

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

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DESPOTS may regard their subjects as their property, and usurp the divine prerogative of prescribing their religious faith, but the history of the world furnishes the melancholy demonstration that the disposition of one man to coerce the religious homage of another, springs from an unchastened ambition, rather than from a sincere devotion to any religion. The principles of our Government do not recognize in the majority any authority over the minority, except in matters which regard the conduct of one man to his fellow man.—*Col. Richard M. Johnson.*

OAKLAND, California, is somewhat agitated over the question of religious services in the public schools. The immediate occasion of this agitation is the action of one of the teachers in requiring pupils "to bow their heads over clasped hands and repeat the Lord's prayer and the psalms." The School Law of California, as found in the Political Code, Article X, Section 1672, reads as follows:—

No publication of a sectarian, partisan, or denominational character must be used or distributed in any school, or be made a part of any school library, nor must any sectarian or denominational doctrine be taught therein.

The State law does not in so many words forbid all religious instruction, but it makes no provision for it, and is generally regarded as forbidding it.

The "Rules and Regulations of the Board of Education, of the City of Oakland," says:—

No sectarian or denominational publication, of any kind whatever, shall be used in the schools, or

be made a part of any school library; nor shall any denominational or sectarian doctrines be inculcated, or present party politics be discussed by teachers on the premises.

Certainly as between Jews and Christians the use of the Lord's prayer would be sectarian, and as between Protestants and Catholics the use of the Scriptures would likewise be sectarian, for it is evident the Catholic or the Protestant version must be used, and offense must, therefore, be given to one party or the other. For the sake not only of justice to the taxpayers, but for the sake of the respect due the Bible, it is to be hoped that this question will be settled in California as it has been in Wisconsin.

### The Present Standing of the Sunday-Law Movement.

IN number four, of his contributions to the Sunday-law question, Mr. Crafts furnishes some more valuable items to the literature and the facts of this question. The article is an inquiry,—“What about Sunday Trains, Sunday Mails, and Sunday Newspapers?” and in the article he makes this confession:—

About all we have gained in the last five years in our fight with Sunday trains, Sunday mails, and Sunday newspapers, is in the way of confession to their wrongness.

How general this confession is, he does not tell us, but whether it be limited or general, such a confession is vastly more of a gain than the Sunday-law cause is entitled to, not only in five years, but in all time, because such things are not wrong. There is no more wrongness in Sunday trains, Sunday mails, and Sunday newspapers, than in trains, mails, and newspapers at any other time, and a confession of any such wrongness is, in itself wrong.

As to the value of the indorsements in that great petition which he calls, “the greatest petition the world ever saw,” he bears important testimony as follows:—

It is not to be supposed that all those represented [in the petition] have acted accordingly. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, for instance, indorsed the petition at the International Conven-

tion in Richmond, and then went home on a Sunday train. The recent International Sabbath-school Convention, at Pittsburg, spoke strongly against Sabbath breaking, but many of its members arrived on Sunday trains.

And the italics are all his own; they are worthily placed too. This simply shows that the indorsement, even where it is genuine, of those organizations and associations, is merely for the purpose of maintaining popularity with those who are demanding religious legislation and offering political influence, without a particle of principle in it. It also conclusively shows that when the Sunday laws which they demand shall have been secured, they will not be obeyed even by those who have made them and profess to believe them; and that the only use that will ever be made of them, will be for those who have the power to vent their religious spite and bigotry upon those who choose to differ with them in regard to the observance of a day of rest. That is the only use that is now made of Sunday laws where they are of force. It is the only use that will be made of the Sunday laws that are further demanded.

And this is the answer to that statement which is so often made when this subject is spoken of, “Pshaw! there is no danger in all that; even though they get a Sunday law, it will not be obeyed.” That is true, and THE SENTINEL, in all its work, has never supposed that the Sunday laws which are demanded will be obeyed when they are secured. But such laws will put power into the hands of the religious Sunday-law leaders, and that power will be used in enforcing the laws upon the few people who choose to observe another day rather than Sunday, and refuse to observe Sunday. We repeat, that is the only use that is made of Sunday laws now, and the only use that ever will be made of them. But that is the worst possible use, because it is simply to prostitute the civil power to the place of a tool in the hands of the irregular passions of religious bigots. For as Bancroft has justly observed, “the humane ever shrink from enforcing the

laws dictated by bigotry, and their enforcement, therefore, falls to the fanatics or the men of savage disposition. Hence, the execution of such laws is always much more harsh than the makers of the laws intend."

