Design of Law.

BY REV. J. H. FULLILOVE.

From the day God said to Adam, "Thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," man has violated every law given to him either by his Maker, his fellow-man, or by himself. Nor has the certainty of punishment, nor the most terrible penalties, been sufficient to keep man from the violation of law. The Czar of Russia can crowd Siberia with victims of disobedience, but others press right on in transgression reckless of penalties. Kentucky can send armed bands of citizen soldiers among her mountain sons to protect her civil authorities in arresting and punishing the factions who settle their feuds in blood. What care the Craig Tolivers for law or penalties? What care they that Kentucky is ashamed at home and dishonored abroad by their illegal and desperate proceedings? Verily, righteousness is not by law.

"You cannot make man sober by law!" True enough; nor truthful, nor honest, nor virtuous, nor peaceable. Men, aye, and women too, will lie in spite of all laws human and divine; social, civil and ecclesiastical. Yes, and they will steal, build we never so many penitentiaries. And be lascivious, though society disowns, death hastens and hell yawns. And commit murder, though for six thousand years Abel's blood has been crying aloud. Not a broken-hearted mother's anguish, a wife's tears, children's sobs, the warnings of conscience, the hangman's rope, nor the terrors of eternal judgment have dulled the dagger's edge nor silenced the voice of the ready-mouthed pistol.

What, then? is law a failure? Some parents act as if we were wiser to let children do as they please, lest parental commandments excite them to disobedience. So, perhaps, reasoned Eli of old, to his sorrow.

Some citizens, seeing that men will gamble and get drunk in spite of law, would have gambling and whiskey-selling regulated by law. Since lotteries and saloons have not been suppressed by law, let them be made to divide their profits with the State. Jesse James might have been living yet a law-abiding citizen, if Missouri had only licensed his highway robberies and accepted a good fee in consideration of his being licensed to do what otherwise he would do anyhow.

But the intention of this article is to bring out the beneficial design of law. I mean all precepts commanding us to do right and forbidding us to do wrong; parental law, social law, civil law, and divine law.

1. *By law is the knowledge of sin.* The first ideas we get of right and wrong are by the commandments of our parents. The child instinctively accepts his parents' commands and prohibitions as the standard of right and wrong.

Later in life we learn that society requires and expects us to comply with certain established customs or suffer the penalty of social criticism. Sins, that in girls are unpardonable by society, are condoned or overlooked in boys. The result is girls generally have a much higher ethical standard than boys. Society more wrongs the boys by her tolerance toward their vices than the girls by the severity of her displeasure toward the same transgression. Let boys learn that drunkenness will bring as prompt, as unrelenting social disgrace to them as to their sisters, and they will be as sober as their sisters.

Men and women abound whose highest ideals of right is borrowed from the enactments of civil law.

Even in the sessions of a Baptist church, I have heard the civil law of Kentucky, allowing betting on races, pleaded as a defense against the charge of gambling. The law of Kentucky authorizes it, therefore it cannot be wrong. A brother minister once defended himself for having married a divorced man to another wife by appealing to the civil law licensing such marriages.

The law of God is a perfect standard of right, and the only one in existence. Fully to accept that standard gives us the highest possible conceptions of good and evil, of right and wrong, of holiness and of sin. As we search the scriptures daily and the Divine Author opens our eyes to behold wonderful things in His law, our knowledge of righteousness increases yet more and more perpetually. As man, unregenerate, learns God's law, he learns, too, at the same time, the guilt and power of sin. Not merely of sin as a transgression of law, but of sin as a principle of his nature that rules his heart, overrides his judgment, forms his character and controls his conduct. Thus sin becomes exceeding sinful.

2. *Law awakens wrath and yet restrains transgression.* The mother's firm tones forbidding the child's doing what she knows is alike wrong in itself and injurious to the child, awakens in that child a burning desire to do what has been forbidden and yet restrains the act. Even when the act is committed, the restraining power is felt, resisted and overcome. This is just as true of the man that slips down some dark alley to enter the illegal saloon, or the "tiger's den," or the house of her "whose steps take hold on Hell," as of the child that stands a-tip-toe and reaches a timid hand to seize forbidden sweets. Law has said, "Thou shalt not," and the man feels the restraint thereof in his soul. He yields to that restraint and is saved from actual transgression, or crushes it under his feet and turns aside to folly.

