

for our argument, if it shall appear, that this sense of property, even in its posterior and rectified form, is the work of nature, operating on the hearts of children; and not the work of man, devising, in the maturity of his political wisdom, such a regulated system of things, as might be best for the order and well-being of society.

11. This matter then might be illustrated by the contests of very young children, and by the manner in which these are adjusted to the acquiescence and satisfaction of them all. We might gather a lesson even from the quarrel which sometimes arises among them, about a matter so small as their right to the particular chairs of a room. If one for example, have just sat on a chair, though only for a few minutes, and then left it for a moment—it will feel itself injured, if, on returning, it shall find the chair in the possession of another occupier. The brief occupation which it has already had, gives it the feeling of a right to the continued occupation of it—insomuch, that, when kept out by an intruder, it has the sense of having been wrongously dispossessed. The particular chair of which it was for some time the occupier, is the object of a special possessory affection or feeling, which it attaches to no other chair; and by which it stands invested in its own imagination, as being, for the time, the only rightful occupier. This then may be regarded as a very early indication of that possessory feeling, which is afterwards of such extensive influence in the economy of social life—a feeling so strong, as often of itself to constitute a plea, not only sufficient in the apprehension