

"For my own part I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey . . . or from that old baboon . . . as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practices infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions."



"Man with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his god-like intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system — with all these exalted powers — Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin."



"I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection."



"Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge: it is those who know little, and not those who know much, who so positively assert that this or that problem will never be solved by science."



"Doing what little one can to increase the general stock of knowledge is as respectable an object of life, as one can in any likelihood pursue."



"Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved."



"It may be conceit, but I believe the subject will interest the public."



"The little beggars are doing just what I don't want them to do."



"One day, on tearing off some old bark, I saw two rare beetles, and seized one in each hand. Then I saw a third and new kind, which I could not bear to lose, so I popped the one which I held in my right hand into my mouth. Alas! it ejected some intensely acrid fluid, which burnt my tongue so that I was forced to spit the beetle out, which was lost, as was the third one."



"Man is descended from a hairy, tailed quadruped, probably arboreal in its habits."