While law has never succeeded in entirely suppressing any vice or crime, yet every vice and every crime is kept to the minimum by law. There is no exception. Law first educates to know better and then restrains where knowledge has been imparted. Human law makers, from the home circle where parental law rules to the National Legislature, may well remember that their laws are educators in righteousness and restrainers of conduct. What has educated the public conscience to abhor dueling? Social and civil law. What has taught us to detest vice, abhor crime and praise honesty, sobriety and virtue? Law. God's law, man's law. What protects life and property by terrifying evil-doers? What makes the bold burglar quail at the glance of the policeman's eye? What makes the ungodly shudder at the thought of eternity? Law.

3. *But the grandest purpose of the law is to bring us to Christ.* The soul taught to know the guilt and power of sin by law, feeling its helplessness under the demands of law, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, yet destitute of righteousness, weary of sin, yet under its yoke, laden with guilt, but powerless to shake off that guilt, the soul thus taught by law turns for deliverance, for pardon, for life, in simple trust, to Him who bore our sins upon the Cross in His own body, made propitiation, wrought redemption, and is now our Advocate with God.

This law blesses while it curses. While by it sin becomes exceeding sinful, Christ becomes exceeding precious. Therefore we love the very law that condemns us! And its righteousness is fulfilled in us [not by us] who walk by faith.

Finally. Law furnishes the standard by which are measured all rewards and punishments. The child soon learns that obedience contributes to his own happiness in securing parental approval, and that disobedience as surely brings him trouble in awakening his father's anger. So, too, society smiles and nods, or frowns and turns aside, according as her mandates are regarded or treated with contempt. Under the law of Moses every transgression received its just recompense, and in keeping the commandments there was great reward.

The same principle applies in the divine government. God will chastise His children for disobedience, and as certainly bless them in doing His will. Eternal life, salvation, is a free gift of sovereign love; but our religious enjoyment here, why not hereafter? is certainly proportioned to our faithfulness. Some will be saved as by fire, while all they have built being wood, hay, stubble, will be burned up to his loss. He that builds gold, silver, precious stones will receive a reward. Both are saved, but there is a difference. If God has given but one talent He requires that it be used, and he that is faithful in a few things shall be ruler over many.

While all the unregenerate shall suffer eternal cutting off, yet it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the cities that rejected Jesus. Every one shall receive according to his deeds in heaping up wrath against the day of wrath.—*Western Recorder.*

The Denominations.

There are everywhere those who are fond of talking about non-denominationalism as the great need of the Christian church. There are too many denominations, they say, and the denominations are too narrow in their views of duty, their interest does not extend beyond their own borders, they are not concerned about the non-church-going, they are wholly taken up with routine, etc., etc. They claim that the great need is undenominational work, and then proceed to advise organization according to their views. This sounds very well, and not a few good people are inclined, off-hand, to fall in with it. It is better, though, to examine the subject a little. Examination will, we think, show that the denominations which are charged with doing little or nothing as it should be done, are, after all, doing all the great Christian work which abides, and which, in turn, makes itself felt in blessing on the world's life.

That there may be denominationalism which is nothing else, is quite true; and where this exists it is, doubtless, a hindrance to the evangelistic spirit that should characterize every Christian body. But it is not true of the denominations generally. Nor does strong attachment of members to the denomination of their choice necessarily make them less concerned for the Kingdom of Christ at large, nor less zealous for the salvation of men everywhere and by every Christian instrumentality. A denomination represents an understanding of Bible doctrine, and is an exemplification of Christian spirit and an organization of Christian activities. In so far as it is these, those who are members of it do well to be thoroughly loyal to it, to pray and pay and work for its success, for by doing so they contribute, in the best and effective way, their part to Christian work. There is no work so good in the main, and so fruitful of the best and most permanent results, as that done by the denominations.

