

## XCIII. — THE PHILOSOPHER'S SCALES.

FROM JANE TAYLOR.

1. A MONK, when his rites †sacerdotal were o'er,  
In the depth of his cell with his stone-cover'd floor,  
Resigning to thought his †chimerical brain,  
Once form'd the contrivance we now shall explain ;  
But whether by magic's or †alchemy's powers,  
We know not; indeed, 't is no business of ours.
2. Perhaps, it was only by patience and care,  
At last, that he brought his inventions to bear;  
In youth 't was †projected, but years stole away,  
And ere 't was complete, he was wrinkled and gray ;  
But success is secure, unless energy fails ;  
And, at length, he produced the philosopher's scales.
3. "What were they?" you ask. You shall presently see ;  
These scales were not made to weigh sugar and tea ;  
O no ; for such †properties wondrous had they,  
That qualities, feelings, and thoughts, they cou'd weigh ;  
Together with articles small or immense,  
From mountains or planets, to †atoms of sense.
4. Naught was there so bulky, but there it would lay,  
And naught so †ethereal, but there it would stay,  
And naught so †reluctant, but in it must go :  
All which some examples more clearly will show.
5. The first thing he weigh'd was the head of Voltaire,  
Which retain'd all the wit that had ever been there ;  
As a weight he threw in a torn scrap of a leaf,  
Containing the prayer of the †penitent thief ;  
When the skull rose aloft with so sudden a spell,  
That it bounced like a ball on the roof of the cell.
6. One time, he put in Alexander the Great,  
With a garment that Dorcas had made for a weight,  
And, though †clad in armor from †sandals to crown,  
The hero rose up, and the garment went down.
7. A long row of alms-houses, amply †endow'd  
By a well-esteem'd †Pharisee, busy and proud,  
Next loaded one scale ; while the other was prest  
By those mites the poor widow dropp'd into the chest ;  
Up flew the †endowment, not weighing an ounce,  
And down, down the farthing-worth came with a bounce.

8. By further †experiments, (no matter how,)  
 He found that ten chariots weigh'd less than one plow ;  
 A sword with gilt trapping rose up in the scale,  
 Though balanced by only a ten-penny nail ;  
 A shield and a helmet, a buckler and spear,  
 Weigh'd less than a widow's †uncrystalized tear.
9. A lord and a lady went up at full sail,  
 When a bee chanced to light on the opposite scale ;  
 Ten doctors, ten lawyers, two courtiers, one earl,  
 Ten counselors' wigs, full of powder and curl,  
 All heap'd in one balance and swinging from thence,  
 Weigh'd less than a few grains of †caudor and sense ;
10. A first water †diamond, with †brilliants begirt,  
 Than one good potato, just wash'd from the dirt ;  
 Yet not mountains of silver and gold could suffice,  
 One pearl to outweigh, 't was the pearl of great price.
11. Last of all, the whole world was bowl'd in at the grate,  
 With the soul of a beggar to serve for a weight,  
 When the former sprang up with so strong a †rebuff,  
 That it made a vast rent and escaped at the roof ;  
 When, balanced in air, it ascended on high,  
 And sail'd up aloft, a balloon in the sky ;  
 While the scale with the soul in't so mightily fell,  
 That it jerk'd the †philosopher out of his cell.

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 XCIV. — ORIGIN OF PROPERTY.

## FROM BLACKSTONE.

1. IN the beginning of the world, we are informed by holy writ, the all-bountiful Creator gave to man "dominion over all the earth ; and over the fishes of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moved upon the earth." This is the only true and solid foundation of man's dominion over external things, whatever airy, †meta-physical notions may have been started by fanciful writers on this subject. The earth, therefore, and all things therein, are the general property of mankind, †exclusive of other beings, from the immediate gift of the Creator. And while the earth continued bare of inhabitants, it is reasonable to

suppose that all was in common among them, and that every one took from the public stock, to his own use, such things as his immediate necessities required.

