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# EVOLUTION AND THE SUPERNATURAL

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DURING the past fifty years no idea or word has been more in evidence than Evolution, for in almost every sphere of life it has been used with reference to the world and things animate and inanimate. And yet there is scarcely any term which needs more careful definition, because it is often misused.

## I. *The Meaning.*

The word comes from the Latin "evolvere," to unroll, and in a perfectly right sense it is often used to indicate any process of "unrolling" or "development." It is possible to speak of the "evolution" (meaning the development) of a plant or an animal or a bird, and when used in this way the term is natural and, perhaps, inevitable. There are those who hold that the record in the first chapter of Genesis reveals a system of development from the lowest form to the highest. Then, too, when our Lord spoke of "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear," it is, of course, possible and legitimate to speak of this as "evolution."

But the strict scientific meaning is quite different and calls for special attention. In this connection Evolution means a change wrought by internal force without external aid or volition. Among the many definitions of Evolution in its purely scientific aspect, perhaps the best is by Professor LeConte: "Continuous progressive change according to certain laws and by means of resident forces." It would be decidedly satisfactory if this view could always be understood when the term is employed. In this scientific sense it is usual to divide the subject into sub-organic, organic, and super-organic. The first refers to the development of matter without life, and is applied to the evolution of the solar system from some cruder conditions of life. Organic Evolution is intended to describe

a process of derivation or development "by means of re-  
dent forces of vegetable and animal life." Super-organic  
Evolution refers to the same principle in metaphysical  
and non-material spheres.

## II. *The History.*

The theory of evolutionary development can be traced  
back to the ages of Greek thinkers several centuries before  
Christ. As the mind seeks for fundamental and unifying  
principles, it was natural for the keen Greek mind to aim  
at discovering some principle which would account for  
the many and varied forms of inanimate and (especially)  
animate nature. But in modern times, while philosophers  
in the eighteenth century discussed the hypothesis of Evo-  
lution, it was not until the time of a Frenchman, Lamarck  
(1744-1829), that the question received thorough con-  
sideration in relation to life. Lamarck's views were not  
widely accepted, but the idea of Evolution became known  
and almost universally accepted among scientists through  
Charles Darwin, who in 1859 published his great work,  
"The Origin of Species." His fundamental principle is  
known as Natural Selection, an idea which was indepen-  
dently and simultaneously discovered by Alfred Russell  
Wallace who, however, allowed Darwin to have all the  
honour connected with the promulgation of the new view.  
By Natural Selection is to be understood the development  
of all living forms according to certain laws, and these,  
in the reproduction of plants and animals, kept alive  
those which individually were best fitted to survive the  
struggle for existence. Since the time of Darwin the  
theory of Evolution has become profoundly modified by  
further scientific research, and in 1914 Professor Bateson,  
president for that year of the British Association for the  
Advancement of Science, gave striking proof of these  
modifications of the Darwinian theory. Among other  
things he said:

"The principle of Natural Selection cannot have been the chief  
factor in delimiting the species of animals and plants. We go to  
Darwin for his incomparable collection of facts; we would fain  
emulate his scholarship, his width and his power of exposition,  
but to us he speaks no more with philosophical authority."

Professor Bateson referred again to this matter at the meeting of the American Association in Toronto last January, rejecting Darwin's theory and saying, "we have no acceptable account of the origin of species."

And yet, notwithstanding this modification, Evolution is still maintained as a general principle by many scholarly and scientific men. The abandonment of the particular view of Darwin is not to be understood as the abandonment of Evolution in general. The fact is still regarded by many as settled, and on this account it is necessary and important to give it full consideration. It is also true that opposition to Evolution has been shown from the very first by men of high position in the scientific world, who opposed it on scientific grounds. Virchow, the great pathologist, and Sir William Dawson, the eminent geologist, wrote in the strongest terms against the doctrine as a system destitute of all proof; and even Professor Tyndall said in an article:

"There ought to be a clear distinction made between science in the state of hypothesis and science in the state of fact, and inasmuch as it is still in its hypothetical stage, the ban of exclusion ought to fall upon the theory of Evolution. I agree with Virchow that the proofs of it are still wanting, that the failures have been lamentable."

These differences of opinion among scientists, together with the general prevalence today of some theory of Evolution, make it imperative to give the matter thorough attention, and to note that at every stage the one requirement is evidence. Like Tyndall, we must distinguish between fact and hypothesis, and only after adequate testimony from facts covering the widest possible area could we rightly regard Evolution as true in the strict scientific sense as defined by LeConte.

### III. *The Question Stated.*

The doctrine of Evolution has been briefly stated by Graebner in "Evolution: An Investigation and a Criticism," substantially in the following words: In some infinitely remote period in the past, matter and force appeared, and with matter and in association with force

there also appeared a primordial cell in which there was a spark of life, and from this cell all things animate have emerged, being controlled by certain laws. These laws in connection with the modifying influences of surroundings like soil and climate, etc., explain the various species that have existed in the past and now exist upon the earth, man included. There are no gaps in the process but a steady ascent from lower to higher (that is, simple to more complex) forms of life until man is reached, who is the acknowledged highest product of Evolution.