True Christian union of spirit and effort is more encouraged, than hindered by evangelical denominations; while much of the history of undenominational movements goes to show that they create in its most unreasonable and offensive form the very spirit of sectarianism against which they loudly protest, and to cure which they claim is their chief mission.

When the members of a denomination are urged to be true to it, it is not to be understood as a call to be narrow and unbrotherly, but to give the best exhibition of the truth and spirit of the gospel, and to be in the largest degree active for the advancement of the kingdom and glory of Christ. These things are never so well done as by loyal adherence to the doctrines and support of the activities of the body with which they are connected. —*Intelligencer.*

A Story from Japan.

At a meeting in Japan where a number of Christian girls were gathered together, the subject was, "How to glorify Christ by our lives." One of the girls said:

"It seems to me like this. One spring my mother got some flower seed; little, ugly, black things, and planted them; they grew and blossomed beautifully. One day a neighbor coming in and seeing those flowers, said, 'Oh! how beautiful! I must have some too; won't you please give me some seed?' Now, if this neighbor had only just seen the flower seed she wouldn't have called for them; 'twas only when she saw how beautiful was the blossom that she wanted the seed.

"And so with Christianity; when we speak to our friends of the truths of the Bible they seem to them hard and uninteresting, and they say: 'We don't care to hear about these things; they are not as interesting as our own stories.' But when they see these same truths blossoming out in our lives into kindly words and good acts, then they say, 'How beautiful these lives! What makes them different from other lives?' When they hear that 'tis the Jesus teaching, then they say, 'We must have it too.'

"And thus, by our lives, more than by our tongues, we can preach Christ to our unbelieving friends."—*Exchange.*

"Lest They Should Hear the Law."

Men do not want to hear it. They think where there is no law there is no transgression; if they can keep themselves out of the way of the moralist, they will keep themselves out of the way of the judge; do not let us hear the commandment, then we cannot be said to be disobeying them. There is some conscience yet left them, when a man says he will run away from church because it plagues him; he cannot steal so well after it as he can before it, so he will play truant to-day and thieve with both hands. Wondrous conscience, persecuting, tormenting conscience! on the other hand, sympathetic, approving, inspiring conscience! A man goes down in proportion as he will not hear the law, and he becomes elevated and ennobled in volume and in quality of character in proportion as he hears it and answers it with a loving life. You can tell very well when a man is an atheist. The atheist cannot hide his face; he does not know himself to be what he is in reality to the gaze of true criticism. He is a man who is trying to make himself happy and that always fails, conjuring himself as who should say, Now, soul, cheer thee, be glad! and the soul cannot answer the thong of that appeal. The soul says in reality, No, sir, no; we are playing a bad game, we are the victims of an evil trick, we are trying to laugh when in our souls there is an ineffable blank and sorrow.

Law-hearing, in the sense of law-obeying, brightens the countenance, attunes the voice, gives the whole man a new bearing, enters into the very grasp of his hand, so that he can pass to another a message of fellowship and trust and brotherhood, understood of them, though without word, without vocable, or sign patent to others. They did not like to retain God in their hearts. That is the explanation of all your bad business and wicked dealing and sharp practice and gluttony and wine-bibbing and self-indulgence; you ousted God, and then called in the devil; you had a night's riot, but the next morning you were a pitiable spectacle of moral depletion, self-accusation, and on-coming despair. A man is never so much in hell as the very moment after he has done what he thought would bring him his chiefest joy, if that chiefest joy be not morally, spiritually, divinely pure. O what a sight were these federal parents of ours while yet their teeth were in the forbidden fruit! Before they had swallowed the substance the juice had run down and poisoned the very fount of truth, and joy and music. It was night then. It was more merciful to run away from Eden even at the bidding of a divine expulsion than to remain there. The very blackness of the environment would help men to bear their trouble, their penalty. That is how the prisoner can bear his nine months' solitary confinement because he is holding monologue and saying to himself: It is not severe enough; I did it; I plotted it. All this is too little; this is all the magistrate can do; O that my environment were even more hopeless! I could bear it as if I were getting outside some balance to that which is inside, and thus establishing an equipoise that would be equal to a kind of grim satisfaction. Heaven would be more hell than hell itself to a fallen angel that was not allowed to escape from the sanctity he had violated. You think you will not go to hear the commandments until you have accomplished a certain purpose of vice. The commandments would be in you like ten accusing spirits, and you might break down in your conspiracy against your Father in heaven. You are going to do some special piece of bad work on Monday; you are going to oppress the weak, or rob the poor, or mislead the unsuspecting; so you will not be well on Sunday; that will be better; you will miss the sermon. You can prepare yourself best for the devil's service by avoiding God's. So you harden your heart lest you should hear the law, and therefore you go forth bereft by so much of moral monition and spiritual expostulation and heart torment accasioned by the resounding of divine words in the memory of your soul.—*Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker.*

