly "is perfectly consistent with the strictest, the most orthodox Christian theology." (p. 5.)

Some few months ago, a writer in the *Tablet* referring to evolution seemed to class Mr. Mivart in the same

category as Darwin and other well-known enemies of Revelation. No classification could be more unfair to Mr. Mivart; and it is difficult to see how anyone who has read his works could confound the systems or compare the men. In fact no writer has yet dealt such a blow to Darwin's system as Mr. Mivart has. Darwin applies his theory to man in his totality, body, mind and soul. Mivart applies it only to the body of the first man. Darwin excludes all intelligent design in the production of organisms. Mivart maintains the necessity of intelligent design: and he has demonstrated the existence of an intelligent first cause, in such a manner as to merit the gratitude of all believers. Darwin's system depends altogether on external accidental circumstances; Mivart's theory depends mainly on internal laws, which are nothing else than the laws of nature instituted and maintained in harmony by Almighty God. And therefore to confound the theories and their authors betrays either a lamentable want of knowledge or an absence of that spirit of fair play which is due to any adversary. One system is the onslaught on Revelation of a professed enemy; the other is a well-meant, if mistaken, effort of a loyal son of the Church to defend Revelation against the alleged difficulties of science. To admit so much is but bare justice to Mr. Mivart, though it is very far from admitting the orthodoxy of his theory. His theory is that man and all other organisms were produced by "derivative creation," which, *he says*, means merely, "that the pre-existing matter has been created with the potentiality to evolve from it, under suitable conditions, all the various forms it subsequently assumes" (*Genesis of Species*, 291). It is, he says, "simply the Divine action by and through natural laws" (p. 301), "the operation of laws which owe their foundation, institution and maintenance" to God (p. 318). It is, he says, "the creation by God of forms, not as existing, but in *potentia*, to be subsequently evolved into actual existence by the due concurrence and agency of the various powers of nature." (*Lessons from Nature* 431.) Thus, then according to this view, the creation of man and of other organisms implies no *immediate action* on the part of God, other than his co-operation with the laws of nature in evolving from matter certain powers inserted in it at its first creation. And this view, Mr. Mivart holds, satisfies fully all the requirements of faith. This is certainly going very far with evolution. The Abbé Moigno the latest and a very able Catholic authority on the subject, thinks that

it is going too far. After stating Mivart's views, he says, "pour moi c'est déjà trop" (*Splendeurs de la Foi*, vol. 2, Appendix c. page 14). Now in testing the orthodoxy of this theory there is, happily, no need to discuss orchids and troglodytes, or the various families of the Lemnidae; we need not trouble ourselves with the whereabouts of the "missing link;" we can apply to it the unerring rule, "quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus;" and if, tested by this rule Mr. Mivart's theory be found wanting, then his scientific speculations must be unsound. There are of course many scientific theories of which Revelation takes no account, but the question at issue here—the origin of man—is one essentially and directly within the province of Revelation, and consequently if Catholic teaching on the point be clear, it must be also decisive. Now Catholic teaching does seem clear on this point to such an extent as to forbid the application of the evolution theory to man. We may not be able to point to a solemn definition of a General Council or to any authoritative decree of a Roman Pontiff, asserting the *immediate formation* of the bodies of our first parents; but this is by no means necessary. For if that immediate formation be asserted by the voice of the ordinary *magisterium* of the Church—the ordinary teaching body—then, are we as strictly bound to believe it, as if it had been defined by a General Council or by a Pope teaching *ex Cathedra*. This is clear from the Constitution "Dei Filius" of the Vatican Council: "Porro fide Divina et Catholica ea omnia credenda sunt quae in verbo Dei scripto vel tradito continentur, at ab Ecclesia sive *solemni iudicio sive ordinario et universalis magisterio*, tanquam divinitus revelata credenda proponuntur." (cap. iii.) And Pius IX. in a letter bearing date December 21st, 1863, and addressed to the Archbishop of Munich, says that we owe the obedience of faith not merely to the solemn definition of Councils and Popes, but also to the voice of the ordinary magisterium of the Church, reaching us through the constant and universal teaching of Catholic Theologians: "ad ea quoque dispensanda quae ordinario totius Ecclesiae per orbem *dispersae magisterio*, tanquam divinitus revelata traduntur *ideoque universali et constanti consensu, a catholicis theologis ad fidem pertinere retinentur*." This same truth is implied in the condemnation of the 22nd proposition of the "Syllabus." Now the theologians, and teachers of the Catholic Church assert with the most extraordinary unanimity, the *immediate formation* of the bodies of our first parents,