Extreme evolutionists maintain that all the power of the universe was included in that primordial cell, and that all things have been worked out apart from any external agency and only by "resident forces." This is often called Causal Evolution since it rules out the necessity of a First Cause. If we admit that the solar system has always existed, it would be necessary to believe in the eternity of matter, but nothing in the universe more clearly points to a beginning than the solar system, and great scientists like Lord Kelvin and Sir Oliver Lodge are quite definite in their conviction that only by means of a First Cause can we account for things as they now are. Even Herbert Spencer was compelled to speak of an "Infinite and unknowable Energy from which all things proceed," thereby admitting a First Cause and at the same time showing his own inconsistency in asserting it to be "unknowable." He could have called it unknown, that is, unknown to him, but to use the term "unknowable" is to beg the entire question. Whatever, therefore, may have been the precise method by which the universe has come to be, an orderly succession suggests cause and effect and the law of Causality implies and demands an intelligent First Cause. So we dismiss this idea of Causal Evolution because it is plainly anti-theistic.

The other view regards Evolution as Modal; that is, as the method employed by God to produce the world and all that is in it. On this assumption Evolution cannot get further back than the condition of things mentioned or implied in the second verse of Genesis, for science is unable to afford proof of the origin of matter, since it

cannot explain how it has come into existence. But now arises the question as to the real meaning of Evolution as the method of the Creator's work. According to Huxley, life originated in a low form of matter, which passed into higher forms by a constant succession of transmutation of species until at length mankind was reached. On this hypothesis it is necessary to inquire whether all life sprang from one cell or from two, one for vegetable and one for animal, and if from two, why may there not have been more? The question must, therefore, be settled by evidence.

This latter view is sometimes called Theistic Evolution and many men see no reason why if the doctrine of Evolution is proved, it should not be regarded as thoroughly in harmony with Theism. But such a position is merely the retention of the name of Evolution with an entirely new interpretation of it which men of science scarcely ever accept. If by Theistic Evolution is meant God's way of working, it is, of course, a conceivable and legitimate position, and the only question would be whether such a doctrine of Evolution is capable of proof. But whether this form of the theory would be accepted by most of the scientists who teach the general idea of Evolution as a great principle of nature is very uncertain. Theism and Evolution can be made correlative terms, but as a rule they are regarded as contradictory, because Evolution is generally so well defined that its fundamental idea is at least deistic, often a-theistic, and to empty a word of its usual meaning and to make it something different is at least confusing, and is hardly likely to be generally adopted. For our present purpose, however, it is quite unnecessary to distinguish between Evolution that is theistic and Evolution that is non-theistic, since in both cases the supreme and, indeed, the only requirement is adequate evidence, and this is wanting. Evolution should be regarded for the present as a working hypothesis, not an assured result.

#### IV. *Evolution and Christianity.*

It is already evident that the evolutionary theory has a very definite, close, and vital relation to the various prob-

lems connected with the Christian religion. It is sometimes said that Christianity has suffered much from not accepting the modern scientific doctrine of Evolution, but it is well for those who think so to remember that Evolution as originally proclaimed to the world sixty years ago was announced not merely as a scientific theory, but also as an ally of a philosophy which by its materialism boasted that it would be capable of driving Christianity out of existence. The Christian Church could hardly be expected to welcome a theory put forth under these auspices, and it is not surprising that the memory of this early time abides, especially as scientists of the highest eminence have materially and fundamentally modified the view of Evolution put forth by Darwin and also their attitude toward Christianity. People in the present day hardly realize the exultation with which the doctrine of Evolution was hailed as the complete explanation of the universe and as the supreme proof of human knowledge and enquiry. It seemed to be the solution of all the problems of life, though Darwin himself was far more modest in his claims and more thoroughly true to the facts than many of his followers. That this is not an incorrect statement may be seen from the words of the great American authority, Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn, who in his book "The Origin and Evolution of Life" says:

"In truth, from the period of the earliest stages of Greek thought, man has been eager to discover some natural cause of Evolution and to abandon the idea of supernatural intervention in the order of nature."

It will thus be necessary to inquire how the acceptance of the doctrine of Evolution as stated by LeConte and others affects the main doctrines of the Christian faith. In particular the following points will need thorough attention: the relation of Evolution to (1) belief in God; (2) the origin of life; (3) the origin of man; (4) the origin of religion; (5) the appearance of Christ; (6) the fact of sin; (7) the fact of redemption. It will be seen that the subject includes practically everything connected with a supernatural revelation. Once again it must be

emphasized that the imperative necessity is for adequate evidence. Nothing merely hypothetical will suffice to lead thinking men to accept any view which cannot produce adequate evidence based on facts to support it.

