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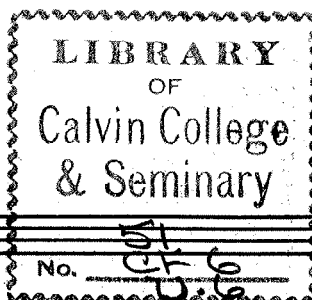
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NOT MANY MIGHTY--

Not Many Noble

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Observations on Evolution

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RIGHTLY or wrongly, I have been slow to feel the terrific tension which has driven many into a veritable death grapple with evolution. A wise old college professor showed us that even if organic evolution should be proved, it would apply to the body not to the mind or spiritual nature. The rocks preserve no fossilized minds; however much modernists may enjoy using that term to describe opponents who show a bit of backbone.

Dr. Woodrow's Evolution

Dr. James Woodrow suggested that one should not expect harmony between science and Scripture, but non-contradiction. Thus he held that science might supplement the Scriptural account by showing the long vistas in which geological changes took place, and that man may be older than Usher's figures (Cf. Davis' *Bible Dictionary*). Woodrow further held that man's body was probably evolved from animal ancestry; but that his soul was a direct creation immediately implanted by God. This hypothesis has been more recently expounded by Professor W. P. Paterson, who told me that he arrived at his view independently of Woodrow. Both men used the same illustration or analogy, namely, the theological hypothesis that babies derive only their bodies from their parents while their souls are directly created by God (Creationism). Warfield suggested that the *Institutes* might be interpreted in similar fashion (*Calvin and Calvinism*, p. 305), an interpretation of Calvin which, however, is negated by the commentaries. According to this mediate evolution or mediate creation, God did supernaturally intervene in the origin of man, and thereafter, did intervene by other mediate creations or miracles to save man from his fallen estate.

Woodrow's term *mediate creation* or *mediate evolution* constitutes a third category alongside the category of immediate creation and of evolution. The older divines defined creation broadly enough to include both immediate and mediate creation. "Creation is that, by which God produced the world and the things therein partly out of nothing and partly out of matter inapt naturally for that production, for the manifestation of the glory of his power, wisdom and goodness" (Wollebuis' *Compendium* V). "By 'mediate creation' is really meant the truly creative acts of God occurring in the course of His providential government, by virtue of which some-

thing absolutely new is inserted into the complex of nature—something to the production of which all that was previously existent in nature is inadequate, however wisely and powerfully the course taken may be led and governed—something for the production of which there is requisite the immediate 'flash of the will that can'" (Warfield, *Bible Student*, July 1901). Thus, Woodrow's mediate evolution differs from "theistic evolution" under which anti-supernaturalists like Otto Pfleiderer and Ernst Troeltsch exclude the category of mediate creation (miracles) and make evolution account for all the subsequent modifications after the primal act of immediate creation.

The late E. Y. Mullins insisted that the unifying center of one's world and life view was what mattered most. Those who find this center in evolution can never give adequate recognition to the supernatural character of Christianity or to the glory and uniqueness of Christ. They cannot, for example, unreservedly affirm the Resurrection of Christ as was made clear in a debate on evolution between Rev. J. R. Stratton and Professor K. F. Mather at Harvard University during the session 1926-1927. "And if Christ be not risen our faith is vain" (I Cor. 15:17). On the other hand one who finds the solution of the mystery of unity and plurality in the Triune God may hold that evolution may be one of God's many ways of working without thereby denying other modes of His working, such as, Miracles, Revelation, Incarnation, Expiation, Regeneration and Inspiration. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God who worketh all things in all" (I Cor. 12:4-6). It may be possible to subsume evolution under Christ; but Christ can never be subsumed under evolution. In Him, through Him and Unto Him were all things created and in Him all things consist (Col. 1:16-17). Hence, a Christian can never be satisfied with a scheme which merely "smuggles" Christ in under evolutionary processes and modifies or qualifies the miracles of His Person and Ministry to accommodate the demands of naturalism.

Woodrow held to a zoögenesis which had its unity in God and allowed for other processes of His working such as creation and miracles. The writer would add the hope that those who follow Woodrow in his hypothesis of *mediate evolution-mediate creation*

will also follow him in upholding the full truthfulness of Holy Scripture and the miracles which demonstrate the supernatural origin of Christianity and illustrate the glory of Christ.

Professor Newman's Evolution

Personally, I have never found the arguments for organic evolution sufficiently strong to accept that hypothesis as being probably true. And my doubts on this subject have been increased by reading a representative volume placed in my hands by a graduate of a church college. This volume* was prepared for "the superior students" in a great university, but was also used as a text-book in this student's *alma mater*.

