

\_Demop\_. But even this moral motive has no effect on the masses unless it is invested with a religious motive, which, at any rate, strengthens it. However, without any such natural foundation, religious motives often in themselves alone prevent crime: this is not a matter of surprise to us in the case of the multitude, when we see that even people of good education sometimes come under the influence, not indeed of religious motives, which fundamentally are at least allegorically true, but of the most absurd superstitions, by which they are guided throughout the whole of their lives; as, for instance, undertaking nothing on a Friday, refusing to sit down thirteen at table, obeying chance omens, and the like: how much more likely are the masses to be guided by such things. You cannot properly conceive the great limitations of the raw mind; its interior is entirely dark, especially if, as is often the case, a bad, unjust, and wicked heart is its foundation. Men like these, who represent the bulk of humanity, must be directed and controlled meanwhile, as well as possible, even if it be by really superstitious motives, until they become susceptible to truer and better ones. Of the direct effect of religion, one may give as an instance a common occurrence in Italy, namely, that of a thief being allowed to replace what he has stolen through the medium of his confessor, who makes this the condition of his absolution. Then think of the case of an oath, where religion shows a most decided influence: whether it be because a man places himself expressly in the position of a mere \_moral being\_, and as such regards himself as solemnly appealed to,--as seems to be the case in France, where the form of the oath is merely "\_je le jure\_" ; and among the Quakers, whose solemn "yea" or

"nay" takes the place of the oath;--or whether it is because a man really believes he is uttering something that will forfeit his eternal happiness,--a belief which is obviously only the investiture of the former feeling. At any rate, religious motives are a means of awakening and calling forth his moral nature. A man will frequently consent to take a false oath, but suddenly refuse to do so when it comes to the point; whereby truth and right come off victorious.