#### V. *Evolution and Creation.*

As it is necessary to distinguish between the fact of Evolution and its method, it is usual for scientists to avoid accounting for the origin of matter on the basis of Evolution, but as the theories of the method of Evolution are so varied it is really impossible to avoid considering the fact as well as the method, because all the profound differences in regard to method raise doubt as to whether Evolution is a fact. Certainly it cannot account for the origin of things, which is a matter for philosophy. And yet, inasmuch as Evolution is a theory connected with the universe, it is essential to inquire whether it has anything to say in regard to the origin of matter. The a-theistic scientists claim that Darwin's view has annihilated the dogma of creation, but the theistic evolutionist confidently asserts that this involves a misapprehension, that Evolution is not opposed to creation but is only a method by which the Creator proceeded in his work. But on any theory of Evolution, two things have to be predicated, matter and force. The universe is made up of matter, and this is in a state of flux, so that the origin of matter and force remains unsolved, perhaps is an insoluble mystery, because science is unable to get behind the facts of matter and force in order to explain their origin. Even Laplace with his Nebular Hypothesis illustrates and proves this contention. The hypothesis of Laplace assumes a mass of nebular matter revolving with velocity and throwing off rings which form the planetary system, but even this theory is now being set aside by science and a new theory promulgated of the origin of matter through electrons. But on either view science cannot explain how these things came to be. For this we are compelled to go farther back and concentrate attention on the teaching of Genesis 1:1, which shows that the universe was not self-originated but was due to a First Cause.

But if it be asserted that Evolution was the method by which God worked after the creation of matter and force, let it be emphatically repeated that the one requirement which must be pressed at every stage is that there be adequate evidence; and whether reference is made to the heavenly bodies or to the state of the earth, the facts are not only inadequate to sustain this theory but they point in an entirely opposite direction. Darwin's theory has been rightly described as marked by three things: a denial, an assumption, an assertion. Darwin denied the existence of purpose or mind in nature, setting aside what has been called Teleology, the science of purpose. His assumption was that Evolution proceeded by a slow gradation. And his assertion was that this process started with the lowest forms of life and went forward until it reached the highest point in creation—man. But as it is now well-known, science gives ample evidence of proceeding by "leaps" instead of by slow and unbroken processes, and also that there is an unbridged gap between the non-living and the living. From this it is clear that if Evolution is true, then not only is it impossible to accept the literal view of Genesis but any view at all, because Genesis is absolutely opposed both to the view as stated by Darwin and also to the modifications of it as generally held by scientists. There are, it is true, several points in which Genesis and a certain theory of Evolution can be said to be in harmony, but the question is whether such an evolutionary theory would be accepted by scientific authorities. Thus, there is one word used in Genesis 1 for the act of creation as distinct from that of making or moulding from materials, and it is significant that this term occurs at three points only, in connection with the spheres of matter, v. 1; of life, v. 21; and of man, v. 27. Mr. A. R. Wallace, who, as already stated, shared with Darwin the distinction of pioneer in the modern Evolution theory, maintains that there must have been three interpositions of a Divine or supernatural flux to account for things as they now are, and this coincidence with Genesis is decidedly striking. There is certainly a gulf between matter and nothing; between life and the non-living; and

between man and the lower creation; and science, whether by means of Evolution or otherwise, cannot bridge any of these gulfs. Then, too, the first chapter of Genesis has the same order of events as are to be seen in scientific records today. Comparative anatomy teaches that the types of life proceed upward from the lowest to the highest, and are determined by the proportion of the amount of the brain to the spinal cord, the order being fish, reptiles, birds, mammals, man. This is exactly the order of Genesis, and it is pertinent to ask how the author of that chapter came to be familiar with facts which were only discovered by science between two and three centuries ago. Further, the unity of animate and inanimate nature as recorded in Genesis is exactly in accordance with scientific thought. Man is seen to be at once united with nature and yet separate from it. Even a materialist like Haeckel testifies to this remarkable fact, and the late Professor Romanes and others speak in strongest terms of the way in which Genesis has anticipated the order of events so far as they are discoverable by science. It is, therefore, significant that although naturally not setting down scientific truths in scientific phraseology, the writer of Genesis has not set down anything inconsistent with scientific results. No scientific error has yet been proved to exist in Genesis, and its language allows, without any straining, of agreement with modern discoveries. Many leading geologists like Buckland, Miller, Dana, Dawson and Hitchcock have expressed the opinion that geology is in harmony with the account in Genesis. But whether all this, which is impressive to a Christian thinker, would be accepted by a thoroughgoing evolutionist is more than doubtful, and so once again the call is for facts which will provide evidence for the theory of Evolution as usually understood, and it must be admitted that no such facts are as yet forthcoming.

## VI. *Evolution and the Origin of Life.*

The fundamental principle of modern evolutionary theories is that all living things from the lowest up to man originated from one very simple form of life by purely

natural laws. But this obviously assumes what is called "spontaneous generation" or the fact of life coming from that which is non-living in a purely natural way. Yet it is well known that science has never proved, but on the contrary has frankly admitted the impossibility of proving, this theory. Indeed, it may be said to be an axiom of science that life can only come from life, and as to how life originated Huxley allows that "we know absolutely nothing." Virchow has said: "The attempt to find the transition from animal to man has ended in total failure." Darwin admitted that the origin of life constituted an unsolved problem and he accepted a view that life was "originally breathed by the Creator into the first forms or into one." But if, as it has been often pointed out, it was necessary for the Creator to give life at the outset, why may it not have been necessary for the same Divine power to interpose at other and subsequent stages?

