

ment. The second argument is, that a succession of races admits of the contemporaneous existence of a greater number of species than could co-exist were none removed by death. If only one undying race occupied the globe, it must subsist exclusively on vegetable food. Whereas much the largest part of the species that now live are carnivorous or omnivorous. All the enjoyment of these flesh-eating animals is, therefore, so much clear gain to the stock of happiness, with the exception of the suffering which death inflicts. Now, but few of the inferior animals perish by disease. Some die by old age, and these suffer almost nothing. But the greater part are suddenly destroyed by the violent assault of the carnivorous races. And as the pangs of death are momentary, and there are no anticipations of its approach, nor Sunderings of the ties of affection, nor dread of an hereafter, the suffering endured must be an exceedingly small drawback upon the enjoyment of the whole life. It is far less than it would be, if animals were left to perish by famine, or by slow degrees, from deficient nourishment; so that the existence of the carnivorous races, seeming at first view intended to convert the world into a vast Golgotha, does in fact add greatly to the amount of enjoyment, because it so prodigiously multiplies the number of species of animals, and lessens the sufferings of death. In the third place, death exerts a salutary moral influence upon man, and, as a consequence, swells the amount of his happiness. And although this consideration affects only one species, yet man's position on the scale of being makes his happiness an object of no small importance.

The final conclusions at which we arrive, then, are, first, that death is a fixed and universal law of nature, essential to the existence of the present system of the world; and secondly, that, like all other laws of nature, it exhibits marks of benevolence, and wise adaptation on the part of the Author of nature. The question will indeed arise in every reflecting mind, why a Being of infinite power and wisdom could not have secured to his creatures the benefits resulting from a system of death, without the attendant suffering. But this question resolves itself into the inquiry, why evil exists at all; and although, in my own view, it exists most probably as a means of greater happiness to the universe, yet on this point the wisest minds have differed and been baffled, and equally perplexing is it to