

POLITICAL WELL-BEING OF SOCIETY.

and actual possession of any thing, so strong a sense of right to its continued possession; and that she has so powerfully backed this principle, by means of another as strongly and universally felt as the former, even that each man has a right to possess the fruit of his own industry. The human legislator has little more to do than to confirm, or rather to promulgate and make known his determination to abide by principles already felt and recognised by all men. Wanting these, he could have fixed nothing, he could have perpetuated nothing. The legal constitution of every state, in its last and finished form, comes from the hand of man. But the great and natural principles, which secure for these constitutions the acceptance of whole communities—implanted in man from his birth, or at least evincing their presence and power in very early childhood—these are what bespeak the immediate hand of God.

17. But these principles, strongly conservative though they be, on the side of existing property do not at all times prevent a revolution—which is much more frequently, however, a revolution of power than of property. But when such is the degree of violence abroad in society, that even the latter is effected—this most assuredly, does not arise from any decay or intermission of the possessory feelings, that we have just been expounding; but from the force and fermentation of other causes which prevail in opposition to these, and in spite of them. And, after that such revolution has done its work and ejected the old dynasty of proprietors, the mischief to them may be as irre-