

pronouncing on the deserts of each other. It is thus that every individual, liable in his own case to be misled or blinded by the partialities of interest and passion, is placed under the observation and guardianship of his fellows—who, exempted from his personal or particular bias, give forth a righteous sentence and cause it to be heard. A pure moral light is by this means kept up in society, composed of men whose thoughts are ever employed in “accusing or else excusing one another”—so that every individual conscience receives an impulse and a direction from sympathy with the consciences around it. We are aware that the love of applause intervenes at this point as a distinct and auxiliary influence. But the primary influence is a moral one. Each man lives under a consciousness of the vigilant and discerning witnesses who are on every side of him; and his conscience, kept on the alert and kept in accordance with theirs, acts both more powerfully and more purely, than if left to the decay and the self-deception of its own withering solitude. The lamp which might have waxed dim by itself, revives its fading lustre, by contact and communication with those which burn more brightly in other bosoms than its own; and this law of interchange between mind and mind, forms an important adaptation in the mechanism of human society.

8. But, to revert for a moment to the revival of conscience after that its sensibilities had become torpid for a season; and they are quickened anew, as if by sympathy, with the moral judgments of other men. This phenomenon of conscience seems