It will be remembered that the "Pearl of Days," the official organ of the American Sabbath Union, and Mr. Crafts himself, heralded through the land the blessed fact that the Erie, and Pennsylvania railroads had largely reduced the Sunday traffic, especially in the matter of freight trains, but now Mr. Crafts deposes as follows:—

I am informed that the so-called reductions on the Erie were a sham, and that even the Pennsylvania's reductions, lasted in most cases, only a few months.

He shows that it is the same way also with the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western, and New York Central railroads.

Again, it will be remembered how much was made of President Harrison's order in respect to the Sunday parade of United States troops, and how that both the order and the offer were extolled. But now Mr. Crafts declares that

What the President has done in regard to the soldier's Sabbath, like the other half-reforms I have referred to, is valuable only as a confession. His proclamation lacks the ring of right. He does not discontinue Sunday parades of United States troops, nor Sunday concerts by Government bands, and only cuts off half the morning inspection. He has not bettered, but worsened, the situation, making two inspections instead of one, at which the soldiers are universally displeased.

All their high hopes which were engendered by the accession of Mr. Wanamaker, the Sunday-school teacher, to the office of Postmaster General, have also been turned into a *via dolorosa*, as witnesseth the following:—

I fear it was the same compromiser, disposed to please both bad and good, who stayed the hands of our Postmaster General in his Sabbath reforms, which also have proved nothing but a confession. We who value the Sabbath, were generous in praise of the few trifling reductions of Sunday work in the mail service, not so much for what they were as for what they promised. But they proved only spring blossoms, and in the autumn we find instead of fruit only faded leaves. Think of John Wanamaker being superintendent of a national Sunday school, with 75,000 class rooms, that is teaching the whole Nation not to keep, but to break, the Ten Commandments!

Yet in the midst of his lament he is able to raise a chirrup with which he attempts to inspire a buzz of a bee in Mr. Wanamaker's presidential bonnet. He announces that, "in his judgment, "Mr. Wanamaker is the man of destiny, *if he will—only be himself,*" and the italics are again his own. He further declares that, "If Mr. Wanamaker will defend himself against political metamorphosis,"

He will soon be seen to be the man who alone can combine and lead the two elements, without either of which any man must soon be defeated, the prohibitionists on the one hand and the labor reformers on the other. Our Presidents thus far have all been lawyers and generals. It is now the merchants' turn. Nationalism and Civil Service Reform demand that the Government shall be administered like a great business. No public man is so capable

as he of taking under Government control the telegraph, and express business, and postal savings banks, in all of which Mr. Wanamaker is understood to believe; and the Government control of railroads, of which his opinion is known, would certainly find in him, when the people shall decree it—and I believe they are nearly ready to write the decree on their ballots—the man most suitable for such a responsibility.

Thus it appears that the American Sabbath Union with the Sunday-law movement, has attained the position where it can presume to hold out, as a reward for service, the chief office in the national Government. It is perfectly consistent, therefore, that Mr. Crafts should adopt, as his view, the recommendation of Dr. Arthur Little, who advocates "agitation, illumination, legislation, litigation, *combination.*" The Sunday-law managers propose to form a combination of every element that they can secure, and then trade off with whatever political aspirant they can win, the offices in the State and Nation even to the presidency.

And then when they have succeeded in securing the power for which they are so zealously laboring, the following quotation from number five, of Mr. Crafts's article, shows what they propose to do "for the improvement of Sabbath observance":—

A minister's little daughter who had been naughty, as he took her in hand, exclaimed earnestly: "Don't whip me, don't whip me; take me and pray with me." The liquor dealers also want the parsons to stick to their praying. "Don't whip me—pray for me." The minister in the story *did both*. Let ministers in "tending" to the larger offenders do likewise. But we shall not whip them if our only lash is not longer than our tongues. Nor will they be terrified by a tract.