and by that formation they understand an action, distinct both from the primary creation of matter, and from the concurrence which God affords to the working out of Nature's laws. Such unanimous teaching is, according to the Vatican Council, and Pius IX. obligatory upon us, and consequently we are not free to hold the evolution theory even with reference to the body of the first man.

So direct, so precise, so circumstantial, is the Scriptural account of man's creation, that, if the evolution theory were true, the sacred writers, if they intended to deceive us, could not have chosen language better calculated to effect that end: "And the Lord God *formed* man out of the slime of the earth,"—*Gen. c. 2, v. 7*. "Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me."—*Job. c. 10, v. 8*. Now the ordinary meaning of such texts (and they are very numerous) is unquestionably the *immediate formation* by God of the bodies of Adam and Eve. And on this ordinary meaning we can insist, unless the evolutionists show that there is sufficient reason for departing from it. *This they have not done*. And consequently the *prima facie* Scriptural view of man's creation need not be abandoned for that "*series infinita*" of hypotheses, and conjectures, and possibilities, which make up the sum total of the evolution theory.

The teaching of the Fathers on this question has been analyzed by an exceedingly able writer in the *Dublin Review* for July, 1871. He sums up as follows: "There is no need to say that the whole school of Fathers, which has been called the School of St. Basil, takes for granted that Adam's body was formed by the immediate act of God." (p. 19.) And to say the whole of this school is, he says, "nearly the same as saying the whole '*traditio Patrum*.'" And, after discussing the views of St. Augustine, this writer concludes thus: "All those reasons combined would make it—we are inclined to think—at least rash and dangerous to deny that the body of Adam was formed immediately by God, and quasi-instantaneously out of the earth." (p. 22.) An examination of the writings of the Fathers will unquestionably bear out the statements of this able writer. We shall find the numerous followers of St. Basil holding the literal meaning of *Gen. c. 2, v. 7*. We shall find all the Fathers without exception according to Suarez, holding the immediate formation of the body of Eve. We shall find many of them, like Tertullian, St. Chrysostom, and St. Cyril of Jerusalem, admiring the

formation of man's body as a special work of Divine Omnipotence—a special work of God's own hands. Again, we shall find many of them discussing the question whether the ministrations of angels might have been employed in forming the body of the first man. The vast majority of them deny such ministrations, and regard man's body as the work of God alone. But even those who favour the ministrations of the angels, imply that man's body was formed by a special action, distinct from the first creation of matter, and distinct also from the ordinary operation of nature's laws. The only one of the Fathers, with regard to whom there can be any hesitation, is St. Augustine, who is regarded by "Christian evolutionists" as the mainstay of their orthodoxy. In explaining his theory of *simultaneous creation*, St. Augustine holds that, at the primary creation of matter, God created all things; not, certainly, in the perfect state in which they subsequently appeared, but in what he calls their "*rationes seminales*," or "*causales*." The difficulty, then, is to determine what St. Augustine meant by those "*rationes seminales*." He himself does not tell us. His language is obscure. He hesitates. He admits the difficulty of the subject he is treating. They were in some sense the germs of future organisms; but *he does not anywhere say* that these germs, by the sole powers then imparted to nature, developed into all the forms of organic life that subsequently arose. On the contrary, he makes statements which are quite incompatible with any such view. He holds the special and immediate formation of the body of Eve. He clearly insinuates that Adam first appeared as a full-grown man. And in the very treatise from which the difficulty arises, he has the following remarkable passage: "*Et elementa mundi huius corpora habent definitam vim qualitatemque suam quid unumquodque valeat vel non valeat, quid de quo fieri possit, vel non possit. Ex his velut primordiis rerum, omnia quae gignantur suo quoque tempore exortus processusque sumunt, fusesque et decessiones sui cuiusque generis. Unde fit ut de grano tritici non nascatur faba, vel de faba triticum, vel de pecore homo, vel de homine pecus.*" (*Gen. ad Lit. c. 16, lib. 9.*) This is a clear assertion that in the ordinary course of nature species are fixed—unchangeable—and fixed in such manner as to be quite incompatible with the evolution theory. The saint then goes on to refer to the extraordinary changes which may occur in organisms; and these, he says, are due, not to

