

out, and new races were brought in; not by mere law, but by divine benevolence, power, and wisdom. These tribes also passed away, when the condition of things was so changed as to be uncongenial to their natures, to give place to a third group, and these again to a fourth, and so on to the present races, which, in their turn, perhaps, are destined to become extinct. From the first, however, the changes which the earth has undergone, as to temperature, soil, and climate, have been an improvement of its condition; so that each successive group of animals and plants could be more and more complicated and perfect; and therefore we find an increase and development of flowering plants and vertebral animals. And yet, from the beginning, all the great classes seem to have existed, so that the changes have been only in the proportion of the more and less perfect at different periods. In short, we have only to suppose that the Creator exactly adapted organic natures to the several geological periods, and we perfectly explain the phenomena of organic remains. But the doctrine of development by law corresponds only in a loose and general way to the facts, and cannot be reconciled to the details. If that hypothesis cannot get a better foothold some where else, it will soon find its way into the limbo of things abortive and forgotten.

I have now noticed, I believe, the principal sources of evidence in which the law hypothesis rests; and at the best, we find only a possibility, but rarely, if ever, a probability, that such a power exists in nature. I turn now, for a few moments, to the arguments on the other side; that is, against the hypothesis.

*And first, it cannot explain the wonderful adaptation of animals and plants to their condition and to one another.*

There is not a more striking thing in nature than that adaptation; and geology shows us that it has always been so. Now, if any thing requires the exercise of infinite wisdom and power, it is this feature of creation. But according to this hypothesis, the laws of nature may be so arranged as to create every animal and plant just at the right time, and place them in the right spot, and adjust every thing around them to their nature and wants. In other words, it supposes law capable of doing what only infinite wisdom and power can do. What is this but ascribing infinite perfection to law, and imputing to