



Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political.—*Thomas Jefferson.*

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WE learn from the *London* (Ontario) *Advertiser* that a bill is about to be introduced in the Canadian Parliament with this title: "An Act to Secure the Better Observance of the Lord's Day." By the term Lord's Day is meant Sunday. What tottering support that Sunday institution must have, when all the Governments in Europe and North America are so urgently besought to hold it up.

REMARKING upon the phrase "secular," used in the two Sunday bills pending in Congress forbidding on Sunday all "secular work, labor, or business," a Baptist minister aptly says:—

When it finds difficulty in deciding whether one hundred and fifty men are absent or present, although they can be seen and heard, as in the recent debate concerning the quorum, how is Congress to render decisions concerning the unseen things of the world to come? Theological matters might better be left to the theologians who are so eminently successful in agreeing among themselves.

At the opening of the Woman's Suffrage Convention, held in Washington, February 18, Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who has been for many years an able and respected leader in the cause which that convention represented, said the part which so many women were taking in the Sunday-law movement, and the effort to "put the name of God in the Constitution," was calling into question what woman's influence might be in government. "I do hope," said Mrs. Stanton, "that this Association will declare that the Woman's

Suffrage Association is opposed to all union of Church and State."

Such a declaration as this, from such a source, should lead the women of the country to give individual thought and study to these questions, and trust the formation of their views and opinions upon them, to their own good sense, instructed by the Bible alone.

### That Representative Decision.

WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE?

JUDGE BENNETT'S answer to the question as to what are the rights of conscience is only an assertion of the doctrine of the majority conscience, in support of which he argues thus:—

The plaintiffs and their children must not forget that other people have consciences, and are protected in those rights of conscience as well as themselves. Suppose the Board of Education in this school district, and the great body of the patrons of the school, conscientiously believe that the Bible should be read in the public school, as strongly and fully as the plaintiffs believe it should not be? Whose conscientious scruples must yield?

Without hesitation and without qualification we say the conscience of the majority must give way. Otherwise there is no such thing as rights of conscience. If the majority is to rule in matters of conscience, then the constitutional provisions guarding the rights of conscience are "a mere parchment barrier," a tantalizing delusion. It is solely to protect the conscientious convictions of the few, or even the solitary individual, that these provisions are made a part of the Constitution. There is no danger that the majority, "the great body," of the people will infringe or interfere with their *own* conscientious convictions. "The Constitution did not mean to inquire how many or how few would profess or not profess this or that particular religion. If there be but a single individual in the State who professes a particular faith, he is as much within the sacred protection of the Constitution as if he agreed with the great majority of his fellow-citizens."—9 Cal. p. 514.

But not altogether to set up our own view alone in answer to Judge Bennett's question, we present the following words of Hon. Stanley Matthews: "If it be said that the Protestant conscience requires that the Bible be read by and to Protestant children, and that it is a denial of a right of conscience to forbid it, waiving at present the obvious and conclusive answer that *no such right of conscience can require that the State shall provide out of the common taxes for its gratification*, it is enough to say that Catholics then, too, have the same right to have their children taught religion according to their views—not out of the Douay Bible if they do not consider that sufficient, but—by catechism and in the celebration of the mass, if they choose to insist; that the Jews have the same right to have their religion taught in the common schools—not from the English version of the Old Testament, but—according to the practice of their synagogues; and infidels have the same right to have their children taught deism, or pantheism, or positivism.

"They have no right to insist upon Protestant practices at the public expense, or in public buildings, or to turn public schools into seminaries for the dissemination of Protestant ideas. They can claim nothing on the score of conscience which they cannot equally concede to all others. It is not a question of majorities or minorities; for if the conscience of the majority is to be the standard, then there is no such thing as a right of conscience at all. It is against the predominance and power of majorities that the rights of conscience are protected, and have need to be."

It is most likely that the people of the United States think they have the rights of conscience guaranteed to them—and in fact they have by their Constitution—but they seem not to realize how easy it is for a court by a few words to sweep away all constitutional guaranties. It is likely that the people of Wisconsin think their rights of conscience are secure; but if Judge Bennett's decision expresses the law in that State they have no rights of conscience

at all. It may be indeed that the Protestants of the city of Edgerton feel that they are secure, even under this decision, because they are the majority, and the decision says the majority conscience must rule. But if this were made a State question, these same Protestants would probably be surprised to know that the Roman Catholics are more than one and a half times as numerous as the Protestants in that State; and if the Roman Catholics should assert the majority-conscience doctrine it is certain that the Protestants would very soon discover that the constitutional safeguards themselves, rather than Protestant dogmas, need to be guarded by the courts. Let the Protestants of Wisconsin protest against this sweeping away of these rights of conscience.

One of the arguments made by counsel for the plaintiffs was, that the Constitution was adopted to "insure domestic tranquillity," and that the reading of the Bible in the public schools "tends to create discord," and that therefore the reading of the Bible in the public schools is unconstitutional! It must be confessed that this argument is more ingenious than profound; but the Judge's answer to it is far worse than the argument. The answer does not possess even the merit of ingenuity. The Court's reply was this:—

It is claimed by both parties to this litigation, that the New Testament at least contains the gospel of peace. This was declared by the angel of the Lord at the birth of the Saviour. We read in Luke, ch. 2, . . . verses 13, 14, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." . . . If the reading of the Bible concerning the words and wonderful works of the Divine Being whose advent into the world was so beautifully, grandly, and sublimely announced by the angel of the Lord, would produce dissension and discontent, and not peace on earth and good will toward men, then it would follow that the "angel of the Lord" was mistaken.