The same result is seen from a consideration of the various species of life. If life originated by Evolution it would be essential to have proof of the way in which the development proceeded until at length mankind was reached. We know that life is expressed in different species. Species has been defined as "a constant succession of individuals; and capable of reproducing each other" (so Buffon and Cuvier). If, therefore, life sprang from one original cell, there should have been at least some proof of the progress from one species to another, but in spite of all the scientific research and discussion, there is no proof of anything like a change or transmutation of species. Species today are practically what they have been for ages; there is no trace of one ever crossing over to another. Dr. Etheridge, the Superintendent of the Department of Natural History in the British Museum, has declared: "In all this great Museum there is not a particle of evidence of transmutation of species." And scientists, including Darwin himself, are compelled to admit that no instance of a new species has ever been found. These are the words of Darwin:

"When we descend to details we cannot prove that a single species has changed."

In the face of this it is not surprising that Etheridge should say that nearly all the writing of evolutionists is "not founded on observation and is wholly unsupported by fact." Indeed, he goes further and says that "they adopt a theory and then strain their facts to support it." In view of these contentions, Christian thinkers are amply justified in asserting that no facts in the realm of natural science give as yet any support to the theory of Evolution in regard to the origin of life.

#### VII. *Evolution in Relation to Man.*

The question of man is of supreme importance in this connection. The Bible plainly teaches that God created man, that man was a special creation, and was in no sense the result of evolutionary development. Strict evolutionists maintain that man ascended from lower animals, and they adduce certain features of man's body, and also the mental and moral state of the savage, to prove this contention. But although this doctrine of the descent of man is held by many, it is still only a hypothesis and not an established fact. Naturalists who pay attention to facts alone never identify these with assumptions. Not only did Virchow and Dana oppose the doctrine many years ago, but as recently as 1900 Reinke said: "We must confess unreservedly that there is not at our disposal a single unexceptionable proof of its correctness." Two years later, in still stronger language, he affirmed that science knows nothing of the origin of man. (Bavinck, *Philosophy of Revelation*, p. 148.) It is also significant that "at the International Congress of Zoologists at Berlin, in 1901, Branco bore witness that palaeontology knows no ancestors of man, but that man suddenly and immediately appears before us in the diluvial age as a perfect *homo sapiens*." (Bavinck, p. 148.) But even supposing it were true of the body (for which there is no real evidence) there is still the conscious, thinking mind to be faced, for man is not man unless the entire personality is included. He is not a machine, and his life is more than physics and chemistry. Anthropology bears witness to man's complex nature, implying a complex origin. Physiology is inadequate to account for him; psychology

must be predicated as well. The memory is a proof that both physical and mental elements are required. The brain is at once physical and the seat of the faculty of recollection, so that when the brain is injured memory suffers; yet no one can explain how the physical matter of the brain is connected with the non-physical element of memory. The mental and physical gap between animals and man is as wide today as ever and scientists acknowledge that "what intervenes between the highest anthropoid brain of 500 cubic centimeters and that of the lowest man, 1150 cubic centimeters, is almost as lost as a sunken Atlantis." (Bavinck, p. 149.)

It is also untrue to identify primitive man with the savage of today, for anthropology, to say nothing of the Bible, gives proof that the savage is the result of degeneration. Sir William Ramsay has described Romans 1:21-32 as "Paul's Philosophy of History." If it be asserted that man has been derived from the lower animals it may fairly be asked which of these is the ancestor of man, because there is not only one but a number of links missing between the highest animal and the lowest type of man. Even assuming that man is the product of theistic evolution it is not too much to say that such a method as derivation from lower animals would be unworthy of a God who intended man to exhibit morality and also to hold fellowship with Himself.

"If He created man with the purpose to bring him into communion with Himself, we cannot easily believe that when the human race appeared on earth, it was in the lowest stage of humanity from which it could not emerge until many centuries had passed." (Andrews.)

It is surely unthinkable that a perfect Divine Being would create man so low in the scale of being that it would be uncounted generations before he could come to any adequate knowledge of his Creator. And so it may be said without question that Evolution cannot account for the facts of mind, of language, of conscience, and of personality. It is also curious that quite recently certain scientific authorities have come to the conclusion that man is not descended from the ape, but the ape from the

man. This is an astonishing change, because in all the leading works on Evolution the chief arguments adduced in favour of the animal origin of mankind are those drawn from alleged similiarities between man and the ape world. There is the argument from comparative anatomy, the argument from palaeontology, and the argument from geological strata; and yet the new theory destroys the value of practically all the evidence hitherto depended upon by biologists to prove the animal origin of man. What is in some respects still more important, the President of the Section of Zoology, at the meeting of the British Association some years ago, Prof. D'Arcy Thompson said:

"The whole meaning, bearing, and philosophy of Evolution has been discussed by Bergson, on a plane to which neither Darwin nor Spencer ever attained; and the hypothesis of a vital principle, or vital element, that had lain in the background for near a hundred years, has come into men's mouths as a very real and urgent question, the greatest question for the biologist of all." And again: "The problems of consciousness and intelligence and the mystery of the reasoning soul—these things are not for the biologist at all, but constitute the psychologist's scientific domain."

