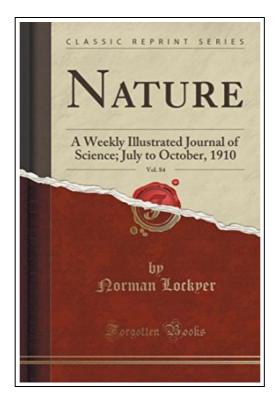
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(Laurence Littel)

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Forgotten Books, 2018. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. Excerpt from Nature, Vol. 84: A Weekly Illustrated Journal of Science; July to October, 1910 This is not the only short cut to the root of the matter. The plain fact that living beings are able to exist is a proof of adaptation. It does not appear to me to be self-evident, though Paley would probably have agreed. Anyhow, it is rather like trying to enter Darwinism by the back-door instead of toiling up the steps. I collect a somewhat better argument. Man is manifestly a bundle of adaptations. The growth of modern physiology implies merely an increased power of interpreting human traits in terms of their utilities. Presumably adaptation is not less per fect in plants and lower animals than in man. Yet, as Rolleston used to tell us at Oxford, that sort of statement would not convict a poacher. Fortunately, evolutionists have a better case for the court. Next we come to variation, which affords the material for natural selection to work upon, and some important conclusions are arrived at. Excluding any possible in?uence of the soma, and I agree, variation must be resident in the germ-plasm. Reasoning by analogy, it is inferred that this is itself established and maintained by natural selection. This involves the paradox that it preceded that which produced it. Its origins are lost in obscurity. No doubt; but if I may try my own hand at deduction, I would suggest that primitive variation was a necessary consequence of molecular instability, and as I regard natural selection as a sort of physical principle like least action or gravitation, it would begin to operate at once. The most fundamental point in the whole argument is the relation...



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