Indeed, and indeed!! And therefore that the reputation of the angel of the Lord for truth and veracity may not suffer in the community about Edgerton, Wisconsin, the State Circuit Court, Judge Bennet presiding, must needs come to the rescue and give him a certificate of good character!

Let us carry the Judge's argument a little further. Let us put it to the test of the Scripture, and see how it will work. Thus: "The New Testament at least contains the gospel of peace. This was declared by the angel of the Lord at the birth of the Saviour. We read in Luke ch. 2, verses 13, 14, 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.'" Now in the same book of Luke we read ch. 12, verses 51-53, the words of the Saviour himself whose advent was so grandly announced, saying: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against

the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Now the rest of the Judge's argument comes in: If the coming of the Divine Being whose advent into the world was so beautifully, grandly, and sublimely announced by the angel of the Lord, would produce dissension "and division" and not peace, then it would follow that the "angel of the Lord was mistaken."

Well, Judge, really now how is it? Was the angel of the Lord mistaken or was he not? Was the angel of the Lord mistaken or was the Lord himself mistaken?

Again: the plaintiffs might have appealed the case to the Supreme Court, and upon the strength of Judge Bennett's argument might have pleaded thus: The Circuit Court has decided that we have "created discord, and ought not to be heard" (page 54). Now the Saviour said he came to send division and discord on the earth. If, then, there be not division and discord, it will follow that the Saviour was mistaken. Therefore the decision must be in our favor, or else the Supreme Court will be involved in the serious matter of sanctioning a grave reflection upon the character of the Lord.

If Judge Bennett's argument in defense of the angel is good, this argument would be much better in defense of the Lord, as he is "so much better than the angels," as to have "obtained a more excellent name than they." Hebrews 1:4.

We do not present this seeming conflict in the Scriptures to sanction for a moment any such idea as that either the angel or the Lord was mistaken, for they both told the truth: we simply present this the more fully to show what is already apparent, that in assuming the *role* of defender of the angels, and attempting to expound Scripture from the bench, Judge Bennett entered into a field where he had no business to go. The character of the angels of the Lord needs no defense from the Circuit Court of Wisconsin.

In closing his decision the Judge said:—

The Bible remains and it would seem like turning a good, true, and ever faithful friend and counselor out of doors, to exclude it from the public schools of the State.

This observation confirms what is apparent throughout the whole decision, that Judge Bennett assumed the position of an advocate instead of retaining that of a judge. He sat there as an advocate to plead for his "ever faithful friend," and at all hazards to keep him where he was, instead of sitting as a just judge to decide fairly whether, in the first place that "faithful friend" ought to have been where he was.

To us the Bible is as much of an ever faithful friend and counselor, as it can be we think to Judge Bennett or anybody

else; and we want to see it become the same to everybody else as far as possible. But we know that friendship is not very readily formed nor very firmly cemented, nor are the admonitions of a counselor very respectfully received, by being forced upon people at their expense and against their will, as has been done with the Bible in the public schools of Wisconsin.

A. T. J.

### The Blair Legislation.

*To the Editor of the Courant:*—Perhaps I had better state at the outset, that although my business interests are largely centered in Connecticut, my place of residence is in New Hampshire and I am now a member of the Legislature of that State. As the Hon. Senator, Mr. Blair, of New Hampshire, seems to be doing all in his power in national legislation to pull down the bulwark of religious liberty in this country, I cannot refrain from calling the attention of the citizens of the State of "steady habits" to some of the more salient facts in the case. Mr. Blair's Sunday-rest-day bill and also his Educational Amendment, are both of a religious nature, making necessary a resolution to amend and eliminate from the national Constitution, the first amendment, which reads:—

Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

For more than a hundred years our Constitution has been sufficient, and it has made us a free, in fact the only free Government that has ever graced the pages of history. It is the pure metal whose clear ring has sounded the note of freedom and religious liberty to the oppressed of all nations. It is the heritage of a noble ancestry of good and tried men, themselves fresh from the fires of religious persecution. Let it remain. If we have the illiterate to educate let it be done within the Constitution.

I have personally consulted hundreds of all classes of our people and have yet to find one intelligent citizen willing to sacrifice the clause referred to. The nature of these bills seems to be little understood by the masses. They are so subtle and hidden in their purposes, changing the fundamental principle of our institutions, that it seems like treason. The Constitution stands to-day against the union of Church, and State, and Congress cannot legislate in regard to our religious belief.

Our duty to God is not at the behest of Government. Let the following, introduced by Mr. Blair, "Congress shall establish a system of free public schools to teach the non-sectarian principles of Christianity," become a law, and we have a new sect whose wisdom shall decide what these principles must be. The Government would then become a religious machine, wholly in the power of the igno-

rant and illiterate voter. Do the people of Connecticut want their public schools under such control?

I am aware of the fact that many good citizens have, at the solicitation of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and in the interest of temperance, signed memorials to Congress, praying for the advancement of Mr. Blair's pet measure. I would not impute dishonest motives to the women of America, who, at great sacrifice and heroism, have attacked the most gigantic evil of our times; but must protest against their noble impulses being put to so base a purpose as that of robbing a nation of its right of conscience and religious liberty. It is evidently not the intention of the good women of this country to bring about so deplorable a result. The latter scheme must have originated in the fertile brain of some demagogic political wire puller.—*D. M. S., in Hartford, Connecticut, Courant.*

#### Questions and Answers.

THE American Sunday-law Union is evidently affrighted at the influence of the counter-petition to their work. This we gather from the fact that the secretary is sending out a circular letter to some of those who have signed the counter-petition. There is no danger of his sending out this letter to each individual who has signed it, because there are more than six hundred thousand of them, and the one-cent postage alone amounting to over six-thousand dollars, would bankrupt the Union in a little while. And if the Union should be able indeed to send it to each individual, there would then be no danger; because the signers of this petition are signers indeed—they signed it with their own hands—and the signatures are not names of people who never saw the petition, never heard it read, and in some cases, never heard of it. It is possible of course that there may be a few out of the whole number—one in ten thousand perhaps—who might have signed without reading carefully enough; but there are not enough of them to pay the Union for its efforts to find them out.

