CREATION

by H. B. Phillips

In Genesis we are told that in six days God created the heavens and the earth and all that is contained therein. Naturally the process is described in human terms, for that is all the people of that age could understand. We now know that what happened was far more marvelous. What was created was merely atoms and the laws they obey. But these atoms had almost sublime properties. Under the laws of chance, without external direction, they formed assemblies which had the properties of life. These assemblies of life, again without direction from outside the system of atoms and the laws they obey, evolved step by step into higher forms, reaching finally the stage of man with a brain capable of understanding the laws of nature and using them for the improvement of his own condition and that of his species. The sublimity of this process consists in the fact that the initial creation did not produce definite beings but merely a capacity to be, which would forever lead to the creation of more and more advanced forms of life and social systems. This continuous creation is the objective of life, religion may be considered as man's effort to take part in this eternal process, and science supplies the methods by which that can be done.

H. B. Phillips was formerly professor and chairman of the department of mathematics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was one of the founders of IRAS.