any natural energy in the organisms, but to the fact that at their creation then, nature was made obedient to a higher will: "*Ut non hanc habent in motu naturali, sed in eo in quo ita creata essent, ut eorum natura voluntati potentiori amplius subjaceret.*" (*Ex. cit.*) It would seem then, that according to St. Augustine, matter, at its creation was endowed with what theologians call "*potentia obedientialis*,"—an aptitude, in virtue of which it may be formed into any organism which God may determine to create. And it is in this sense precisely that St. Thomas understands the expression *rationes causales* of St. Augustine. In the "*Summa*" (p. 1, q. 91, a. 2), St. Thomas maintains the immediate creation of Adam's body; and he quotes, as an objection, the expression of St. Augustine, which he disposes of as follows: "*Ad quantum dicendum quod secundum rationes causales in creaturis dicitur aliquid pre-existere dupliciter; uno modo secundum potentiam activam et passivam, ut non solum ex materia pre-existenti fieri possit, sed etiam ut aliqua pre-existens creatura hoc facere possit. Alio modo secundum potentiam passivam tantum ut scilicet de materia pre-existenti fieri possit a Deo: et hoc modo, secundum Augustinum, corpus hominis pre-existit in operibus predictis secundum causas rationis.*" This aptitude in matter is not an active energy. It pre-supposes the action of a competent cause in the formation of organisms. No one, of course, thinks of saying that St. Augustine held the doctrine of evolution. No such doctrine could have occurred to him. But Mr. Mivart, who relies on him, as well as on St. Thomas and Suarez, as establishing the orthodoxy of the evolution theory, says of all of them: "These writers asserted abstract principles such as can perfectly harmonize with the requirements of modern science, and have, as it were, provided for the reception of its most advanced speculations." (*Lessons from Nature*, p. 433.) But if St. Augustine merely taught (as his own words seem to indicate, and as St. Thomas distinctly asserts) that God created matter with a "*potentia obedientialis*," or an innate aptitude for the formation of organisms, pre-supposing a competent cause—then such a view lends no support, affords no foundation, to the evolution theory. And whatever St. Augustine's principles were, it is not fair to quote him for the orthodoxy of tenets that go altogether beyond his principles, and that contradict doctrines which he explicitly maintained. It follows, then, that

St. Augustine cannot be quoted as opposed to the "traditio Patrum," asserting the immediate formation of the bodies of our first parents.

