

within the limits of our visible world and by the fellows of our species, there was a general sense of the right and the wrong—an occasional exemplification of high and heroic virtue with the plaudits of its accompanying admiration on the one hand—or, along with execrable villany, the prompt indignancy of human hearts, and execration of human tongues upon the other. We are not pleading for the practical strength of morality in those days,—though we might quote the self-devotion of Regulus, the continence of Scipio, and other noble sacrifices at the shrine of principle or patriotism. It is enough for our object which is to prove, not the power of morality, but merely the sense and recognition of it—that the nobility of these instances was felt, that the homage of public acclamation was rendered to them, that historians eulogized and poets sung the honours of illustrious virtue. We are not contending for such a moral nature as could achieve the practice, but for such a moral nature as could discern the principles of righteousness. In short there was a natural ethics among men, a capacity both of feeling and of perceiving the moral distinction between good and evil. The works of Horace and Juvenal and above all of Cicero abundantly attest this—nor are we aware of aught more splendid and even importantly true in the whole authorship of Moral Science than the following passage from the last of these writers. “*Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna; quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos*