

## The Laws of God.

BY GEO. W. ARMSTRONG.

I would like to reach the young people who are about "finishing their education" and who will shortly be entering upon the more serious duties of life. There are many brief biographies of men recorded in the Bible—Joseph Daniel, Nehemiah and Joshua—and the foundation principles of their lives were solid, strong and true, hence the superstructure has lasted through the ages as the model for all the generations; and success in any department of human thought and enterprise can only be accomplished in its highest and most lasting sense when the same principles underlie life with its progressive aspirations. Take the first chapter of the Book of Joshua, and if its teachings are followed, not only will life be a success, but failure would be an impossibility.

Joshua is being installed into office as the successor of Moses, the leader and deliverer of the children of Israel. The position is made the more responsible because of the manner in which the duties had been discharged by his predecessor, whose career had been one of supreme success. Success is what most men aim at, and all desire; and the ambition is laudable if the object to be achieved is right, and the mode adopted for its accomplishment in harmony with just and honest principles.

God states to Joshua one great and broad principle, which, if acted upon, will make his life a complete success. That principle is: *Rigid observance of God's law.* This advice tendered to Joshua is needed by all, and doubtless it has been recorded in the volume of inspiration that all succeeding generations might be benefited by it.

In meditating upon this divine counsel, the following thoughts arise: God's law, observe to do according to all the law.

One characteristic of God's law is that it is IMMUTABLE—IT NEVER CHANGES. Human statutes are liable to change. The circumstances and growth of a nation may require their abrogation. Hence we find in every senate chamber of civilization the spirit of change and reform, showing that the enactments of one age may be altogether unsuitable and distasteful to succeeding generations. But it is not so with the laws of God; they, like Himself, are immutable, and any deviation from the established order of things we regard as miraculous and supernatural.

God's laws, like all His works, are adapted to all times and require the obedience of all mankind. Sometimes, but very rarely indeed, have some of the laws by which the universe is governed been suspended, but such temporary suspension or alteration are looked upon as miraculous, and only goes to prove how unchangeable are the ways of God.

But these changes, even when they do take place, are kept within the limit of laws which govern physical things. Who ever heard of God suspending a moral law? These are without variation or shadow of turning. God's commandments are: Do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother, etc. These laws have always existed since the necessity for them, and will continue to exist. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled," Matt., v. 18. God in His mercy on certain conditions may forgive moral transgression, but suspend the operations of moral law—never!

Another characteristic of the law of God is: ITS CERTAINTY OF OPERATION.

"Every transgression shall receive its just recompense of reward." Science may devise means to thwart for a time the punishment

## THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

for disobeying physical laws, but nevertheless their operation is certain sooner or later. Just as certain as that fire burns or water drowns, so will debauchery and licentiousness destroy the constitution. These habits may be practised secretly, but "be sure thy sin will find thee out." Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, and in most cases they indulge in their unlawful and sinful practises when they suppose no eye sees, forgetting there is an EYE far above the stars looking down upon them, an EYE, too, which penetrates the deepest gloom and to which darkness and light are both alike; and He who sees is the author of the laws thus transgressed. "His eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," and just as certain as that His laws exist, so sure will be the punishment for their transgression. "Remember that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment."

A further characteristic of God's law is ITS PERFECT IMPARTIALITY.

God is no respecter of persons, and sin is as offensive in His sight whether practised by prince or peasant. The laws of God operate with the same degree of certainty in the palace of the rich as in the lowly habitation of the poor. Law exists everywhere, and they who try to break from it do so at their own peril. Kings may scoff and princes laugh, but the Lord will have them in derision. "He hath established His throne in the heavens and His kingdom ruleth over all;" and shall not the King of the whole earth do right? Yea, for His laws are impartial, and he who sins shall die.

But beyond the laws of God being unchangeable, certain and impartial, they are also pure, just, holy, perfect, true and good. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; and the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; Ps. 19. "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and true;" Rom. 7: 12.

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### Possibilities of Early Morning.