The editor of the volume insists on an evolution of the most thorough-going type, with a purely mechanical explanation of both psychology and physiology. He characterizes vitalism as being opposed to the views that have led to scientific progress and as being "largely outgrown." (p. 164). The doctrine of a supernatural origin of life is dismissed as "obscurantism," while the doctrine of special creation is declared "outworn and completely discredited." (194). On the other hand he is very positive as to the truth of evolution. He writes, "at present there are no known facts contrary to evolution" and "from the standpoint of science we may conclude that evolution is proved" (194), "the truth of evolution is demonstrated" (381). "Evolution is a law of nature and is proved or established as firmly as the law of gravitation" (193).

In another volume* the same scientist states the scope of evolution thus, "there has been as real an evolution of the cosmos as of the solar system, of molecules and atoms as of organisms. Hydrogen atoms have evolved into more complex atoms." What shall we say of the case for this all-inclusive evolution? Is the positiveness of assertion matched and substantiated by the adequacy of evidence?

First, inorganic evolution. In the statement above the biological authority includes inorganic nature in his conception of evolution very much as did the old definition of Herbert Spencer. But current physicists will certainly be surprised to read that the doctrine that hydrogen atoms have evolved (and presumably are evolving) into atoms of higher atomic valence has been proved. Jeans and Eddington have represented the movement as being in the diametrically opposite direction so that entropy, or the disintegration of matter, has been widely accepted as the second law of thermo-dynamics. R. E. D. Clark, Ph.D., of Cambridge has stressed entropy in a recent periodical article*; while such a convinced evolutionist as Professor Julian Huxley in a symposium on *Science and Religion* states that the trend in the universe as a whole is toward final uni-

formity, a state of cosmic death; and that only on this planet and only in the matter of living organisms is there an opposite trend, namely evolution. This means that Mr. Huxley has surrendered the doctrine of inorganic evolution to the demands of entropy.

Secondly, organic evolution. The editor of the volume under consideration is plainly worried by his difficulty in stating the way in which the mechanical causation, which alone is posited, has worked. He admits disagreement among evolutionists as to the co-operating factors in the mechanism of evolution and his consequent inability to state the caudo-mechanical basis of the process (387). Returning to this thought in the conclusion he acknowledges that "we know little about the mechanism of mutations"; but he expects, in the next quarter of a century that "we" may be on our way to an understanding of the caudo-mechanics of evolution (418). This may well be a matter of concern since no less an authority than Professor L. T. More of Cincinnati* has stated that, in order to be a scientific definition of evolution, a proposed definition must also state the natural cause or method by which the transformations are brought about.

The How of Evolution

The editor of the book under chief consideration gives attention to three possible mechanical explanations of organic evolution, those connected with the names of Darwin, Lamarck and De Vries, or natural selection, transmission of acquired characteristics and mutations.

Of Darwin's view, he writes, "We now know what Darwin had no means of knowing, that the majority of small quantitative differences among the individuals of a species are merely somatic adjustments, and that, unless Lamarck's factor be in operation, these character differences could not be transmitted to the offspring of survivors" (414). Previously he had stated that Darwin's theory of pangenesis, by which the great naturalist assumed that changes which had proved useful in the struggle for survival would be transmitted, had been entirely discredited.

Of Lamarck's doctrine, he says, "Reluctant as many of us are to abandon hope in the efficacy of the Lamarckian factor, candor forces us to admit that at the present time this factor has so little in its favor as to be of no value in our attempt to explain the cause of inherited adaptations." (412)

The editor ends by pinning his hope on the theory of mutations, and yet his language at this point is as follows: "Mutations are now known to furnish the material for selection. We have seen that the majority of mutations are changes for the worse, but, unless they are seriously detrimental they are likely to persist and be passed on to some of their offspring. At long intervals a mutation of a superior sort occurs and is at once incorporated as a racial asset." (414). This means that we are asked to believe that the tree of life climbed from amoeba to man in a purely

* More, *The Dogma of Evolution*.

* *The Nature of the World and of Man*, H. H. Newman, Chicago.

* *Creation by Evolution*, H. H. Newman.

* *The Evangelical Quarterly*, April, 1937. "God and Entropy—The Latest Phase."

mechanical way by means of mutations most of which are so bad that they destroy the line in which they occur.