We have received one of the circulars. It asks a number of questions to those who signed the counter-petition. We signed the counter-petition. Therefore we are entitled to answer the questions which we now proceed to do.

Washington, D. C., December 31, 1889.

Your name appears on a petition to Congress opposing legislation on "Sabbath observance," which is as follows:—

We, the undersigned, adult residents of the United States 21 years of age or more, hereby respectfully but earnestly petition your honorable body not to pass any bill in regard to the observance of the Sabbath or Lord's Day, or any other religious or ecclesiastical institution or rite; nor to favor in any way the adoption of any resolution for the amendment of the national Constitution that would in any way give preference to the principles of any one religion above another, or that will in any way sanction legislation upon the subject of religion, but that the total separation between religion and the State, assured by our national Constitution as it now is, may forever remain as our fathers established it.

This petition is *verbally* claimed to be in opposition to another petition (given below), some of whose signers declare they could also sign the petition you have indorsed if it is to be understood exactly as it reads. The petition which you have signed refers to a "bill" and also to an "amendment," two distinct measures that were before the last Congress, each of which has many subordinate propositions, and to some other matters not included in either measure. We are, therefore, in doubt whether you are against some one of the many things named in the petition, or against them all. Hence these inquiries:

*First.* You ask Congress "not to pass any bill in regard to the observance of the Sabbath or Lord's day, or any other religious or ecclesiastical institution or rite." Do you wish to be considered as also opposed to the following petition for a civil Sunday law, which only asks Congress to give those under its jurisdiction the same protection against Sunday toil and traffic and turmoil as is generally enjoyed by those who are under the jurisdiction of State Legislatures?

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:* The undersigned, adult residents of the United States, twenty-one years of age or more, hereby earnestly petition your honorable body to pass a bill, forbidding, in the United States Mail and Military service, and in Interstate commerce, and in the District of Columbia and the Territories, all Sunday traffic and work, except works of real necessity and mercy, and such private work by those who observe another day as will neither interfere with the general rest nor with public worship.

Are you opposed to this petition for a civil rest day for those under the jurisdiction of Congress?

ANSWER; Yes, decidedly, and for several reasons.

(1.) It is not "a civil rest day" that is wanted by the framers and circulators of the petition; it is a falsehood to say that it is; and we will not sanction any falsehood by our signature nor any other way if we know it.

(2) "This petition" is not the one upon which the legislation was framed which is now pending in Congress, and which we are asked to indorse by this change of signature. Here is the petition upon which and to satisfy which, were framed the two Sunday bills now before Congress: words left out of the above petition are in italics:—

The undersigned organizations and adult residents (21 years of age or more,) of the United States, hereby earnestly petition your honorable body to pass a bill, forbidding in the United States Mail and Military service, and in Interstate commerce, and in the District of Columbia and the Territories, all Sunday traffic and work except *works of religion and works of real necessity and mercy*, and such private work by those who *religiously and regularly* observe another day of the week by *abstaining from labor and business* as will neither interfere with the general rest nor with public worship.

This being the petition upon which the pending Sunday legislation was framed it is a deception and a snare for you to try to get indorsements of that legislation by sending out for signatures a petition which is most materially different from the one upon which that legislation was framed. It is likewise a deception to call that a "civil rest day" which is to be enforced by laws framed in accordance with petitions for a *religious* rest day, and which do in themselves propose to enforce a religious rest day.

Therefore being opposed both to Sunday laws and to deception, we are doubly opposed to "this petition for a civil rest day."

*Second.* The above petition, you will observe, makes no reference to the original Blair Sunday-

rest bill, which may be what you wished to oppose. If so, do you object also to the new Blair Sunday-rest bill of the present Congress?

ANSWER: Yes, we do "observe" it. And, yes we *do* "object also to the new Blair Sunday-rest bill of the present Congress," and to every other Sunday-rest bill that ever has been or that ever may be framed.

*Third.* Do you object to giving Sunday rest to the Soldiers and Marines in the United States Army and Navy—thus completing and making permanent by law what the President has done in this matter by proclamation?

ANSWER: We *do not* object to giving Sunday rest, or any other rest, to the soldiers and marines in the United States Army and Navy. We do decidedly object to "*completing* and making permanent *by law* what the President has done in this matter by proclamation." Such is not needed by law. The President being Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, his command is law there; and this plea for law to complete that which is already law, is only another deceitful trick in the great scheme by which it is hoped to have Sunday sacredness recognized and established by national law.

*Fourth.* Do you object to giving post-office employees the same protection against needless Sunday work that is given to other Government employees and to employees generally, thus completing and making permanent by law what the Postmaster-General has done in this matter?

ANSWER: The same answer, in effect, as to question three.

*Fifth.* Do you object to making permanent by law, the reductions of Sunday work recently made by many railroad corporations, and completing these reforms by removing what railroad presidents declare to be the chief obstacle to complete suspension of Sunday trains, namely, competition, by stopping all Sunday work in interstate commerce that is not work of necessity or mercy?

