

## THE HISTORY OF OUR SPECIES

intermediate members which complete the connecting chain of ancestors from the oldest *prosimiæ* to man.

The most famous and most interesting of these discoveries is the fossil ape-man of Java, the much-talked-of *pithecanthropus erectus*, found by a Dutch military doctor, Eugen Dubois, in 1894. It is in truth the much-sought "missing link," supposed to be wanting in the chain of primates, which stretches unbroken from the lowest *catarrhinæ* to the highest-developed man. I have dealt exhaustively with the significance of this discovery in the paper which I read on August 26, 1898, at the Fourth International Zoological Congress at Cambridge.\* The palæontologist, who knows the conditions of the formation and preservation of fossils, will think the discovery of the *pithecanthropus* an unusually lucky accident. The apes, being arboreal, seldom came into the circumstances (unless they happened to fall into the water) which would secure the preservation and petrification of their skeleton. Thus, by the discovery of this fossil man-monkey of Java the descent of man from the ape has become just as clear and certain from the palæontological side as it was previously from the evidence of comparative anatomy and ontogeny. We now have all the principal documents which tell the history of our race.

\* *Vide* the translation of Dr. Hans Gadow: *The Last Link*. (A. & C. Black.)