

Divine directions for human conduct all tend to the good of the obedient. It might be regarded as self-evident that such directions are designed to be obeyed, when it is considered the author is good: yet some systems of human devising set forth strangely, that although the great Lawgiver has already directed certain courses of conduct, he has at the same time secured, by his unchangeable decree, a contrary course, and these declared contrary purposes of the divine counsel, are manifest when it is said that God's law is broken by acts consistent with his decree. But decrees seem singularly opposed to the law which is "holy, and just, and good," when we place beside the second commandment the announcement of the Westminster divines, that "*God hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.*" The case of making graven images may appear more strikingly plain on this than on some other points of opposition between law and decree: here is a direct command *not* to "make any graven image," while on the other hand it is declared the decree "ordered in all things, and sure," has ordained all the particulars concerning *making* said images for worship; even the calf which Aaron declared "came out," when he had cast the gold into the fire—the date and circumstances of its formation, as well as the exact form, had its proportions defined in the eternal arrangement before Aaron had thought of having it "carved and fashioned," also all the peculiarly deformed formations of unskilled carvers and of depraved fancy, are to be regarded as developments of *original designs* existing in the infinite plan, long before all worlds. The horrid countenances of bloody monster-gods—the image which Nebuchadnezzar set up—the designs of Diana's temple, and the construction of Juggernaut's car, were all only manifestations of the divine arrangement, as well as every little despicable object of Chinese or Hindoo adoration. Whatever metal, wood, stone, or clay, or whatever material composing such supposed deities, and their special moulding, carving, and graving, &c., were, according to the above creed, as fully planned, decreed, and divinely originated, as were the various parts and articles of the Tabernacle of the testimony—*strictly, according to the pattern showed unto Moses in the holy mount.*

Are we then to receive as Christian doctrine what is stated by high Calvinistic authority, A. Toplady, for instance: "*Whatever comes to pass, comes to pass by virtue of the absolute, omnipotent will of God, which is the primary and supreme cause of all things?*" So that while the true God had all this "house of gods" laid up for future bringing forth—having decreed that men *shall* make—determined the number, and pre-