

We may devote a few minutes to a sober consideration of the subject and, though not attempting to settle the dispute, we may cull some valuable information.

I would say, "in limine," we must be just to Darwin; his followers have "out Herodotus Herod."

The more we consider the work of the great Naturalist, the more we must admire his candor, courage, ability, knowledge and honesty; for he has furnished the material out of which both his detractors and friends have forged the weapons that serve to attack and defend his opinions.

These controversies always remind me of the "Punch and Judy show," the "Deus ex Machina," that originates, conducts and concludes the performance, remains perfectly intact at the finish and as ready as ever to repeat the play.

In order to explain to you my impressions of the two ideas referred to (and whether right or wrong you shall be the judge) and give a tangible explanation of a very intangible subject. I would liken them to two divergent lines; the new or material theory being one which is not defined at either end, the other branching off from the first and defined at the beginning, where man and living things appear in the cycle of the earth's history, the other end indeterminate. We will begin at the point where the two theories coincide. The material theory goes away back, following the line of descent of still less highly organized beings, until one or more primordial elements be reached; and a fanciful philosopher even gets beyond the realms of our planet and launched the supposition that these first elements of life might have come to us freighted on a shooting star from the realms of space, where this end of the line disappears in infinity. The other end is supposed to pass from our epoch along the coming centuries, reaching greater perfection in animated nature; but has no definite termination.

The old or Biblical version of these events assumes as a beginning a series of creative acts and very great permanence of created forms which will continue to the end of this epoch of the world's history an unknown terminus.

I would but refer to the lucid, full and convincing argument by which Darwin has captivated so many careful thinkers and proved to their apparent satisfaction the *changeable character of species* through "natural (may we not say judicious) selection" and "the survival of the fittest." His facts are patent to all who wish to investigate and his conclusions almost irresistible.

The older theory apparently opposite assumes the *unchangeable character of species* from the unquestioned law that "like produces like;" a law so easily verified by observation and more definitely proven by the allied law of *Atavism*, for, when from any of several causes, a modification occurs in descent there is a most marked tendency to revert to the original type, or a failure to reproduce the assumed new type.

This fact is so well known by stockmen and florists that great labour, judgment and experiment are needed to get the new type sufficiently permanent to reproduce, and when this is apparently obtained just as great judgment is needed to keep the qualities gained,