

extent to which that origin must have preceded the epoch of the first recorded appearance of vertebrate life."

But beyond this lies the unfathomable gulf of the origin of the living and organized from the merely mineral; of this "abiogenesis" science knows nothing, and even Huxley can only fall back on the probability that at some almost infinitely distant point of past time physical conditions may have been so different from those now existing as to admit of the spontaneous origin of life. Here there is no scope for natural selection, but we stand face to face with what to our present ideas would be a miracle of creation. But such abiogenesis must once, at least, have occurred; and if once, why not oftener? Yet now it seems impossible, and by some is dismissed as unthinkable. We can only say, "To man it is impossible, but to God all things are possible;" and, leaving Him out of the account, we must be content to leave ourselves no rational standing-place over the infinite void. This position Huxley avowedly assumed, as an honest agnostic whose mind was so constituted that he could not move one step beyond phenomena, and declined to infer from these phenomena any power or divinity behind them.

In point of fact, without God and without the Redeemer and the great truths revealed by Him, it is impossible to solve the "problem of humanity;" and it is impossible wholly to divest the mind of the idea of a rational First Cause, and a relation between Him and the spiritual nature of man. The lines which it is said were by Huxley's request to form his epitaph, declare this:—

"And if there be no meeting past the grave,
If all is darkness, silence yet is rest.
Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep,
For God still giveth His beloved sleep,—
And if an endless sleep He wills, so best."

Here we have God recognized as giving even the sleep of death, and if so, why not also the future life and the