

ing *now* of the world's annals, is simply a congeries of biographies. It is when we extend our view into the geological field that it passes from *biography* into *history proper*, and that we have to rise from the consideration of the birth and death of individuals, which, in all mere biographies, form the great terminal events that constitute beginning and end, to a survey of the birth and death of races, and the elevation or degradation of dynasties and sub-kingdoms.

We learn from human history that nations are as certainly mortal as men. They enjoy a greatly longer term of existence, but they die at last: Rollin's History of Ancient Nations is a history of the dead. And we are taught by geological history, in like manner, that *species* are as mortal as individuals and nations, and that even genera and families become extinct. There is no *man* upon earth at the present moment whose age greatly exceeds an hundred years; — there is no *nation* now upon earth (if we perhaps except the long-lived Chinese) that also flourished three thousand years ago; — there is no *species* now living upon earth that dates beyond the times of the Tertiary deposits. All bear the stamp of death, — individuals, — nations, — species; and we may scarce less safely predicate, looking upon the past, that it is appointed for nations and species to die, than that it “is appointed for *man* once to die.” Even our own species, *as now constituted*, — with instincts that conform to the original injunction, “increase and multiply,” and that, in consequence, “marry and are given in marriage,” — shall one day cease to exist: a fact not less in accordance with beliefs inseparable from the faith of the Christian, than with the widely-founded experience of the geologist. Now, it is scarce possible for the human mind to become acquainted with the fact, that at certain periods species began to exist and then, after the lapse of untold ages, ceased