and references. There is coarse print and fine print; there are obscure signs and hieroglyphics. We all read the large type more or less appreciatively, but only the students and lovers of nature read the fine lines and the footnotes. It is a book which he reads best who goes most slowly or even tarries long by the way. He who runs may read some things. We may take in the general features of sky, plain, and river from the express train, but only the pedestrian, the saunterer, with eyes in his head and love in his heart, turns every leaf and peruses every line. One man sees only the migrating water-fowls and the larger birds of the air; another sees the passing kinglets and hurrying warblers as well. For my part, my delight is to linger long over each page of this marvelous record, and to dwell fondly upon its most obscure text.

I take pleasure in noting the minute things about me. I am interested even in the ways of the wild bees, and in all the little dramas and tragedies that occur in field and wood. One June day, in my walk, as I crossed a rather dry, high-lying field, my attention was attracted by small mounds of fresh earth all over the ground, scarcely more than a handful in each. On looking closely, I saw that in the middle of each mound there was a hole not quite so large as a lead-pencil. Now, I had never observed these mounds before, and my curiosity was aroused. “Here is some fine print,” I said,
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The nature fakers take just this kind of liberties with the facts of our natural history. The young reader finds it entertaining, no doubt, but is this sufficient justification?

Again, I am told that the extravagant stories of our wild life are or may be true from the writer’s point of view. One of our publishing houses once took me to task for criticising the statements of one of its authors by charging that I had not considered his point of view. The fact is, I had considered it too well; his point of view was that of the man who tells what is not so. As if there could be more than one legitimate point of view in natural history observation — the point of view of fact!

There is a great deal of loose thinking upon this subject in the public mind.

An editorial writer in a New England newspaper, defending this school of writers, says:—

"Their point of view is that of the great out-of-doors, and comes from loving sympathy with the life they study, and is as different from that of the sportsman and the laboratory zoologist as a notebook differs from a rifle or a microscope."

Now how the point of view of the "great out-of-doors" can differ from the point of view of the little indoors in regard to matters of fact is hard to see. A man who watches the ways of an animal in the wilderness, or from the mountain-top, is bound by the same laws of truthfulness as the man who sees

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it through his study window. What the writer means is doubtless that the spirit in which the literary naturalist—the man who goes to the fields and woods for material for literature—treats the facts of natural history differs from the spirit in which the man of pure science treats his. Undoubtedly, but the two alike deal with facts, though with facts of a different order.

The scientist, the artist, the nature-lover, and the like, all look for and find different things in nature, yet there is no contradiction between the different things they find. The truth of one is not the falsehood of another. The field naturalist is interested in the live animal, the laboratory zoologist in the measuring and dissecting of the dead carcass. What interests one is of little or no interest to the other. So with the field botanist as compared with the mere herbalist. Both are seekers for the truth, but for a different kind of truth. One seeks that kind of truth that appeals to his emotion and to his imagination; the other that kind of truth—truth of structure, relation of parts, family ties—that appeals to his scientific faculties. Does this fact, therefore, give the nature faker warrant to exaggerate or to falsify the things he sees in the fields and woods? Let him make the most of what he sees, embellish it, amplify it, twirl it on the point of his pen like a juggler, but let him beware of adding to it; let him be sure he sees accurately. Let him beware
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of letting invention take the place of observation. It is one thing to work your gold or silver up into sparkling ornaments, and quite another to manufacture an imitation gold or silver, and this is what the nature fakers do. Their natural history is for the most part a sham, a counterfeit. No one quarrels with them because they are not scientific, or because they deal in something more than dry facts; the ground of quarrel is that they do not start with facts, that they grossly and absurdly misrepresent the wild lives they claim to portray.

A Wisconsin editor, writing upon this subject, shoots wide of the mark in the same way as does the New England editor. "Knowledge born of scientific curiosity," he says, "has nothing in common with the study of animal individuality which the 'nature fakers' have fostered and to which the public has proved responsive. There is all the difference in the world between being interested in the length of an animal's skull and being interested in the same animal's ways and personality." True enough, but this is quite beside the mark. The point at issue is a question of accurate seeing and reporting. The man who is reporting upon an animal's ways and personality is bound by the same obligations of truthfulness as the man who is occupied with the measurements of its skull. By all means let the literary naturalist give us traits instead of measurements. This he is bound to do, and the better he does it, the better we shall like him. We can get our statistics elsewhere. From him we want pictures, action, incident, and the portrait of the living animal. But we want it all truthfully done. The life history of any of our wild creatures, the daily and hourly course of its life, all its traits and peculiarities, all its adventures and ways of getting on in the world, are of keen interest to every nature student, but if these things are misrepresented, what then? There are readers, I believe, who say they don't care whether the thing is true or not; at any rate it is interesting, and that is enough. What can one say to such readers? Only that they should not complain if they are stuck with paste diamonds, or pinchbeck gold, or shoddy cloth, or counterfeit bills.

The truth of animal life is more interesting than any fiction about it. Can there be any doubt, for instance, that if one knew just how the fur seals find their way back from the vast wilderness of the Pacific Ocean, where there is, apparently, nothing for the eye, or the ear, or the nose to seize upon in guiding them, to the little island in Bering Sea that is their breeding haunt in spring—can there be any doubt, I say, that such knowledge would be vastly more interesting than anything our natural history romancers could invent about it? But it is the way of our romancers to draw upon their invention when their observation fails them. Thus
And I may add, nor any more creation than there is now, nor any more miracles, or glories, or wonders, or immortality, or judgment days, than there are now. And we shall never be nearer God and spiritual and transcendent things than we are now. The babe in its mother's womb is not nearer its mother than we are to the invisible sustaining and mothering powers of the universe, and to its spiritual entities, every moment of our lives.

The doors and windows of the universe are all open; the screens are all transparent. We are not barred or shut off; there is nothing foreign or unlike; we find our own in the stars as in the ground underfoot; this clod may become a man; yon shooting star may help redden his blood.

Whatever is upon the earth is of the earth; it came out of the divine soil, beamed upon by the fructifying heavens, the soul of man not less than his body.

I never see the spring flowers rising from the mould, or the pond-lilies born of the black ooze, that matter does not become transparent and reveal to me the working of the same celestial powers that fashioned the first man from the common dust.

Man's mind is no more a stranger to the earth than is his body. Is not the clod wise? Is not the chemistry underfoot intelligent? Do not the roots of the trees find their way? Do not the birds know their times and seasons? Are not all things about us filled to overflowing with mind-stuff? The cosmic mind is the earth mind, and the earth mind is man's mind, freed but narrowed, with vision but with erring reason, conscious but troubled, and — shall we say? — human but immortal.
HOW few persons can be convinced of the truth of that which is repugnant to their feelings! When Darwin published his conclusion that man was descended from an apelike ancestor who was again descended from a still lower type, most people were shocked by the thought; it was intensely repugnant to their feelings. Carlyle, for instance, treated the proposition with contempt. He called it the “gospel of dirt.” “A good sort of man,” he said, “is this Darwin, and well meaning, but with very little intellect.” Huxley tells of seeing the old man one day upon the street, and of crossing over to greet him. Carlyle looked up and said, “You’re Huxley, are n’t you? the man who says we are all descended from monkeys,” and went on his way. It would be interesting to know just what Carlyle thought we were descended from. Could he, or did he, doubt at all that if he were to go back a few thousand years over his own line of descent, he would come upon rude savage men, who used stone implements, and lived in caves or rude huts, who had neither letters nor arts, and with whom might did indeed make right, and that back of these he would find
still more primitive races, and that these too had their still more savage and bestial forbears? When started on the back track of his own race, where could he stop? Could he stop anywhere? The neolithic man stands on the shoulders of the paleolithic, and he on a still lower human or semi-human form, till we come to a manlike ape or an apelike man, living in trees and subsisting on roots and nuts and wild fruits. Every child born to-day, by the grip of its hands, the strength of its arms, and the weakness of its legs, hints of those far-off arboreal ancestors. Carlyle must also have known that in his fetal or prenatal life there was a time when his embryo could not have been distinguished from that of a dog, to say nothing of a monkey. Was this fact also intolerable to him?

