

conclusive to the effect that creation is but development, — does he find it necessary either to cramp his faculties or outrage his taste, by a weak yielding to the requirements of any such belief.

Meanwhile the farmer, — a plain, observant, elderly man, comes up, and he and the philosopher enter into conversation. “I have been reading the history of creation in the side of your deep ditch,” says the philosopher, “and find the record really very complete. Look there,” he adds, pointing to the unfossiliferous strip that runs along the bottom of the bank; “there, life, both vegetable and animal, first began. It began, struck by electricity out of albumen, as a congeries of minute globe-shaped atoms, — each a hollow sphere within a sphere, as in the well-known Chinese puzzle; and from these living atoms were all the higher forms progressively developed. The ditch, of course, exhibits none of the atoms with which being first commenced; for the atoms don’t keep; — we merely see their place indicated by that unfossiliferous band at the bottom; but we may detect immediately over it almost the first organisms into which — parting thus early into the two great branches of organic being — they were developed. *There* are the fucoids, first-born among vegetables, — and *there* the zoophytes, well nigh the lowest of the animal forms. The fucoids are marine plants; for, according to Oken, ‘all life is from the sea, — none from the continent;’ but *there*, a few feet higher, we may see the remains of reeds and flags, — semi-aqueous, semi-aerial plants of the comparatively low monocotyledonous order into which the fucoids were developed; higher still we detect fragments of pines, and, I think, juniper, — trees and shrubs of the land of an intermediate order, into which the reeds and flags were developed in turn; and in that peaty layer immediately beneath the vegetable mould, there occur boughs and trunks