

ples, and knowing no higher sanction than the current sentiments of honour: and, not appealing to extreme instances, but taking men as they are, it may I think be confidently stated, that the general acceptance of Paley's moral rule in any Christian society, would inevitably debase the standard of right and wrong. It strikes indeed at the very root of the higher virtues which in the past history of mankind have ever been held up to honor, as the strong bonds of social happiness, and the foundation of national greatness. And while human nature is what it is, every system that is sterile in great virtues will be fruitful in great crimes. On this truth history is but a continued comment.

If we accept a system of philosophy which looks on actions only as the means to obtain a worldly end, have we not cause to fear that the end will be made to sanctify the means; and that sensual sin, in its most hideous form, will be endured, or perhaps impudently recommended, as a counterpoise to the evils that are wound about our nature, and enter into the very elements of a condition of probation? Have we not cause to fear that private virtue will, before long, be set at nought, or sink under the domination of universal selfishness—and that, in the prevailing disbelief in individual honor, public men will become the mere implements for carrying into effect the basest aims of faction? In such a degraded state of public opinion, bad, unscrupulous, and boasting men, may be elevated to places of high authority; and in their hands the fountains of law and justice may become polluted—the sacred cause of liberty bartered or betrayed—and the national faith sacrificed to vanity, to personal interest, and to party violence.