So by the Sunday-law movement, which is led by the preachers, they propose to secure power by which they can whip as well as pray, and it is to be clearly understood that they do not propose to do the whipping with their tongues nor with tracts. Jesus Christ never sent preachers to whip offenders, and when it is proposed to whip the people into Sunday observance, then it is high time that the people themselves should see to it that such characters as these shall not secure the power to whip. It is certain that their prayers without the power to whip can do neither good nor harm to any one. But when a preacher obtains the power of the civil law to whip offenders, then his prayers always deepen the devilry in the whipping.

It will be remembered, that a few weeks ago we printed words which Mr. Crafts had adopted from Lyman Abbott, to the effect that they purpose to "run up the Puritan flag, and emblazon on it the motto of a modern and modified Puritanism." The ancient and unmodified Puritanism likewise chose to whip offenders into the kingdom of God, as the following record shows:—

Mary Tompkins and Alice Ambrose came to Massachusetts in 1662; landing at Dover, they began preaching at the inn, to which a number of people resorted. Mr. Rayner, hearing the news, hurried

to the spot, and in much irritation asked them what they were doing there? This led to an argument about the Trinity, and the authority of ministers, and at last the clergyman "in a rage flung away, calling to his people, at the window, to go from amongst them." Nothing was done at the moment, but toward winter the two came back from Maine, whither they had gone, and then Mr. Rayner saw his opportunity. He caused Richard Walden to prosecute them, and as the magistrate was ignorant of the technicalities of the law, the elder acted as clerk, and drew up for him the following warrant:—

To the constables of Dover, Hampton, Newberry, Lynn, Boston, Roxbury, and Dedham: Until the vagabond Quakers are carried out of this jurisdiction you are to give them sound whippings; you and every one of you are required in the King's Majesty's name to take these vagabond Quakers, Anne Coleman, Mary Tompkins and Alice Ambrose, and make them fast to the cart's tail, and to whip them upon their naked backs. Convey them from constable to constable until they are out of this jurisdiction, as you will answer at your peril: and this shall be your warrant.

At Dover, December 22, 1662.

Per me, RICHARD WALDEN.

The Rev. John Rayner pronounced judgment of death by flogging, for the weather was bitter, the distance to be walked was eighty miles, and the lashes were given with a whip, whose three twisted knotted thongs cut to the bone.

So in a very cloudy day, your deputy, Walden, caused these women to be stripp'd naked from the middle upward, and tyed to a cart, and after a while cruelly whipp'd them, whilst the priest stood and looked, and laughed at it. . . . They went to the executioner to Hampton, and through dirt and snow at Salisbury, half way the leg deep, the constable forced them after the cart's tail at which he whipp'd them.

Had the Rev. John Rayner followed the cart to see that his three hundred and thirty lashes were all given with the same ferocity which warned his heart to mirth at Dover, before his journey's end he would certainly have joyed in giving thanks to God over the women's gory corpses, freezing amid the snow. His negligence saved their lives, for when the ghastly pilgrims passed through Salisbury, the people, to their eternal honor, set the captives free.—*Emancipation of Massachusetts, pages 155, 156.*

Whether the whipping of the "modern and modified Puritanism," would be any less severe, or any less amusing to the preachers, than was the ancient and unmodified, is a question the American people ought to consider while there is yet time.

A. T. J.

#### Morality in the Public Schools.

UPON the question as to whether morality should be taught in the public schools, we would suggest that it would be well for those who demand it, to agree upon what morality really is, what is its basis, and what are its sanctions. If this should not be clearly discerned and taught, even granting that it is the province of the State to teach morality, it is certain that the teaching would be no better than that which is now given in the public schools, and the probabilities are, that it would be much worse. It is also certain that those who favor the teaching of morality in the public schools cannot agree upon what morality is, nor upon what are the grounds of moral responsibility.

This question was studied "thoroughly and practically" for four years by the Evangelical Ministers' Association of Boston.

