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# HUMAN NATURE:

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN reviewing with the readers of *Human Nature* the editorial labours of five years, we have simply to refer to the fact that the indications held forth in the original prospectus have been faithfully carried out in subsequent volumes. In the year now completed, the long series of papers by Miss Anna Blackwell, on the *Philosophy of Reincarnation*, have come to a close; and, with reference to this subject, it is to be observed that no dogmatic position has been attempted by the magazine itself. Miss Blackwell has had every facility to express her views, but whether she has succeeded in enforcing them by incontrovertible facts and logical deductions, remains with every reader to decide for himself. An article has also been introduced objecting to certain tenets entertained by Miss Blackwell, and a further discussion, on the negative side, may be expected. Our object is to discover truth, not to exclude any particular form of investigation; hence, in the volume before us, this principle has been steadily kept in view, allowing all writers to give the best reason they could for the faith within them. This is an age wherein the most advanced minds pride themselves upon the unrestricted freedom with which they accept and express truth. It is painful to observe, however, that such is oftentimes the case in sentiment when it is not so in fact. It is too frequently observed that these advanced minds, when pushed by the onward march of new discoveries and revelations of higher forms of thought, allow their boasted principles of freedom to succumb before the pressure imposed by previously entertained views and old associations.

Against such short-comings, *Human Nature* has hitherto maintained a stand so decided and positive, that its character in this respect has now obtained a world-wide recognition. Such is our apology, if, indeed, any is necessary, for the great freedom everywhere visible in the volume now before the reader. Facts have been introduced which the scientific minds of the age sneer at or treat with contempt; and deductions from these facts have been permitted which run counter to the theology and philosophy of the period. But it is conceded by all that the nature of man and his relations to the universe are yet, in many respects, enigmatical, and it is only by entertaining new and expanding facts and views that man's nature can be further elucidated, his life directed, and his condition ameliorated. That the year's labours have done something towards these great ends is fervently hoped by the editor and contributors.

Progressive Library and Anthropological Institution,  
15 Southampton Row, London, W.C.  
December 1, 1871.

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