

16. But one precious fruit of the recent geological discoveries may be gathered from the testimony which they afford to the destruction of so many terrestrial economies now gone by, and the substitution of the existing one in their place. If there be truth at all in the speculations of this science, there is nothing which appears to have been more conclusively established by them, than a definite origin or commencement for the present animal and vegetable races. Now we know what it is which upholds the whole of the physiological system that is now before our eyes,—even the successive derivation of each individual member from a parent of its own likeness; but we see no force in nature, and no complication of forces, which can tell us what it was that originated the system. It is at this passage in the history of nature, where we meet with such pregnant evidence for the interposition of a designing cause,—an evidence, it will be seen, of prodigious density and force, when we compute the immense number and variety of those aptitudes, whether of form, or magnitude, or relative position, which enter into the completion of an organic structure. It is in the numerical superiority of the distinct collocations to the distinct laws of matter, that the superior evidence of the former lies. We do not deny that there is argument for a God in the number of beneficial, of his own creation; straining every nerve of ingenuity to ascribe them *all to secondary causes.*