In 1882 an able committee of that body, composed of representative men of all

denominations, was appointed for the purpose of preparing "a book of morals for the public schools." Two of that committee were Drs. Joseph T. Duryea and Edward Everett Hale. The result of the four years' study of the question by this committee was expressed by Dr. Duryea in 1885, in a letter to the chairman of a committee in New York, appointed to consider the same subject. The following is the material part of that letter:—

32 Union Park, Boston, Dec. 5, 1885.

MY DEAR SIR: The committee appointed to consider the matter of a book of morals for the public schools, have been trying faithfully to find out what can be done. Difficulties have been met and not overcome. We are trying to evade them. . . . The desire was for a graded series. This would involve a book worthy to go into the high schools. This could hardly omit reference to the grounds of moral responsibility. The committee have seriously doubted the wisdom of debating the basis of moral choice and action before youth. To show them that apparently good men differ concerning the very foundation of morality, might be harmful before they are developed and informed sufficiently to understand how there can be differences as to theories, and yet substantial agreement as to practical morality.

I think, now, the tendency is to admit that it is better to address the moral intuitions, and not to theorize about them; also to treat moral matters as they come up in the life of the pupils, and their associations in the school and on the play-ground.

But it has been deemed practicable to prepare a book, or a series of books, after the pattern of the "Book of Golden Deeds," prepared for youth in England.

The moral affections and sentiments might be exhibited in expression, and moral principles might be embodied in characters, and concretely presented in deeds. An outline including all the virtues, and incidents under each of them, might be selected. Also deeds might be presented involving all the moral rules drawn out of the root principles of morality.

This is as far as we have been able to go, with expectation of meeting with general approval, and securing the admission of the book or books.

Yours truly, JOSEPH T. DURVEA.

This is an interesting letter, and coming as it does as the result of years of special study on the subject by such men, its statements are of more than common importance.

First, difficulties have been met and not overcome, and they are difficulties of such a nature as, from the circumstances of the case, to seem insurmountable, because instead of battling with them with a real endeavor to overcome them the committee tried to evade them. But upon such a question, to evade the difficulty is not to escape it, for it is still there and there it remains. This statement simply reveals in a more forcible way than is usually done, the fact that upon the question of the Bible, or religion, or morality, in the public schools, there are difficulties which cannot be overcome with justice to all. Of course we use the word morality as meaning much more than civility.

Second, the committee could not insert in a book for the public school any reference to "the grounds of moral responsibility," because that is an unsettled question even among those who were to compile

the book; and because the wisdom of debating before youth the question of what is the basis of moral choice and action, is seriously to be doubted; and, further, because it might be harmful for the youth in school to discover that the very reason why they should choose, and act, a certain way in a given case, was an unsettled question amongst college graduates and doctors of divinity.

These reasons certainly ought to be sufficient to put a check upon the efforts of any such committee. They ought also to be sufficient to put a damper upon the zeal of very many who are now so ardently in favor of forcing this question to an issue in the management of the public school. Because when men of mature and trained minds, graduates of the best colleges and the highest universities, and of theological seminaries, and who, of all men, are most intimately and constantly associated with the consideration of this very question in all its phases,—when these can not agree upon what is the ground of moral responsibility, or the basis of moral choice and action, it certainly would be perfect folly to demand that school-children should decide the question. The committee did well to say it might be harmful; the committee might have gone farther and said not only that it might be harmful, but that it could not be anything else than harmful.

Yet it was not exactly this phase of the question that the committee referred to when it said it might be harmful. It was the fact that the children would discover "that apparently good men differ concerning the very foundation of morality," and would thus be led to doubt whether there is any real foundation for morality; and consequently would be landed plumply into skepticism. Of this the committee might well be afraid, because it would be the inevitable result of every attempt of the State to inculcate morality.

A. T. J.

#### An Immoral Community.

CALIFORNIA is held up by the Sunday-law advocates as a terrible example of an immoral community, because it has no Sunday law; but we doubt if it is any worse, or even as bad, as some States that have Sunday laws. South Carolina has, we believe, quite a rigid Sunday law; yet, according to the public press, Rev. W. T. Tolson, a Baptist preacher of Columbia, delivered a sermon in that city not long since, in which he attacked the social organizations of the city, and painted Columbia in the blackest colors of immorality. He said the city was in league with Satan, and in his remarks gave many black and disgusting details of the immorality practiced.

"The Columbia Club, of which the elite of South Carolina members, was denounced by S. A. Theological Seminary He even

denounced the Young Men's Christian Association as being in league with hell for allowing pictures of 'a traveling company of prostitutes' to be posted on their property. He attacked the city authorities for allowing gambling hells and disorderly houses to exist, and spoke plainly of miscegenation, which, he said, resulted from the muddling of the race problem.

