

speaking, the expression "non-miraculous history of creation" contains a "*contradictio in adjecto*."

In order to understand this, let us for a moment examine somewhat more closely what we understand by *creation*. If we understand the creation to mean the *coming into existence of a body* by a creative power or force, we may then either think of the *coming into existence of its substance* (corporeal matter), or of the *coming into existence of its form* (the corporeal form).

Creation in the former sense, as the *coming into existence of matter*, does not concern us here at all. This process, if indeed it ever took place, is completely beyond human comprehension, and can therefore never become a subject of scientific inquiry. Natural science teaches that matter is eternal and imperishable, for experience has never shown us that even the smallest particle of matter has come into existence or passed away. Where a natural body seems to disappear, as for example by burning, decaying, evaporation, etc., it merely changes its form, its physical composition or chemical combination. In like manner the coming into existence of a natural body, for example, of a crystal, a fungus, an infusorium, depends merely upon the different particles, which had before existed in a certain form or combination, assuming a new form or combination in consequence of changed conditions of existence. But never yet has an instance been observed of even the smallest particle of matter having vanished, or even of an atom being added to the already existing mass. Hence a naturalist can no more imagine the coming into existence of matter, than he can imagine its disappearance, and he therefore looks upon the existing quantity of matter in the universe as a given