

perished. Nature has^r made a better provision than this for both these interests; but law has done more mischief by interference with the one, than it could ever have done by interference with the other. It could not have quelled the appetite of hunger, which still, in spite of all the law's officiousness, would have remained the great practical impellent to the use of food, for the wellbeing of our physical economy. But it has done much to quell and to overbear the affection of compassion—that never-failing impellent, in a free and natural state of things, to deeds of charity, for the wellbeing of the social economy. The evils which have ensued are of too potent and pressing a character to require description. They have placed England in a grievous dilemma, from which she can only be extricated, by the new-modelling of this part of her statute-book, and a nearer conformity of its provisions to the principles of natural jurisprudence. Meanwhile they afford an emphatic demonstration for the superior wisdom of nature which is never so decisively or so triumphantly attested, as by the mischief that is done, when her processes are contravened or her principles are violated.*

* Without contending for the language of our older moralists, the distinction which they mean to express, by virtues of perfect and imperfect obligation, has a foundation in reality and in the nature of things—as between justice, where the obligation on one side implies a counterpart right upon the other, and benevolence,