"His whole discourse was in this style. He says he can produce proof of his statements, and some exciting episodes are ahead."

It seems from all this that even a Sunday law is impotent for good in the absence of wholesome private morals.

#### The Methodists and the Schools.

THE following editorial from the *Times*, of this city, was published last April, at the time when the Methodist Conference was held, to which it refers. The article was selected at the time for reprinting in THE SENTINEL, but has been overlooked until now. The matter, however, has lost none of its value; it is good for all time:—

The action taken on Monday, by the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, upon the subject of the common schools was, perhaps, the most important work of that body. We look upon it as a grievous mistake. If every church should accept the principles laid down in the report adopted by the Conference without a dissenting voice, and if these principles were applied to the management of the schools, it is to be feared that there would be very little left of the common school system in this country.

It is remarkable that while the framers of the report are doubtless sincerely attached to the common schools, and would regard the destruction of them as a great evil, they are taking precisely the course that the avowed enemies of the schools would wish them to adopt. This is one of the unfortunate consequences of the application of a religious or quasi-religious zealotry to secular affairs. . . . The Roman Catholics are not at all afraid of the Protestant zealots. If these latter can only impose upon the common schools a Protestant curriculum, they will make out the Roman Catholic case that it is oppressive and unjust, and a violation of the constitutional safeguard of religious liberty, to force Roman Catholic parents to send their children to such schools or to contribute to maintain them by paying taxes.

Of course the Protestant propagandists do not describe the public instruction they wish to see administered as Protestantism. They describe it as Christianity. But the Roman Catholics also profess to be and call themselves Christians, and everybody knows that a Methodist preacher and a Roman Catholic priest could not possibly

agree about what religious instruction ought to be administered in the common schools. The priest on his part would regard the scheme favored by the preacher, and the preacher on his the scheme favored by the priest, as distinctly worse than the exclusively secular scheme, which they agree only in denouncing as "godless."

The Protestant platform as laid down by the Methodists would meet with the entire concurrence of the Roman Catholics who are trying to secure a division of the school fund and to secure the support of their own parochial schools by the proceeds of public taxation. Of course they would mean something by the words "Christian" and "Christianity" entirely different from what the Methodists mean, but they would agree that "Christianity is a part of the common law of the State," that "the perils of bad habit from association in the school can only be overcome by the inculcation of Christian morals," and that when the schools "become godless and therefore necessarily immoral," Christian citizens must deny the right of the State to give such an inadequate education.

The phrases we have quoted are from the report adopted by the Methodist Conference, and we take leave to say that they are either meaningless or irrelevant. An English judge did once set forth that Christianity is part of the common law of England, and several American judges have repeated this dictum. But practically, and in the application the Methodist Conference gives to it, what does it mean? So far as it relates to rights and duties, Christianity is a part of the common law only in so far as it is distinctly embodied in the common law. You cannot indict a man for not loving his neighbor as himself. Christianity may require a man to sell all that he has and give to the poor, or when one cheek is smitten to turn the other also to the smiter, but these duties are not enforced by the penal code of any Christian nation in our time.

The truth is that the talk about "a godless and therefore necessarily immoral education" loses sight altogether of the end and aim of the public school system. It does not attempt to make Christian men and women. That is left for other agencies, among them the Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches. It aims to make men intelligent and independent citizens, to give them such an education as will enable them to exercise their political rights for the general welfare, and as will enable them to keep out of jail and out of the poorhouse. In this it has been successful, and has amply vindicated its right to be maintained at the public expense. Whether men behave themselves from right motives or from wrong is a point of vital importance from the religious point of view. From the secular point of view, which is that of the State, it is of no consequence whatever.

Reading, writing, arithmetic and geog-

raphy are not taught differently by a Methodist and by a Jesuit, but in precisely the same fashion, if they are taught properly. To say that a "godless" instruction in these branches of knowledge, or in any other that are properly within the province of the public schools, is "necessarily immoral," is to make a perfectly meaningless assertion. As soon as we leave generalities about the "inculcation of Christian morals" and undertake to determine specifically what Christian morals the public schools shall inculcate, we come upon matters of controversy about which people differ whose rights as citizens, as parents and as tax-payers are precisely the same.

