

against the latter. But, perhaps, something more may be collected of the design and character of God, by stretching forward our observation prospectively in the history of man, and so extending our regards to the more distant consequences of virtue or vice, both on the frame of his character and the state of his enjoyments. By studying these posterior results, we approximate our views towards the final issues of that administration under which we are placed. That defensive apparatus wherewith the embryo seed of plants is guarded and protected, might indicate a special care or design in the preserver of it. What that design particularly is comes to be clearly and certainly known, when, in the future history of the plant, we learn what the functions of the seed are, after it has come to maturity; and then observe, that, had it been suffered universally to perish, it would have led, not to the mortality of the individual, for that is already an inevitable law, but to the extinction and mortality of the species.

3. For tracing forward man's moral history, or the changes which take place in his moral state, it is necessary that we should advert to the influence of habit. Yet it is not properly the philosophy of habit wherewith our argument is concerned, but with the leading facts of its practical operation. A beneficial effect might still remain an evidence of the Divine goodness, by whatever steps it should be efficiently or physically brought about,