with faith and hope, the apparently triumphant course of the demonstration in the third lecture, in the end we only run our heads against an impassable wall.

Is this, then, the most conclusive kind of demonstration which one of the most accomplished biologists of our time can offer for the hypothesis of evolution? It would seem so; but it is only fair to say that in selecting the historical or palæontological argument for evolution, the lecturer adopted the most difficult line of proof. The showy analogies of Spencer and Darwin, though equally failing as demonstrations, have a much more specious appearance. But there lies behind all this a consideration more potent than any argument, and which probably weighs with many of the converts of this new philosophy more than all facts and reasonings. It is expressed in the following sentences of the report:

"The only way of escape, if it be a way of escape, from the conclusions which I have just indicated, is the supposition that all these different forms have been created separately at separate epochs of time, and I repeat, as I said before, that of such a hypothesis as this there neither is nor can be any scientific evidence, and assuredly, so far as I know, there is none which is supported or pretends to be supported by evidence or authority of any other kind. I can but think that the time will come when such suggestions as these, such obvious attempts to escape the force of demonstration, will be put upon the same footing as the supposition by some writers, who are, I believe, not completely extinct at present, that fossils are not real existences, are no indications of the existence of the animals to which they seem to belong; but that they are either sports of nature or special creations, intended—as I heard suggested the other day—to test our faith. In fact, the whole evidence is in favor of evolution, and there is none against it. And I say that, although perfectly well aware of the seeming difficulties which have been adduced from what appears to the uninformed to be a scientific foundation."

This is the real difficulty. Without evolution, or some similar hypothesis, there will remain in nature, and especially with reference to the origin of species, a residuum of facts unexplained, and apparently inexplicable by science. This can not be endured in an age which has learned to believe that it can explain every thing. In default of actual knowledge, it is necessary by some sweeping hypothesis to cover up our ignorance. The whole march of science is strewn with the wrecks of such hypotheses, devised in every age by ingenious men, to serve as a substitute for actual knowledge, and to spare themselves the labor of arduous investigation; satisfying one generation with a comfortable form of words, only to be cast off by the next.

Evolution will have its day, and then men will wonder how they could have believed it. When it shall be discovered, as assuredly it will, that the world involves causes and agencies vastly more complex than this simple theory suggests, our successors in the arena of science will point to it as a warning against the prevailing error of specialists and enthusiasts, who ever tend, like quacks in medicine, to refer all effects to the same cause, and to cure all evils by one specific. Our time is too much one of rash and daring speculation, as distinguished from the slow and laborious search for truth. But when the reaction comes, the scientific men of the future, as they slowly dig the trenches with which they hope to gain the citadel of truth, will not refuse to give due credit to the bold adventurers who in vain attempted to storm it with a rush. Nor will they fail to admit that they did good service in cutting down many of the old prejudices and false impressions that have blocked the path of the free investigation of nature.