

The Husbandman's Dependence upon Almighty God.

“Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”—ACTS xiv. 17.

Though the Lord is good and bountiful at all times, yet there are occasions which indicate that goodness with peculiar force, and which call for a more marked acknowledgment of His bounty on the part of those who are its rational recipients.

The text directs our thoughts to the goodness of God as it is shewn in the annually recurring supply of those things which are indispensable for our bodily sustenance—that supply which every season brings, and in which is read the fulfilment of that great and universal promise, that “while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”

This great purpose of the divine beneficence is effected by the laws which God has impressed upon the material universe, and by the properties, situations, and affinities which he has assigned to the elements and to various substances of the earth. From these spring results, conducive to the happiness and existence of the human race, and of the whole animal creation.

But it is not only, or altogether, to the laws of inanimate matter that these results are owing. Another principle is concerned—namely, that of God's continued providence and superintendence, by which, without changing or arresting