

Oolite and Lias yet other and different groupings. And thus group preceded group throughout all the Tertiary, Secondary, and Palæozoic periods ; some of them remarkable for the number of species which they contained, others for the profuse abundance of their individual specimens, until, deep in the rocks at the base of the Silurian system, we detect what seems to be the primordial group, beneath which only a single animal organism is known to occur,—the *Oldhamia antiqua*,—a plant-like zoophyte, akin apparently to some of our recent sertulariæ. (See fig. 5, page 13.) Each of the extinct groupings had, we find, a beginning and an end ;—there is not in the wide domain of physical science a more certain fact : and every species of the group which now exists had, like all their predecessors on the scene, their beginning also. The “infinite series” of the atheists of former times can have no place in modern science : all organic existences, recent or extinct, vegetable or animal, have had their beginning ;—there was a time when they were not. The geologist can indicate that time, if not by years, at least by periods, and show what its relations were to the periods that went before and that came after ; and as it is equally a recognised truth on both sides of the controversy, that as something now exists, something must have existed for ever, and as it must now be not less surely recognised, that that something was not the race of man, nor yet any other of the many races of man’s predecessors or contemporaries, the question, What then was that something ? comes with a point and directness which it did not possess at any former time. By what, or through whom, did these races of nicely organized plants and animals begin to be ? Hitherto at least there has been but one reply to the question originated on the sceptical side. All these races, it is said, have been *developed*, in the long course of ages, into what they now are, as the young animal is developed in the womb, or the young plant is developed from