

THE AMERICAN SENTINEL.

“Corrupted freemen are the worst of slaves.”

VOLUME 1.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY, 1886.

NUMBER 2.

The American Sentinel.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE
PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING COMPANY,
OAKLAND, CAL.

Entered at the Post-office in Oakland.

Effect of National Religion.

THE *Examiner and Chronicle* is the leading Baptist paper of this country. When the National Reform Association was formed, and the object announced, to procure a religious amendment to the Constitution of the United States, this paper said:—

“This agitation for a national religion, officially professed, has, for its logical outcome, persecution—that, and nothing more nor less. It is a movement backward to the era of Constantine; as far below the spirituality of the New Testament as it is below the freedom of republican America.”

The State and the Church.

In 1848 Baptist W. Noel (England), a writer of acknowledged ability, published a work on the subject of Church and State, in which he reviewed some of the positions taken by Mr. Gladstone on this subject. His work was not a review of Gladstone, as was Macaulay's essay, but his points are equally well made. Unlike Macaulay, he is “a dissenter” and a minister. The following extract is from Mr. Noel's book, page 29:—

“How many members of Parliament profess to trust wholly in Christ for their salvation from hell, and therefore make his word their exclusive rule of conduct? If the majority are without this faith, they are unchristian and ungodly; and the union between the church and the State, is the union between the churches of Christ and a body of unconverted men—it is the union of the church with the world. And since all who are not with Christ are against him, it is the union of his friends with his enemies. The effect of the union does not depend upon what the State ought to be, but upon what it is; and to advocate the union because the State is bound to be evangelical, is the same thing as to say that a thief should be made the trustee of a property because he is bound to be honest; or that the Lord's supper should be administered to a drunken profligate because he is bound to be virtuous and sober. The advocates of the union constantly argue, not from what the State is, but from what it ought to be; and infer most erroneously the effect of the union of the churches with the actual State from what they suppose would be the effect of their union with the Utopian State. The actual State is irreligious, and the churches are bound to dissolve their union with it.”

Secularized Christianity.

IN the first number of the SENTINEL, we pointed out some of the unavoidable consequences of legalizing Christianity in our Government. The points there set forth are so clear and undeniable that we do not fear contradiction on any one of them. To place the laws and usages of Christianity on a “legal basis,” as the “National Reform Association” demands, is to so relate them to the Government that they may be enforced by law. But as to what is Christian law, usage, or institution, or as to the intention and manner of observance of these laws and institutions, there is a world-wide difference of opinion in the United States. How shall these differences be reconciled, or by what authority shall these conflicts of faith and practice be adjusted? On this point we affirmed as follows:—

“The court is necessarily constituted the judge and exponent of the law; and therefore if disagreement arises as to the meaning of the law, or as to what constitutes a misdemeanor in the premises, the court is the authority, and the sole authority, to which appeal must be made.”

That is to say, that the court shall decide what is and what is not a Christian law or institution, and how Christian laws and institutions shall or shall not be observed, and what is and what is not a violation of the laws of Christianity. This cannot be denied. And it would be no relief from this sad state of things to refer questions of Christian law to a body of ecclesiastics for decision; for (1) No body of ecclesiastics can reconcile all conflicting views; they would simply express their own views of the questions; (2) The court would have to enforce their decision; and (3) It would still remain true that Christian faith and practice would be removed from the domain of individual conscience, where they properly belong, and placed in the hands of a legal tribunal. It would be a long step backward toward “the Dark Ages,” for which we trust the American people are not prepared.

It is a matter of surprise that any intelligent person can suppose that the cause of Christianity would be benefited by a formal declaration in our Constitution that the Bible is the supreme rule of the conduct of the nation. If such a declaration were incorporated into our Constitution to-day, it would not in the least change the attitude of the people toward the principles which the Bible inculcates. It is pertinent to inquire, What is the actual attitude of the people toward the Bible? And what effect would such a declaration have upon the Christianity of the nation?

Dividing the whole nation into two classes, we shall find that they who profess to love and reverence the Bible are greatly in the minority. A small fraction of the people of the United States habitually attend those services where the Bible is taught as the word of God. The great majority are altogether indifferent to the Bible. Many of this class may profess respect for it; but it is such respect as they would profess for a citizen who was somewhat popular with some of their neighbors, but for whom they personally cared nothing. Christian society may hold them somewhat under restraint; otherwise they live very much as if there were no Bible in existence.

And of those who habitually attend places of public worship, only a part—and we think the smaller part—have real love for the Bible, and earnestly strive to make it the rule of their conduct. Many go to the churches under the impulse of various selfish and worldly motives. The real lovers of the Bible and of Bible truth, who are willing to sacrifice self and the world to conform to its teachings, are literally a “little flock.” In this judgment we are not unmindful or ignorant of the real standing of Christianity in the world. We only recognize facts, and pay respect to the words of our Saviour, who declared that the way to life is a narrow way, wherein few are found, and that the broad way, where the multitude go, is the way to destruction.

Of those who profess faith in the Bible, and are members of churches, we have no need to make divisions; they have saved us that trouble. They are scattered in some hundreds of denominations, with every conceivable faith concerning the teachings and intentions of the Scriptures. How far they are right, and how far they are wrong, it is not our province to inquire. That each and all of them have some truth, no one will dispute. That any one of them has all the truth, scarcely any one would claim. Amid all these conflicting theological opinions, on what basis would the Bible be enforced as the supreme law of the land?

It would be impossible for any court to so construe the Bible as to make it uphold and give warrant to all the conflicting creeds and faiths of the churches. And it is not to be supposed that the judges of our numerous courts would be able to come to an agreement concerning the intention and meaning of the Scriptures, seeing that the most eminent and learned ministers and Doctors of Divinity and Professors of Theology cannot. It is said that minor issues may be dropped, and only those points of faith and doctrine be enforced upon

which all denominations are agreed. But that is impossible; for it is a fact that they are not all agreed upon any point of faith or practice. We repeat the query, On what basis, then, shall the doctrines of the Bible be enforced? Whose faith and practice shall be accepted as the true, and whose shall be condemned as false?

We have no doubt that an attempt will be made to act upon the plan suggested; to drop the questions and doctrines considered "non-essential" by the larger denominations, and insist upon and enforce those which are popularly accepted. It was remarked by a learned D. D., in the time of the slavery agitation, that he did not care if the devil wrote the Constitution; he was only interested to know what was the intention of those who adopted it. And this would finally be the standard by which the usages and institutions of Christianity would be enforced by the courts. The Bible would nominally be the rule of the nation's conduct, while the intentions and wishes of those who were instrumental in procuring the religious amendment to the Constitution would be the actual rule to be enforced. Very few (if any) judges could be found who would literally construe the Bible in the face of public opinion; and no one would long retain his seat who would presume to do so. The courts would naturally become the instruments to enforce, not the Bible itself, but *the most popular construction of the Bible*. Let any one examine this subject, weigh the contingencies, and come to a different conclusion if he can.

