

By the same reason may a man in the state of nature *punish the lesser breaches* of that law. It will perhaps be demanded,⁸ with death? I answer, each transgression may be punished to that degree, and with so much severity, as will suffice to make it an ill bargain to the offender, give him cause to repent, and terrify others from doing the like. . . .

It is often asked as a mighty objection, "Where are, or ever were there, any men in such a state of nature?" To which it may suffice as an answer at present, that since all princes and rulers of independent governments all through the world are in a state of nature, it is plain the world never was, nor ever will be, without numbers of men in that state. I have named all governors of independent communities, whether they are or are not in league with others—for it is not every compact that puts an end to the state of nature between men, but only this one of agreeing together mutually to enter into one community and make one body politic. Other promises and compacts men may make one with another, and yet still be in the state of nature. The promises and bargains for truck,⁹ and so on, between the two men in the desert¹⁰ island, mentioned by Garcilaso de la Vega¹¹ in his history of Peru, or between a Swiss and an Indian in the woods of America, are binding to them, though they are perfectly in a state of nature, in reference to one another—for truth and keeping of faith belongs to men as men, and not as members of society.

To those that say, there were never any men in the state of nature, I . . . affirm that all men are naturally in that state and remain so, till by their own consents they make themselves members of some politic society. . . .

CHAPTER V. OF PROPERTY

Whether we consider natural *reason*, which tells us that men, being once born, have a right to their preservation, and consequently to meat and drink and such other things as nature affords for their subsistence; or *revelation*, which gives us an account of those grants God made of the world to Adam and to Noah and his sons, it is very clear that God, as King David says (Psalms 115:16), "has given the earth to the children of men"—given it to mankind in common. . . .

God, who has given the world to men in common, has also given them reason to make use of it to the best advantage of life, and convenience. The earth and all that is therein is given to men for the support and comfort of their being. And though all the fruits it naturally produces and beasts it feeds belong to mankind in common, as they are produced by the spontaneous hand of nature; and nobody has originally a private dominion, exclusive of the rest of mankind, in any of them, as they are thus in their natural state: yet being given for the use of men, there must of necessity be a means to appropriate them some way or other, before they can be of any use or at all beneficial to any particular man. The

⁸*demanded*: asked. [D. C. ABEL]

⁹*truck*: barter. [D. C. ABEL]

¹⁰*desert*: desolate. [D. C. ABEL]

¹¹Garcilaso de la Vega (1539–1616) was a Spanish (Peruvian-born) historian. [D. C. ABEL]

fruit or venison which nourishes the wild Indian, who knows no enclosure and is still a tenant in common, must be his, and so his (that is, a part of him) that another can no longer have any right to it, before it can do him any good for the support of his life.

Though the earth and all inferior creatures be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person—this nobody has any right to but himself. The labor of his body and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature has provided and left it in, he has mixed his labor with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state nature has placed it in, it has by this labor something annexed to it that excludes the common right of other men. For this labor being the unquestionable property of the laborer, no man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good, left in common for others.

He that is nourished by the acorns he picked up under an oak, or the apples he gathered from the trees in the wood, has certainly appropriated them to himself. Nobody can deny but the nourishment is his. I ask then, when did they begin to be his? When he digested? or when he ate? or when he boiled? or when he brought them home? or when he picked them up? And it is plain, if the first gathering made them not his, nothing else could. That labor put a distinction between them and common; that added something to them more than nature, the common mother of all, had done—and so they became his private right. And will anyone say he had no right to those acorns or apples he thus appropriated because he had not the consent of all mankind to make them his? Was it a robbery thus to assume to himself what belonged to all in common? If such a consent as that was necessary, man had starved, notwithstanding the plenty God had given him. We see in commons, which remain so by compact, that it is the taking any part of what is common and removing it out of the state nature leaves it in, which begins the property; without which the common is of no use. And the taking of this or that part does not depend on the express consent of all the commoners. Thus the grass my horse has bit, the turfs my servant has cut, and the ore I have dug in any place, where I have a right to them in common with others, become my property, without the assignation or consent of anybody. The labor that was mine, removing them out of that common state they were in, has fixed my property in them. . . .

CHAPTER VII. OF POLITICAL OR CIVIL SOCIETY

. . . Man being born (as has been proved) with a title to perfect freedom and an uncontrolled enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of the law of nature, equally with any other man or number of men in the world, has by nature a power not only to preserve his property—that is, his life, liberty, and estate—against the injuries and attempts of other men, but [also] to judge of and punish the breaches of that law in others, as he is persuaded the offense deserves, even with death itself, in crimes where the heinousness of the fact, in his opinion, requires it. But because no political society can be nor subsist without having in