

to our fallen nature, and are among the unavoidable conditions of our probation.

No one denies that the moral and political characters of men are in a great measure formed by the institutions under which they live; and were it asked, whence these institutions derive their permanency and power; we might reply in general terms—only from being well fitted to the social condition of the state. But if we take a historical view of this great question, we shall see more deeply into the origin of national sentiments. We shall generally find that national character has not been formed merely by national institutions; but on the contrary, that the institutions themselves (so far as they are peculiar and permanent) have for the most part taken their original form and impress from the moral condition of the state—that they have grown with its growth—that they have (like the external covering of the bodily frame) been secreted from its life-blood—and that they are the representatives of opinions and feelings called into being from time to time, and too often during successive ages of conflict and struggle. Happy is that country which is rising in the moral scale of nations, and where the constitution contains within itself a provision for the perpetual adaptation of its institutions to the healthy movement of the state! Laws, like those of the Medes and Persians, which alter not, must soon be followed by premature decay, by secret crimes, or bloody revolutions—the sure attendants of unbending despotism.

Lastly, before I quit the subject of political philosophy, let me endeavour to impress upon you the great truth, that no human system can bring the rebellious faculties of man under the law of