But popularity and true Christianity never went hand in hand. Popular religion—the only religion that the masses would tolerate—is a worldly religion. It may be "Christian" in name, but is never in fact. We repeat our wonder that any intelligent person can think that Christianity will be benefited by being allied to the secular power. Lord Macaulay well said: "The whole history of Christianity shows that she is in far greater danger of being corrupted by the alliance of power, than of being crushed by its opposition."

It is needless to inquire what would be the effect on those denominations who were so unfortunate as to be on the unpopular side. First a premium would be held out to them to become hypocrites; but if they maintained their integrity, their rights would not be respected by the popular majority, and of course not in the courts. Such a state of things would be greatly to be deplored, and we shall honestly and conscientiously put forth every effort in our power to prevent such a calamity befalling our nation and the Christian religion.

J. H. W.

An officer of the National Reform Association said: "They [infidels] demand that all Christian usages and institutions be abrogated to conform to the Constitution. We propose to amend it to conform to the actual character of the nation." If, in a family of ten, three were professed Christians and seven were infidels, could that family be called a Christian family? If these professed reformers would call things by their right names, they would not utter so many fallacies. This is not a Christian nation, and an amendment of the Constitution would neither increase nor elevate its religion.

The Mormon Question.

THE "National Reform Association" has not shown wisdom in its method of opposing Mormonism. We have exposed the fallacy of the reasoning of its speakers in confounding religion with crime. Utah presents the nearest approach to their ideal of a true State to be found in the country, because in Utah the civil power is subordinated to the ecclesiastical. There the State exists to serve the church. Religion is placed "on an undeniable legal basis" in Mormondom. The state of things now existing in Utah could not exist—could never have existed—had not a close alliance been formed between the church and the State. Recently on our calling at the office of the *Tribune* in Salt Lake City, the editor made a remark which we think is worthy of the consideration of all in the "Religious Amendment Party." He said: "Before they effect a union of church and State throughout the land, they would better come to Salt Lake, and see how it works. Here we have it in its full strength."

Suppose the Bible were legally declared to be the supreme law of the land, what influence would that have on the Mormons? How far would such a declaration go towards settling the dispute between the Mormons and other churches and the nation? The Mormons have never denied that proposition; professedly they make the Bible the basis of their institutions. How, then, would such a declaration uproot the evils of Mormonism? We can imagine but one answer which the Amendmentists can make. They may say: "Give us the power to enforce Christianity by law, and we will compel the Mormons to abstain from polygamy."

But this answer, which is, indeed, embodied in their declarations, is not creditable to those who make it. What they ask is the power to enforce *their construction* of the Bible, without regard to the construction which others may put upon it. Allowing that their construction is correct, as far as polygamy is concerned, if it is to be merely the arbitrary exercise of power, what assurance can we have that they may not exercise that power in matters whereon their construction may be wrong? And what could they do in that direction more than the Government is doing without their help? We approve the action of the Government in its efforts to exterminate polygamy, because polygamy is not a religious institution. But these professed reformers confess that polygamy is a part of religion, and say that the Government has no right to suppress it under our present Constitution! On this we gave proof direct in our first number. But behold again their inconsistency. They promise to suppress this part of the religion of the Mormons if the Constitution shall be amended, and they over and over again assure us that the amendment is only intended to recognize God as the author of the nation's existence, without at all interfering with anybody's religion.

We deny that polygamy is a religious institution in any proper sense of the word "religion." The Mormons profess to be Christians, and therefore we use the word religion as it is used in Christian lands. The righteousness which God requires in his word is that of obedience.

"He that doeth righteousness is righteous." 1 John 3:7. "And it shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us." Deut. 6:25. There is no righteousness, no obedience, in doing that which he has not commanded. That which is offered in worship which is outside of his requirements, is "will-worship," or "voluntary humility," and is displeasing to him. Col. 2:18-23. Of such as offer will-worship it may well be asked: "Who hath required this at your hand?" Isa. 1:12.

We deny in the most positive terms that God ever instituted polygamy, or ever required its practice. He tolerated or permitted it, as he did many other things which never met his approval. We ask the reader to examine into the origin of polygamy, confident that he will recognize the reason and force of our denial.

Tracing the descendants of Adam through his two sons, Seth and Cain, to the seventh generation, we come to Enoch and Lamech. Enoch, descended from Seth, was a most godly man, and was counted worthy of translation. He did not die, for "God took him." Lamech, the seventh from Adam, was also a remarkable man. Up to this time in every instance where the marriage relation is mentioned, a single wife is recognized. But the record says: "And Lamech took unto him two wives." He was the first polygamist. According to Mormon ethics, he, too, was a very godly man—the first to observe this very important relation. But, to the contrary, he was a murderer; a self-convicted criminal, according to his own confession sevenfold more worthy of punishment than Cain. Surely, polygamy has a bad parentage!

Although no direct proof of the practice of polygamy is found in the Scriptures for a long time after Lamech, there is reason to believe that the children of Cain did practice it.

Speaking of the sons of Seth, the record says: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Margin, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord."

But after the lapse of some eight hundred years after Enoch, all classes had corrupted their way before God. The children of Seth joined affinity with the children of Cain. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." This strongly implies that the marriage institution was abused; and it is there recorded that their wickedness was so great that God determined to destroy them all.

Noah and his three sons and their wives were saved from the destruction which came upon the world. Each had but one wife, for only eight were in the ark. 1. Peter 3:20. Only one century passed after the flood, when men became so arrogant and ambitious—so Heaven-defying—that God confounded their language, and scattered them abroad. And in something over five centuries they again became exceedingly wicked, as instance the people of Sodom. And their wickedness was specially manifested in the abuse of the marriage relation—in the gratification of vile lusts. Raised amid such surroundings, it is no marvel that the daughters of Lot had but a low sense of morality, as was manifested in their conduct after the destruction of Sodom.

The history of Genesis is very brief, generally speaking more of the better class of men than of the worst. Generations of wicked people are passed over without mention. But Abraham occupies a large place in the history, and polygamists are wont to point with great satisfaction to his unfortunate departure from the original rule of marriage. But the circumstances are anything but helpful to their cause. God had promised that Abraham and his seed should inherit the land. Abraham was childless, yet he believed the promise of God. Sarah had not the faith of Abraham, and fearing that the promise of God would fail, resorted to an expedient to effect its fulfillment! Abraham complaisantly listened to his wife, and took her Egyptian serving maid, by whom he had a son. But the Lord did not sanction the expedient; he refused to accept the son of the Egyptian maid as the heir of the promise, though Abraham earnestly besought him to do so. He refused to make him joint-heir with Sarah's son. And this abuse of the marriage relation by Abraham was the cause of long-continued trouble in his family. Hagar became scornful and disobedient to her mistress, and Sarah could not endure her conduct. Too late she confessed her wrong. See Gen. 16:5. Ishmael was "a wild man." His descendants have been a wild, roving, predatory race. Their hands have been against every man; they have been lawless from the beginning even unto this day.

