

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Readers are invited to submit reviews of current literature relating to origins. Mailing address: ORIGINS, Geoscience Research Institute, 11060 Campus St., Loma Linda, California 92350 USA. The Institute does not distribute the publications reviewed; please contact the publisher directly.

EVIDENCE OR PREFERENCE AS A FOUNDATION FOR BELIEF?

THE GREAT EVOLUTION MYSTERY. Gordon Rattray Taylor. 1983. NY: Harper & Row. 277 p.

Reviewed by R. H. Brown, Geoscience Research Institute

The Great Evolution Mystery is the last of fifteen books that distinguish Gordon Rattray Taylor as a brilliant writer and an original thinker. His broad scientific interests and his keen insight into issues of public concern, together with his literary skills, led to his selection as Chief Science Advisor for BBC television.

Throughout this book Mr. Taylor expressed unwavering implicit confidence in naturalistic evolution as the correct view concerning the origin and development of life. However, the book contains the best collection of scientific evidence for creation that I have seen! One might suspect that the author was a closet creationist who posed as an evolutionist to get evolutionists to hear the evidence against their viewpoint. But as far as I am able to discern, Mr. Taylor was fully honest in his approach. The vast array of contradictory evidence he has presented is directed only against the Darwinian and neo-Darwinian explanations for evolution. Having demolished Darwinism he offers no replacement, other than the confidence that naturalistic evolution is the only correct general view, and that a satisfactory scientific foundation for it will be found eventually. He suggests that this foundation may include modified elements of Lamarckism and an innate property of matter and organisms for self-direction toward higher complexity and greater adaptability.

I offer some quotations from *The Great Evolution Mystery* in hope that they will lead the reader of this review to a thorough reading of the entire book.

In a summary on p 137, the author refers to “at least a dozen areas where the theory of evolution by natural selection seems either inadequate, implausible or definitely wrong.”

In reference to “the thirty or more reactions which are involved in making blood” the author says on p 183: “That these sequences of coordinated reactions — and there are literally thousands of them in the human body — should all have arisen by chance mutation of single genes is in the highest degree unlikely.”

Concerning photosynthesis, he state on p 207, “Unless there was some inner necessity, some built-in, primordial disposition to consolidate into such a pattern, it is past belief that anything so intricate and idiosyncratic should appear.”

On p 230 one read, “... perhaps the most serious weakness of Darwinism is the failure of paleontologists to find convincing phylogenies or sequences of organisms demonstrating major evolutionary change.” Concerning the highly acclaimed horse evolutionary sequence, Taylor states, “The fact is that the line from *Eohippus* [*Hyracotherium*] to *Equus* is very erratic.... Specimens from different sources can be brought together in a convincing-looking sequence, but there is no evidence that they were actually ranged in this order in time.”

On p 233 the author quotes L. von Bertalanffy to state: “... the fact that a theory so vague, so insufficiently verifiable ... has become dogma can only be explained on sociological grounds.”

The Great Evolution Mystery provides a strong basis for the conclusion that most people, evolutionists and creationists alike, adopt a theory of origins first, and then proceed to seek a scientific explanation for it.