

would enlist on the side of the defensive. In the course of generations, those sedative influences, which tend to the preservation of the existing order wax stronger and stronger; and those disturbing influences, which tend to the restoration of the ancient order, wax weaker and weaker—till man at last ceases to charge himself with a task so infinitely above his strength, as the adjustment of the quarrels and the accumulated wrongs of the centuries which have gone by. In other words, the constitution of law in regard to property, which is the work of man, may be so framed as to sanction, and, therefore, to encourage the enormities which have been perpetrated by the force of arms—while the constitution of the mind in regard to property, which is the work of nature, is so framed, as, with conservative virtue, to be altogether on the side of perpetuity and peace.

16. Had a legislator of supreme wisdom and armed with despotic power been free to establish the best scheme for augmenting the wealth and the comforts of human society—he could have devised nothing more effectual than that existing constitution of property, which obtains so generally throughout the world; and by which, each man, secure within the limits of his own special and recognised possession, might claim as being rightly and originally his, the fruit of all the labour which he may choose to expend upon it. But this was not left to the discovery of man, or to any ordinations of his consequent upon that discovery. He was not led to this arrangement by the experience of its consequences; but prompted to it by certain