



Natural Law and Legal Practice Lectures Delivered at the Law School of Georgetown University

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1899 edition. Excerpt: ...come to the duties of parents to their children. By Blackstone they are reduced to three: maintenance, protection, education. Four evident reasons show that this threefold duty follows directly from natural law: 1st, Every moral agent is accountable for the consequences of his own acts, so far as he can foresee them on him it is incumbent to provide that those consequences be not hurtful, but beneficial. But the birth of children is the result of an act of the free will of their parents. Therefore it is the bounden duty of the parents to see that the life which they have given be not a curse, but a blessing. It could not be a blessing were the duties mentioned, especially that of education, neglected therefore it is the duty of the parents to provide for the maintenance, protection, and education of their children and that duty would exist of necessity even if positive law should fail to sanction it for even in that case the natural relation of parents to children would remain essentially unchanged. 2d. As we have seen, the end of nature in the marriage relation is to secure the continuance and perfection of the human race but this purpose would evidently be defeated if the three obligations above-mentioned were neglected by the parents therefore these obligations are laid upon them by nature itself. Blackstone says: The last duty of parents to their children is that of giving them an education suitable to their station in life a duty pointed out by reason, and of far the greatest importance of any. For, as Pufendorf very well observes, it is not easy to imagine or allow that a parent has conferred any considerable benefit upon his child by bringing him into the world, if he afterward entirely neglects his culture and...

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