ANSWER: Yes, (1) for the same reason as given in answer to questions three and four; and (2) because we are opposed to the Government's establishing a monopoly in Sunday observance by "removing competition" or by any other means.

*Sixth.* Do you object to giving a rest day to the people of the District of Columbia, whose Commissioners have recently said that it has no valid Sunday law, not even enough to stop servile labor on that day; which is, therefore, to be classified with France and California as the only parts of the civilized world having no Sunday law? Do you object to the enactment by Congress of as good a Sunday-rest law for the Capital as can be found in the statutes of any State, in accordance with the desire of the Commissioners, approved by the President?

ANSWER: Yes to the first question, because the people of the District of Columbia have a rest day, and they observe it so well that the American Sabbath Union himself says that of all the cities in the United States, in Washington city there is the best Sunday observance. The District of Columbia is appropriately "classified" with California, because, by the same authority we know that in California without Sunday laws there is better observance of Sunday than in states which have

Sunday laws, and better observance of it than there was in the same State when it had Sunday laws. And neither the District of Columbia nor California need any laws to "give" them that which they already have.

To the second because "as good a Sunday-rest law as can be found in the statutes of any State" is simply good for nothing, or worse. And neither "the desire of the Commissioners" nor the approval of the President can make that good which is in itself bad. We say this out of the full respect which every citizen of the United States owes to the chief magistrate of the greatest nation the world has ever seen.

*Seventh.* Or is it the enforcement by law of a religious observance of Sunday that you oppose?

ANSWER: Yes, it is that and more. It is the enforcement by law of any kind of observance of Sunday as such that ever could be named under the *sun*—to the worship of which Sunday observance owes its origin.

*Eighth.* Are you opposed to a purely civil law stopping toil and traffic and turmoil on the first day of the week, that all the people may have OPPORTUNITY for rest and home fellowships, and those who choose, for moral culture?

ANSWER: All the people freely have all that already. And when it is proposed to enact a law to give to people that which they already freely have, that is the first step toward taking away from them the free exercise and enjoyment of that which they already freely have.

The circular closes with a "memorial" to Congress to be "undersigned by those who indorsed the petition referred to in the first paragraph"—the counter-petition. But as not a solitary soul ever indorsed the counter-petition, but all signed it upon its face with their own hands, this memorial is *null and void*—as every Sunday law by right is and always was.

A. T. J.

#### Religious Liberty in Virginia, 1776.

WHEN the American colonies were just on the verge of war, conventions of the leading statesmen were held in every colony. The minds of all were agitated, and it was with intense interest that the early Americans watched for the results of the proceedings of the representatives that they had sent to these conventions at the various capitals.

Among these colonies, one of the foremost in agitating absolute civil and religious liberty, one of the foremost in the production of great statesmen, and one of the foremost in working for all that was for the well-being of America, was the Colony of Virginia. It was in her halls that the inimitable eloquence of Patrick Henry found utterance; it was in her legislative assemblies that Monroe and Madison gave vent to their ideas on the formation of a Government for the peo-

ple; it was in this grand old Colony that Jefferson, who drafted the immortal Declaration of Independence, first gave evidence of his statesmanship; and it was Virginia that gave birth to Washington, the father of his country. Among such minds as these liberty of conscience received an impetus, which for more than a century, its opponents have tried to counteract.

In the great Convention of Virginia, in May, June, and July, 1776, it was—

*Resolved unanimously,* That a committee be appointed to prepare a Declaration of Rights, and such a plan of Government as will be most likely to maintain peace and order in this Colony, and secure substantial and equal liberty to the people.\*

The committee was appointed. It drafted a declaration of rights which, after being amended, was read a third time and passed, without a single dissenting voice. The title and first and last paragraphs read as follows:—

*A Declaration of Rights, made by the representatives of the good people of Virginia, assembled in full and free convention; which rights do pertain to them and their posterity, as the basis and foundation of Government.*

1. That all men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.†

16. That religion, or the duty that we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other.‡

When the words "liberty" and "rights" were used in early times, American statesmen understood those words in their true sense; and held individual liberty of conscience and freedom of religious worship as the inalienable right of every man.

The paragraph, respecting religion, in the Declaration of Rights as originally reported from the committee, read, after the word "violence," "all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion;" and, consequently, on account of the term "toleration" objection was made. The Convention of Virginia held the same position (and that is the American position) as that expressed in a report adopted by the United States Senate, January 19 1829, from which the following is an extract:—

What other nations call religious toleration, we call *religious rights*. They are not exercised in virtue of governmental indulgence; but as *rights*; of which Government cannot deprive any portion of of citizens, *however small*. Despotism may invade those rights, but justice still confirms them.§

Of Madison, who was a member of this Convention, history says:—

Religious liberty was a matter that strongly enlisted his feelings. When it was proposed that,

\* American Archives, Fourth Series, Vol. 4, Col. 1524.

†Ibid Col. 1561.

‡Ibid Col. 1562.

§ Niles's Register, January 24, 1829.

under the new Constitution, all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience, Madison pointed out that this provision did not go to the root of the matter. The free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience, is something which every man may demand as a right, not something for which he must ask as a privilege. To grant to the State the power of tolerating is implicitly to grant to it the power of prohibiting: whereas Madison would deny to it any jurisdiction whatever in the matter of religion. The clause in the Bill of Rights, as finally adopted, at his suggestion, accordingly declares that "all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience." The incident not only illustrates Madison's liberality of spirit, but also his precision and forethought in so drawing up an instrument as to make it mean all that it was intended to mean.||

It was in this form—in a form that it would declare that absolute religious liberty was an inherent right of which no earthly power could of right deprive a single individual that it passed the memorable Convention of Virginia, on the 12th day of June, 1776, without a dissenting voice.

