

encroachment on their property. The one, in fact, is tantamount to the other. It is thus, that, under the constraints of selfishness alone, fidelity and justice may be in copious and current observation among men; and while perhaps, the principle of these virtues is exceedingly frail and uncertain in all hearts—human society may still subsist by the literal and outward observation of them.

3. Here then is the example, not of a virtue in principle, but of a virtue in performance, with all the indispensable benefits of that performance, being sustained on the soil of selfishness. Were a profound observer of human life to take account of all the honesties of mercantile intercourse, he would find that, in the general amount of them, they were mainly due to the operation of this cause; or that they were so prevalent in society, because each man was bound to their observance, by the tie of his own personal interest—insomuch that, if this particular tie were broken, it would as surely derange or break up the world of trade, as the world of matter would become an inert or turbid chaos, on the repeal or suspension of the law of gravitation. Confidence, the very soul of commercial enterprise, and without which the transactions of merchandise were impossible, is the goodly result, not of that native respect which each man has for another's rights, but of that native regard which each man has for his own