

cal, vegetable, and animal existence—into matter and force. And now I ask your consideration of one more inference from this system, which is the one I had in view when I announced the subject of this sermon, "A Corollary of Evolution." It is this: According to the principles of evolution, the original form in which the universe existed from eternity may have been the spiritual form—thought, emotion, volition, wisdom, love, might, omniscience, omnipotence, and infinite benevolence—a form perfectly convertible into gravitation, motion, light, and heat. And against the supposition that the original form of the universe was that of spiritual existence there is, under the system of evolution, no reasonable presumption or probability, and no just objection, except that it is orthodox. Some hasty and inconsiderate philosopher may object off-hand that it is contrary to the known course of evolution; that the higher forms of motion, like thought and feeling, should precede the lower, such as heat, light, and vegetation; that, in fact, the lower forms always precede the higher in course of development. But the answer is obvious: that this objector has forgotten to what scale his "known course of evolution" has been mapped; that what he knows of the course of evolution does not really represent a curve long enough to furnish the elements for computing the course of nature. He dreams that his paltry millions or billions or trillions of years make rather a long time from which to estimate the rest, whereas they are only a tick of the clock. He speaks of *the* course of evolution, as if there might not have been a score of successive and diverse courses of evolution, from the nebula back to the nebula again, since time began. He speaks of time; we are speaking of that which was before time—from eternity, concerning which his science and his speculation are alike confessedly and hopelessly at fault. He has relegated it all to the Unknowable. He has to deal with two elements, and only two, that make up the universe—matter and force; both of them variable, convertible, and reconvertible in form; both of them indestructible and uncreatable in essence. As they cannot cease to be, so they cannot begin to be. *Unless*