

In his admirable Bridgewater Treatise, Dr. Buckland has conclusively shown that the same great system of organization and adaptation has always prevailed on the globe. It was the same in those immensely remote ages, when the fossil animals lived, as it now is. And there is one feature of that system which deserves notice in this argument. At present, we know that there exist large tribes of animals, called carnivorous, provided with organs expressly designed to enable them to destroy other animals, and of course to inflict on them violent and painful death. Exactly similar tribes, and in a like proportion, are found among the fossil animals. They were not always the same tribes; but when one class of carnivora disappeared, another was created to take their place, in order to keep down the excessive multiplication of other races, which appears to be the grand object accomplished by the carnivorous races. And that animals of such an organization not only lived in the ages preceding man's creation, but actually destroyed contemporary species, we have the evidence in the remains of the one animal enclosed in the body of another, by whom it was devoured for food; and both are now converted into rock, and will testify to the most sceptical, that death among animals existed in the world before man's transgression.

*Under the third part of this investigation, I shall attempt to show that physiology teaches us that death is a general law of organic natures.*

It is not confined to animals, but embraces also plants. As they correspond in a striking manner to animals in their reproduction and growth, so they do in their decay and dissolution. In short, wherever in nature we find life and organization, death is inevitable. The amount of vital energy varies in different species and in individuals; but in them all, it at length becomes exhausted, and the functions cease. After a certain period, the vessels which convey the nutritive materials, and elaborate the proximate principles, become choked with excrementitious matter, assimilation is performed imperfectly, and gradually the vital energies are overpowered, and yield up their charge to the disorganizing power of chemical agencies. We can hardly see why the delicate machinery cannot hold out longer than it does, or even indefinitely. But experience shows that an irresistible law of nature has fixed the period of its operations. In the expressive language of Scripture,