

constructed like those of fish generally, rather for the purpose of holding fast slippery substances than of mastication, still bristle in their jaws; nay, the very plates, spines, and scales of the fish on which they had fed, still lie undigested in their abdomens. We cannot stop short at the shells: if the human skull was not created a mere skull, nor the shell a mere dead shell, then the fossil fish could not have been created a mere fossil. There is no broken link in the chain at which to take our stand; and yet, having once recognized the fishes as such, — having recognized them as the remains of animals, and not as stones that exist in their original state, — we stand committed to all the organisms of the geological scale.

But we limit the Divine power, it may be said: could not the Omnipotent First Cause have created all the fossils of the earth, vegetable and animal, in their fossil state? Yes, certainly; the act of their creation, regarded simply as an act of power, does not and cannot transcend his infinite ability. He could have created all the burying-grounds of the earth, with all their broken and wasted contents, brute and human. He could have created all the mummies of Mexico and of Egypt as such, and all the skeletons of the catacombs of Paris. It would manifest, however, but little reverence for his character to compliment his infinite power at the expense of his infinite wisdom. It would be doing no honor to his name to regard him as a creator of dead skeletons, mummies, and churchyards. Nay, we could not recognize him as such, without giving to the winds all those principles of common reason which in his goodness he has imparted to us for our guidance in the ordinary affairs of life. In this, as in that higher sense adduced by our Saviour, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." In the celebrated case of Eugene Aram, the skeleton of his victim, the murdered Clark, was found in a