Passing from the Fathers on to the great Catholic theologians, testimony to the immediate formation of the body of the first man becomes more direct and explicit. Many of the Fathers referred to the question only indirectly and accidentally. The theologians treat it professedly. St. Thomas, as already stated, maintains the doctrine, and explains the apparent difficulty of St. Augustine's expression in the language given above. Suarez maintains it, and holds it to be *Catholic doctrine* (*Opera Sac. Dierum*, lib. 3, c. 1). St. Thomas and Suarez are quoted as asserting "principles that can perfectly harmonize" with evolution; but it is perfectly clear they have held doctrines which cannot "harmonize" with evolution at all. Berti, a zealous disciple of St. Augustine, held the doctrine of *immediate formation*. He says, "fuit præterea Adæ formatio opus solius Dei;" and after quoting *St. Augustine himself*, to prove his views, he adds, "Hoc aliisque exemplis, probat Sanctus Pater, Opificem omnium statim formasse hominem aditum" (lib. 12, c. 2). And yet Berti is quoted for opposite views by Mr. Mivart! Estius (*Sent.*, lib. 2, d. 17), Becanus, Billuart, Widman, all hold this doctrine of immediate formation. And it is no small satisfaction to find a distinguished Irish theologian, John Punch, of Cork, bearing the following explicit testimony to the same truth. In his *Theologiae Cursus Integer* (*De Op. Sac. Dierum*, disp. 17, q. 3, c. 2), he says, "Dico, si Deus ipse sine ministerio Angelorum creavit reliqua animalia, ita dicendum etiam de homine." The testimony of theologians to this truth may be multiplied a hundred-fold. But it is needless. It is the teaching, express or implied, of them all. But, inasmuch as the authorities already quoted could not have contemplated the evolution theory, it is worth while to quote some who have written since that theory arose, and who have discussed its theological bearings. Perronc, a writer as remarkable for moderation as for accuracy in stating Catholic doctrines, maintains the immediate formation of the bodies of our first parents, and says that it *appears to Faith*, "Propositio spectat ad fidem" (*De Deo*, Cr. p. 3, c. 1, Prop. 1.) Ubaldo, the present distinguished Professor of Scripture in the Propaganda, holds the doctrine (*In. in Sac. Scrip.*, vol. 1st). Mazzella, the distinguished Jesuit Professor of Dogmatic Theology,

at the Roman College, has studied and mastered the evolution theory; and in his book "De Deo Creante," he quotes largely from Mr. Mivart, as well as from Darwin, Wallace, and Thompson. In answer to the question, how the first human body was formed, he says: "Cui quaestioni *theologi, insistentes auctoritati S. Scripturae et unanimi SS. Patrum interpretatione intellectae, uno ore respondent, corpus hominis primo eformatum fuisse per directam et immediatam Dei actionem, distinctam tam a prima materiae creatione, tum concursu quem Deus, causa primus, præbet secundarum causarum operationibus.*" (*Disp.* 3, Art.) And a few pages later on (p. 340) he plainly states, that denial of this doctrine is either heresy, or very closely allied to it. Professor Lamy of Louvain, who is also well read in the literature of evolution, says in his Commentary on Genesis, vol. 1, p. 155: "Erroneo igitur putavit, ut mihi quidem videtur, doctus vir Georgius Mivart, doctrinam assertentem corpus hominis terminum fuisse cujusdam transformationis animalis v. g. Simii, cui Deus infuderit animam immortalem, non repugnare narrationi creationis hominis." And at page 179, he lays down the doctrine of immediate creation in the words already quoted from Mazzella; and he adds, "Unde sequitur *errare omnes transformistas, qui volunt entia omnia viventia, etiam hominem, provenire ab aliquot formis inferioribus, vel cellulis, quas Deus creaverit.*" Professor Jungman, of the same University, says: "Absque dubio dogma Catholicum hoc est, primos homines immediate a Deo conditos esse" (*De Deo Creat.*, p. 151). And at p. 157, he quotes the opinion of Mr. Mivart, and says of it: "*Haec dubium nobis est, illam opinionem penitus esse rejiciendam, nec salva doctrina Theologica sana eam teneri posse.*"

