

The Origin of Species

Is a subject which occupies a great deal of attention among the learned, on the other side of the water just now; and infidelity is making another vigorous effort to establish a hypothesis which is at variance with revelation. The Cincinnati *Gazette*—has a clever notice of the latest infidel theory:

The theory is that “probably all the organic beings that ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed.” This is one form of the hypothesis; another is, that the original atom from which men and monkeys and oysters alike have sprung, came into being itself, by the force of natural laws, without the need of any God to breath into it the breath of life. This is the position taken by the author of “The Origin of Species,” but it is an inference drawn from his premises, by certain persons who consider it very profound to regard this universe as having come into being without any God or personal Creator.

Having conceived of the primeval monad or egg from which all organic beings have, as he thinks, sprung, the author gives the following illustration of the manner in which one thing might be changed into another, as, for instance, how a black bear might become a whale. He says: “In North America the black bear was seen by Hearne swimming for hours, with widely opened mouth, thus catching, like a whale, insects in the water. Even in so extreme a case as

this, if the supply of insects were constant, and if better adopted competitors did not already exist in the country, I can see no difficulty in a race of bears being rendered by natural selection, more and more aquatic in their structure and habits, with larger and longer mouths, till a creature was produced as monstrous as a whale."—Darwin, p. 184 (1st edition).

This is the illustration of the manner of the origin of whales, so much more profound than to believe in the language of the Bible that "God created great whales." Gradually we suppose, the bears' mouths, generation after generation became larger, and the tail lengthened and flattened, and grew fishy, and the legs widened into fins, and the hair grew thin, and at length disappeared, and probably some very considerate and inventive, go-ahead genius of a bear, observing how many of the insects rushed out when he shut his mouth, and he closed his jaws on emptiness, thought how fine a thing it would be if he could have a strainer there, whale-like to catch them, and throwing, in strong desire, the whole force of his vitality into the proper region of his jaws, the needed whalebone began to sprout out and he found himself at length a finished whale. Certainly this seems a very easy and quite natural method of raising whales—much better, doubtless, than the old method, of believing that in the beginning they were created by God!
