

THE LAW OF CRIMES

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The law of crimes by John Wilder May

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JOHN WILDER MAY

**THE LAW
OF CRIMES**

THE
LAW OF CRIMES.

By JOHN WILDER MAY,
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OFFICER FOR BOSTON.

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P R E F A C E.

IN the following pages the author has endeavored to state briefly the general principles underlying the Criminal Law, and to define the several common-law crimes, and such statutory crimes — *mala in se*, and not merely *mala prohibita* or police regulations¹ — as may be said to be common statute crimes.

The brevity of this treatise did not admit of a history of what the law has been, nor a discussion of what it ought to be; but only a statement of what it is. In the cases cited will be found ample learning upon the first of these points. Digressions upon the second would be out of place in a book designed as a lawyer's and student's hand-book.

The alphabetical arrangement has been adopted in the second chapter, as, on the whole, more convenient for the practising lawyer. The student, however, will perhaps find it to his advantage, on first peru-

¹ On the question of the limitation of this power of police regulation, see 2 Kent's Com. 840; *Com. v. Alger*, 7 Cush. (Mass.) 53; *Thorp v. R. & B. Railroad Co.*, 27 Vt. 149; *Slaughter-House Cases*, 16 Wall. (U. S.) 36.

sal, instead of reading consecutively, to pursue the more scientific method of grouping the titles ; taking first, for instance, crimes against the person, — as Assault, Homicide, and the other crimes where force applied to the person is a leading characteristic ; then crimes against property, — as Larceny, Embezzlement, Cheating, False Pretences, and the like, where fraud is a leading characteristic ; to be followed by Robbery, Burglary, Arson, Malicious Mischief ; and concluding with such crimes as militate against the public peace, safety, morals, good order, and policy, — as Nuisances generally, Treason, Blasphemy, Libel, Adultery, and the like.

If the author has succeeded in his design, the practising lawyer may readily find within the compass of these few pages the law which he seeks, and the authorities in its support.

J. W. M.

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