Small wonder, then, that even a scholar, whose book does not recognize the supernatural, has declared that evolution is not sufficient to account for the story of organic life. As a result of his nature studies Dr. Austin Clark of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington has come to the conclusion that the phyla and other great divisions of organic life have been continuous "from the beginning" and have never intergraded. Being unwilling to accept the doctrine of special creation toward which such observation points, this scientist posits the thesis of *eogenesis* to help account for the great divisions of life. By this term he means that the major groupings began simultaneously by the original life cell or cells branching out in all directions at the same time. Clark holds that this *eogenesis*, plus mutations and evolution are all necessary to account for *Zoögenesis*.

And Professor Fleishman of Erlangen has been reliably quoted thus, "The more deeply I pursued the alleged evidence for it (the theory of evolution) and sought to gain through special investigation some essential proof of the genetic relationship of animals, the more clearly I recognized that the theory is a seductive romance which deceptively pretends to give results and explanations, rather than a doctrine built upon positive foundations."

From the philosophical standpoint, Professor C. Van Til has suggested that evolution as a system of continuous change is logically contradictory to the system of classification which is not less fundamental to science. In a current volume Dr. A. E. Taylor, professor of moral philosophy in Edinburgh, shows the logical impossibility of either selfhood or personality "emerging on the scene as a product of evolution." "If we found it incredible that mere 'experience objects' should of themselves turn into 'subjects of experience,' beings who can feel, it is equally unthinkable that beings who can merely feel should, of themselves, turn into beings who can think and know." "There must be primitive and unoriginated personality, as well as primitive selfhood, at the very foundation of things." And ours is "a *created* personality, depending for its being on supreme uncreated personality."*

Evolution or Revelation

Coincident with this realization of the weakness of the case for evolution there is a rising sense of the glory and uniqueness of God's special *Revelation*. Accordingly, men are not so prone to treat the idea of God in the Old Testament as an evolution from Semitic religious thinking; but as the *Revelation* of the living God. At the last Calvinistic Congress Pfarrer W. Vischer, professor in Basel, insisted that "for the New Testament the Holy Scripture is a whole," "the Gospel proclaims that Jesus is the Christ of Israel, promised and expected in the

Old Testament" so that the Old Testament writings "are the Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. 3.15).* In March 1938, I attended a lecture by one of the more 'liberal' professors in New College, Edinburgh. This professor declared that the theory of the evolutionary origin of the religion of the Old Testament had been given up in his university and that the whole matter was again 'in the melting pot'. After the lecture several of the students said that the same professor at the beginning of the term had taught the very evolutionary view which in the lecture I attended he repudiated as outmoded.

The loss of confidence in man and his ability to evolve a kingdom of peace, prosperity, culture, plenty, truth and justice is driving the hopes of men back to the promises of God's Word. The new sense of biblical eschatology means the repudiation of idealistic evolutionism which had no place for the supernatural resurrection, and which, in some cases, even dismissed immortality as 'the last enemy.' For example Feuerbach substituted the historical future, the future of humanity as that which lies beyond our grave *on earth*, for anything that lies beyond our grave *in heaven*. Professor Paul Althaus comments, "That was the eschatology of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Today its time is past. The belief in an advancing evolution of mankind to a spiritual-moral consummation is destroyed . . . There has come a new hour for the proclamation of the biblical expectation of the Kingdom which secular chaliasms (such as communism) tried to supplant. . . . In it the thought of evolution is valued neither for the eschatology of the individual nor for the eschatology of the human race; but for both DEATH AND RESURRECTION. The individual and history both wait on the last day. They will be perfected together." (*Die letzten Dinge*, 1933, p. 26). Similarly, Mr. D. R. Davies of the British Weekly dismisses the "comely and esthetic type of religion which is founded, not on salvation, but on the excellence of that glorious creature man, and on the facilities for his evolution." Condemning the "policy of appeasement" by which Christian Liberalism "liquidated" the idea of hell and surrendered the bastions of the eternal Gospel of Christ to the demands of naturalism, he insists that the Church reject "the shallow evolutionary philosophy of Liberalism" as well as the revolutionary concept of Marx. It is "a fatal optimism about man and the world" to construe history as a self-contained unit, in which, by either evolution or revolution, man can bring in a Utopia. Rather, we look for "the Second Coming, which by means of the Last Judgment, will bring history to its conclusion" and for the fulfillment of history beyond time in that Kingdom of Glory which God, acting in a supernatural, catastrophic way, will establish in a new heavens and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness.*

* *Proceedings of the Calvinistic Congress*, 1938, pp. 237, 239, 257.

* Davies, D. R., *On to Orthodoxy*, pp. 148, 155, 156, etc.

* Taylor, *The Christian Hope of Immortality*, 1938, pp. 46-47.