Eternal Life.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

Eternal life is imparted by grace through faith. When it first enters the soul it comes as God's free gift. The dead cannot earn life; the very supposition is absurb. Eternal life enjoyed on earth comes to us as a gift. "What!" saith one, "do you mean to say that eternal life comes into the soul here?" I say yes, here, or else never. Eternal life must be our possession now; for if we die without it it will never be our possession in the world to come, which is not the state of probation, but of fixed and settled reward. When the flame of eternal life first drops into a man's heart, it is not as the result of any good works of his which preceded it, for there were none; nor as the result of any feelings of his, for good feelings were not there till the life came. Both good works and good feeling are the fruit of the heavenly life which enters the heart, and makes us conscious of its entrance by working in us repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. "Eternal life is the gift of God in Jesus Christ." By faith we come consciously into Christ. We trust Him, we rest upon Him, we become one with Him, and thus eternal life manifests itself. Has He not said, "I give unto My sheep eternal life;" and again, "He that believeth in Him hath everlasting life?" Oh, beloved, you that have been quickened by the Spirit of God, I am sure you trace that first quickening to the grace of God. Whatever your doctrinal views may be, you are all agreed in the experimental acknowledgment that by the grace of God you are what you are. How could you, being dead, give yourself life? How could you, being the slave of sin, set yourself free? But the Lord in mercy visited you as surely as the Lord Jesus Christ visited the tomb of Lazarus; and He spoke, with His almighty voice, and bade you come to life, and you arose and came to life at His bidding. You remember well the change that came upon you. If any man here could have been literally dead, and then could have been brought to life, what a wonderful experience his would have been! We should go a long way to hear a story of a man who had been dead, and then was made alive again. But, I tell you, his experience, if he could tell it, would not be any more wonderful than our experience as quickened from death in sin; for we have suffered the pains that come through the entrance of life into the soul, and we know the joys which afterwards come of it. We have seen the light that life brings to the spiritual eye; we have felt the emotions that life brings to the quickened heart; we have known the joys which life, and only life, can bring to the entire man. We can tell you something about things, but if you want to know them to the full you must feel them for yourselves. "Ye must be born again." We bear our witness that eternal life within our spirit is not of our earning, but the gift of God.

Beloved, since we received eternal life, we have gone on to grow, and we have made great advances in the divine life; our little trembling faith has now grown to be full assurance; that zeal of ours which burned so low that we hardly dared to attempt anything for Jesus has now flamed up into full consecration, so that we live to His praise. Whence has this growth come? Is it not still a free gift? Have you received an increase of life by the law, or has it come to you as the free gift of God? I know what you will say; and if any of you have so grown in grace that you have become ripe Christians; if any of you have been taught of God so that you can teach others; if any of you have been led by the Holy Spirit so that your sanctification is known unto all men, and you have become saintly men and women; I am sure that your holiness and maturity are still gifts received, and not wages earned. I will put the question to you again: Did this abundant life come to you by the works of the law, or by grace through faith which is in Christ Jesus? Your instantaneous answer is, "It is all of grace, in the latter as well as in the earlier stages." Yes, in every degree the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Yes; and when we get to heaven, and the eternal life shall there be developed as a bud opens into a full-blown rose; when our life shall embrace God's life, and God's life shall compass ours; when we shall be abundantly alive to everything that is holy, divine, heavenly, blessed, and eternally glorious; oh, then we shall confess that our life was all of the grace of God, the free gift of God in Jesus Christ our Lord! I am sure that our heavenly education will only make us know more and more fully that while death is the well-earned wages of sin, eternal life is from beginning to end the gift of infinite grace.