W. A. BLAKELY.

#### Sunday-Law Meeting in Brooklyn.

SUNDAY evening, March 2, there was a meeting held in the Washington Avenue Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., in the interest of the Kings County Sunday Association. After the opening exercises, which were conducted by the pastor—Rev. Dr. Braislin—Col. A. S. Bacon, vice-president of the association, took the chair and presided throughout the meeting. The chief speaker of the occasion was Rev. Dr. T. A. Fernly, corresponding secretary of the Philadelphia Sabbath Association.

After a chant by the choir the pastor read the second chapter of Colossians, putting special emphasis on the sixteenth and seventeenth verses, which I was at a loss to understand at the time; subsequently, however, it was plain enough; for in the course of the meeting it transpired that while the Doctor is in favor of Sunday keeping, and of Sunday laws too, for that matter, he is much more liberal in his views than Dr. Fernly; and this scripture was evidently designed to fortify his people against some of the views to be presented by the representative of the Philadelphia Sabbath Association. But just how this was will appear in its proper place.

In stating the object of the meeting the chairman dwelt long and ably, and indeed almost entirely, upon the so-called "civil Sabbath;" and it was evidently his wish, if not his expectation, that in his remarks which were to follow, Dr. Fernly would confine himself for the most part to the "civil" phase of the question. But the gentleman from the city of brotherly love proved to be too much of a National Reformer to take the course so gently suggested for him to follow, and dwelt almost entirely upon the religious side of the

|| Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography, Vol. 4, page 165.

question. He based the movement squarely upon the binding obligation of the fourth commandment which he maintains has never been repealed. Though what that fact has to do with the Sunday institution or with civil law he did not so much as attempt to show.

The Doctor likened "the American Sunday" to the dykes of Holland, and said that there were leaks which must be stopped or the country would be ruined. One of these leaks is the foreign element which is coming into the country so rapidly. He said if they come and conform to our laws and our religion they are welcome, but if they reject our faith we must do just as any citizen would do should a stranger come to his house and refuse to conform to the rules of the house. Such an one would, he said, be told to go; and if he refused to do so would be put out by physical force. He thought that in such a case a little "muscular Christianity" would not be out of place. In this respect at least the Doctor's idea of Christianity differs materially from that of the great Founder of Christianity, and is substantially the National Reform doctrine that infidels should be disfranchised or else banished to some wild desolate land, there for the sake of the devil, and in the name of the devil to set up a Government of their own.

After Dr. Fernly had concluded his speech the chairman called upon the pastor of the church for some remarks, which were made very briefly, but right to the point, though not the point desired by the corresponding secretary of the Philadelphia Sabbath Association unless his looks belied his feelings in the matter.

Dr. Braislin said that he would like to have some definition of what was meant by "Sabbath observance." He thought that before asking very much of others, Christians should themselves be agreed as to what constituted proper Sunday observance. He utterly repudiated the idea that the keeping of Sunday is enjoined by the fourth commandment, because, said he, "we do not keep the seventh day, but the first." Nobody, he thought, who rides in his own carriage on Sunday, should object to the running of street cars on that day; and the rich should not be allowed to enjoy privileges on Sunday which the law denies to the poor.

It was very evident that though the Doctor favored some Sunday regulation he was not prepared to go to the lengths advocated by the principal speaker of the evening, and we doubt if the brother from Philadelphia was much comforted by the remark made by the Brooklyn pastor that he would not prolong the meeting, as he was sure of most of the audience at another time. All things considered, the meeting was not what an ardent National Reformer and Sunday-law advocate would be likely to regard as a brilliant success.

C. P. BOLLMAN.

### A Dangerous and Vicious Bill.

WE mentioned last week the fact that a bill had been introduced in the New York Legislature containing provisions which prohibit parents from teaching their own children in their own homes without State supervision. The Union League Club of this city took up the consideration of this bill. A committee of eight was appointed to draw up a report, which it did in the following pointed and well chosen sentences:—

The Committee on Political Reform have had under consideration Assembly bill No. 106, entitled "An Act to secure to children the benefits of an elementary education, and making an appropriation therefor," and submit the following report and resolution and recommend their adoption:—

This bill purports to be in favor of compulsory education and in support of the common schools. Nothing is more important or desirable to the preservation of our institutions than the universal dissemination of knowledge, and, as a means to that end, the most vigorous support of the public schools is needed, consistent with individual liberty. It is believed that every member of this club is a staunch supporter of the common school system, in common with the great body of the citizens, and would do nothing to weaken their hold upon public affection, or impair in any way their usefulness.

The proposed bill is so extraordinary in its provisions as to require a careful and critical examination. It incorporates within it certain principles and methods of action that are entirely inconsistent with individual liberty and the sacred rights of the family. The bill seems to be, in some measure, a substitute for the act passed in 1874, but with additional powers and limitations that make it a dangerous and vicious bill.

The first section provides that every parent and guardian shall cause all children between the ages of seven and eleven to attend some public school in the city or school district in which such child shall reside, or some school other than a public school in which at least certain common school branches are taught.

The second section provides that for every neglect of the duty thus imposed in the first section, the guilty person commits a misdemeanor and is subject to fine and imprisonment therefor.