Isaac was a godly man, having but one wife. And we have reason to believe that Jacob would have been a monogamist, had it not been for the wicked and cruel deception practiced upon him by his heathen father-in-law. The taking of Leah was not a matter of choice with him; but when he found that she had been imposed upon him, he submitted to the deception, and to the suggestion of Laban, and took Rachel also.

Now, we ask, where is the evidence that polygamy was an ordinance of God, a religious duty? Nothing of the kind can be found. The thought is shocking to every one who has studied the subject in its relations. That God permitted certain things without approving them is beyond denial. Paul said: "The times of this ignorance God suffered; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Acts 17:30. When the Pharisees questioned Jesus on the subject of divorce, he said: "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so." He removed the glosses which a hard-hearted people had thrown over the marriage institution, and gave his sanction to the arrangement which existed "from the beginning." And how was it in the beginning? God "made them male and female"—not male and females. He made a woman and gave her to Adam for a wife, not women for his wives. Jesus said: "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife [not unto his wives], and they two shall be one flesh," not they three nor they five.

If polygamy were the proper marriage relation, pleasing to God, why is it that it was not instituted in "the beginning"? Why was not something said somewhere that it was pleasing

to God? Why was it not commanded? Why was it that the first man to practice polygamy was a self-convicted murderer? And why did not Jesus give some place for it in his comments on the marriage law, instead of using language which positively forbids it? It is admitted that many otherwise godly people offended in this respect, and Christ explained why it was permitted; but he corrected all false views of marriage, and restored it to its original relationship, of one man and one woman, or one wife. A union of two—not a union of many.

If it were proved to be an ordinance of God—if it were founded upon a commandment of God—we should deny the authority of the Government, and of any power on earth, to punish those who practice it. But it is a matter of choice, not a matter of religious obligation. It is an immorality, being contrary to the original marriage institution and law. It is an offense against society. It is a proper subject of Governmental action, and we earnestly hope that the Government will suppress it. But why should the structure of our Government be changed to suppress this more than any other crime? It should not. The demand for the change is based on the false reasoning of the "National Reform Association." True reasoning does not admit the demand.

J. H. W.

National Reform and the Rights of Conscience.

THE avowed purpose of the National Reform Party is to secure an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, by which every man will be compelled to acknowledge that God is Sovereign, that Christ is Ruler, and that the Bible is the supreme law. Whether a man believes it or not, is no difference, he must be compelled to acknowledge it because they profess to believe it. The *Christian Statesman* of Oct. 2, 1884, says:—

"Give all men to understand that this is a Christian nation; and that, believing that without Christianity we perish, we must maintain by all right means our Christian character. Inscribe this character on our Constitution. . . . Enforce upon all that come among us the laws of Christian morality."

"Enforce," according to Webster, is "to force; to constrain; to compel; to execute with vigor." Therefore the proposition of these National Reformers is to force, to compel, all to keep the laws of Christian morality. To execute with vigor upon all, the laws of Christian morality.

And what is to be the penalty for dissent? Well, they pretend to be so kind that they will not whip anybody for it; they pretend to be so liberal that they will not impose a fine upon any one for it; they pretend to be so merciful that they will not imprison any one for it; but they are neither so kind, so liberal, nor so merciful but that they will disfranchise every one who will not acknowledge, and submit to, the provisions which they choose to embody in their Religious Amendment to the Constitution.

Thus, for a religious opinion, however conscientiously held, which may disagree with theirs, they deliberately propose to deprive men of their birthright to the most inestimable right of earth,—that for which thousands upon

thousands have laid down their lives; that for which our fathers pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor,—the right to be a citizen amongst a free people, and in this instance a citizen of the best Government or the earth. Every honor to which he might otherwise aspire, every right to which he might otherwise be entitled, must be swept away at one stroke because, forsooth, he chooses to claim the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. That this is no fancy picture that we have drawn, that it is no fable that we have devised, in regard to what that party proposes to do, we have abundant proof, and that in their own words.

Mr. W. J. Coleman is one of the principal exponents of the National Reform religion. In the *Christian Statesman* of Nov. 1, 1883, Mr. Coleman replied to some questions that had been put by a correspondent who signed himself "Truth Seeker." We copy the following:—

"What effect would the adoption of the Christian Amendment, together with the proposed changes in the Constitution, have upon those who deny that God is the Sovereign, Christ the Ruler, and the Bible the law? This brings up the conscience question at once. . . . The classes who would object are, as 'Truth Seeker' has said, Jews, infidels, atheists, and others. These classes are perfectly satisfied with the Constitution as it is. How would they stand toward it, if it recognized the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ? To be perfectly plain, I believe that the existence of a Christian Constitution would *disfranchise every logically consistent infidel.*"

There we have in plain words what they propose to do with dissenters under their "Christian Constitution." But let us look into this a little further. Notice, it is only the *logically consistent* dissenter that will be disfranchised. By the same token, then, the *illogically inconsistent* can all be citizens. That is, the man of honest intention, of firm conviction, and of real principle, who values his principles more than he does political preference, he must be disfranchised; while the time-servers, the political hacks, the men of no convictions and of no principle, they can all be acceptable citizens. In other words, the *honest man*, if he be a dissenter, cannot be a citizen; but every hypocrite can be a citizen. Therefore the inevitable logic of the National Reform position is to put a premium upon hypocrisy. And such will be the value of citizenship under their so-called Christian Constitution.

Such a result from such proceedings is not new. The Puritan Parliament "solemnly resolved that no person shall be employed but such as the House shall be satisfied of his real godliness." And as the natural consequence, the realm was filled with hypocritical piety.

Thus much merely in passing, as it is not so much our purpose in this article to notice the logic of their position, as it is to show their avowed purpose of outraging every principle of the rights of conscience. Mr. Coleman is not alone in thus defining the *status* of dissenters. In the *Statesman* of February 21, 1884, Mr. J. C. K. Milligan, in writing upon the same subject, expressed himself thus:—

"The worst result will be to disfranchise them."

But this is not the worst result which they

wish, nor which they intend shall be to such. Just read carefully the following extract from an address delivered by Rev. E. B. Graham at a National Reform Convention held at York, Neb., and reported in the *Christian Statesman* of May 21, 1885:—

"We might add, in all justice, if the opponents of the Bible do not like our Government and its Christian features, let them go to some wild, desolate land; and in the name of the devil, and for the sake of the devil, subdue it, and set up a Government of their own on infidel and atheistic ideas, and then if they can stand it, stay there till they die."

Exactly; dissenters must not only be disfranchised, they must all be sent to the devil, and that too in some, "wild and desolate land;" and even that is not enough, but they must "stay there till they die." And that is the National Reform idea of "justice." That is the kind of a Government that they propose under their Christian Constitution. That is the way in which they propose to convert men to the Christian religion. That is the way in which they propose to exemplify the sublime Christian principle of brotherly love, and the means which they will employ that brotherly love may continue! That is the way in which they are going to bring about the reign of universal peace, even, as they say, the millennium itself. That will be indeed the reign of the saints (!) By a like scheme of the Christian endeavor of the "Society of Jesus," there was peace once in the fair Waldensian Valleys. By like exertions Innocent III. succeeded in creating peace amidst the graceful scenery, the rich fields, and the splendid cities of Languedoc and Provence.

This, too, is all to be done in behalf of liberty of conscience,—that is, the conscience of the National Reformers. They give us clearly to understand that it is entirely out of respect to their own consciences that they propose to do all these things. Mr. Coleman says further, in the place before quoted:—

"If there be any Christian who objects to the proposed Amendment on the ground that it might touch the conscience of the infidel, it seems to me it would be in order to inquire whether he himself should not have some conscience in this matter."

So, then, in this National Reform Christianity, it is the perfection of conscientiousness to outrage some other man's conscience. And the reverse of the Golden Rule becomes, to them, the law and the prophets. Their chief complaint is that the present Constitution disfranchises them (which is false), and therefore they must have it changed so that it will disfranchise every one but them.

And so, All things whatsoever ye would not that men should do to you, *this do ye* even unto them; for this is the law of National Reform.

And who are they that propose to do these things? An Association of which the vice-presidents alone number *one hundred and twenty*, than whom we verily believe that there cannot be found in the United States an equal number of other men who could exert a more positive influence. In a complete list given in the *Christian Statesman* of Dec. 2, 1883, we read the names of *thirteen* Bishops of such of the evangelical churches as have bishops, *fifteen* College Presidents, *thirteen* College Professors, *ten* Justices of Supreme Courts. As printed in the

Statesman of Dec. 24, 1885, we find *eleven* Bishops, *sixteen* College Presidents, *fifteen* College Professors, *three* ex-Governors, *seven* Justices of Supreme Courts, *five* Judges of Superior Courts, *two* Judges of the United States District Court, *one* Judge of the United States Circuit Court, with such a number of Hon.'s, Rev.'s, and D. D.'s, that we cannot attempt now to count them.

As for us, we are neither Jews, infidels, nor atheists. But as we dissent totally from the doctrines of the National Reform Party, we suppose, of course, and we are willing to confess, that we belong to that fourth class to which Mr. Coleman referred by the phrase, "and others." We do not deny that God is Sovereign, nor that Christ is Ruler, nor that the Bible is the Supreme law. We freely confess all these. But while we confess that God is Sovereign, we positively deny that he has delegated his sovereignty to the National Reform Party. While we confess that Christ is Ruler, we deny that he has chosen the National Reform Party as his confidential advisers in his rule, or that he has appointed that party as his vicegerent in the United States to rule this country in his absence. While we confess that the Bible is the Supreme standard of human actions, we deny *in toto* that the Author of the Bible has appointed the National Reform Party to be the infallible interpreters of that Book.

And because we distrust their movement, because we see the result of it when they shall have secured the power, they choose to think us possessed of a wonderful "compound of folly and fanaticism." (See editorial comment in *Statesman* of Feb. 21, 1884.) But from their own words, fairly quoted in this article, we are justified in saying that the success of their movement will be the destruction of the dearly-bought principle of American liberty; the destruction of the inestimable treasure of American citizenship; and the destruction of every principle of the rights of conscience, under the Government of the United States. And because of this the AMERICAN SENTINEL is set for the defense of the genius of American institutions.

A. T. J.

Catholic and Protestant.

WHEN we endeavor to point out the danger which threatens our liberties by a change in the structure of our Government whereby *somebody's religion* may be legalized and enforced, we are told that our fears are groundless; that it is needless to point to the Inquisition, or to the persecutions of the Dark Ages, as they were carried on under quite different circumstances and by a quite different people; that we have nothing to fear from *Protestant Christians*.

But our fears are not allayed by any such assurances. We have a criterion by which we judge in all such cases, and, keeping this in sight, we shall not go far astray in our judgment. It is *our knowledge of human nature*.

We have no confidence at all in human nature, except as it is restrained and guided by divine grace. And human nature not restrained by grace, is the same in all ages and in all people. Catholics and Protestants are all human—neither more nor less. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are." Grace made him a "man of God." John and James so far

forgot their commission, and the teachings of their Master, as to desire to call down fire upon the people of a village of Samaria. Paul by grace was a most devoted servant of Christ; by nature, a murderer in action, and in spirit "breathing out threatenings and slaughter." The Pharisees and elders considered themselves exemplary and godly men while the world praised them; but they clamored for the blood of Him who reproved their sins and exposed their hypocrisy.

If professed Christians of this age were not ambitious, they would not feel after the reins of secular power. It is no disparagement to any man to say that he does not know himself until he is tried. Hazeel thought the deeds worthy of a dog which the prophet said he would commit; yet he obtained the power by murder, and committed the deeds without scruple when he had the power. It is a saying that "even a thief thinks himself honest when he has no chance to steal." By all this we mean that a person under certain circumstances does not know what he will do if placed under entirely different circumstances. We have no more confidence in an ambitious, worldly, bigoted Protestant, than we have in an ambitious, worldly, bigoted Catholic, if the two are placed under like circumstances.

Our motto says: "Corrupted freemen are the worst of slaves." And we may say that perverted, corrupted religionists are the most dangerous of men. The question has often been asked, Why are religious wars the most sanguinary and cruel? The reason is obvious. Religion, whether true or false, intensifies the feelings. True religion refines as well as intensifies; but false religion intensifies without any refining influence or power. We have the testimony of those who were some time in the service of the Inquisition, that nothing could steel their hearts to the sufferings and cries of their dearest friends but their conviction of duty to "the Church," and through her to God.

This being the case, we declare that it is unsafe to place the reins of power in the hands of any religionists—of any church. Christianity, when secularized, is perverted; and perverted Christianity has not, and never had, any restraining influence over human nature. Its power, then, is to make zealots and bigots. It has a reactionary influence. Perverted religion perverts its possessor. How careful we should be to preserve the purity of Christianity, and to save it from contaminating alliances. And yet, when we would preserve it from alliance with the world, we are counted its enemies!

J. H. W.

UNQUESTIONABLY one of the most lamentable evils which afflict the rising generation flows from the early use of tobacco. Street boys who are not yet out of child's clothes snatch the discarded stumps of cigars of grown men, and smoke them in apish imitation of their elders. Lads at school acquire a taste for tobacco by surreptitiously smoking cigarettes—cigarettes which have done more to demoralize and vitiate youth than all the dram-shops in the land. Evil education has two corruptions—the corruption of the body and the corruption of the soul. The bodily mechanism of boys of sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen years of age can be as thoroughly injured by insidious poisons as the mind can be soiled by wicked teaching.—*The Catholic Standard*.

Morality and Religion.

In its broadest sense, religion is any system or method of worship, without regard to what the object of worship may be. In the world there are very many religions, and there are very many objects of worship. In this sense the angels are religious, for they worship God.