Missionary Intelligence.

The receipts of the American Baptist Home Mission Society during the past year were $449,444.94. The number of laborers employed was 833; the number of schools 25.

The McCormick Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Chicago will send seven of its thirty-nine graduates at once to the foreign field. It is doubtful if any seminary of any denomination contributes a larger proportion of its graduates this year to the missionary service.

The native churches in Japan, under the care of the American Board, organized, half a dozen years ago, a Home Missionary Society. It has flourished so well that the demands of the work now justify the appointment of a paid president, who will devote all his time to establishing new churches and strengthening those already existing.

One can admire the courage, if not the wisdom, of the seven young men from Kansas and Minnesota who, stirred by H. Grattan Guinness's appeals for Africa, have resolved to start immediately for the Dark Continent, without seeking further preparation or the backing of any society. They were all in business, and most of the distinctively religious work which they have done has been as officers and members of Y. M. C. Associations. One has already reached Africa and the others will follow soon, their intention being to strike for the Soudan, and to preach the gospel in places where it has never been proclaimed. Those still in this country are making addresses with a view to securing as many more recruits as possible. They seem to rely on chance gifts, and they express an unbounded confidence in the providential supply of their needs. This method, as we have suggested, appeals to the heroic in men, but there must be grave doubt whether it is the method which Christ would sanction to-day as the most judicious means of carrying forward the great foreign missionary movement.—*Congregationalist.*

A somewhat sizable bone of contention just now in the constituency of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, which directs the foreign work of English Methodists, is the question as to the style of living which its representatives in India should maintain. Hugh Price Hughes, the well-known London preacher, while disfavoring an ascetic mode of life, avers that the missionaries would come nearer the natives if they spent less money on their own food, clothing, and household furniture. He thinks they yield unconsciously to the tendency observable among other British residents of India to maintain a more luxurious establishment than the nature of their work warrants. To support Mr. Hughes' criticism, Dr. Lunn, who has served a number of years in India, brings forward an array of figures designed to show that the missionaries could live very comfortably on less than two-thirds of the amount now appropriated them for food, clothing, books and servants. Coming from so high a source, these strictures on missionary methods will attract more attention than the conventional flippant criticism of this sort. The executive committee of this Wesleyan Society is considering carefully the whole subject. Very few persons, however, acquainted with the foreign field, believe that the average missionary is in danger of caring too much for things carnal.

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Deacon Smith's Conversion.

"My wife keeps tellin' me it's my bounden duty to let the brethren know how I wuz converted. Now I've been a pillar of the church nigh on to fifty years and deacon of our little church in Pineville for more than thirty year, and still it wuz only six months ago that I wuz soundly converted. I never tried to write out my experience before, though many's the time I've told it over in meetin' with a deal of sinful pride, I'm thinkin' now. To begin with I'm terrible set in my own opinion. Conservative is what I used to call it before I wuz converted. In these days of rush and tumble, Endeavor sociables and the whir and hum of 'new-fangled notions,' it did seem to me some one ought to 'set his face like a flint' against all these goin's on. To be sure I was usually in the minority; but wasn't that a proof of my single-hearted aim and purpose? Somehow it allers cheered my heart to feel I didn't want to be like other nations; I'd rather be one of the Lord's 'pecooliar' people. I'm free to confess sense my eyes were opened that I wuz pecooliar sure enough, but it wuz mostly for the glory of Deacon Smith instead of the Lord. My pride wuz humbled and that's the only reason the Lord had mercy on me and converted my soul. It came through a change of pastors we had in Pineville parish. The idol of my heart wuz Parson Morgan. He wuz strait as an arrer, had a voice like a trumpet and didn't believe in these queer ideas of modern times any more'n than I ever did. He allers consulted me about his plans for the spiritooal advancement of his people, and many's the edifyin' talks we've had bewailin' the sins of the young and risin' generation.