When religious teaching is given which is offensive to members of any sect, or of no sect, the right of these persons to insist that their children shall not be subjected to it is clear, and the claim they may found upon it for a division of the school fund is just. If they merely complain, as do the Roman Catholics and the Methodists, that the schools do not teach religion at all, the sufficient answer is that this is not the business of the schools, while it is the business of the Methodist and the Roman Catholic Churches. This is the only ground upon which the school system can be maintained in a community of different religious or irreligious beliefs; and whoever abandons this ground is, in effect if not in intention, an enemy of the common school system.

#### Civil Laws against Blasphemy.

"BLASPHEMY," says the Encyclopedia Britannica, "means literally defamation or evil speaking, but is more particularly restricted to an indignity offered to the Deity by words or writing. The common law of England treats blasphemy as an indictable offense. All blasphemies against God, as denying his being, or providence, all contumelious reproaches of Jesus Christ, all profane scoffing at the Holy Scriptures, or exposing any part thereof to contempt or ridicule, are punishable by the temporal courts with fine, imprisonment, and also infamous corporal punishment." "In some Catholic countries," says Webster, "the crime of blasphemy includes speaking evil of the Virgin Mary and the saints. In the middle ages, blasphemy was used to denote simply the blaming of a person or thing. Among the Greeks, to blaspheme was to use words of ill omen, which they were careful to avoid."

"The 9 and 10 William III, c. 32," continues the Encyclopedia Britannica, "enacts that if any person, educated in or having made profession of the Christian religion, should by writing, preaching, teaching, or advised speaking, deny any one of the persons of the Holy Trinity to be God, or should assert or maintain that there are more Gods than one, or

should deny the Christian religion to be true, or the Holy Scriptures to be of divine authority, he should, upon the first offense, be rendered incapable of holding any office or place of trust, and for the second, incapable of bringing any action, of being guardian or executor, or of taking a legacy or deed of gift, and should suffer three years' imprisonment without bail. . . . By the law of Scotland, as it originally stood, the punishment of blasphemy was death."

These are the laws of the liberty-loving Saxons! If a man commits the offense of denying the truthfulness of the Scriptures twice, then he is to be left to the mercy of any villain in the world; for he is to be denied all recourse in the courts. Nor is this law entirely a dead letter (though, fortunately, this class of laws are fast becoming so). John Stuart Mill, in writing on this subject in his essay "On Liberty," pertinently says:—

It will be said that we do not now put to death the introducers of new opinions; we are not like our fathers who slew the prophets, we even build sepulchers to them. It is true we no longer put heretics to death; and the amount of penal infliction which modern feeling would probably tolerate, even against the most obnoxious opinions, is not sufficient to extirpate them. But let us not flatter ourselves that we are yet free from the stain even of legal persecutions. Penalties for opinion, or at least for its expression, still exist by law; and their enforcement is not, even in these times, so unexampled as to make it at all incredible that they may some day be revived in full force. In the year 1857, at the summer assizes of the county of Cornwall, an unfortunate man\* said to be of unexceptional conduct in all relations of life, was sentenced to twenty-one months' imprisonment for uttering, and writing on a gate, some offensive words concerning Christianity. [A number of instances also might be cited in the United States, notably, *People vs. Ruggles*, 8 Johnson (New York), 290; *State vs. Chandler*, 2 Harrington (Delaware), 553; *Updegraph vs. Commonwealth*, 11 Sergeant and Rawle (Pennsylvania), 394; and *Commonwealth vs. Kneeland*, 20 Pickering (Massachusetts), 206.]

Within a month of the same time, at the Old Bailey, two persons, on two separate occasions,† were rejected as jurymen, and one of them grossly insulted by the judge and by one of the counsel, because they honestly declared that they had no theological belief; and a third, a foreigner,‡ for the same reason was denied justice against a thief. This refusal of redress took place in virtue of the legal doctrine that no person can be allowed to give evidence in a court of justice, who does not profess belief in a God (any god is sufficient) and in a future state; which is equivalent to declaring such persons to be outlaws, excluded from the protection of the tribunals; who may not only be robbed or assaulted with impunity, if no one but themselves, or persons of similar opinions, be present, but any one else may be robbed or assaulted with impunity, if the proof of the fact depends on their evidence.