The third section does provide that a child may be taught at home, but such teaching must be by a "teacher duly qualified under the laws of this State or approved by a school commissioner or by a superintendent of schools, by whatever name known, in a city of the State."

Section fifteen authorizes the employment of town constables to aid in executing the provisions of the act and provides for payment of their fees.

The seventeenth section provides that the school authorities may appoint special officers to discharge the duties provided in certain sections of this act, and may fix fees or salary for the payment of the same.

There are various other sections of the bill that would be open to criticism, but the limits of this paper render their consideration impossible.

#### THE PRIVACY OF THE DOMESTIC CIRCLE.

The bill invades the privacy of the domestic circle and supersedes the authority of the parent in the education of children of tender age, and substitutes therefor persons authorized by act of the Legislature to discharge these delicate and important duties.

Although section three tolerates education in the family circle, it does not leave that to the choice and discretion of the parent, but provides that that teaching shall be under the supervision and control of a "School Commissioner or a Superintendent of schools, by whatever name known in a city of the State." The same section also gra-

ciously provides that in case a child is taught at home, the instruction in the branches specified in the bill shall be at least equivalent to that given in the public schools.

There is also a provision that, in case of the physical or mental condition of a child being such as to render its attendance at school inexpedient or impracticable, a physician's certificate may remit the penalty.

The general effect of the bill is to bring all matters of education, whether in the family circle or in public or private schools, under the supervision of school superintendents or school commissioners. The neglect of the duty of educating children according to these public officials is made a misdemeanor.

#### LIKELY TO LEAD TO VIOLENCE.

This bill proceeds upon the theory that the artificial and intangible body known as "the Government" is a better guardian of children than those to whom they owe their existence, and that the most ignorant and incompetent public school teacher in the State is qualified to train any young child, while the most refined, intelligent, virtuous and loving mother of that child, if for any reason she fails to obtain the consent of the school authorities, is not competent for that purpose. It calls for interference between parent and child at precisely that tender age when the character of the latter is unformed, and when it is in the most need of parental guidance and teaching. An attempt to enforce the provisions of this bill will be likely to lead to violence and breaches of the peace.

However desirable general education may be, it never can be desirable to invade the rights of parents and the sanctity of the family in the manner proposed by this act, under the guise of public instruction.

The bill specifies certain fundamental subjects of education as essential to fit a child as a member of the State. True education consists in the harmonious and symmetrical development of mind and character, and both should proceed together as far as practicable. In most cases no one is as likely to know the character of children as well as parents, and only in exceptional cases should be taken from them the absolute right to determine what and what kind of education they shall receive. The object of the public school system is to aid parents in the education of their children and not to override the parental control or usurp its place. The bill reduces parents to the humiliating position of being obliged to obtain the consent of the school authorities before they can teach their own children, or select a teacher for them at home, and to the risk of fine and imprisonment if they act without such consent. Such legislation as this tends to destroy individuality and substitutes therefor State control in matters that should always belong to the individual. It is a long step in the direction of Socialism, where all property and all individuals are placed under the direction of Government.

#### TO WEAKEN PARENTAL AUTHORITY.

Dr. Kittridge, of this city, recently said: "The home is the grandest university in the world, and to its wise and religious education we owe, more than to any educating influence, the scholars and patriots and benefactors of our race." This we believe to be a true statement of the value of the home, and home influence; and whatever evils may exist touching the education of certain classes of our citizens, those evils cannot by any possibility justify the subversion of the homes, and home control of children, which serve to lay the foundation for all that is best and holiest in our lives and our country.

The tendency of this bill, if enforced, will be to weaken parental authority over the children, and divide responsibility between the parents and the State authorities for their education. It is in the line of the most vicious class of legislation with which we are afflicted—that of State interference and control in matters with which the State of right ought not to interfere. However paternal

the Government may be, in this field it should keep its hands off. Whatever may be said in favor of enforced education of those whose education is entirely and grossly neglected, nothing can justify the public scrutiny and control of family education as contemplated by this act.

We therefore submit the following:—

*Resolved*, That the Union League Club deems this bill in the particulars mentioned in this report a menacing invasion of the sacred rights of the family, in the matter of the education of children, and we request the members of the Legislature so to vote as to defeat the passage of the bill.

Signed by E. B. Hinsdale, chairman; Edward H. Ammidown, R. M. Gallaway, Cephas Brainerd, Clarence C. Buel, John Jay Knox, D. B. St. John Roosa.

M. M. BUDLONG, Secretary.

*Union League Club House, January 28, 1890.*

Amen. And let all the people of the State act promptly and also request the members of the Legislature so to vote as to defeat the bill.

### The Nation has no Creed.

THE argument still made, occasionally, is; that this is a Christian country and as a Christian country, whose Christianity is founded on the Bible, it is right and proper to read the Bible in the public schools.

I deny the validity of that argument. As individuals the vast majority of us may be theologically Christian, but as a nation we are not Christian; we are nothing theologically. The nation has no creed. It distinctly professes that it has none. It agrees to protect all creeds. It is just as much bound to protect the Mohammedan as the Christian, the atheist as the Methodist. It can only protect all by insisting upon the silence of all through every department of its work.

There are cases in which the majority have no right to rule. Your State or your city, because the majority happens to be Protestant and Evangelical, has, therefore, no right to force Bible reading into the public school, if there be one single Jew, one single atheist, one single Catholic who objects to it.

The Bible is not in the curriculum; it is not studied as history or literature; it is read as religious authority, and its reading is made a religious exercise. If the parent of one single child in all the State objects, then your Bible reading in the public school, becomes a tyranny.

