

We should say that it regards the whole of external nature as a vast common, but for this difference—that, instead of regarding nature as free to all, it rather regards it as free to itself alone. When others intermeddle with any one thing in a way that suits not its fancy or pleasure, it resents and storms and exclaims like one bereft of its rights—so that, instead of regarding the universe as a common, it were more accurate to say, that it regarded the whole as its own property, or itself as the universal proprietor of all on which it may have cast a pleased or a wishful eye. Whatever it grasps, it feels to be as much its own as it does the fingers which grasp it. And not only do its claims extend to all within its reach, but to all within the field of its vision—inasmuch, that it will even stretch forth its hands to the moon in the firmament; and wreak its displeasure on the nurse, for not bringing the splendid bauble within its grasp. Instead then of saying, that, at this particular stage, it knows not how to appropriate any thing, it were more accurate to say, that, a universal tyrant and monopolist, it would claim and appropriate all things—exact from the whole of nature a subserviency to its caprices; and, the little despot of its establishment, giving forth its intimations and its mandates, with the expectation, and often with the real power and authority, of instant obedience. We before said that its anger was co-extensive with the capacity of sensation; and we