

these orders would require to be subdivided a good many times, always selecting those which have most things in common, and grouping them by themselves. By narrowing down in this way it is comparatively easy to find out the name of any bird from the descriptions usually given in works on ornithology. In like manner in all the other divisions into which animal life is arranged, classification is carried out. The necessity for classifying the different sorts of animals into such groups as I have tried to point out must be so apparent to all that there need be nothing further said on the subject.

The study of the various forms of animal life with all their never ending peculiarities, their relations to each other—their habits and instincts, &c., must always be of great interest to man, but that branch of scientific research, which takes for its subject the origin of life, together with the origin of species, opens up fields of speculation of much greater interest, and which bid fair to revolutionize our whole conception of the manner in which man as well as all other organisms came to be as we now find them.

It is my purpose to try and point out as briefly and as clearly as I can some of the views held by leading scientists of the present day on the subject just named. Up to a very recent period the belief was all but universal that all living creatures came from the hands of their creator perfectly formed and perfectly fitted to the surrounding world in which they had their habitation, that a power outside and beyond what we call nature brought life into existence from nothing, and that it was so continued in the same unchanged and unchangable condition throughout all the time of its existence. It was claimed that God had infallibly revealed to man the order and plan of creation, and consequently there was no room for discussing or inquiring into the subject at all. The few people who had the timidity to doubt the finality of the biblical conclusions, as then understood, suffered no little in the way social and physical persecution.

The investigation of nature, principally during the past half century, has not only shaken the belief in the theological explanation of the world and of life, but has given rise to new theories concerning the beginning of life and the causes accounting for all its varied forms.

As the structure and make up of the earth came to be investigated