

And yet, if the *spirit* of a monad or of a mollusc be not immortal, then must there either have been a point in the history of the species at which a dying brute — differing from its offspring merely by an inferiority of development, represented by a few atoms, mayhap by a single atom — produced an undying man, or man in his present state must be a mere animal, possessed of no immortal soul, and as irresponsible for his actions to the God before whose bar he is, in consequence, never to appear, as his presumed relatives and progenitors the beasts that perish. Nor will it do to attempt escaping from the difficulty, by alleging that God at some certain link in the chain *might* have converted a mortal creature into an immortal existence, by breathing into it a “living soul;” seeing that a renunciation of any such direct interference on the part of Deity in the work of creation forms the prominent and characteristic feature of the scheme, — nay, that it constitutes the very nucleus round which the scheme has originated. And thus, though the development theory be not atheistic, it is at least practically tantamount to atheism. For, if man be a dying creature, restricted in his existence to the present scene of things, what does it really matter to him, for any one moral purpose, whether there be a God or no? If in reality on the same religious level with the dog, wolf, and fox, that are by nature *atheists*, — a nature most properly coupled with irresponsibility, — to what one practical purpose should he know or believe in a God whom he, as certainly as they, is never to meet as his Judge? or why should he square his conduct by the requirements of the moral code, farther than a low and convenient expediency may chance to demand? *

* The Continental assertors of the development hypothesis are greatly more frank than those of our own country regarding the