

[From *The Times*, February 8, 1892]

call "the supernatural." It regards all "natural processes" as the work of a Divine Being. Professor Huxley asserts or implies that this is erroneous, and that wherever we can trace the operation of natural causes we must exclude all idea of a Divine origin or direction.

I venture to assert, on the contrary, that this is very bad science and still worse philosophy. Physical science has nothing to do with anything else than "processes" and physical causes. When it pretends to deny the derivation from or the direction of these by a Supreme Mind it goes outside its province. It does more. It contradicts the universal testimony and consciousness of mankind as evinced in the very structure of all human speech. Professor Huxley himself, in spite of a continuous effort, has vainly tried to eliminate the language of design, of purpose, and of adaptation from his description of biological structures and functions.

The sacred writers have dealt with this aspect of nature almost exclusively. But they have never even tried to eliminate the idea of physical processes. Both are to them equally "natural." The vicious and unphilosophical distinction between "natural" and "supernatural" is absolutely unknown to them.

I venture to think that this is true science and the soundest philosophy. But it is well that the "broad issue" for which Professor Huxley seems to contend should be thus openly avowed. That "broad issue," as now explained, appears to be this, that in ascribing the creative work to a Divine Being the narrative of Genesis is in "irreconcilable antagonism" with modern science. I am happy to believe, and to know, that in this broad issue he will not have the unanimous or even the general support of the most eminent men of science in the United Kingdom.

Your obedient servant,

ARGYLL.

February 4.