

### **Benthammania**

A series of write-ups in respect of Bentham's principles of legislation. Every write up will cover one chapter of the book "Bentham's principles of legislation"

- *Dr. Ajay Nathani*

#### ***Chapter V***

### **Law Relative to Abundance**

Bentham first describes the instincts which create desire in a person to go for abundance. The basic instincts which drive a person to create abundance are attraction of pleasure, the succession of want and objective desire of increasing happiness. This instinct, when there is adequate security provided by the law, will produce a drive in a person to make efforts towards acquisition. There is a basic difference between need and want. Need is the instinct to drive a person for creating subsistence whereas want drives him to make efforts to create abundance. Need arises when there is an acute emergency in the present which will drive a person to make efforts to immediately satisfy the need, whereas want is a type of desire which can wait for satisfaction, however satisfaction of wants and need both create pleasure and happiness. A person having no money to feed his family is in acute need of money and will be driven to do any sort of labour to earn money to satisfy the acute need of money. On the other hand, a person who possesses a motor car wants to acquire a Mercedes and then he will be driven to create more financial resources and will go on saving money to satisfy his want and in the process he will proceed forward to create abundance.

Bentham says that wants and enjoyment drive the man to create a magazine of abundance. The desire of a person goes on increasing but never satisfied and the instinct drives him to create more and more abundance. Each new want brings with it a greater number of wants. The pleasure created by the satisfaction of the wants becomes a new principle of actions. The great governments will create a greater scale of desire to make the people contribute to more labour and thereby proceed to create more and more abundance.

Bentham puts the question what is the wealth of a society? He answers that the sum of all individual wealth is the wealth of the society or wealth of the country. He therefore provides that the government should legislate the law which motivates people to create and collect more and more wealth, by successive movements to the highest possible point.

Bentham describes that abundance is created little by little by the continued operation of some causes which creates subsistence. A person putting his labour to satisfy his need to create subsistence may desire to work more and create some surplus, by collecting this surplus little by little he will be able to create abundance. We have several examples in society where people beginning with poverty ridden life become millionaires driven by their desire to fulfill their

wants and procure pleasure of satisfaction on achieving desired wants. Bentham says that those who claim abundance under the name of luxury, never look at it from this point of view.

Bentham gives a plausible reason as to why he is stressing on achieving abundance and making abundance one of the most important objects of civil law. As per him the tribes or countries, without abundance perish if attacked by bad seasons, wars, accidents of all kinds. Countries where luxury is above the risk of famines. Manufacture of luxury furnishes assurance against famine. Bravery or starch factory which produces the items used by people having abundance, during the time of need be changed or converted into the means of subsistence. The recent pandemic has proved this logic given by the Bentham. The countries with a poor economy and without surplus resources were neither able to test their citizens for Coronavirus, nor they were able to procure vaccine for their citizens, whereas the countries having strong economy and surplus finances were able to provide proper facilities for testing and hospitalisation for their citizens and were also able to vaccinate their citizens at the earliest and control the loss of their economy by unavailability of manpower and closure of markets.

---