And so, after careful consideration of all the arguments adduced by science, it is necessary to say quite plainly that, if the Bible is true, Evolution cannot be true; man is represented in Scripture as God's special creation, and nothing which can be derived from science gives the slightest reason to reject the plain meaning of the familiar words, "God made man in His own image; in the image of God created He him."

#### VIII. *Evolution and Religion.*

St. Augustine's oft-quoted words are: "Thou hast made us for Thyself." This means that "Man is a religious animal." What then is the relation of religion to Evolution and of Evolution to religion? It has been pointed out that probably there is no proposition on which the higher religious philosophy of the past century is more agreed than this, that all religion originates in revelation (Orr, "Revelation and Inspiration"). Now, is Evolution consistent with revelation? Take the Old Testa-

ment: scholarship has endeavoured to re-arrange its books so as to indicate the development of Israel's religion along evolutionary lines, but "when this historical criticism has analyzed and re-arranged the books of the Bible . . . . the problem of the religion of Israel remains still unsolved . . . . what profit is there in the analysis of the documents if Israel itself with its religion remains in the midst of the peoples unexplained? (Bavinck, p. 189.) Israel was admittedly unique among the nations of antiquity. Wellhausen once asked why Chemosh the god of the Moabites never developed into the universal God as did Jahweh of Israel. He could not answer because he did not believe in a supernatural revelation. The same principle is seen in connection with the New Testament. At a given time in the history of the world, Christianity began, but it is impossible to account for it except by means of a Divine interposition, which is wholly inconsistent with purely natural development. One of the outstanding features of this Divine revelation is the fact of the Bible, and its position as a Divinely-authoritative book cannot be explained apart from its being the record of a Divine revelation. And so "with the reality of revelation Christianity stands or falls" (Bavinck, p. 20). The same thing is seen in connection with the Comparative Study of Religions. All the highest authorities combine to show the impossibility of accounting for the various religions of the world by any process of Evolution. It is a matter of historical fact that no religion is known to have developed upwards from animism through polytheism into pure monotheism without the aid of a supernatural revelation. Polytheism invariably degenerates into pantheism and never of itself reaches up to monotheism (Bavinck, p. 185). From these considerations it is clear that no emergence from the brute can explain religion in man, for religion must of necessity be based on revelation, both in regard to its origin and also as to its truth (Bavinck, p. 169).

Both the Bible and man's nature combine to show this. Man's original position was that of one made in the image of God who had fellowship with his Creator. This posi-

tion involved and was due to what may be called primeval revelation. But it was lost through sin, and when man fell from this high estate, while he did not lose his capacity for religion, he certainly lost his capability to become religious by his own unaided efforts. On this account he needed revelation both to show him his sin and also to point out the way of salvation by means of the Divine gift of regeneration, which restores him to his original position of a life lived in fellowship with God. But it is abundantly evident that all this is entirely incompatible with any natural and evolutionary process.

#### *IX. Evolution in Relation to History.*

This subject must, for our present purpose, be limited to the two questions which specially concern the relation of Evolution to the Christian religion. According to Evolution the progress of history has been upward, but the teaching of the Bible indicates a downward tendency as well. Paul in Romans 1 shows how man started from an adequate knowledge of God and through self-will descended to the lowest depths of moral degradation. This is in harmony with all that is known of history, ancient and modern. There are many facts which support this view of a primitive culture followed by a definite degeneration, and as a writer has said: "The dogma of a gradual development from a lower to a higher level is not sustained by the history of the Oriental peoples." (Quoted in Bavinck, p. 179.) The same sad results are seen in human demoralization during modern times, for the history of Europe and even of America proves this beyond question, while the recent war grew out of the moral collapse which characterized the German nation. Not only so, but the present wave of crime and corruption is another proof that Evolution cannot account for the facts of history. "The conception of Evolution when applied in history to a family or a tribe and a people or to humanity has an entirely different sense from that which it bears in individual organisms. . . . Society is not a biological organism." (Bavinck, p. 117.)

Another evidence from history of the impossibility of explaining everything by Evolution is the fact of the ap-

pearance of great personalities. It is known that in almost every age some outstanding individual has appeared, and his personality calls for explanation. How is the history of the world to be explained except by means of the appearance of great men like Caesar, Luther, Cromwell, Lincoln and very many more? Sir Oliver Lodge rightly asks: "Does anyone think that the skill of the beaver, the instinct of the bee, the genius of a man arose by chance, and that its presence is accounted for by anything done and by survival? What struggle for existence will explain the advent of a Beethoven? What doubtful instinct for earning a living as a dramatist will adduce for us a Shakespeare? These things are beyond science of the orthodox type. Then let it be silent and let it deny nothing in the universe until it has at last made an honest attempt to grasp the whole." (*Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 1, p. 218.) The conclusion is that "a genius like Goethe is far from explained when we know that he inherited his stature from his father and his cheerful disposition from his mother. Evolution is a great word, but it turns its back on difficulties and sums up a rich and complicated reality under a vague formula" (Bavinck, p. 120.) These considerations show the need of the greatest possible care lest authority in biology and geology should be thought necessarily to remain when the same man speaks about history and religion. There are few matters so serious amidst the complexity of modern knowledge as the danger and even the tyranny of specialism. "So long as matter in its essence is unknown, and the resident forces of creation are not exhausted by us, all formulation of laws is necessarily tentative, and a large degree of modesty is the proof of a scientific spirit" (Bavinck, p. 101).

