

they play in the economy of nature, would seem to entitle them to a systematic position of more than ordinal value. The German naturalists of the new school, in their enthusiastic adoption of the Darwinian theory of evolution, naturally welcome in these 'moners' the essential attribute of the 'Urschleim,' an infinite capacity for improvement in every conceivable direction; and to more prosaic physiologists they are of the deepest interest, as presenting the essential phenomena of life, nutrition and irritability, existing apparently simply as the properties of a homogeneous chemical compound, and independent of organization.

The monera pass into the rhizopoda, which give a slight indication of advance, in the definite form of the graceful calcareous shell-like structures which most of them secrete, and the two groups may be taken together.

The dredging at 2,435 fathoms at the mouth of the Bay of Biscay gave a very fair idea of the condition of the bottom of the sea over an enormous area, as we know from many observations which have now been made, with the various sounding instruments contrived to bring up a sample of the bottom. On that occasion the dredge brought up about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cwt. of calcareous mud. There could be little doubt, from the appearance of the contents of the dredge, that the heavy dredge-frame had gone down with a plunge, and partly buried itself in the soft, yielding bottom. The throat of the dredge thus became partly choked, and the free entrance of the organisms on the sea-floor had been thus prevented. The matter contained in the dredge con-