

come through the channel of the accepted "Christian" sciences.

The theory of Evolution itself may, as far as it endeavors to explain the *modus operandi* of the creation, be true or not true. The world may or may not owe its present form to the disintegration of matter and a change of motion in its molecular parts. The theory is probably good enough. But it is a theory, and nothing more, and may, like its predecessors, have to give place to something more probable. Philosophical systems, built up as they are by inductive reasoning always have to be reconstructed as our knowledge of facts increases. And the theory of Evolution by no means appears to give entire satisfaction.

An inquirer will always ask: How did matter come to exist? Did it not always exist? What caused the motion of the molecular parts? As far as our experience goes, motion is an effect. And an effect pre-supposes a cause. What is this cause in regard to the first origin of evolution, or, rather, condensation of matter? And here the modern philosophy just leaves an investigator in the dark. It very far from solves the real difficulty in the great question of creation. It only puts it an eternal moment back in time and there leaves it unsolved. The question is, how did this visible world come into existence? and Evolution gives the rather naive answer, that it evolved out of something that was never made. Now, to any ordinary mind it would probably be just as easy to suppose the world in its present form uncreated as to suppose that it spontaneously evolved out of something else that had never been called into existence. The difficulty is precisely the same.

So far all philosophers have, when they tried to go beyond the word of God, failed to explain the great question of existence. And no wonder; for although we live on the earth, yet our knowledge of its real nature and that of the other bodies of the universe is as yet dependent on what we can gather from our observation of the facts that come within our limited range of observation. And these facts are not sufficient to establish the whole truth apart from revelation. It is clear enough that in our present state of existence we, as the Apostle says, know only in part, and we have no means of obtaining a full knowledge of all the phenomena that surround us. But as long as

this is the case it is equally clear that we can frame no perfectly reliable system of philosophy. Our greatest wisdom is, therefore, to accept the instruction of Him who knows the creation as a great master knows the work of his hands.

Suppose the following case. Somewhere in the ocean there is an island. It is inhabited by intelligent beings, who have never communicated with the outside world. One day they perceive a vessel passing the island at some distance, a sight they have never seen before. They would naturally endeavor to explain to themselves that phenomenon. What is it? How did it come to exist, and by what laws is it governed? All they knew and could know about it was contained in the observations made from the shore. They could see a large object moving in the water. They perceived that it moved independent of winds, currents and tide. They could observe its masts, riggings, etc. These were all the facts they could gather. What a variety of theories would not these islanders be likely to form? One might say that it had been formed by some known sea monster for shelter, perhaps. Another might pronounce it to be some unknown specimen of animal. One might contend that it was a supernatural being, and some would, no doubt, start the idea that it was simply an object formed by the process of evolution out of particles of water. The molecular particles of the ocean had been moved upon and finally after a long, long period of time had assumed the form of a ship. Of course, any of these theories might for a time satisfy the inquirers on that island. But let these philosophers come in contact with men on the ship. Let them hear the captain give a description of the building of the vessel. Let them go on board and see for themselves. How would their ideas change, and how silly would they be, if they refused to give credit to the instructions of those who knew the nature of the object.

Now, we are in the same condition in relation to the universe as those islanders in regard to the vessel. If we have nothing but our own observations on which to found our theories, we will be led to all kinds of absurdities. And all our philosophers from Aristotle down to Spencer when they are in a position to view the universe, not from the shore only, will find that they have attempted to solve what

knowledge, apart from revelation, insolvable.

To believe with a childlike faith the word of God which declares that the worlds were made for certain purposes by the Almighty Creator, and to live for an exaltation that will enable us hereafter to obtain a full knowledge of how it was made, appears to be the most sound philosophy ever conceived. It is satisfactory alike to mind and heart, because it unites man with his Eternal Father.

### TRUUBLOUS TIMES.

THE New York *Tribune* draws this gloomy picture of the times:

"History teaches that the closing years of each of the bygone centuries have been rendered memorable by a more than usual amount of the sorrows, troubles and ills to which mankind is heir. Alarmed lest the century should pass away without the human race receiving its full quota of suffering, the Powers of Nature appear to have crowded into its concluding years all the unspent hoard of pestilence, famine, war and catastrophes of every kind. Nor does the final decade of the nineteenth century seem destined to prove any exception to the rule. It has opened in a manner that cannot be regarded as otherwise than ominous. Cholera has once more deserted the Oriental headquarters and invaded Europe from several points, bearing death and desolation in its train. Famine is again casting its blighting shadow over the sorely stricken inhabitants of the Emerald Isle. In Italy the misery is so appalling that starvation is depopulating entire districts, and from every quarter of the globe come tales of ruined crops, destroyed herds and devastated homes.

"While no one country or district can be said to have escaped, it would appear as if the forces of Nature had concentrated their principal efforts for evil upon the central portion of Europe. Germany, Switzerland, a part of France, and in particular Austria, are at present the principal sufferers. The phylloxera has for the first time on record secured a foothold in the vineyards of the Champagne and of the Rhine, and threatens completely to destroy these productive industries; and while in one portion of Austria the drouth is so intense that the cattle and horses are dying by the thousand for want of fodder, the remainder of the Empire, as well as Southern Germany and Switzerland, is suffering from terrible inundations. So appalling have the latter become that a special department of the government has been organized in all haste at Vienna for the purpose of dealing with the danger. The principal rivers have burst their banks in a number of places, flooding the surrounding districts, arresting railroad communications, and ruining the crops. The Lake of Constance has risen to the highest level known for more than a hundred years, and many of the other inland seas have followed suit, rendering a suspension of navigation imperative. And what in the eyes of the superstitious is worse than all, the Carlsbrunneke at Prague, which for half a thousand years has withstood the onslaughts of the Moldau, has just crumbled away into the