#### X. *Evolution in Relation to Christ.*

On the theory of Evolution man has developed through many stages until he has reached his present condition. Hegel applied the principle of evolution to history and this in turn was applied by Strauss to account for Jesus Christ on purely naturalistic principles. Since that day, Wellhausen has made the same application to the Fourth

Gospel, with the result that his view of Jesus Christ is purely natural and human. But the problem of Christ is not to be solved in this way, for as we ponder His personal character and sinlessness, His claim to represent and express God, the element of the unusual (since we must not beg the question by saying supernatural), in His life, and, not least of all, His remarkable influence through the ages—these find no explanation in Evolution. Christ is either the product of a Divine revelation or He is to be rejected altogether, while, if He is regarded as a Divine Incarnation, Evolution necessarily becomes disproved. This is the conclusion drawn by a well-known British scientist, Professor Henslow, himself a believer in Modal Evolution in regard to at least a part of the world, and he has written a treatise with the title, "Jesus Christ No Product of Evolution." It is now a long time since Christ appeared on earth; but if Evolution be true some more perfect characters and better men than He ought to have been produced; yet this has not been so, for notwithstanding the nineteen hundred years since the appearance of Christ, there has been no life like His and no one who can in the slightest degree be compared with Him. For these reasons we hold that the Incarnation of Jesus Christ was the coming of God into human life, and as such it was the culmination of the Divine purpose to reveal Himself to man. As a necessary consequence, it is incapable of being accounted for by any process of evolutionary development.

#### XI. *Evolution in Relation to Sin.*

It is sometimes said that science has no trace of the Fall. This is doubtless true in regard to physical science, and we have no right to expect it there. Why should anything purely moral be indicated in geology or biology? But there are other branches of science and these call for equal consideration. There is the testimony of moral philosophy or, as it may be called, psychology. What can be said of man's conscience, which clearly testifies to the fundamental distinction between right and wrong? How has man come to the consciousness of guilt as the result

of wrong-doing? Education can do much to develop conscience but many tribes of savages have more enlightened consciences than even some educated and cultivated men. These savages show the work of law written on their hearts, and the idea of a conscience developed from the lower animals is unthinkable, for no one ever associates a conscience with a dog, a tiger, or a shark. Man, on the other hand, is everywhere conscious of a law, for the observance of which he is responsible; and he is equally conscious of breaches of that law. These breaches are called in the Bible by the name of Sin, so that "man in becoming a sinner does not rise but falls" (Bavinck, p. 78). Dr. Denney once remarked that many minds in the present day are endeavouring to explain away the consciousness of sin under the influence of current conceptions in biology. If all life is one, Denney goes on to argue, then as it comes from the same source and reaches the same end, man's present condition is merely an inheritance from the past remains of an animal nature for which he is not responsible. "There is no doubt that this mode of thought is widely prevalent, and that it is one of the most serious hindrances to the acceptance of the Gospel" (Denney). It is vital to face this issue and to challenge the thorough-going evolutionist in regard to it. If things are as he represents them to be, how are the terrible facts of life to be explained? What about the lying, thieving, murder and many unmentionable sins? Where are these to be found in a scheme of unbroken progress? As all observers can see, it is not a matter of a few occasional discords in an otherwise perfect harmony, but it is the harmony which is occasional and the discords which have been the rule. A doctrine is true or false as it explains or is unable to account for all the facts, and it is impossible for anyone to argue that the doctrine of Evolution is adequate to an explanation of the facts of life. It cannot account either for the existence or the persistence of sin.

## XII. *Evolution in Relation to Redemption.*

Since man is a sinner and cannot save himself, it follows that if he is to realize what was evidently the orig-

inal Divine purpose for him, namely, freedom from sin, some Divine intervention must accomplish the task. This intervention took place in the Person of Christ and the outcome is Christianity as a redemptive religion. But if it be such, it follows that Evolution cannot explain it. Two elements are all that now need to be considered in this connection. First, the Death of Christ, which is always associated in the New Testament with man's Salvation, and with this causal connection between the Death and the Salvation some Divine act on man's behalf is clearly involved and demanded. Then as the outcome of the Atoning Death of Christ, the New Testament reveals the Holy Spirit as the Divine power for human redemption. Christ's appearance and death took place nineteen centuries ago, but in order that man may benefit thereby today, the Holy Spirit makes Christ real to the soul, and thus "the Jesus of History" becomes "the Christ of Experience." Christianity is marked by three special features in relation to human life. The first is Conversion, by which is meant the believer's initial spiritual experience. Then follow Fellowship with God as the supreme purpose of Redemption, and Character as the outcome of Redemption in practical reality. It is the province of the Holy Spirit to make real these three essential needs of man, and the action of the Spirit is summed up in the Bible word "Grace." Now this necessitates a continuous process of Divine intervention. Christianity is a moral miracle. The Bible asserts that given certain conditions, a new power will enter man's life and change it. Thus, every conversion involves the interposition of the supernatural, and thereby the absolute impossibility of any mere naturalistic evolutionary development. Evolution can have no place for that incoming of life which is the very essence of the Christian redemption.

