

and with facts derived from the study of past forms of life upon the globe, the evolutionist attempts to penetrate through the long vista of bygone ages till he may rest his speculative gaze upon a vast rotating nebular mass of gaseous matter from which he supposes our universe to have been slowly evolved ; assuming that our planet had a past history of this kind, he must also assume that it rapidly changed from a gaseous to a fluid state before beginning to solidify by the formation of a superficial crust, which gradually thickened as the fervent heat of it radiated into space. Until this stage of the earth's history had been far advanced no living thing could have existed upon its surface. Living things must, however, have appeared upon its surface at some very remote epoch, since their remains are to be found far down in the rocks which at present constitute its crust. How, therefore, it may be asked, is the first appearance of life on this earth to be accounted for ?

We should not invoke an unknown act of creative power unless more ordinary natural causes fail, and it really be found necessary to invent some such a hypothesis. Now, the thorough-going evolutionist repudiates the notion of creation in its ordinary sense. He believes that the operation of natural causes working in their accustomed manner were quite adequate to bring into existence a kind of matter presenting a new order of complexity and displaying the phenomena we call life. Living matter is thus supposed to have come into being by the further operations under new conditions of the same agencies as had previously led to the various inorganic constituents of the earth's crust—such mineral and saline substances as we see around us at the present day, so that in accordance with this view we have no more reason to postulate a miraculous interference or exercise of creative power to account for the evolution of living matter in any suitable portion of the universe, whether on this earth or elsewhere, than to explain the appearance of any other kind of matter. The question might be asked whether life still continues to come into existence from inert or lifeless matter ? Herbert Spencer, the great apostle of evolution, sees no reason why it may not do so. Professor Bastian, and a good many others, maintain that it really does so, as proven by a series of experiments extending over a lengthened period. He contends that all the conditions of matter necessary to the beginnings of life still exist, and that