Now, in the face of this consensus of Catholic teaching, what becomes of the boasted "orthodoxy" of the evolution theory? What becomes of the assertion, "that the strictest Ultramontane Catholics are perfectly free to hold the doctrine of evolution?" (*Lessons from Nature*, 430.) Be it freely granted, that the authorities cited above are not as deeply read in biological science as are the advocates of evolution; but if the teaching of the Catholic Church be what the above-named authorities say it is (and it certainly is so), then no Catholic can admit the *truth* or the *orthodoxy* of the evolution theory as applied to man. That theory denies in the formation of the first man's body any immediate action of God, other than the primary creation of

matter, endowed with certain powers, and His co-operation with the working of Nature's laws. On the other hand, Scripture, Fathers, Theologians, Preachers, all teach, and the simple faithful have always unhesitatingly believed, that the first man was formed by a direct immediate act of Almighty God—an act distinct from the primary creation of matter, and from God's concurrence with Nature's laws. And according to the Vatican Council, and to the letter of Pius IX. already quoted, such constant universal teaching ranks as Catholic doctrine infallibly true, obligatory on all children of the Church; and therefore any doctrine incompatible with this teaching has no claim to be regarded as orthodox. It follows, then, inevitably that as far as man is concerned, soul or body, faith permits no coquetting with the evolution system.

With the application of the evolution theory to organisms lower than man, theology is not much, if at all, concerned. The writer in the *Dublin Review*, says that it is not against faith so to apply it; but he does not admit, nor (as his words seem to indicate) does he believe that the theory is true, even of lower organisms. It certainly is not proved even of them. A good deal of variation is proved, but the evolution of one species from another is not proved; and, according to some of the best authorities, cannot be. But with this aspect of the question Theologians do not much concern themselves, though Professors Lamy and Jungman, of Louvain, both hold that the application of the evolution theory, even to plants and animals mentioned in Genesis, is incompatible with the true meaning of the text.

And now the question may be put, what has science yet discovered that is incompatible with the independent creation of species? Nothing, simply. Is there any probability of any such discovery in the future? Very many most eminent scientists tell us there is not. Are we then to abandon the faith of all past ages for the dreamings of a few would-be philosophers of the present day, who are blinded by excessive light? Are we to bend and strain Revelation to suit the speculations of even well-meaning men? The Catholic Church welcomes every fresh accession of knowledge; she blesses and honours the votaries and promoters of real science; but she reminds them, in the words of Pius IX., that in their search for knowledge Revelation must be their guiding star. "Catholici earum" (Scientiarum), cultores, divinam Revelationem, veluti reatricem stellam prae oculis habeant oportet, qua prae-

luente, sibi, a syrtibus et erroribus carcant" (Letter to Archbishop of Munich, Dec. 21, 1883.) The Church has seen many enemies, has witnessed many revolutions, has braved many storms; and whenever science, "falsely so called," clashes with her deposit of faith, she meets it with bold defiant front. She does not tolerate it, nor does she fear it. And from the issue of such conflicts in the past, we can well infer what shall be the issue of any such in the future. When many of the biological speculations of our time will have gone down into the grave in which Gnosticism lies mouldering, forgotten—the Church of God will be what she has ever been since her foundation, the sole faithful, fearless, witness, teacher, and guardian of all revealed truth. That some of the advocates of evolution mean well to the Church is quite certain; but the adoption of this theory by Catholics is "a new fashion of an old sin." It is an instance of a tendency that is becoming too common—that of minimizing Catholic doctrine—of diluting it, so as to suit the tastes of a class of persons from whom the Church has nothing to expect and nothing to fear. "At talem consuetudinem non habemus neque Ecclesia Dei."

J. MURPHY.

#### THE "ANIMA CHRISTI."

PRAYER, as we know, is one of the principal duties of man to his Creator; and it is as a duty that men commonly regard it. Yet it is well to remember that besides being a duty it is also a privilege, and the mere privilege of prayer is something very wonderful. Prayer is one of the great elemental forces of the spiritual order, and, perhaps, because it is so, it seems to follow the law of the great physical forces of the universe, in that it attracts very little notice, or at all events, very little express notice from those who are most familiar with it. The sunrise and the sunset—the multitudinous growth that goes on night and day upon the face of the earth—all that is most beautiful, and all that is most powerful, have become so commonplace, that they are scarcely noticed. Those who see them oftenest are least struck by them, and never seem to dream of their beauty and their power.