

good-will. But I do not hold as from the good-will of another, that which law hath enabled me to plea as my own right—nay to demand, with a front of hardy and resolute assertion. It is this which makes it the most delicate and dangerous of all ground—when law offers to prescribe rules for the exercise of beneficence, or to lay its compulsory hand on a virtue, the very freedom of which is indispensable to its existence. And it not only extinguishes the virtue; but it puts an end to all those responses of glad and grateful emotion, which its presence and its smile and the generosity of its free-will offerings awaken in society. It is laying an arrest on all the music of living intercourse, thus to forbid those beautiful and delicious echoes, which are reflected, on every visit of unconstrained mercy, from those families that are gladdened by her footsteps. And what is worse, it is substituting in their place, the hoarse and jarring discords of the challenge and the conflict and the angry litigation. We may thus see, that there is a province in human affairs, on which law should make no entrance—a certain department of human virtue wherein the moralities should be left to their own unfettered play, else they shall be frozen into utter apathy—a field sacred to liberty and good-will that should ever be kept beyond the reach of jurisprudence; or on which, if she once obtain a footing, she will spoil it of all those unbought and unbidden graces that natively adorn it. So that while to law we would commit the defence of society from all the aggressions of violence, and confide the strict and the