2. These general notions of property were then sufficient to answer all purposes of human life; and might, perhaps, still have answered them, had it been possible for mankind to have remained in a state of †primeval simplicity, in which “all things were common to him.” Not that this communion of goods seems ever to have been applicable, even in the earliest stages, to aught but the *substance* of the thing; nor could it be extended to the *use* of it. For, by the law of nature and reason, he who first began to use it, acquired therein, a kind of †transient property, that lasted so long as he was using it, and no longer. Or, to speak with greater †precision, the *right* of possession continued for the same time, only, that the *act* of possession lasted.

3. Thus, the ground was in common, and no part of it was the property of any man in particular; yet, whoever was in the occupation of any determined spot of it, for rest, for shade, or the like, acquired for the time, a sort of ownership, from which, it would have been unjust and contrary to the law of nature, to have driven him by force; but, the instant he quitted the use or occupation of it, another might seize it without injustice. Thus, also, a vine or a tree might be said to be in common, as all men were equally entitled to its produce; and yet, any private individual might gain the sole property of the fruit which he had gathered for his own repast: a doctrine well illustrated by Cicero, who compares the world to a great theater which is common to the public, and yet the place which any man has taken, is, for the time, his own.

4. But when mankind increased in number, †craft, and ambition, it became necessary to entertain †conceptions of a more permanent dominion; and to †appropriate to individuals, not the immediate *use* only, but the very *substance* of the thing to be used. Otherwise, innumerable tumults must have arisen, and the good order of the world been continually broken and disturbed, while a variety of persons were striving who should get the first occupation of the same thing, or disputing which of them had actually gained it. As human life

grew more and more refined, many conveniences were devised to render it more easy, commodious, and agreeable; as habitations for shelter and safety, and raiment for warmth and decency. But no man would be at the trouble to provide either, so long as he had only an <sup>†</sup>usufructuary property in them, which was to cease the instant that he quitted possession; if, as soon as he walked out of his tent or pulled off his garment, the next stranger who came by would have a right to inhabit the one and to wear the other.

5. In the case of habitations, in particular, it was natural to observe that even the brute creation, to whom every thing else was in common, maintained a kind of permanent property in their dwellings, especially for the protection of their young; that the birds of the air had nests, and the beasts of the fields had caverns, the invasion of which they esteemed a very <sup>†</sup>flagrant injustice, and in the preservation of which, they would sacrifice their lives. Hence a property was soon established in every man's house and <sup>†</sup>homestead; which seem to have been originally mere temporary huts or movable cabins, suited to the design of Providence for more speedily peopling the earth, and to the wandering life of their owners, before any extensive property in the soil or ground was established.

6. There can be no doubt but that movables of every kind became sooner appropriated than the <sup>†</sup>permanent, substantial soil; partly because they were more <sup>†</sup>susceptible of a long occupancy, which might be continued for months together, without any sensible interruption, and at length, by usage, ripen into an established right; but, principally, because few of them could be fit for use, till improved and <sup>†</sup>meliorated by the bodily labor of the occupant; which bodily labor, bestowed upon any subject that lay in common to all men, is universally allowed to give the fairest and most reasonable title to an exclusive property therein.

7. The article of food was a more immediate call, and therefore a more early consideration. Such as were not contented with the <sup>†</sup>spontaneous products of the earth, sought for a more solid refreshment in the flesh of beasts, which they obtained by hunting. But the frequent disappointments incident to that method of provision, induced them to gather together such animals as were of a more tame and <sup>†</sup>sequacious

nature, and to establish a more permanent property in their flocks and herds, in order to sustain themselves in a less †precarious manner, partly by the milk of the dams, and partly by the flesh of the young.

8. The support of these their cattle, made the article of *water* also a very important point. And, therefore, the book of Genesis, (the most venerable monument of †antiquity, considered merely with a view to history,) will furnish us with frequent instances of violent contentions concerning wells; the exclusive property of which appears to have been established in the first digger or occupant, even in places where the ground and †herbage remained yet in common. Thus, we find Abraham, who was but a sojourner, asserting his right to a well in the country of Abimelech, and exacting an oath for security, "because he had digged that well." And Isaac, about ninety years afterward, reclaimed this his father's property; and, after much contention with the Philistines, was suffered to enjoy it in peace.

