which evolved him, *remotely* from a colloid, *immediately* from an ourang-outang! But the law of evolution is too far reaching to be confined in its operations to this earth. It pervades the planetary system; and astronomers, says a writer, hold that the solar system has gone through the same process. It not only regulates the actions of forces and of matter, it controls development, waste, and repair. If everything was claimed to be *osmosis* by Darwin, and osmosis everything, one greater than Darwin—Herbert Spencer—may equally well say, and does say, evolution is everything, everything is evolution. And the latter has an advantage over the former in having his serried hosts of physiological units to support him.

If the law of evolution pervades and controls everything, it is also claimed to pervade that which gives *life* to every thing. It would appear as if that which was intended, by the Great Giver Himself, ever to remain occult, is that which, of late years, has been the most determinedly investigated. And with what result? The chemist, before he became familiar with the law of osmosis, might have sought for life in his crucible, and in his alembic; the physiologist, before he had heard of protoplasm and the law of evolution, might have hoped to find it at the end of his knife; and some fancied they had discovered its seat, if it had its seat anywhere. But, somehow or other, they were too slow in their manipulations, for life always managed, by a tour de passe passe, to slip away just before it could be reached. Explorers could not see it, but they saw where it had been—not the immaterial essence, but the material casing, fresh and warm and recently vacated, which, of course, was all the same thing! This is a digression.

But, as if the Great Giver of life had no right to conceal from us, who enjoy it, a knowledge of that principle, we must thrust aside the veil that conceals from us that vivifying influence, and life, or, at least all that we shall ever know of its essence, stands revealed; and here it is, dished up by advanced biologists, psychologists, evolutionists and philosophists. What is life? says Lewes: "A series of definite and successive changes, both of structure and composition, which take place within an individual without destroying its identity." Now this must appear very plain. "It is," says Richeraud, "a collection of phenomena which succeed each other during a limited time in an organized body." (That is equally plain.) "It is," says de Blainville, "the two-fold internal movement of composition and decomposition, at once general and continuous." (That quite equals in clearness either of the other two.) "Une harmonie entre l'être vivant et le milieu correspondent caracterise evidemment la condition fondamentale de la vie," says Comte. (Plain without being very plain.) Mr. Spencer, who rejects all other definitions, to have his own, perhaps, rejected in turn, says it is the co-ordination of actions, "and co-ordination is the specific character of vitality." But Mr. Spencer has modified his views; and his formula, as further amended, reads thus: "Life is a definite combination of heterogeneous changes both simultaneous and successive." If a philosopher has a right to *make* a formula, he has a right to amend it, and even this amended formula requires still further amendments, for Mr. Spencer admits; "This ultimate formula is, after all, but proximately correct." Probably; and he would have been quite correct if he had said with Foderé—"*life*?—the greatest, the most difficult question he can ask after that of God Himself." But ask the religious philosopher, learned or unlearned, who meditates on this life in its bearing to the life hereafter—ask the bird of the forest on the nest of its birth; the insect pursuing the object of its love; the little fish gamboling in the stream; or the greater ones ploughing the depths of the ocean; and from high in the heavens and from the depths of the earth, and from the waters under the earth, will come the answer, as plain as it can be made by a Huxley or a Spencer—it is the breath of God Himself.

Of course, this is old fashioned, and everything must be recent, everything must be new, even in science. Yes! everything must be new! and when we read, at the breakfast table, of great and important researches which have led to the promulgation of new theories, and the erection of new systems, we are cheered with a hope that our evening reading may make us acquainted with still newer theories, or newer systems; or, perhaps, bring back to us, unscathed, those we were as yet somewhat sorry to relinquish. A learned professor publishes "a series of important researches" which promise to throw much light on, let us say, the constitution and changes of organic matter; and upon this, new systems are created, which, to believe the man of systems, have a foundation in science which had been wanting in previous systems. When Professor Graham, some time ago, showed that solid substances exist under two forms of aggregation—the colloid (or jelly-like) and the crystalloid—what a bouleversement there was in camps scientific. And having discovered these conditions, and invented the names, he received