

tion be due to the force of instincts or to the force of circumstances,—any more than whether, in the physical system, a certain beneficial result may be ascribed to apt and peculiar laws, or to apt and peculiar collocations. In virtue of one or other or both of these causes, we behold the individuals of the species grouped together—or, as it may be otherwise expressed, the aggregate mass of the species broken asunder into distinct families, and generally living by themselves, each family under one common roof, but apart from all the rest in distinct habitations; while the members of every little commonwealth are so linked by certain affections, or by certain feelings of reciprocal obligation, that each member feels almost as intensely for the wants and sufferings of the rest as he would for his own, or labours as strenuously for the sustenance of all as he would for his own individual sustenance. There is very generally a union of hearts, and still oftener a union of hands, for the common interest and provision of the household.

3. The benefits of such an arrangement are too obvious to be enumerated. Even though the law of self-preservation had sufficed in those cases where the individual has adequate wisdom to devise, and adequate strength to provide for his own maintenance—of itself, it could not have availed, when this strength and this wisdom are wanting. It is in the bosom of families, and under the touch and impulse of family affections, that helpless