But in Christian lands the word is used in a more restricted sense. He is not counted religious who does not believe in God, his Son Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation, and the Bible as the revelation of the will of God to man. As the Mohammedan counts all as infidels who do not believe in Mohammed, so Christians esteem all as infidels who do not believe in Christ and the Bible.

The Christian religion is that system which accepts the Scriptures of the Old Testament as the revelation of God from the beginning of the world; accepts the fact of the fall of man, and of his subjection to death as a penalty for disobedience, and of his entire inability to recover himself from his lost condition. It accepts Christ as the Son of God, the sole means of salvation, who died as a sacrifice to redeem us, and lives a priest to make intercession for us, and to aid us by his Spirit.

Morality is obedience to the revealed will of God, whose law is a moral law, the only moral rule. Man lost his morality by disobedience of this rule. Had he retained his innocency, he would still have been a religious being, according to the primary sense of the word. He would have held communion with God, and worshiped him as the angels now do. But religion in the commonly-accepted sense would not have existed. There would have been no sin, no need of a Saviour; Christ would not have died, and Christianity would not have been.

Alexander Campbell, in his debate with Bishop Purcell, said the ten commandments are a synopsis of all religion and morality. Webster's Dictionary says the ten commandments are a summary of morality. Both statements are true, if we consider religion according to its primary signification. But the ten commandments do not contain within themselves the *Christian religion*; for this is remedial, and a law cannot be remedial. No system can recover from guilt and its consequences which does not contain pardon. Law cannot pardon, Christianity does. Therefore the law is not a *religious instrument* in this sense.

An able writer in the *Princeton Review* (Henry N. Day, D. D., of New Haven,) says: "In any comparison as to their relative authority and importance to man, the precedence must be given to religion." There is difficulty in marking lines where things are so intimately blended as are these two, as the same writer again says: "A piety divorced from morals is a contradiction or an impossibility." But we cannot accept his statement first quoted as strictly true when spoken of the Christian religion, which, he says, is the only true religion.

Briefly we will notice the law as the "synopsis of all religion and morality," and show the relation which Christianity sustains to it.

The ten commandments are divided into two parts, as based on the two great requirements

to love God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Service done directly toward God is more strictly religious, while obligation rendered toward our fellow-men is more properly moral. But, as before remarked, these intimately blend in the ten commandments. In the first four precepts the religious element predominates; in the last six the moral element predominates. But though one element predominates in one, and the other element predominates in the other, the two elements cannot be separated in this law. No man can be a moral man and violate any one of the first four precepts, though they are strictly religious. And so also, no man can be truly religious and violate one of the last six precepts, though they are more strictly moral. No one is a moral man who is profane, an idolater, or a Sabbath-breaker; and no one can be truly religious who is covetous, who is a thief, an adulterer, or a murderer. These propositions need no argument; they are evident to all.

We call every precept of the ten commandments moral, and the whole ten, *the moral law*, because they are *original obligation*. By this we mean that they directly emanated from the will and mind of the Creator, and depended upon no contingency. The relations which they recognize, and upon which they rest, are those that inhere in the truths that God is our Creator, and man is our fellow-creature. Man could not originate these relations, nor cause these precepts to become duties. Hence they are essentially *primary*; no obligation of any nature can take precedence of them. The religious element in this law takes precedence, as our duty to God comes first, and to man secondarily. We must love God supremely, with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and our neighbor only as ourselves. And this order is not reversed or changed by the gospel; as the angels sang at the birth of the Redeemer: "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will toward men." Glory to God is the first note in the song of the angels, as it should be the first object in the lives of men.

How does Christianity—"the only true religion"—stand related to this law? We have said that the law is *primary*, and as the nature and object of Christianity is essentially different from that of the law, they cannot stand on the same plane. The gospel, or the Christian religion, is *secondary*. Man could not originate, nor can he control, his relations to God as his Creator and to man as his fellow-creature. But Christianity does not grow out of these original or primary relations. It is wholly based upon the fact that *man is a sinner*; and this relation man himself originated. It was not so originally; it did not grow out of or emanate from the mind and will of God.

And in all the systems of ethics of all mankind, this priority or precedence is given to *the moral law*. Each and every one of the ten commandments is of obligation, and obedience to them is duty, at all times and under all circumstances. And the importance of this obedience is not lessened by any contingency. A failure in any other respect does not change the nature of obedience to this.

We all hold that, if the two may be separated, it is much more important that a man

obey the sixth or eighth commandment, that he abstain from murder and theft, than that he obey the requirement to be baptized or partake of the Lord's supper. And for this evident reason, that *obedience to the gospel is neutralized by disobedience to the moral law*. Obedience is and always was better than sacrifice. Of what account is baptism to a thief—to one who continues to steal? Of what value is the Lord's supper to a willful murderer? The law would have been forever binding if Christianity had never existed. Its relations antedate Christianity. But Christianity never would have existed if there had been no moral law, or if the moral law had never been violated. And Christianity even now is not and cannot be of any benefit to a man who willfully or negligently violates the law of God, the ten commandments.

Want of space in this paper compels us to waive an examination of the relation of civil Government to the two systems. We will notice that hereafter.

J. H. W.

What is the Harm?

THE Mendocino *Beacon* is one of the best of our California papers. We thank the editor for his kindly notice of the SENTINEL, but think he has overlooked *the main issue* which we make in our controversy with the "National Reform Association." We freely admit our belief that the movers in this Association think that they are doing God service, and that they really believe the ends they seek are necessary to the welfare of our nation. And our difference with them is one of conviction and fixed principle. We believe that their success would prove disastrous both to the Government and to Christianity in this country.

The *Beacon* quotes the setting forth of the object of the Association in its platform—"Suitably acknowledge Almighty God as the author of the nation's existence, and the ultimate source of its authority, Jesus Christ as its Ruler and the Bible as the supreme rule of its conduct, and thus indicate that this is a Christian nation, and place all Christian laws, institutions, and usages on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land," and asks what is the harm of saying so if it is the truth.

We, too, recognize the truth that all power is of God; but we do not believe that this is a Christian nation, and no amendment to our National Constitution will make it such. Christianity is an individual experience, and the nation is Christian to the degree that the individuals composing it are Christians. And individuals are made Christians, not by votes and political movements, but by the preaching of the gospel and by personal conversion.

But *the real issue* between us and the Association, and the one which the *Beacon* seems strangely to have overlooked, is that of placing the laws and institutions of Christianity "on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land." To this point our protest and arguments are all directed; and to this point the query of the *Beacon* will not apply. We invite it to carefully read our statements on this subject, and to say if it can find

any defect in our reasoning, and if there be not reason to fear the result of such an amendment as the Association is laboring to secure.

We will briefly state a few points made by the speakers and writers of the Association. In the National Convention held in 1874, in a speech which was loudly cheered by the officers and delegates, are the following words:—

“Constitutional laws punish for false money, weights, and measures, and of course Congress establishes a standard of money, weight, and measure. So Congress must establish a standard of religion, or admit anything called religion, as it already has the Oneida Community in New York, the Mormons in Utah, and the Joss house in California.”