"Now Pineville parish, sense they've built the new factories and sech like buildin's, is fillin' up with a young and triflin' congregation. Parson Morgan was too strict, didn't even believe in women's speakin' in meetin', some of 'em said, because he had sech a smart wife, if she once had a chance she'd preach enuff sight smarter'n himself. First one objection then another came up, and nothin' must do but he must go. I see the congregation wuz growin' smaller all the time; but it was a sore blow to me when Parson Morgan came over to me one day and sed he should go and leave this perverse generation to shift for themselves. And then we went to candidatin.' I could hardly believe my ears when I found they hed about decided to give a call to a young upstart who wasn't thirty years old. 'Just finished his college course,' they sed, with no experience at all of course.

"I felt a 'righteous indignation' at their lack of judgment, but nothin' would do but he must come, and come he did. I can't deny that his sermons were smart, though sometimes they wuz leetle unsound to my way of thinkin'. The congregation began to grow, the prayer-meetin' and Sunday-school to fill up, and I couldn't help feelin' riled to hear everybody praisin' him when they were so dead sot agin Parson Morgan. The first thing I knew he wuz a talkin' to a Unitarian minister, very sociable like, belongin' to a Shakespeare club, and never askin' a word of advice from Deacon Smith, whom Parson Morgan allers consulted. I've found out sense he wuz afraid of me, I looked so stern and forbiddin', and I don't know as I wonder. He played ball with the boys and seemed so triflin' I made up my mind the pulpit wuz a mistake for such a light-headed feller as he. But don't you think one of my old neighbors came to me one day with tears in her eyes and sed her son 'indulged in a hope,' and it wuz all because the minister played ball and wuz so jolly with him, he'd begun to think religion wuzn't a bad thing to have after all. Of course I wuz glad to have the boy converted, but I thought kinder bitter how Parson Morgan had labored and prayed over him and it had done no good.

"One night I was settin' by the fire, wishin' I could see Parson Morgan, when the bell rang and my wife showed our minister, Mr. Mason, into the room. Of course I shook hands with him, and I wuz jest thinkin' how awkward it was for us to be alone together, when he burst out, 'Deacon Smith, I can bear it no longer! I must have the comfort of being supported by your sympathy. Parson Morgan has told me how much he relied upon you, and I thought of course I was sure of one true friend in these new duties. Some one told me you didn't approve of a minister's playin' ball and such like, but can't you see I want to get a hold some way upon those of my age. I suppose you and Parson Morgan could sympathize with each other in many things I know nothing of, because he was so much older than I, and had had a wide experience of other years of ministry. But you know I must commence somewhere, and I've felt so drawn to these young folks that I try to think of all sorts of ways to reach them. I'm so much interested in that Shakespeare club to-morrow night, for a young man has promised to be there, that I've tried so often to win into our prayer-meetings. Will you not pray with me that his heart may be touched in some way to-morrow night so he will not refuse me again, but will venture into some of our meetings?' And before I knew it we were on our knees actually prayin' for that Shakespeare club!

"The Holy Spirit showed me very plainly my wilfulness and stubbornness as never before, because I wanted the parson and people to walk in ways of my own choosin' instead of bein' willin', like the dear brother, to walk with them in what wuzn't wrong if so be some might be saved. And then I prayed for Parson Mason with a full heart and runnin' over, that the Lord would give him abundant success in fishin' for men. I prayed for Deacon Smith that he might, like Aaron and Hur, stay up the parson's hands when he was sorely burdened with the work. After we rose from our knees, Parson Mason took me by the hand and sed in a chokin' voice, 'God bless you my brother? I can do double the work to know that I am supported by the deacons of my church.' Sometimes I go and pray with Parson Mason and sometimes he comes to me, but I object no more to his new fangled notions sense I've hed that look into the parson's heart and my own. I've found out sense I wuz actually hinderin' the work of grace in Pineville, because I wuz so stubborn.

"Hopin' I may help some of the brethren by experience of mine, I am very truly yours, DEACON SMITH."
—*National Baptist.*

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