

though possessing an irritability to which it is difficult to refuse the idea of some kind of sensitiveness, yet appear not to have any consciousness or intellectual faculties.

Our first inquiry most naturally should be, whether we find any information, direct or indirect, in the original document of inspiration. I think that we do; not indeed directly, but indirectly and by such an implication as is equal to a formal assertion. The constitution of animated beings, founded upon the divine will, is expressed in the words, "Be fruitful, and multiply." This involves the preservation of species, but a succession of individuals, which would necessarily imply a departure of precedent individuals. The law of organization, from the embryo formation to the animal maturity, is carried on in the way of a continual separation of particles and their replacement by new ones which the nutritive process incessantly furnishes. To this process, impassable limits are set, by the most certain laws of the Creator's ordination; those of gravity and chemical action. To suppose that those laws should be abrogated, or, what would amount to the same thing, be perpetually suspended, would involve a contradiction; it would be abolishing the very essential condition of organized existence. When a certain point was reached, separation, changed combination, and dissolution of the molecules, must take place; the rudiment and sure introducer of death.

Were it not so, were animated beings to increase and multiply without the departure of the preceding generations, they would, at no immense distance of time, go beyond the provision of nutritive support, and the limits of appropriate habitation: the land, the air, and the waters, would be filled; food would fail, and death with aggravated suffering would be the infallible consequence. This terrible consummation would the more speedily ensue, as,