It must be a bitter pill to persons of Carlyle’s temperament to have to accept the account of their own human origin; that the stork legend of the baby is, after all, not good natural history. The humble beginning of each of us is not one that appeals to the imagination, nor to the religious sentiment, nor to our love of the mysterious and the remote, yet the evidence in favor of its truth is pretty strong.

In fact, the Darwinian theory of the origin of man differs from the popular one just as the natural history of babies as we all know it differs from the account in the nursery legends, and gives about the same shock to our sensibilities and our pride of origin.

One of the hardest lessons we have to learn in this life, and one that many persons never learn, is to see the divine, the celestial, the pure, in the common, the near at hand — to see that heaven lies about us here in this world. Carlyle’s gospel of dirt, when examined closely, differs in no respect from a gospel of star dust. Why, we have invented the whole machinery of the supernatural, with its unseen spirits and powers good and bad, to account for things, because we found the universal everyday nature too cheap, too common, too vulgar. We have had to cap the natural with the supernatural to satisfy our love for the marvelous and the inexplicable. As soon as a thing is brought within our ken and the region of our experience, it seems to lose caste and be cheapened. I am at a loss how to account for this mythopoetic tendency of ours, but what a part it has played in the history of mankind, and what a part it still plays — turning the light of day into a mysterious illusive and haunted twilight on every hand! It would seem as if it must have served some good purpose in the development of the race, but just what is not so easy to point out as the evil it has wrought, the mistakes and self-delusions it has given rise to. One may probably say that in its healthy and legitimate action it has given rise to poetry and to art and to the many
escapes which the imagination provides us from the hard and wearing realities of life. Its implacable foe is undoubtedly the scientific spirit — the spirit of the now and the here, that seeks proof and finds the marvelous and the divine in the ground underfoot; the spirit that animated Lyell and opened his eyes to the fact that the forces and agencies at work every day around us were adequate to account for the tremendous changes in the earth’s surface in the past; that animated Darwin and led him to trace the footsteps of the creative energy in the natural life of plants and animals to-day; that animated Huxley and filled him with such righteous wrath at the credulity of his theological brethren; and that animates every one of us when we clinch a nail, or stop a leak, or turn a thing over and look on the other side, and apply to practical affairs the touchstone of common sense.

That man is of divine origin in a sense that no other animal is, is a conviction dear to the common mind. It was dear to the mind of Carlyle, it chimed in well with his distrust of the present, his veneration of the past, and his Hebraic awe and reverential fear before the mysteries of the universe. While Darwin’s attitude of mind toward outward things was one of inquiry and thirst for exact knowledge, Carlyle’s was one of reverence and wonder. He was more inclined to worship where Darwin was moved to investigate. Darwin, too, felt the presence of the great unknown, but he sought solace in the knowable of the physical world about him, while Carlyle sought solace in the moral and intellectual world, where his great mythopoetic faculty could have free swing.

We teach and we preach that God is in everything from the lowest to the highest, and that all things are possible with him, and yet practically we deny that he is in the brute, and that it is possible man should have had his origin there.

I long ago convinced myself that whatever is on the earth and shares its life is of the earth, and, in some way not open to me, came out of the earth, the highest not less than the humblest creature at our feet. I like to think of the old weather-worn globe as the mother of us all. I like to think of the ground underfoot as plastic and responsive to the creative energy, vitally related to the great cosmic forces, a red corpuscle in the life current of the Eternal, and that man, with all his high-flying dreams and aspirations, his arts, his bibles, his religions, his literatures, his philosophies — heroes, saints, martyrs, sages, poets, prophets — all lay folded there in the fiery mist out of which the planet came. I love to make Whitman’s great lines my own:

"I am an acme of things accomplished, and I an endorser of things to be.
My feet strike an apex of the apices of the stairs."