

THE EVOLUTION OF DARWIN'S FINAL PARAGRAPH

NOTE-BOOK OF 1837^a

*Astronomers might formerly have said that God foreordered each **planet** to move in its particular destiny. In the same manner God orders each animal created with certain **forms** in certain countries; but how much more **simple** and sublime [a] **power**—let attraction act **according to** certain law, such are inevitable consequences—let animals be created, then by the **fixed laws** of generation, such will be their successors.*

SKETCH OF 1842^b

*There is a simple **grandeur** in the view of life with powers of growth, assimilation and reproduction, being **originally breathed into** matter under one or a few forms, and that whilst this our **planet** has gone circling on according to fixed laws, and land and water, in a cycle of change, have gone on replacing each other, that **from so simple** an origin, through the process of gradual selection of infinitesimal changes, **endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful** have been evolved.*

ESSAY OF 1844^b

*There is a simple **grandeur** in this view of life with its several powers of growth, reproduction and of sensation, having been **originally breathed into** matter under a few forms, perhaps into only one, and that whilst this planet has gone **cycling onwards** according to the fixed laws of gravity and whilst land and water have gone on replacing each other—that **from so simple** an origin, through the selection of infinitesimal varieties, **endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful** have been evolved.*

THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES, 1859^c

*There is **grandeur** in this view of life, with its several powers, having been **originally breathed into** a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning **endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful** have been, and are being, evolved.*

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^aDarwin F (Ed.) (1887). *The Life and letters of Charles Darwin*, 3vols (Murray, London), vol 2, p 9.

^bde Beer G (1958). *Evolution by natural selection*. (Camb. Univ. Press).

^cDarwin CR (1859). *The origin of species*, 1st ed., (Murray, London.)