

others from divers evils arising from malice, injustice, violence, and ambition. Such are the persecutions of tyrants, the horrors of war, and so many other public or private calamities to which the good and the bad are indiscriminately subject. It even frequently happens that the authors of all those miseries are those who feel least their effects, whether because they are screened by success from a reverse of fortune, or whether because their hardness is arrived to that pitch as to let them enjoy almost without trouble and remorse the fruit of their iniquities.

as well upon the innocent as the guilty.

3. Again. 'Tis not unusual to see innocence exposed to calumny, and virtue itself become the object of persecution. Now in those particular cases, in which the honest man falls, as it were, the victim of his own virtue, what force can the laws of nature be said to have, and how can their authority be supported? Is the internal satisfaction arising from the testimony of a good conscience, capable alone to determine man to sacrifice his property, his repose, his honor, and even his life? And yet those delicate conjunctures frequently happen; and the resolution then taken may have very important and extensive consequences in relation to the happiness and misery of society.

Sometimes even virtue itself is the cause of persecution.

XIII. Such is indeed the actual state of things. On the one side we see that in general the observance of natural laws is alone capable of establishing some order in society, and of constituting the happiness of man; but on the other it appears that virtue and vice are not always sufficiently characterised by their effects, and by their common and natural consequences,

The means which human prudence employs to remedy those disorders, are likewise insufficient.