Whatever is too precious, too tender, too good, too evil, too shameful, too beautiful for the day, says Crockett in the "Lilac Sunbonnet," happens in the night. Night is the bath of life, the anodyne of heartaches, the silencer of passions, the breeder of them, too; the teacher of those who would learn, the cloak that shuts a man in with his own soul. The seeds of great deeds and great crimes are alike sown in the night. The good Samaritan doeth his good by stealth; the wicked one cometh and soweth his tares among the wheat. The lover and the lustful person, the thief and the thinker, the preacher and the poacher, are abroad in the night. In factories and mills, beside the ceaseless whirl of machinery, stand men to whom day is night and night is day. In cities the guardians of the midnight go hither and thither with measured step under the drizzling rain. No man cares that they are lonely and cold. Yet, nevertheless, both light and darkness, night and day, are but the accidents of a little time.

It is twilight—the twilight of the morning and of the gods—that is the true normal of the universe. Night is but the shadow of the earth, light the nearness of the central sun. But when the soul of man goeth its way beyond the confines of the little multiplied circles of the system of the sun, it passes at once into the dim twilight of space, where for myriads of myriad miles there is only the grey of the earliest God's gloaming, which existed just so since ever the world

was, and shall be when the world is not. Light and dark, day and night, are but the lights of a station at which the train does not stop. They whisk past, gleaming bright but for a moment, and the world which came out of great twilight plunges again into it, perhaps to be re-made and re-illuminated on some eternal morning.

It is good for man, then, to be oftimes abroad in the early twilight of the morning. It is primeval instinct with possibilities of thought and action. Then, if at all, he will get a glimpse into his soul that may happen to startle him. Judgment and the face of God justly angry seem more likely and actual things than they do in the city, where the pavements are thronged, and at every turning some one is ready for good or evil to hail you "fellow."

### The Calvin Museum at Geneva.

BY REV. JAMES I. GOOD, D. D.

Geneva is one of the most interesting cities of Europe, especially to the Reformed. While Zurich may be said to be the birthplace of the Reformed, Geneva became their centre or capital city, especially during the life of Calvin. From Geneva the influence of Calvin streamed out into every part of Europe. It is indeed somewhat remarkable that the capital or centre of the Reformed world should have been at its circumference geographically, for Geneva was the last Reformed city—nearest to Rome. And several times the neighboring Catholics tried to capture Geneva, once almost succeeding, in the famous Escalade. The danger of Geneva is all the more apparent when we remember that her connection with the Protestant lands north of her was only through a very narrow strip of land along the west coast of the Lake of Geneva. Geneva is the miracle of European history. Nothing but a special divine providence preserved it to the Reformed.

Geneva is interesting to-day because of her past Reformation history. There are still a number of places shown that are connected with Calvin's life. Of course the city has grown very much since his time and obliterated the old landmarks of the Reformation. Thus we would like to have found the garden where the Reformed celebrated their first Lord's Supper, but that is all covered over by modern houses. Happily, Calvin's church, St. Peter's, still remains—a beautiful specimen of the Gothic architecture. And in it they still show Calvin's chair, as stiff and straight-backed as his theology is supposed by some to be. They will show you his house not far from the church, but as it was not built till after his day it is not worth visiting. They also show in the cemetery a stone in which are cut the letters J. C., which is said to mark his last resting-place. But this is not likely, as he forbade his grave to be marked. Calvin was too modest to ask for fame.

There is, however, another place generally overlooked by tourists, which is a vivid reminder of Calvin's work. It is his college, founded by him in 1539 over the door of which are the latin words "Post tenebras lux" (After the darkness light). There ever since his time ministers have been prepared for their work.

It is the oldest Reformed theological seminary. Just before it is the little park, "Promenade de St. Antoine," under whose trees, when Robert Haldane in 1816 was privately teaching the students of that theological seminary the way back to Christ's and Calvin's gospel, the rationalistic professor of Theology Chenevieve walked up and down in rage at his impotence to stop Haldane's evangelical influence on the stu-