

evolution of the Darwinian type is "the key to distribution," he departs widely from any basis of scientific fact. This becomes apparent when we consider the following results, which appear everywhere in the discussion of the various insular faunas and floras:—(1) None of these islands, however remote, can be affirmed to have been peopled by the spontaneous evolution of the higher animals or plants from lower forms. Their population is in every case not autochthonous, but derived. (2) Even in those which are most distant from the continents, and may be supposed to have been colonized in very ancient times, there is no evidence of any very important modification of their inhabitants. (3) While the facts point to the origin of most forms of terrestrial life in the Palearctic and Nearctic regions, they afford no information as to the manner or cause of their origination. In short, so far is evolution from being a key to distribution, that the whole question would become much more simple if this element were omitted altogether. A few examples may be useful to illustrate this, as well as the actual explanation of the phenomena afforded by legitimate science.

The Azores are situated in a warm temperate latitude about 900 miles west of Portugal, and separated from it by a sea 2,500 fathoms in depth. The islands themselves are almost wholly volcanic, and the oldest rocks known in them are of late Miocene age. There is no probability that these islands have ever been connected with Europe or Africa, nor is there at present any certainty that they have been joined to one another, or have formed part of any larger insular tract. In these islands there is only one indigenous mammal, a bat, which is identical with a European species, and no doubt reached the islands by flight. There is no indigenous reptile, amphibian, or fresh-water fish. Of birds there are, exclusive of waterfowl, which may be regarded as visitors, twenty-two land birds; but of these, four are regarded as merely accidental