This speech was “cheered to the echo,” and it was very evident that the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was as unpopular, in this convention, as the idea of the Religious Amendment was popular. The truth is, these amendments are antagonistic, and the Reform Association spoke as people who clearly recognize the fact.

Now we inquire if the *Beacon* can see no harm in Congress establishing a standard of religion,—if it approves of the idea of legalizing Christian laws and institutions in our National Government. If the editor is willing that Congress shall establish, and put in legal force, a standard of religion for him, then we greatly mistake his temper and spirit. We beg leave to dissent; our religion is not of that kind, to be measured out to us by Congress, or any other body of law-makers.

Consider for a moment the character of Congress in its relation to Christianity, or even to religion and morality, and then consider what kind of a “standard of religion” our Congress will establish. It will not be sufficient to say that the Bible is the law of the land; steps must be taken to enforce its precepts, its Christian features and usages; otherwise these institutions and usages will not be placed on a legal basis. But, as we have elsewhere argued, *everybody's* construction of the Bible cannot be enforced, and whose shall be selected to be put on a legal basis? Let not any think lightly of our purpose and our work in opposing the Religious Amendment until they have considered these questions in their bearings. Before we open the flood-gates, let us clearly settle how the waters are to be guided or kept under control.

As above intimated, the simple declaration that God is the source of power, and the Bible the supreme law of the nation's conduct, would have no practical effect. Legislation would be required to enforce religious usages, or, to “establish a standard of religion,” or, to put Christianity on a legal basis. This is clearly recognized by the National Reform party. For proof of this we offer the following:—

In 1870, December 5, a Philadelphia paper announced that a number of Congressmen, Vice-president Colfax being one of them, arrived in Washington by railroad, on Sunday, December 4. The *Christian Statesman*, the organ of the Reform Association, spoke the feeling of its party on that subject. From its article we briefly quote. It said:—

“1. Not one of those men who thus violated the Sabbath is fit to hold any official position in a

Christian nation. . . . He who violates the Sabbath may not steal, because the judgment of society so strongly condemns theft, or because he believes that honesty is the best policy; but tempt him with the prospect of concealment or the prospect of advantage, and there can be no reason why he who robs God will not rob his neighbor also. For this reason, the Sabbath lies at the foundation of morality. Its observance is an acknowledgment of the sovereign rights of God over us.

“2. The sin of these Congressmen is a national sin, because the nation hath not said to them in the Constitution, the supreme rule for our public servants, ‘We charge you to serve us in accordance with the higher law of God.’

“3. Give us in the national Constitution the simple acknowledgment of the law of God as the supreme law of nations, and *all the results indicated in this note will be ultimately secured*. Let no one say that the movement does not contemplate sufficiently practical ends.”

And thus, as the *ultimate* result of their demands, we are to have a reversal of that clause of the sixth article of the Constitution which forbids religious tests as qualifications for office, and of the first amendment, which declares that Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. People may continue to inquire, “What is the harm?” In the eyes of those who are willing to see our Government entirely remodeled to suit the ideas of shortsighted religious zealots, there can appear to be no harm. But let them know that these *ultimate* objects will not be obtained without a struggle more disastrous than any that our nation has yet seen; and that when such political-religious machinery is set in motion, it cannot be controlled by the cool-headed men who put it in force. We promise that we shall do nothing to oppose its initiation or its action beyond lifting up our voices in warning, and pointing out the dangers which threaten both our civil and our religious liberty. But there are many tens of thousands in the land who will oppose it by other means.

And we expect that, as Elijah was accused of troubling Israel because he pointed out the cause of their troubles, so we shall be accused of creating the trouble against which we have uttered our warnings.

The *first Inquisition* was founded on a professed desire to advance the cause of God on the earth. The effort to establish a *second* is based on the same profession. But Christianity was not, and never will be, benefited by such means.

We hope that none will condemn our work without *carefully reading and considering* our reasons. J. H. W.

Not a Christian Nation.

THE San Jose, Cal., *Mercury* makes the following sensible remarks upon the oft-repeated claim that this is a Christian country or nation:

“The framers of the Constitution not only omitted the establishment of a State religion, but made careful provision against its future establishment. That instrument is simply a political bond for securing the civil rights and establishing the limitation of those rights between citizens, irrespective of their religious beliefs and practices. The fact that a large majority of the inhabitants of the United States

are nominally Christians does not make this a Christian country. A majority of the church members in Delaware are Methodists, but it is not, therefore, a Methodist State. The only attempt to identify religion with citizenship was made by the early Puritans of Massachusetts, and proved a failure. Rhode Island, which was settled by Baptists and in which that denomination probably predominates now, is not and never was styled a Baptist State, nor was Maryland, which was settled by Catholics, made thereby a Catholic commonwealth. So much for the nominal or technical Christianity of this country. When it comes to absolute practical Christianity, there is no country, nation, despotism, monarchy, or republic on the face of the earth that ought to have the hardihood to term itself Christian.

“The political institutions of the United States, while they do not give any form of the Christian religion, or the religion itself, predominance or peculiar rights, do yet afford all forms of it a fair and unlimited field for moral action and moral influence. The Christian missionary is exposed to no restraining laws or personal perils, except, perhaps, those incident to the collection of his salary. But the Israelite, the Mahomedan, or the Buddhist has an equal right to preach, and, if he can, to make converts to his faith. None of them, however, can properly claim that his religious observances shall be engrafted upon the law of the land. The field for Christian effort and teaching in the United States is a magnificent one; but its limits are within the boundaries of argument, persuasion, and moral force. It has neither national recognition nor governmental power, and the claim that this is a Christian country, either theoretically or practically, is baseless.”

Pity for Rum's Victims.

LADIES and gentlemen, I appeal to all of you—I appeal to every sensible and sensitive heart in England and America, to this divine feeling of pity. Do we not, must we not, feel pity when we think of the hundreds and thousands of men who become the victims of a dead product which is yet potent enough to destroy souls for whom Christ died? Must we not feel pity for the ravages which are caused by this deadliest of all human curses? Do we not feel pity for the men whom we have probably seen and known, who because of drink are living in its pollution and going to deaths of blasphemy, and are giving back to the God who made them nothing but the dust of their bodies and the shipwreck of their souls? Have we no pity for the thousands who are pouring poison into the ranks of youth until its root becomes as bitterness and its blasphemy comes up as fruit? Have we no pity for the families, the husbands and wives on whose hearthstones are burning, because of drink, the very fires of hell?

