

fatality alone were enough utterly to change the aspect of our world—from a pleasing habitation for the sons of men, transforming it into the vast sepulchral abode of its mouldering generations.

'9. But this is reasoning on a supposition the most favourable. It is presuming that, apart from death, all within us and about us is in the very heyday of happiness. But really it is not so. It is evident that Nature labours under a sore distemper—and whereof she hath given palpable symptoms, not only in the volcano and the earthquake and the storm—but in that general conspiracy of all her elements, against which man hath to fight and to fatigue himself his whole life long—that he might force out a subsistence, and keep footing through a history, which is made up of little better than to drudge and to die. Should we try to unriddle the mystery, we would state it as one of the likeliest solutions—that she was at one time healthful and entire, but that a universal blight had come upon her, and she hath now become the wreck of what she was—still lovely in many of her aspects, though in sore distress—still majestic and venerable, though a venerable ruin—appearing as if out of joint; and giving token by her extended deserts, and the gloom of her unpeopled solitudes, and her wintry frown, and her many fears and fitful agitations, that some mysterious ailment hath befallen her.

20. There is we think an utter derangement into which nature has been thrown—so that all her elements are impregnated with disease; and often the hurricane, and pestilence, and sweeping