9. All this while, the soil and pasture of the earth, remained still in common as before, and open to every occupant; except, perhaps, in the neighborhood of towns, where the necessity of a sole and exclusive property in lands, (for the sake of agriculture,) was earlier felt, and therefore more readily complied with. Otherwise, when the multitude of men and cattle had consumed every convenience on one spot of ground, it was deemed a natural right to seize upon, and occupy such other lands, as would more easily supply their necessities.

10. We have a striking example of this, in the history of Abraham and his nephew Lot. When their joint substance became so great, that pasture and other conveniences grew scarce, the natural consequence was, that a strife arose between their servants; so that it was no longer †practicable to dwell together. This contention, Abraham thus endeavored to compose: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." This plainly implies an acknowledged right in either, to occupy whatever ground he

pleased, that was not pre-occupied by other tribes. "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, even as the garden of the Lord. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan, and journeyed east; and Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan."

11. As the world grew by degrees more populous, it daily became more difficult to find out new spots to inhabit, without encroaching upon former occupants; and, by constantly occupying the same individual spot, the fruits of the earth were consumed, and its spontaneous products destroyed, without any provision for future supply or succession. It, therefore, became necessary to pursue some regular method of providing a constant subsistence; and this necessity produced, or at least promoted and encouraged the art of agriculture. And the art of agriculture, by a regular connection and consequence, introduced and established the idea of a more permanent property in the soil, than had hitherto been received and adopted.

12. It was clear, that the earth would not produce her fruits in sufficient quantities, without the assistance of †tillage; but who would be at the pains of tilling it, if another might watch an opportunity to seize upon and enjoy the product of his industry, art, and labor? Had not, therefore, a separate property in lands, as well as movables, been vested in some individuals, the world must have continued a forest, and men have been mere animals of prey. Whereas, now, (so graciously has providence interwoven our duty and our happiness together,) the result of this very necessity has been the ennobling of the human species, by giving it opportunities of improving its *rational*, as well as of exerting its *natural* faculties.

13. Necessity beget property; and, in order to insure that property, recourse was had to civil society, which brought along with it a long train of inseparable †concomitants; states, government, laws, punishments, and the public exercise of religious duties. Thus connected together, it was found that a part only of society was sufficient to provide, by their manual labor, for the necessary subsistence of all; and leisure was given to others to cultivate the human mind, to invent useful arts, and to lay the foundations of science.

## XCV. — BRITISH REFUGEES.

FROM PATRICK HENRY.

EXTRACT from a speech delivered in the Legislature of Virginia, in favor of permitting the British †refugees, or those who had joined the English party in the war of independence, to return to the United States.

1. WE have, Mr. Chairman, an extensive country without population. What can be a more obvious policy, than that this country ought to be peopled? *People* form the strength and constitute the wealth of a nation. I want to see our vast forests filled up, by some process a little more speedy than the ordinary course of nature. I wish to see these states rapidly ascending to that rank, which their natural advantages authorize them to hold among the nations of the earth. Cast your eyes over this extensive country. Observe the †salubrity of your climate; the variety and fertility of your soil; and see that soil intersected in every quarter, by bold, navigable streams, flowing to the east and to the west, as if the finger of heaven were marking out the course of your settlements, inviting you to enterprise, and pointing the way to wealth.

2. Sir, you are destined, at some period or other, to become a great agricultural and †commercial people: the only question is, whether you choose to reach this point by slow †gradations, and at some distant period, lingering on through a long and sickly †minority, subjected meanwhile to the machinations, insults, and oppression of enemies, foreign and domestic, without sufficient strength to resist and chastise them; or whether you choose rather to rush at once, as it were, to the full enjoyment of those high destinies, and be able to †cope, single-handed, with the proudest †oppressor of the world.

