

being of society, to the extent that this is dependent on certain mental tendencies—whether these can be demonstrated by analysis to be only secondary results, or in themselves to be simple elements of the human constitution. We may be said indeed, to have already bordered on this part of our argument—when considering the origin and the rights of property; or the manner in which certain possessory affections, that appear even in the infancy of the mind and anticipate by many years the exercise of human wisdom, lead to a better distribution, both of the earth and of all the valuables which are upon it, than human wisdom could possibly have devised, or at least than human power without the help of these special affections could have carried into effect. For there might be a useful economy sanctioned by law, yet which law could not have securely established, unless it had had a foundation in nature. For in this respect, there is a limit to the force even of the mightiest despotism—insomuch that the most absolute monarch on the face of the earth must so far conform himself, to the indelible human nature of the subjects over whom he proudly bears the sway; else, in the reaction of their outraged principles and feelings, they would hurl him from his throne. And thus it is well, that, so very generally in the different countries of the world, law, both in her respect for the possessory and acquired rights of property and in her enforcement of them, has, instead of chalking out an arbitrary path for herself, only followed where nature beforehand had pointed the way. It is far better, that, rather than