

the diminution of violence or injustice in the world: And thus too our own dread of resentment from others, works the same outward effect, which honour or a respect for their rights would have had upon our transactions, which delicacy or a respect for their feelings would have had upon our converse with those around us. It is in this way that God makes the wrath of man to praise Him; and the same is true of other affections of our nature, which have less the character of selfishness than either anger or fear. It is not because prompted by a sense of duty, but under the force of a mere natural proneness, that mothers watch so assiduously over the helplessness, and fathers toil so painfully for the subsistence of their children. Even compassion, with the speed and the discrimination of its movements, does for human life more than man is capable of doing with his highest efforts of morality and reason—yet, not in the shape of a principle, but in the shape of a strong constitutional propensity. The good is rendered, not by man acting as he thinks that he ought, or under the force of a moral suggestion; but by man acting because he feels himself constrained, as if by the force of a physical necessity—not surely because, in the exercise of a sovereign liberty, he hath assumed a lordly ascendant over all the inferior passions of his nature; but because himself is lorded over by a law of his nature, having in it all the might and mastery of a passion.