### XIII. *Conclusion.*

From what has been said it is clear that Evolution is not a fact but only a hypothesis, and it is still as necessary as ever to seek for adequate proof. To speak of it (as one writer does) as "the idea of ordinary change govern-

ing all things" is not only ambiguous but is wholly different from what is usually regarded as Evolution. "Ordinary change governing all things" might easily mean a theory of development which all can accept. And to say, as a leading theologian has recently said, that "every educated man knows that the main facts of organic Evolution are firmly established" is to assert what is not correct. The various theories of Evolution associated with the names of Lamarck, Darwin, Weismann, DeVries, and Mendel reveal such fundamental and contradictory differences that while they do not in themselves disprove the fact of Evolution they show the difficulty of believing it to be almost if not quite insuperable, and they go far to set aside the idea as it is generally accepted.

"It is a pity that such a conception which is to explain everything should itself so much need explaining. The definitions that are given of it vary immensely . . . and no single definition covers all the phenomena that are subsumed under the conception." (Bavinck, p. 43.)

The fact is that men of science, as well as men in the Church, have found that Evolution does not yield the desired and expected results, and when a scientist, like Huxley, endeavoured to explain the universe in the light of this principle he was compelled to settle down into Agnosticism, while Herbert Spencer went further by saying, not only that he did not know, but illogically maintaining that it was impossible to know. And now that, fifty years afterwards, Agnosticism is no longer the fashionable attitude of earlier days, the explanation of Evolution is as far off as ever, because science realizes that the universe is infinitely more complex than it was formerly considered to be. Here again some words of Professor Osborn may be adduced:

"Between the appearance of 'The Origin of Species' in 1859 and the present time, there have been great waves of faith in one explanation and then in another; each one of these waves of confidence has ended in disappointment, until finally we have reached a stage of very general scepticism. Thus, the long period of observation, experiment and reasoning which began with the French philosopher, Buffon, one hundred and fifty years ago, ends in 1916

with the general feeling that our search for causes, far from being near completion, has only just begun."

It is also not unfair to call attention to the frequent, or, rather, general, tendency of a large number of leading scientists who accept the doctrine of Evolution to depart from the theistic, to say nothing of the essential Christian position. Darwin himself, who at first held a deistic form of belief in creation, was led more and more in the direction of an agnostic naturalism. A scholar once said that we do not want to know what Darwin believed or was convinced of, but what he could prove, and the prophecy that Darwin's attempt to solve the riddle of life would not survive until the end of the nineteenth century has undoubtedly been fulfilled. And "the declaration of J. B. Meyer has met with wide assent, that Darwin's doctrine of descent was not so much a hypothesis proposed to explain facts as rather an invention of facts for the support of an hypothesis" (Bavinck, p. 35). Yet, though Darwinism in its strict form is not accepted today, the theory of Evolution is still dominant in scientific circles, and on this account continues to call for thorough consideration by Christian thinkers. It is in this prevalence of the theory that the danger lies of confusing inference with fact and of dogmatizing with the uninstructed. From the very first the idea of Evolution was criticized and opposed by eminent scientists, and it is not incorrect to say that it is now held, in its Darwinian form, only by those who have not given it thorough consideration but who have taken their views at second hand from others. It will be evident, therefore, that Evolution whether as a fact, or as a theory to explain the fact, is incompatible with the supernatural Christianity recorded in the Bible. It is opposed to the Bible in regard to its idea of God, its view of morality, its conception of miracle, its view of sin, its doctrine of the uniqueness of Christ, and its conception of the fact and forces of redemption. Indeed, Evolution is opposed to the whole conception of Christianity as a Divine revelation. Huxley once said: "Evolution, if consistently accepted, makes it impossible to believe in the Bible." It should also be remembered that

it is quite immaterial for Christian theology to be in complete harmony with the latest science, because scientific knowledge is speculative and changeable, and is being constantly modified. What is needed, whether in Evolution or Christianity, is fact and not theory, certainty and not mere hypothesis. It has been truly said that there are three main schools of Evolutionists, the atheistic, who deny the Divine existence; the agnostic, who ignore it; and the theistic, who affirm it (Cook, "Biology"). And of the theistic form of the doctrine of evolution there are three varieties:

"(1) That which limits the supernatural action in the origination of species to the creation of a few primordial cells.

"(2) That which makes Divine action in the origination of the species chiefly indirect, or through the agency of natural causes, and yet sometimes direct, or through special creation.

"(3) That which makes God immanent in all natural law and regards every result of cosmic forces as the outcome of present Divine action." (Cook, "Biology.")