Theology should be absolutely debarred. If a Catholic deems the Bible a Protestant book, if any Unitarian deems it an orthodox book, if any materialist deems it a superstitious book, he has the right to demand that his religious or anti-religious rights shall not be infringed upon. The Jew, who accepts the Old Testament as divine writing, but rejects the New, has a right to demand that his children shall not be compelled to listen to the reading of the New Testament as scripture. The atheist has the same right to demand that his child shall not be submitted in the public schools to a style of teaching which at home is denied.

Suppose it came to pass that the great majority in this city or State were atheists or materialists; what would we call it if they forced into the public school the daily reading of a book which distinctly taught atheism and materialism? Would not Baptists and Presbyterians cry out against the awful tyranny?

It is not in the slightest degree a question of who is right and who is wrong in this matter. Under our form of government a man has the same liberty to believe an error that he has to believe a truth. The Government dare not become censor or pronounce judgment upon any form of theological belief or disbelief. It has no right to allow the public school to become the vehicle of any religious or anti-religious doctrine.

I say, therefore, that if there be one single objector, it is tyranny to keep the Bible in the public school. You say it is read without comment. It is read, and it carries its essential doctrines without the need of comment. Would you allow the Koran to be read as a religious exercise without comment?

The time has come when, if we are true Americans, we must not only allow religious liberty to all sects, we must demand religious liberty for all sects. We have passed the limit of simple tolerance. We must secure to the least and poorest his equality and fraternity.

The people of this nation may be overwhelmingly Protestant. Of course I can only rejoice, as an individual, in that fact; but the Nation is not Protestant, the State is not Protestant, the city or town is not Protestant. Every form of our Government must be absolutely non-committal, without favor or prejudice in this matter.—*Rev. Dr. Crowe, Jersey City.*

SENATOR BLAIR has since the present session of Congress opened, re-introduced his famous Sunday-rest bill. He has changed the title and made other modifications in the bill to disarm opposition. One of the most important is a sop thrown to the Seventh-day Adventists in a proviso exempting them from the operations of the bill. Notwithstanding these disguises and concessions the spirit of the bill remains the same. The principle is wholly radically and fundamentally wrong, and it matters little how the act is doctored and tinkered to satisfy this or that element of opposition. We hope Congress will sit squarely down on it. It matters not what pleas are urged in favor of the bill—that it is the interest of the laboring man to secure to him a day of rest, etc. There may be some truth in this, but the fact still remains that the real object of the bill is coercion of those who differ from the prevailing religious observance of this nation.—*Litchfield Minnesota, Independent.*

## NATIONAL RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ASSOCIATION.



### DECLARATION of PRINCIPLES.

We believe in the religion taught by Jesus Christ. We believe in temperance, and regard the liquor traffic as a curse to society.

We believe in supporting the civil government, and submitting to its authority.

We deny the right of any civil government to legislate on religious questions.

We believe it is the right, and should be the privilege, of every man to worship according to the dictates of his own conscience.

We also believe it to be our duty to use every lawful and honorable means to prevent religious legislation by the civil government; that we and our fellow-citizens may enjoy the inestimable blessings of both religious and civil liberty.

C. ELDRIDGE, - - - - - President.  
W. H. MCKEE, Secretary.

### "Not True as Stated."

THE following extracts from the Congressional Record, of February 19, are suggestive of the methods employed in accumulating signatures to petitions for a national Sunday-rest law:—

*Mr. Sherman:* I present a petition of citizens of Ohio, collected by the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, praying for the passage of a National Sunday-rest law. I notice the printed indorsement on the back of the petition states that it contains 701 individual signatures. This is evidently not true; but I suppose the statement ought to be that it contains the signatures of clergymen or otherwise representing 701 individual persons. It seems to me that the person who made the indorsement, ought not to state it in the way it is, for it is not true, as stated.

*Mr. Spooner:* I find on my desk, doubtless intended to be presented to the Senate, a petition said to contain 2,000 individual signatures from Wisconsin, praying for the passage of a Sunday-rest law. In the envelope I find, and I present to the Senate, three printed slips with a printed form of petition, and the following indorsement:—

Indorsed by Madison Convention of Congregational churches, representing churches of five counties, with membership of 1,400.

Attest, JAMES M. CAMPBELL, President.  
*Sun Prairie, Wis., June 10, 1889.*

Which accounts, as I understand it, for the 1,400 individual signatures stated on the envelope.

Here is another indorsed by a meeting of citizens of Milwaukee, June 9, 1889, number of petitioners, 450; and still a third, indorsed by a mass meeting of citizens in Milwaukee, June 9, 1889, number of petitioners, 150.

When it is understood, that what was said in these individual cases, is just as applicable to millions of ostensible signatures, counted and presented in favor of this movement, then it can be understood how unanswerable an argument against the passage of this bill, is bound up in these same petitions. W. H. M.

HERE is a petition which all are asked really to sign, so that when it is presented in Congress it will be "true as stated":—

We, the undersigned, adult residents of the United States, twenty-one years of age or more, hereby respectfully but earnestly petition your honorable body not to pass any bill in regard to the observance of the Sabbath or Lord's Day, or any other religious or ecclesiastical institution or rite; nor to favor in any way the adoption of any resolution for the amendment of the national Constitution that would in any way give preference to the principles of any one religion above another, or that will in any way sanction legislation upon the subject of religion, but that the total separation between religion and the State, assured by our national Constitution as it now is, may forever remain as our fathers established it.

