

a harmoniously acting unit, can we explain mechanically the origin of the simplest living thing.

Whether such forces can ever be discovered it would be hazardous to conjecture. Considering the minuteness of the machine and its intricacy, it is evident the problem is a difficult one, and in all probability it lies outside the reach of human ingenuity. We may hope to make chemical compounds *ad libitum*, but we cannot hope to be able to fashion such a machine. Certain it is that the scientist is at present

baffled in his search after this *ignis fatuus* we call life. Just as he thought he had almost reached it by chemical means, it has slipped from his grasp, and he finds that it is not a chemical problem at all. Where to turn his attention now he hardly knows. But science is never satisfied, and we may confidently expect that his probe will in time be turned in a new direction, and who can tell with what successes and with what disappointments?—*Popular Science.*

A NEW RACE DISCOVERED.

DURING his comprehensive explorations in Egypt, Prof. Flinders Petrie came upon an ancient cemetery of very large proportions, from which he unearthed a great number of skeletons belonging to a very ancient people that has since been termed "the new race."

A representative collection of these skeletons, carefully numbered, has now arrived at the Cambridge University from the spot near Thebes where they were found. Material was thus furnished for a study of variations in the human skeleton, and the series of minute measurements which have been made not only furnishes valuable statistics, but brings out several interesting features with regard to the original owners of the bodies.

The ancient people, according to the discoverer of their remains, constituted a "branch of the same Libyan race that formed the Ammonite power," and their date is put down by him as between 3000 and 4000 B.C.

The dimensions of the long bones point to a stature similar to that of the French; but while in France the women vary most, the opposite held good with the "new race." Taking everything into consideration, support is given by the investigations to a generalization in Prof. Pearson's forthcoming book on the "Chances of Death," that "the more primitive and savage a race, the less will be the variation of both sexes, and the greater will be the approach of equality of variation between them." That the early inhabitants of the country near Thebes followed the primitive custom of "squatting" is shown by the structure of the bones of the foot, which manifest the peculiarities found in modern tribes adopting that practice.

A simian character—the sacral notch in the base of the vertebral column—was looked for, and might have been expected in such an early race. It was, however, looked for in vain. In fact, in many characteristics, the skeletons are most modern, while in others they are the reverse. The men and women to whom they belonged may be summed up as a hardy, vigorous people, approaching to the negro in the proportion of their limbs, while the spine and shoulder-blades show a more determinable affinity to Europeans.—*Mail (Lon.).*