But none of these theories can be regarded as true to the conception of God either as transcendent in nature or as revealed in Christianity. All these views of Theistic Evolution rob the Bible of authority as effectually as does Evolution, because Evolution rules out the miracles, and the Bible is miraculous or nothing. And if present conditions can be fairly adduced, it must be confessed that the tendency of modern thought is to make God less and less recognized in the intellectual world.

From all this it is obvious that the theory of Evolution is still a hypothesis which we have a perfect right to question until facts are forthcoming to transform the hypothesis into scientific truth. It is, therefore, time that the whole truth be known in order that those may be reassured who fear the authority of the Bible is destroyed. Evolution is not an explanation of anything. It does not and cannot say a word as to how the primal impulse arose from which the whole movement proceeds. It does not explain the upward tendency of things. It does not explain the particular forms and laws in the universe. It cannot bridge the gulf between mind and matter. All

these vital matters have to be taken for granted at the start; and from the standpoint of Evolution, Agnosticism is the only position in regard to them, for they are unknown and apparently unknowable. They may be described, but cannot be accounted for. Evolution may attempt to describe; only Theism can explain.

It is well known that if any single cell of life, in plant, insect, or animal, cannot take in from without, the issue is death. There is no such thing as development merely from within, for development is also dependent on appropriation of force from without. If nothing is taken in from without, there is no development from within, and it is this that the Bible specifically teaches, both as to the realms of nature and of grace. The truth is that so many seem content to take Evolution for granted, as though it were absolutely assured beyond all possibility of question. Yet those who take this line are, as already seen, opposed to some of the plainest scientific facts, and they can only be regarded as adopting the science at second-hand without proper inquiry.

Thus, in spite of all the brilliant discoveries of science, the fact abides that we must come back to the Bible for an explanation of the origin of life. And those who have been perturbed by any utterance on this subject may possess their souls in patience, and should remember that not every statement found in books and magazines is necessarily true, especially when it has to do with religion. There is no need to apologize for the Word of God, and no need to be disconcerted when anyone declaims against it.

Those who are inclined without due knowledge of the facts of the case to accept what they understand as the modern doctrine of Evolution should first of all face certain questions:

(1) How is it that life has never yet been produced from that which is non-living?

(2) How did the mental, moral, and spiritual faculties of man come into existence on the theory of Evolution?

(3) How is it that embryonic life is incapable of being

improved except by means of a better quality of the mature members of the species?

(4) How is it that embryonic life is incapable of preserving itself and needs the constant protection of the mature parent species during the period of development? How, then, could the embryo or germ survive unaided the great catastrophic changes of early ages?

(5) How is that Evolution fails to explain man's appearance on the earth in view of the many gaps between the highest animal and the lowest member of the human race?

(6) How is Jesus Christ to be explained by the theory of Evolution, and how, on this theory, has no being superior to Him been developed during the last nineteen hundred years?

(7) How is the supernatural element in Christianity to be explained, including regeneration, continuous grace in the soul to overcome sin, and the guarantee of resurrection hereafter?

When these questions are satisfactorily answered, it will be possible to settle the true relations between Evolution and the Bible.

This is how a scientist puts the case in a summary of the facts in five departments of knowledge as they are now known:

(1) Both matter and energy seem now to be at a standstill, so far as creation is concerned, no means being known to science whereby the fixed quantity of both with which we have to deal in this world can be increased (or diminished) in the slightest degree.

(2) The origin of life is veiled in a mist that science has not dispelled and does not hope to dispel. By none of the processes that we call natural can life now be produced from the not-living.

(3) Unicellular forms can come only from pre-existing cells of the same kind; and even the individual cells of a multicellular organism, when once differentiated, reproduce only other cells after their own kind.

(4) Species of plants and animals have wonderful powers of variation; but these variations seem to be regu-

lated and predestined in accordance with definite laws, and in no instance known to science has this variation resulted in producing what could properly be called a distinct new kind of plant or animal.

(5) Geology has been supposed to prove that there has been a long succession of distinct types of life on the globe in a very definite order extending through vast ages of time. This is now known to be a mistake. Most living forms of plants and animals are also found in fossils; but there is no possible way of telling that one kind of life lived and occupied the world before others, or that one kind of life is intrinsically older than any other or than the human race (Q. E. D. by Price, p. 125f).

Meanwhile, there is profound force in one of the last addresses delivered by that great scientist, Lord Kelvin, who said:

"I marvel at the undue haste with which teachers in our universities and preachers in our pulpits are restating truth in the terms of Evolution while Evolution itself remains an unproved hypothesis in the laboratories of science."

*Literature.*—The substance of this article was written for translation into Chinese, for the Chinese edition of the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. The position taken can be studied more fully in "Evolution: An Investigation and a Criticism," by Graebner, and "Fallacies of Evolution," by J. D. Charles, to both of which the present writer is much indebted. Other books following a similar line are: "Evolution Criticised," by T. B. Bishop; "Theistic Evolution," by Fairhurst; "The Philosophy of Revelation," by Bavinck. A brief bibliography of other books (of various views) will be found in the writer's booklet, "What about Evolution?"