

When once sunk to this condition, a nation has parted with the materials both of its strength and glory—the very elements of its cohesion are passing away: and should there not be found ten just men within it to turn away the avenging wrath of heaven, before long its high places will be laid low, and *its pleasant land will be laid desolate.*

The moral system of utility resolves virtue into a single principle, from which our social duties are all to be evolved as a rational consequence. This simplicity (constituting in truth the greatest fault of the system), gave it a ready acceptance in society: for however impatient man generally is in tracing the unascertained connexion of phenomena, he is never wearied with following out the consequences of an hypothesis. In the latter case his natural pride is flattered—he stands forth not as a humble seeker after truth, but as a dispenser of the laws of nature—and he looks on every conclusion he deduces from his principles, as his own intellectual progeny, to be supported by him at whatever cost.

If a rash spirit of generalization have often retarded the advance of physical science, its consequences are incomparably more baneful in moral reasoning. A false theory in physics affects only our views respecting the connected properties of dead matter: and may be set right, sometimes by a single experiment. But moral theories have no simple *experimenta crucis* whereby their truth or falsehood may be tested; and in their application they may effect the social dignity and the happiness of millions, each gifted with an immortal nature. I am not fighting with ideal evils. Who has not witnessed the effects of false principles carried into