

## Chapter 1

### The Problem Defined

Until recent years, the Genesis story of creation was the accepted explanation, in the Christian world, of the origin of our earth and all life upon it. But within the last century there has been a turning away from the creation explanation to that of evolution, on the part of many scientific men in Christian lands. They have defended their action by declaring that the discoveries of science demanded that they change their view. Such a step could produce only one possible result - a controversy. Christian people wanted to know whether the doctrine of creation, which was the substratum of their thinking, was false, or whether scientific men were simply defending a form of skepticism under the guise of scientific facts.

But this present-day widespread discussion, instead of being deplorable, is a most healthy sign. It reveals an active interest on the part of the people of this enlightened century to weigh evidence for themselves. In former centuries, the masses quietly accepted the verdict of those who claimed to be their superiors. The divine right of kings - the right of the few in the political world - is gone. The divine right of a few ecclesiastics to dictate in religious affairs has also been shaken off in virtually all lands. And surely the claim of a few men to an absolute control of all learning and science may at least be questioned.

The evolutionist scouts the Bible story of our earth, and calls upon all who want to be truly scientific to accept the evolutionary theory. This theory, expressed in simple language, teaches that the higher forms of life - such as man - came from the lower, and that the lowest forms of life - such as the wriggling microbes - came from the non-living earth, and that this earth came from something else. Or to state the theory in the chronological order: When our evolving earth finally assumed a normal shape, consistency, and temperature, then, by some chance chemical combination, non-living matter spontaneously-produced living cells, which kept changing into other and higher forms of life, until ultimately man was reached. In other words, all creation from star dust to the mind of man is linked together in a gradually ascending scale of complexity.

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Some people speak of the "evolution" of the chick from an egg. But this is growth, not evolution.

The question before us, of course, is, What evidence does the evolutionist have in support of his theory? Has some scientist in the laboratory seen life spring from the non-living earth? No. Says Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, of the American Museum of Natural History: "The mode of the origin of life is a matter of pure speculation, in which we have as yet little observation or uniformitarian reasoning to guide us."<sup>1</sup> This quotation is characteristic.

### 1. "The Origin and Evolution of Life": 67.

Has one species ever been seen to change into another? No. Dr. William Bateson, a noted evolutionist of England, declared in a presidential address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science:

"Although we must hold to our faith in the evolution of species, there is little evidence as to how it has come about, and no clear proof that the process is continuing in any considerable degree at the present time. The thought uppermost in our minds is that knowledge of the nature of life is altogether too slender to warrant speculation on these fundamental subjects. Did we presume to offer such speculations, they would have no more value than those which alchemists might have made as to the nature of the elements." <sup>2</sup>

### 2. Science: September 4, 1914.

He recently reaffirmed this statement in the following words: "Variation of many kinds, often considerable, we daily witness, but no origin of species."<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Science: January 20, 1922.

Commenting on the fact that one species has never been known to change into another, Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan, of Columbia University, says: "It may be claimed that the theory of descent [evolution] is lacking, therefore, in the most essential feature

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that it needs to place the theory on a scientific basis. This must be admitted."4 Because this is so, Dr. H. H. Newman, of the University of Chicago, confesses, "Reluctant as he may be to admit it, honesty compels the evolutionist to admit that there is no absolute proof of organic evolution."5

4. "Evolution and Adaptation" : 43.

5 "Readings in Evolution": 57.

Such a confession probably will come as a complete surprise to the large majority of readers, who have been regaled with such marvelous accounts of the discoveries in the field of evolution, that they have unconsciously come to believe that a direct demonstration of its truth has been produced.

If there is no absolute proof of evolution, then what is the proof? inquires the layman. It is circumstantial, and consists in the interpretation placed on certain facts drawn chiefly from the three sciences of comparative anatomy, embryology, and paleontology. These three terms will hold no terrors for the non-scientific reader if he will but keep in mind that "comparative anatomy" simply has reference to the study of the similarities in structure of various animals; that "embryology" means the study of life before birth - for example, the study of the chick before it is hatched; and that "paleontology" describes the study of the fossils.

However, before we proceed to examine the supposed evidence for evolution, which has been drawn from these three sciences, there is one point that should be made clear; namely, that the major part of this evidence was known many years before scientific men in general accepted evolution, and that this evidence was not the primary cause of their accepting the theory. With this fact proved, it becomes patent that the value of the circumstantial evidence may reasonably be questioned; for if scientific men could view this evidence for many years and still not become convinced of evolution, the presumption is raised that there may be some other explanation of the evidence. To establish this point, we must trace briefly the history of

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the evolutionary theory, which begins with the times of the Greeks, some twenty-four hundred years ago.