

first of microscopists ; and Müller, most eminent in physiology — should reject these hypotheses of spontaneous generation and transmutation. Nevertheless, the unusual interest which has been manifested by the recent work entitled *Vestiges of the Natural History of the Creation* — wherein these hypotheses, as well as the nebular hypothesis, are ingeniously defended, and that, too, without denying the original intervention of a divine Power in nature — show us that a long-drawn contest is yet before naturalists on these subjects, ere these fancies shall be forced into that extramundane receptacle of things abortive and unaccomplished, described by Milton as “a limbo large and wide,” on the back side of the moon. And yet, my conviction is that this contest will not have so important a bearing on the cause of religion as some theologists imagine. For, even though these hypotheses should be established, an intelligent, spiritual, infinite Deity is quite as necessary to account for existing nature as on the more common theory, which supposes the universe commanded from nothing at once in a perfect state. Indeed, to endow the particles of matter with the power to form exquisite organic compounds, just at the moment when circumstances are best adapted to their existence, and then to become animated, nay, endowed with instincts, and with lofty intellects, — all which results the advocates of these hypotheses must impute to the laws impressed upon originally brute matter, — such effects, I say, demand infinite wisdom, power, and benevolence even more imperatively than the common theories of creation. I doubt not that in general these hypotheses have been adopted to sustain atheistic opinions, or to remove the Deity away from his works. But unbiased philosophy sees that they utterly fail to accomplish either of these objects. And I confess that I reject them more because they have no solid evidence in