

the Bible, which, on this subject, is our only source of evidence.

We have in Scripture the same kind of proof that plants were subject to decay and death, before the fall, as we have in respect to animals. For in the account of the creation of plants on the third day, we find them described as bearing seeds; and does not this clearly imply the same system of reproduction which now exists throughout the vegetable kingdom? In short, an unprejudiced mind, in reading the history of the world in Genesis, before and after the fall, can hardly fail of the conviction, that animals and plants were originally created on the same plan, as to reproduction, decay, and death, which now prevails. Great, indeed, must have been the change at the fall, if, previous to that time, their structure excluded all the organs and means of reproduction; as must have been the case if decay and death were also excluded. And it is strange that the sacred writers should take no notice of such a change. He states the effect of sin upon the three parties directly concerned in it, namely, the tempter, Adam, and Eve; and if a transformation of all vegetable and animal natures, great enough almost to constitute a new creation, did take place, it could hardly have been passed in silence. Even in the case of man, we have no remarkable physical change. The effect seems to have been chiefly confined to his intellectual constitution, where we should expect the effect of sin to be primarily felt. There, indeed, in man's noblest part, has the havoc been the most terrific, and powerfully has its operation there re-acted upon the body, so as to make death, in the case of man, the king of terrors.

We find, then, insuperable objections to the prevalent notion that an entire revolution took place at the fall in the material world, and especially in organic nature. Those passages of Scripture which, literally interpreted, seem to imply some changes of this sort, are easily understood as vivid figurative representations of the effects of sin upon men, while their literal interpretation would involve us in inextricable difficulties. We rest, therefore, in the conclusion, that, whatever connection there may be between death and the existing system of organic and inorganic nature, no important change took place at the time of man's first transgression; in other words, the present system is that which was originally determined