

cannot, with any possible ingenuity, obtain an imperative hold on beneficence at all—for her very touch transforms this virtue into another. Should law go forth on the enterprise of arresting beneficence upon her own domain, and there laying upon her its authoritative dictates—it would find that beneficence had eluded its pursuit; and that all which it could possibly do, was to wrest from her that part of the domain of which it had taken occupation, and bring it under the authority of justice. When it thought to enact for beneficence, it only, in truth, enacted a new division of property; and in so doing, it contravenes the possessory, one of nature's special affections—while, by its attempts to force what should have been left to the free exercise of compassion, it has done much to supersede or to extinguish another of these affections. It hath so pushed forward the line of demarcation—as to widen the space which justice might call her own, and to contract the space which beneficence might call her own. But never will law be able to make a captive of beneficence, or to lay personal arrest upon her. It might lessen and limit her means, or even starve her into utter annihilation. But never can it make a living captive of her. It is altogether a vain and hopeless undertaking to legislate on the duties of beneficence; for the very nature of this virtue, is to do good freely and willingly with its own. But on the moment that law interposes to