3. If you prefer the latter course, as I trust you do, encourage †emigration; encourage the husbandmen, the mechanics, the merchants of the old world to come and settle in the land of promise. Make it the home of the skillful, the fortunate, and the happy, as well as the †asylum of the distressed. Fill up the measure of your population †as speedily as you can, by the means which Heaven has placed in your

power; and I venture to prophesy there are now those living, who will see this favored land among the most powerful on earth; able to take care of herself, without resorting to that policy so dangerous, though sometimes unavoidable, of calling in foreign aid. Yes, they will see her great in arts and in arms; her golden harvests waving over fields of immeasurable extent; her commerce <sup>+</sup>penetrating the most distant seas; and her cannon silencing the vain boast of those who now proudly affect to rule the waves.

4. Instead of refusing permission to the refugees to return, it is your true policy to encourage <sup>+</sup>emigration to this country, by every means in your power. Sir, you must have *men*. You can not get along without them. Those heavy forests of timber, under which your lands are groaning, must be cleared away. Those vast riches which cover the face of your soil, as well as those which lie hid in its bosom, are to be developed and gathered only by the skill and enterprise of men. Your timber must be worked up into ships, to <sup>+</sup>transport the productions of the soil, and find the best markets for them abroad. Your great want is the want of men; and these you *must have*, and *will* have speedily, if you are wise.

5. Do you ask, how you are to get them? Open your doors, sir, and they will come. The population of the old world is full to overflowing. That population is ground, too, by the oppressions of the governments under which they live. They are already standing on tiptoe upon their native shores, and looking to your coasts with a wishful and longing eye. They see here, a land blessed with natural and <sup>+</sup>political advantages, which are not equaled by those of any other country on earth; a land, on which a gracious Providence hath emptied the horn of abundance; a land, over which peace hath now stretched forth her white wings, and where content and plenty lie down at every door.

6. They see something still more <sup>+</sup>attractive than this. They see a land in which Liberty has taken up her abode; that Liberty whom they had considered a fabled goddess, existing only in the fancies of the poets. They see her here, a real <sup>+</sup>divinity; her altars rising on every hand, throughout these happy states; her glories <sup>+</sup>chanted by three millions of tongues; and the whole region smiling under her blessed



influence. Let but this †celestial goddess, Liberty, stretch forth her fair hand toward the people of the old world, tell them to come and bid them welcome; and you will see them pouring in from the north, from the south, from the east, and from the west. Your wilderness will be cleared and settled; your deserts will smile; your ranks will be filled; and you will soon be in a condition to defy the powers of any adversary.

7. But gentlemen object to any †accession from Great Britain, and particularly to the return of the British refugees. Sir, I feel no objection to the return of those deluded people. They have, to be sure, mistaken their own interests most wonderfully, and most woefully have they suffered the punishment due to their offenses. But the relations which we bear to them and to their native country, are now changed. Their king has acknowledged our †independence. The quarrel is over. Peace has returned, and found us a free people.

8. Let us have the magnanimity to lay aside our †antipathies and prejudices, and consider the subject in a political light. They are an enterprising, moneyed people. They will be serviceable in taking off the surplus produce of our lands, and supplying us with necessaries during the infant state of our †manufactures. Even if they be †inimical to us, in point of feeling and principle, I can see no objection, in a political view, to making them †tributary to our advantage. And as I have no prejudices to prevent my making use of them, so I have no fear of any mischief they can do us. Afraid of *them!* What, sir, shall *we*, who have laid the proud British *lion* at our feet, now be afraid of his *whelps?*

CXVI.—ANTONY OVER CÆSAR'S DEAD BODY.

FROM SHAKSPEARE.

FRIENDS, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;  
 I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.  
 The evil that men do, lives after them;  
 The good is oft †inter-red with their bones;  
 So let it be with Cæsar! The noble Brutus  
 Hath told you, Cæsar was ambitious:  
 If it were so, it was a grievous fault,  
 And grievously hath Cæsar answer'd it.