

peculiar to all living things, viz., automatic growth and multiplication beyond the means of subsistence (Malthus' principle), and variation (Darwin).

It was, however, gradually realised that all these terms involve a principle which cannot be mechanically defined, and that, moreover, the question of origins or genesis, of the beginning of things, had really been forgotten in the more fruitful and absorbing quest of genealogies. In this respect the French term "transformation" and the English term "descent" are more adequate than such terms as "origin" and "genesis."

If, on the one side, the Spencerian scheme of evolution was never adequately and fully applied to cosmical and lifeless phenomena, it was found on the other side that it could no more be applied to the higher stages of organic, mental, and social life without in each case introducing new factors and data, empirically collected. Whilst Spencer showed much ingenuity in preparing for every higher phase the necessary empirical foundation, and in collecting such elementary factors and data as lent themselves to the application of his general scheme, it also became evident that the whole of this process consisted in an atomism of thought, in an analytical process analogous to the atomic view of mechanical physics, and that the final consummation, as already indicated at the conclusion of 'First Principles,' was the conception of an ultimate equilibrium difficult to distinguish from the dead level of monotony and stagnation. In fact, the Spencerian idea of evolution proved to be only applicable to finite regions in which the ultimate equilibrium could again be disturbed