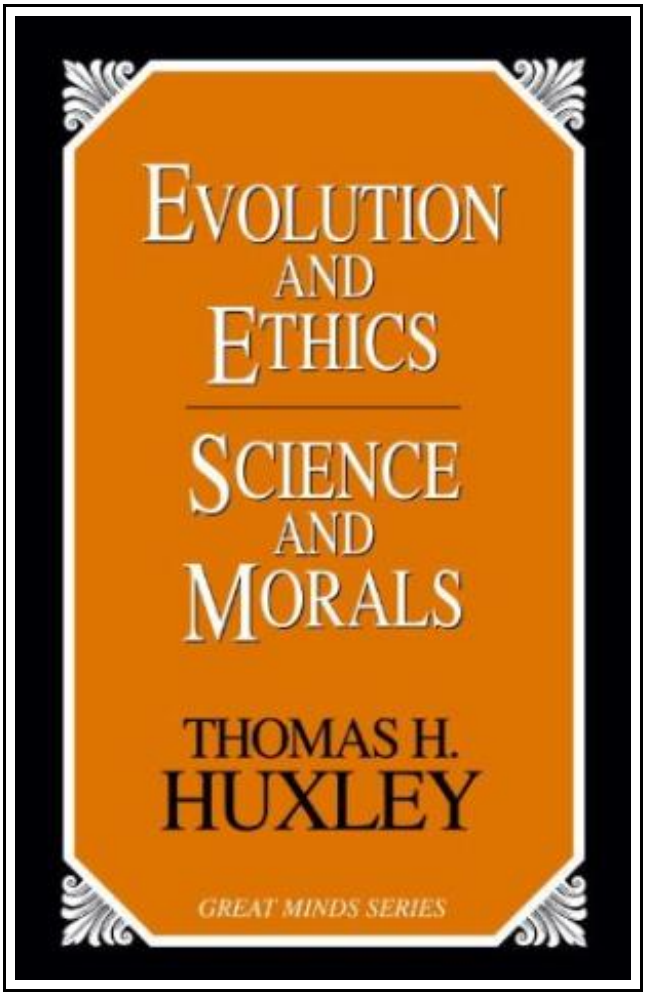
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EVOLUTION AND ETHICS/ SCIENCE AND MORALS (PAPERBACK)

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Prometheus Books, United States, 2004. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 223 x 163 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. These two essays by the famous 19th-century champion of Darwin s theory of evolution tackle a subject that is still a major focus of ethical debates today: the relation of science as a whole, and specifically evolutionary ideas, to ethics and morality. Written toward the end of Huxley s career when he was already famous as a persuasive lecturer and a fascinating expositor of new ideas, these essays demonstrate his rhetorical gifts and talent for explaining the importance of science to a lay audience. Evolution and Ethics, his last major talk delivered at Oxford in 1893, was written in response to the then fashionable Social Darwinism popularized by philosopher Herbert Spencer. Spencer and his followers had been labeling the poor, criminals, and other social undesirables as unfit and suggesting that society deal with them as harshly as nature deals with the physically unfit. Huxley found this approach both morally repugnant and a serious misapplication of Darwinian theory to the subject of ethics. Society progresses, Huxley maintained, through individuals who prove themselves to be ethically the best, not physically the most fit. Ethics is designed to curb our antisocial animal instincts and therefore must be detached from natural competition. In Science and Morals, written some years earlier (1886), Huxley addresses three criticisms: namely, that he and his associates refuse to take seriously anything that (1) cannot be verified by the senses, that (2) is beyond the bounds of physical science, and that (3) cannot be subjected to laboratory experimentation and chemical analysis. To all of these criticisms Huxley replies that he takes very seriously a host of mental phenomena that do not, strictly speaking, fall within these narrow physical limits: the universal...

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