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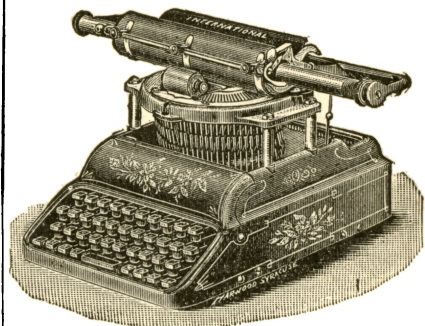
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OUR thanks are due to Hon. H. W. Baker, Superintendent of the State Documents, Albany. N. Y., for official documents furnished.

IF you are interested in Arizona curiosities, subscribe for the *Moral and Scientific Companion*, published by Mr. Eugene Browne, of Florence, Arizona.

Now that the United States Senators begin to say on the floor of the Senate Chamber, that the Sunday-law petitions are "not true as stated," perhaps those who are running the Sunday-law business will discover that it would be better to be honest and state the truth as it is. See page 86 of this paper.

MARCH 5, there was presented to the Senate of the United States a petition carrying 308,377 names in opposition to the Blair Sunday bill and the Blair resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution respecting establishments of religion and free public schools. This makes more than 658,000 *bona fide* signatures that have been presented to the Senate in opposition to these measures. Let the good work go on.

THE Young People's Christian Endeavor societies of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., have started a boycott on Sunday trade. They are endeavoring to get people to sign an agreement not to patronize any stores that do not close on Sundays, only excepting drug stores. These societies would do better to spend their efforts in an honest endeavor to be Christians, than to lay themselves out in such "Christian endeavor" as this amounts to.

A GENTLEMAN who holds a proper estimate of human nature has stated to us that, though we are so strongly opposed to the work and aims of those who are seeking to secure religious legislation, we ourselves would be just as bad as they are if we had the power which they are asking for. Of course we would. And for the very good reason that we would have to be as bad as they are before we could ask for that power; and being as bad as they in asking for it we certainly would be as bad as they in the use of the power when

obtained. Our constant purpose is, that by the grace of God we may be kept so good, that we will *never ask for any such power.*

WE are indebted to Prof. W. H. McKee, Secretary of the National Religious Liberty Association, for a copy of the Brief submitted by him to the Congressional Committee on the proposed District Sunday law. We shall print it next week. Professor McKee is a graduate of Michigan University Law School, and a practical lawyer besides—having been regularly admitted to the bar in three different States—and we can assure our readers that in this Brief there is a treat in store for them.

OUR esteemed Republican contemporary, the *Tribune*, reports that the experiment in State socialism which the State of New York entered upon when it determined to pay the laborers it employs higher wages than the market rate, is to be continued, and that the Legislature will have to appropriate \$600,000 to bear the expense of keeping it up during 1890.

It is a bad experiment. State socialism ought not to be encouraged or tolerated in this country. The State should pay the same wages as are paid by other employers of labor, and no more.—*New York Sun.*

IN the *North American Review*, for March, there is a fine discussion of "The Limitations of the Speakership," by Speaker Reed and Ex-Speaker Carlisle. The editor of the *Review* graciously informs the public that "of all *others*" these two gentlemen could discuss this question "with adequacy in point of practical experience and contrasted principles." "Others" indeed! We had supposed that of all men in the country these two gentlemen were *themselves*. And if Mr. Bryce had only been in the gallery of the House of Representatives, January 29 last, we believe that he would be inclined to think so too. Assuredly, Mr. Editor, these two gentlemen are *themselves*, not "others."

THE organ of the French Evangelical Publishing Society, *Semeur* (Springfield Mass.), the publication of which was suspended last fall, has again made its appearance under a new name. It is now known as *Le Citoyen Franco-American*, which means "The Franco-American Citizen." It is printed principally in French but has an English department, and has a thoroughly Protestant ring which is decidedly refreshing. The object of the paper is the promulgation of Protestantism among French-speaking people in America, and while its publishers do not wish their countrymen to forget that they are French, they do desire that they shall become thoroughly loyal American citizens, owing allegiance, not to the Pope of Rome but to the Government under

which they live, and to the God who gives them their being. We trust that *Le Citoyen Franco-American* will be always and in every part thoroughly and consistently Protestant.

REFERRING to the Blair bills, a Nebraska paper (the *Bertrand Herald*) says:—

It is lucky for the country that Senator Blair does not possess the power to formulate a national bill of fare for every American citizen. It is fortunate for both Church and State that he has not the power to direct just what shall be taught in our public schools and just how each individual shall regard Sunday, whether he be Christian, infidel, agnostic or Jew, If Senator Blair could secure the position of chief dictator to this nation, the American people would soon find themselves shorn of every individual right. Religious liberty and freedom of conscience would be destroyed, and Church and State would be as firmly united as in the days of the rack and the Inquisition.

THE temperance crusades of the women are changing color as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union have more to do with politics. When they first began, through the power of prayer to God and persuasion to men, saloons were closed, men were converted, and whisky was poured into the gutter. But in Lathrop, Missouri, lately, the women entered on another kind of crusade. They did not pray or weep, but became indignant, smashed the doors of two law-breaking saloonists, poured whisky and brandy into the gutter and set it on fire. Something like \$1,000 worth was destroyed. The change illustrates the changing spirit of the age. We believe, however, that the praying crusade was the better one.—*Signs of the Times.*

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has taken out a license to sell beer and wine for the entertainment of the clergy of his diocese. An English bishop said in a public address not long ago that one of his ambitions was to keep a public house. His Grace of Canterbury will now have an opportunity to show his talents as the keeper of a "pub.," and doubtless his stock of refreshments will be pure.—*New York Sun.*

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