

him in most cases, to decide, what is the food of that animal, with almost as much certainty as if he had for years observed its habits. Who can doubt, then, that when a carnivorous animal employs the weapons with which nature has furnished it for the destruction of another animal, in order to satisfy its hunger, that it acts in obedience to a law of its being, originally impressed upon its constitution by the Creator. It is true, that even the flesh-eating animals may be taught for a time to subsist upon vegetable products. But this is unnatural; and such an animal usually pays the price of thus inverting its original instinct, by disease and premature decay. In a state of nature, an animal would starve rather than thus violate its instinctive desires.

I will allude to only one other fact, that shows death to be inseparable from organized beings, without a constant miraculous interference, in such a world as ours. Animal organization in all conceivable circumstances, must be liable to accident, from mere mechanical force, by which life would be destroyed. It may be possible, perhaps, to conceive of a material tenement for the soul, which should be unaffected by all forms of mechanical violence and chemical action; if, for instance, its constitution were analogous to that supposed medium through which light, heat, and electricity, and perhaps gravitation, act. But surely our present bodies are far enough removed from such conditions, being of all terrestrial things the most liable to ruin from the causes above mentioned.

The conclusions from all these facts and reasonings, are, that death is an essential feature of the present system of organized nature; that it must have entered into the plan of creation in the divine mind originally, and consequently must have existed in the world before the apostacy of man. Whether the entire system of death had any connection with that event, or whether there is any thing peculiar in the death endured by the human family, will be questions for examination in a subsequent part of my lecture.

In opposition to these conclusions, however, the common theory of death maintains that, when man transgressed, there was an entire change throughout all organic nature; so that animals and plants, which before contained a principle of immortal life, were smitten with the hereditary contagion of disease and death. Those animals which, before that event,