

**THE DESTINY OF  
MAN. VIEWED IN THE  
LIGHT OF HIS ORIGIN**

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The Destiny of Man. Viewed in the Light of His Origin by John Fiske

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By Mr. Fiske

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By JOHN FISKE



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The Riverside Press, Cambridge  
1899

To  
MY CHILDREN,  
MAUD, HAROLD, CLARENCE, RALPH,  
ETHEL, AND HERBERT,  
His Essay  
*IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED.*



-e.s.d. 26 November 1980 - Greene gift.







## PREFACE.



**H**AVING been invited to give an address before the Concord School of Philosophy this summer, upon some subject relating to the question of immortality there under discussion, it seemed a proper occasion for putting together the following thoughts on the origin of Man and his place in the universe. In dealing with the unknown, it is well to take one's start a long way within the limits of the known. The question of a future life is generally regarded as lying outside the range of legitimate scientific discussion. Yet while fully admitting this, one does not necessarily admit that the subject is one with regard to which we are forever debarred from entertaining an opinion. Now our opinions on such tran

scendental questions must necessarily be affected by the total mass of our opinions on the questions which lie within the scope of scientific inquiry ; and from this point of view it becomes of surpassing interest to trace the career of Humanity within that segment of the universe which is accessible to us. The teachings of the doctrine of evolution as to the origin and destiny of Man have, moreover, a very great speculative and practical value of their own, quite apart from their bearings upon any ultimate questions. The body of this essay is accordingly devoted to setting forth these teachings in what I conceive to be their true light ; while their transcendental implications are reserved for the sequel.

As the essay contains an epitome of my own original contributions to the doctrine of evolution, I have added at the end a short list of references to other works of mine, where the points here briefly mentioned are more fully argued and illus-

trated. The views regarding the progress of human society, and the elimination of warfare, are set forth at greater length in a little book now in the press, and soon to appear, entitled "American Political Ideas."

PETERSHAM, *September 6, 1884.*

