

were gentle and herbivorous, or frugivorous, suddenly became ferocious or carnivorous. The climate, too, changed, and the sterile soil sent forth the thorn and the thistle, in the place of the rich flowers and fruits of Eden. The great English poet, in his *Paradise Lost*, has clothed this hypothesis in a most graphic and philosophical dress; and probably his descriptions have done more than the Bible to give it currency. Indeed could the truth be known, I fancy that on many points of secondary importance, the current theology of the day has been shaped quite as much by the ingenious machinery of *Paradise Lost* as by the Scriptures; the theologians having so mixed up the ideas of Milton with those derived from inspiration, that they find it difficult to distinguish between them.

In the case under consideration, Milton does not limit the change induced by man's apostacy to sublunary things, but, like a sagacious philosopher, perceives, also, that the heavenly bodies must have been diverted from their paths.

"At that tasted fruit,
The sun, as from Thyestian banquet turned
His course intended; else how had the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?"

This change of the sun's path, as the poet well knew, could be affected only by some change in the motion of the earth.

"Some say he bid the angels turn askance
The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,
From the sun's axle; they with labour pushed
Oblique the centric globe."

Next we have the effect upon the lower orders of animals described.

"Discord first,
Daughter of sin, among the irrational
Death introduced: through fierce antipathy.
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,
Devoured each other"

The question arises here, whether such views are sustained by the Bible and by science. Few, I presume, would seriously maintain that the act of our first parents, which produced what Dr. Chalmers calls "an unhingement" of the human race,