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THE ORIGINS OF INDIVIDUALISM

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ulation, and a steady preference of the greater Happiness.”<sup>2</sup> These ideas accorded with the practical notions of conservatives and of lawyers. They furnished a satisfactory intellectual foundation to the rights of property and to the liberty of the individual in possession to do what he liked with himself and with his own. This was one of the contributions of the eighteenth century to the air we still breathe.

The purpose of promoting the Individual was to depose the Monarch and the Church; the effect—through the new ethical significance attributed to Contract—was to buttress Property and Prescription. But it was not long before the claims of Society raised themselves anew against the individ-

<sup>2</sup> *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, section lx.