

Natural Law.

IN this time of war and strife, when nation faces nation, when army faces army, fleet faces fleet, and man faces man, all intent upon the crushing of that powerful and well-matched opponent, the country's laws are but an unsteady rule for national government, liable to be changed at any time. It requires but a thought, and those in charge of the country's affairs may suspend, alter or repeal, at a moment's notice, the most common law we obey. In every land this is being done to meet such emergencies as arise from time to time, while in Europe to-day we find countries whose code of civil laws has been entirely suspended and replaced by martial law as the sole measure of right and wrong.

But there is a law which is not changeable, and which, unlike the Positive Law, not even such a great emergency as a war can suspend. This is the Natural Law—that law which we feel within us and which guides us in life by telling us what is right and what is wrong. “Avoid evil and do good” are the words which are continually being whispered in our ear. And whether we follow this direction or not, and whether we believe it to be obliging or not, this Natural Law always remains universal, manifest, unchangeable and reducible to the one principle of avoiding evil and doing good.

It is Natural Law which tells man not to steal, and even were the civil authorities not to determine this action as wrong, man would still feel that in doing it he went against his inward dictate, his conscience applying the Natural Law to his each separate act. It is Natural Law which tells man to destroy that pride which would lead to egotistic principles, and thus the church, by its positive law, is not alone in commanding the suppression of this vice. It is Natural Law which tells man to obey the ten commandments given to him by God, and these ten commandments, which for centuries have been obliging upon man, are only written forms of ten obligations which have always existed as part of Natural Law. And, again, it is Natural Law which leads man to obey his God, to acknowledge Him as his creator, and to realize the grand design of the Divine Providence, which is based on Eternal Law.