Have we no pity for the mothers whose hearts are rent with anguish at the fate of these their offspring? Do we not feel for the unmotherly mothers who well-nigh turn womanhood to laughter and motherhood to horror? Have we no pity for the poor miserable children? Is there no voice strong enough to plead “like angels, trumpet-tongued, against the deep dam-

nation of their taking off of these children?"—who, in the language of Southey, are not so much born into the world as damned into the world, damned and predestined, as it were, to live lives of disease and degradation because of the drink in the midst of which they are brought up, and of which they have the hereditary taint in their very veins? Must children year after year in these our Christian lands—in England at any rate, if not in America—pass through the fire to this Moloch, in numbers infinitely greater than were ever burned in the valley of Hinnom? [Applause.] I, for one, cannot but feel deep pity for all these, and I feel pity for England, which, for two centuries, has been writhing in the dark places of these licensed temptations—pity not only for England, but for the whole race of mankind, which is raising up the cry of anguish from every polluted continent, which yet cherishes and even fondles in its bosom this venomous and deadly asp. Alas! of every curse I have ever heard of, this is a curse in which the entail might be cut off in this very generation. And yet the race of man, bewildered by epigrams, baffled by sophistries, blinded by conceit, seduced by pleasure, and rendered callous by greed, goes on enjoying and even rewarding the production of this fatal cause of evil among themselves, until one is forced to cry, "Let the heavens burst and drown with deluge of rain the feeble vassals of lust and wine."—*Canon Farrar's Speech in New York.*

God in the Constitution.

THIS phrase, now of common occurrence, savors strongly of irreverence; but genuine reverence for the Supreme Being must be expected to greatly decline when his existence and attributes are made a political question, to be bandied about in stump speeches, and recognized on coercion. It is a growing question in the nation at large. The following is part of a brief speech of Mr. Broomall, of Delaware County, Pennsylvania, on the question of incorporating the proposed amendment into the Constitution of that State. It is worthy of attentive reading and careful consideration:

"First, the words reported by the committee have no use there, no proper function. To those who believe in a Supreme Being, and I trust we all do—there may be those who do not, but I confess that I have not met them—to those who believe in a Supreme Being, the phrase is useless, is unmeaning. To those who do not (and while I doubt whether there are those who do not, I am not prepared to deny the possibility of their existence),—to those who do not, it is untrue. To all of us it is a mere mockery; it is a pretense of something that I am afraid our proceedings too often show we do not always feel.

"Let us bear in mind that we are proposing, not to change the Constitution ourselves, but to submit certain propositions to the people for their adoption or rejection. Are gentlemen willing to submit to a majority of ballots the question of the existence and attributes of the Deity? I am not. What a question it is! The being and attributes of the Creator; the existence of a lawgiver above all legislators; of

a law above all human laws,—a law that sets aside all human laws when they conflict with it,—a law that binds the individual, not as a member of society, but as a man, and that commands him not to obey the civil law when it conflicts with this higher law! We propose to submit to a majority of ballots these great questions, whether there be a Ruler of the universe, and whether we are responsible for our conduct to that Ruler of the universe!

"To what tribunal do you propose to submit these great questions? We have heard that tribunal characterized here. Gentlemen have spoken of that tribunal in a way that would make us hesitate to submit any question to it, no matter what. How has the election mob of Philadelphia been characterized? In what language has it been spoken of here? Gentlemen have risen on this floor and denounced the decision of a Philadelphia election mob in language that would make one afraid for his country, lest self-government should prove a failure; and you propose to submit these great questions to the decision of that tribunal. You propose to let a Philadelphia election mob settle for all of us the question whether there is or is not a great Judge in whose court we are all responsible for our conduct. Just imagine such a question submitted to such a tribunal! In all of the grog shops of the city, this question is to be debated and talked about. It is to be settled there; it is to be decided there; and Christianity must submit to the decision, whatever it be!

"Who asks that this question should be decided in our organic law at all? Who asks those questions to be decided here? Who submits to us the question? Who authorizes us to settle it? How can any delegate dare decide for his constituents whether there be a God and whether they owe him responsibility for their conduct? Who asks this decision? Whom will it bind? Do gentlemen who advocate this proposition say that they have authority from the Being most interested in the question, if we are to believe their doctrine, to suffer that question to be raised here, and decided by an election mob? Do they pretend to say that that great Being has authorized them to submit his power and his existence to that kind of a tribunal?

"Sir, it is quite time, at this late day, that it were understood that Christianity asks no aid from human governments; that religion can stand a great deal of crushing out without being injured; but when it is taken to the arms of the civil power, it falls degraded and dishonored. It was for this reason, and after the experience of centuries, that our forefathers divorced forever all church and State, and suffered religion to stand where it should stand,—upon the consciences and convictions of men!

"Look at the history of the world, and see whether we dare propose to return to the old state of things! What was the condition of Christianity before the Roman emperors allied it to the Government? As pure an emanation from Heaven as ever blessed the earth. What was it after? A very demon of hell! And it is so always. Wherever religion rests where alone it was intended to rest, upon the consciences and convictions of men, there it is an angel of

purity; wherever it is joined with the civil arm and rests upon coercion, it is a curse to the country in which it is."

There is Danger in It.

THE *Christian Statesman* once published a quotation a column long from a sermon by Dr. Talmage, upon the subject of God in our politics and in our Government. To the supposed objection that there is somebody that does not believe in God, the preacher replies:—

"Well, my friends, there are a great many people who do not believe in chastity, a great many who do not believe in the sanctity of the marriage relation, a great many who do not believe in the rights of property, a great many people who do not believe in any style of government—people who would rob and steal and murder. Do you refuse to make laws against criminals because they are criminals? Will you refuse to recognize God in the Government affairs because there are men who do not believe in God?"

We yield to nobody in our love of the Bible and Christianity; in our reverence for God and regard for his authority. But we protest against that persecuting spirit, so foreign to true Christianity, which places an unbeliever, *because he is an unbeliever*, on a level with adulterers, thieves, and murderers. There was a time when "the church" declared that "heresy is the highest crime." Do we wish to return to such a state of things? We are fast drifting in that direction.

We believe in making "laws against criminals because they are criminals," but for no other reason. We do not believe that heresy, or unbelief, or infidelity, is a crime with which human laws have anything to do. To set up such a standard of crime is menacing to our liberties, both civil and religious. These people may succeed in thus subverting our liberties, but the effort will bring trouble on all and ruin to its promoters.

THE religious wars and persecutions of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were a training school for the political independence of the United States of America in the eighteenth century. Diverse and seemingly incongruous as were the nationalities represented in the colonies,—Dutch, French, German, Swedish, Scotch, Irish, English,—they had all imbibed, either by experience or by inheritance, something of the spirit of personal independence, and especially of religious liberty. Gustavus Adolphus designed his colony of Swedes for the benefit of "all oppressed Christendom." Penn, the Quaker, established Pennsylvania as "a free colony for all mankind," where the settlers "should be governed by laws of their own making." The first charter of the Jerseys—which were largely peopled by Quakers and Scotch and Irish Presbyterians—declared that "No person shall at any time, in any way, or on any pretense, be called in question, or in the least punished or hurt, for opinion in religion." And Oglethorpe's Colony of Georgia was founded to be a refuge for "the distressed people of Britain, and the persecuted Protestants of Europe;" then the German Moravian settled side by side with the French Huguenot and the Scotch Presbyterian, under the motto, "We toil not for ourselves, but for others."—*Townsend's Old World and New.*

The American Sentinel.

