

23. If a strong self-interest in one's person may not only be consistent with, but, by the aid of the moral sense, may be conducive to a proportionally strong principle of forbearance from all injury to the persons of other men—why may not the very same law be at work in regard to property as to person? The fondness wherewith one nourishes and cherishes his own flesh, might, we have seen, enhance his sympathy and his sense of justice for that of other men; and so, we affirm, might it be of the fondness wherewith one nourishes and cherishes his own field. The relation in which each man stands to his own body, was anterior to the first dawnings of his moral nature; and his instinctive sensibilities of pain and suffering, when any violence is inflicted, were also anterior. But as his moral perceptions expand, and he considers others beside himself who are similarly related to their bodies—these very susceptibilities not only lead him to recoil from the violence that is offered to himself; but they lead him to refrain from the offering of violence to other men. They may have an air of selfishness at the first; yet so far from being obstacles in the way of justice, they are indispensable helps to it. And so may each man stand related to a property as well as to a person; and by ties that bind him to it, ere he thought of his neighbour's property at all—by instinctive affections, which operated previously to a sense of justice in his bosom; and yet which, so far from acting as a thwart upon his justice to others, give additional impulse to all his observations of it. He feels what has passed within his own bosom, in reference to the field that