

upon the study of the Law, I had every possible discouragement to encounter. I had neither friend, books, nor money, and when I began to practise, the only ray of hope that shone upon me was an uncle upon the Superior Bench, whose name alone gave me some countenance; but throughout the course of my life, in the most dreary prospects, I don't know that I ever felt a disposition to despair. I don't mention it as a virtue in me, but it arose from a natural "*Gaîté de cœur*," which I then possessed and which perpetually prompted me to hope that things would be better to-morrow; and this enabled me to make light of present inconveniences, and to look out for and to embrace all the means of mending them within my reach; and could I at your age have been placed in the same circumstances that you are now, I verily believe I should not have envied Kings their wealth or titles.

The warm sentiments with which your last and former letters abound on the subject of my benevolence towards you, I consider as the overflowings of a grateful heart. Gratitude is an amiable affection, but like all the passions and affections of the human mind is apt to run riot in excess when its proper object is presented. To you, what I have done for you is undoubtedly a benefit of some importance, but to me it is trifling. Though you may have gained much I have parted with but *little*—and why should contributing to the happiness of others, without diminishing our own be considered as a cardinal virtue? Why should it be ranked higher than mere duty? especially if the communication of happiness is reciprocal? But if there is return of real benefit the obligation is in a great measure cancelled, and this is truly the case between you and me. Your obliging deportment, your assiduity to be serviceable, your constant endeavour to ease me of all care