OAKLAND, CAL., FEBRUARY, 1886.

The "Christian Statesman" and the "American Sentinel."

THE *Christian Statesman*, the organ of the "Religious Amendment Party," gives a very respectful notice of the AMERICAN SENTINEL, and at considerable length. It says their work has been languishing for lack of opposition, and that "the lack is now, in part at least, to be supplied." If fair and honorable, yet vigorous opposition will aid their cause, we shall certainly help to give it an impetus. But time will show what the SENTINEL will accomplish in that respect. If we cannot stay the popular tide, which seems to be setting so strongly in favor of a union of church and State, we shall certainly succeed in saving many from giving their aid and influence to that which, we verily believe, will prove a curse to our country and to the cause of Christianity.

The *Statesman* does not speak a word against the contents or methods of the SENTINEL. We do not think it can possibly pick a flaw in any argument we used, and we hope that the future may merit the favor which the first number has so generally received. The *Statesman* quotes at length from our leading article, for which it has our thanks.

But one thing we think was "off the base." It says, speaking of our reasons given for publishing the SENTINEL, that we gave them "in a somewhat apologetic tone." Not if we know our feelings and motives. It might as well say that Jefferson introduced the "immortal Declaration" with an apology; he certainly considered it just to give a reason for their action. But was it an apology? Not much. And we do not believe that any one who has read our first number thinks that we felt like apologizing or that our work needs an apology.

In contrast with the notice of the SENTINEL given by the *Christian Statesman*, another paper which prints "Christian" on its head, gives its opinion that the SENTINEL is working in the interest of the Liberal League and of infidelity. We think not. And we may at some future time give our opinion as to what interest it is serving in its position. We leave our work with all confidence to the judgment of candid readers.

Rights of Infidels.

HAVE infidels any rights? In the church, No; in the State, Yes. In our next number we shall examine these propositions, and show that the union of church and State either destroys the rights of the infidel, or permits him to exercise them under wrong relations.

In connection with this, we might further ask, Have dissenters any rights? Have minorities any rights? And is it our duty to understand these subjects, and to sacredly regard the rights of all classes? Reader, what do you think? If it were left to your decision, how would you vote upon it?

"Testing the Right to Observe the Seventh Day."

UNDER the above head we find the following in the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, from a correspondent of that paper, writing from Fayetteville, Arkansas:—

"After a lengthy session of more than three weeks, Circuit Court has at last adjourned. Quite a full docket was disposed of, the principal interest being manifested in the test case of the Seventh-day Adventists under the new Sunday law of this State. This denomination, through the labors of several of their ministers, sent here as missionaries from the Northern States, have, within the past eighteen months, succeeded in gaining quite a foothold in Arkansas, having a fine church edifice and strong membership at Springdale, a few miles from here, as well as churches in other parts of the State. They have been from the first apparently an industrious and God-fearing people, the chief difference between them and other Christian bodies being that they observe the seventh day as the Sabbath, according to the commandment. But it seems that sectionalism cannot lay down its arms even when the sacred precincts of religion are entered, so among the first things performed by the Legislature at its session last winter, less than a year after these people had come into the State, was the repeal of the clause which gave them the liberty to keep the day of their choice. This may be a part of the 'reform' connected with the new machine; but if so, it seems to be directed by a very bigoted spirit.

"As the law now stands, all parties, irrespective of their religious belief, are compelled to observe the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, and under this law three indictments were found against members of the above denomination, one of the cases being against Elder Scoles, one of their ministers, whose case is to be made the test in the Supreme Court as to the constitutionality of the recent act of the Legislature. It is a little singular that no one else has been troubled on account of the law, with perhaps one minor exception, while members of the above denomination are being arrested over the whole State. It savors just a trifle of the religious persecution which characterized the Dark Ages. A minister of the gospel pleading in a court of justice, with the open Bible in his hand, for the liberty to keep God's commands is a strange sight in this country; but, according to the rulings of the court in this case, a man has no rights of conscience outside of the dictation of the law. If this be the case, and if our lawmakers are to control the religious opinions of their constituents, there is no telling what we may yet see in the way of enforcing their peculiar creeds and dogmas. Much interest is manifested here over this matter, and a decision from the higher courts is anxiously looked for."

We find remarks of the same tenor of the above in the editorial columns of another secular paper in Missouri. If any think there is no danger of religious persecution in this land if the power be given to professed Christians,—if they think the days of religious bigotry and intolerance are past, and that the courts will not carry out the desires of zealots,—then we ask them to tell us why it is that railroads keep

their freight houses open, with a multitude of hands employed, and almost every kind of business is freely transacted, and people openly hunt and fish on Sunday, and none are prosecuted except those who conscientiously observe the seventh day, for which they undeniably have the letter of the commandment. These things are more than mere straws, to show what is coming. They show that we are correct in our expression, that the courts will be expected to carry out the popular will on religious questions, without any regard to the reading of the Bible, or to the religious rights of the minority. We warn the American people to look to what they do. "Don't unchain the tiger." See what he has always done in past ages before you let him loose.

A Christian Empire.

OUR zealous reformers are anxious to have these United States legalized into a "Christian Nation." We have read of the Roman Empire becoming Christian, and of Constantine, "the first Christian emperor." But we never read of the good that accrued to Christianity from the alliance. Willard's Universal History says:—

"Surely it was not in the spirit of Christ, who said, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' that Constantine made it the religion of the empire; and from henceforth we find its heavenly influence sullied by mingling with earthly things."

And so it will be in our own land, if Christianity shall be made the legal religion of the nation. Has the preaching of the cross become of no effect that civil law is required to compel men to conform to "Christian laws, usages, and institutions"? Dark will be the day to liberty and Christianity when this alliance is formed.

OUR COUNTRY,

THE MARVEL OF NATIONS:
ITS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE, AND WHAT THE
SCRIPTURES SAY OF IT.

By U. SMITH.

Author of "Smith's Parliamentary Rules," and Other Popular Works.

This is a new and popular work on a subject of the deepest interest to all American citizens. It takes a brief but comprehensive view of our Government from a

HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS STANDPOINT.

It also shows that the United States is a subject of prophecy; that an outline of its history was written nearly two thousand years ago. It calls the attention of the reader to a

CHAIN OF PROPHECY,

Of which our Government is an important link, and shows that the location, the time of its rise, the nature of its Constitution, and its wonderful growth and subsequent influence, as well as its future attitude, were all clearly foreseen and pointed out by the Prophet of God, hundreds of years ago. Other great nations of the world are subjects of prophecy, and *why not our own?* THE SUNDAY QUESTION, MODERN SPIRITUALISM, AND NATIONAL REFORM are prominent among the topics ably discussed in this work.

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