

ration,—a condition which may perhaps be rather definite, if only we were aware of what it was. But that undoubted fact is quite consistent with any view as to the nature of “life,” and even with any view as to the mode of its terrestrial commencement ; there is nothing in that to say that it is a function of matter alone, any more than the wind is a function of the leaves which dance under its influence ; there is nothing even to contradict the notion that it sprang into existence suddenly at a literal word of command. The improbability or absurdity of such a conception as this last, except in the symbolism of poetry, is extreme, and it is unthinkable by any educated person ; but its improbability depends upon other considerations than biologic ones, and it is as repugnant to an enlightened Theology as to any other science.

The mode in which biological speculation as to the probable development of living out of dead matter, and the general relation of protoplasm to physics and chemistry, can