The assumption on which this is grounded, is that the oath is worthless, of a person who does not believe in a future state. . . . The rule, is suicidal, and cuts away its own foundation. Under pretense that atheists must be liars, it admits the testimony of all atheists who are willing to lie, and rejects only those who brave the obloquy of publicly confessing a detested creed rather than affirm a falsehood.

\* Thomas Pooley, Bodmin Assizes, July 31, 1857. In December following he received a free pardon from the Crown.

† George Jacob Holyoake, August 17, 1857; Edward Truelove, July, 1857.

‡ Baron de Gleichen, Marlborough Street Police Court, August 4, 1857.

These, indeed, are but rags and remnants of persecution, and may be thought to be not so much an indication of the wish to persecute as an example of that very frequent infirmity of English minds, which makes them take a preposterous pleasure in the assertion of a bad principle, when they are no longer bad enough to desire to carry it really into practice.

That similar laws should have a place on the statute books of an enlightened Government like that of the United States,—especially when it professes perfect religious freedom—entire separation of the civil Government from religion—is surprising indeed. John Adams deplored the fact greatly. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, dated at Quincy, January 23, 1825, he said:—

MY DEAR SIR: We think ourselves possessed, or at least we boast that we are so, of liberty of conscience on all subjects and of the right of free inquiry and private judgment in all cases, and yet how far are we from these exalted privileges in fact. There exists, I believe, throughout the whole Christian world, a law which makes it blasphemy to deny, or to doubt, the divine inspiration of all the books of the Old and New Testaments, from Genesis to Revelation. In most countries of Europe it is punished by fire at the stake, or the rack, or the wheel. In England itself, it is punished by boring through the tongue with a red hot poker. In America it is not much better; \* even in our Massachusetts, which, I believe, upon the whole, is as temperate and moderate in religious zeal as most of the States, a law was made in the latter end of the last century repealing the cruel punishments of the former laws, but substituting fine and imprisonment upon all those blasphemies upon any book of the Old Testament or the New. Now, what free inquiry, when a writer must surely encounter the risk of fine or imprisonment for adducing any arguments for investigation into the divine authority of those books? . . . It is true, few persons appear desirous to put such laws into execution, and it is also true that some few persons are hardy enough to venture to depart from them; but as long as they continue in force as laws, the human mind must make awkward and clumsy progress into its investigations. I wish they were repealed. The substance and essence of Christianity, as I understand it, is eternal and unchangeable, and will bear examination forever; but it has been mixed with extraneous ingredients, which, I think, will not bear examination, and they ought to be separated.

\*The truth of Adams's statement is proved by the following law, which, legally, is in force in the very capital of our Nation to-day,—although, of course, it is a dead letter. It was a Maryland law enacted October, 1793, and, with the rest of the laws of Maryland, was adopted as a law in the District of Columbia by the following act of Congress:—

"SECTION 92. The laws of the State of Maryland not inconsistent with this title, as the same existed on the twenty-seventh day of February, 1801, except as since modified or repealed by Congress or by authority thereof, or until so modified or repealed, continue in force within the District." "Revised Statutes, District of Columbia," page 9.

The first section of the act, entitled, "An act to punish blasphemers, swearers, drunkards, and Sabbath-breakers," etc., reads as follows:—

. . . That if any person shall hereafter, within this province, wittingly, maliciously, and advisedly, by writing or speaking, blaspheme, or curse God, or deny our Saviour Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, or shall deny the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or the Godhead of any of the three persons, or the unity of the Godhead, or shall utter any profane words concerning the Holy Trinity, or any of the persons thereof, and shall be thereof convicted by verdict, or confession, shall, for the first offense, be bored through the tongue and fined twenty pounds sterling; . . . and that for the second offense, the offender being therefore convicted as aforesaid, shall be stigmatized by burning in the forehead with the letter B and fined forty pounds sterling; . . . and that for the third offense, the offender being convicted as aforesaid, shall suffer death without the benefit of the clergy." "Laws of the District of Columbia," page 136 *et seq.*

As incompatible as they are with religious equality, several of the States have similar laws, with the penalty somewhat modified, and now and then attempts are made to enforce them.

Blasphemy is purely a religious offense, and should be dealt with by the churches alone. The Government has no more right to deal with blasphemy than it has to deal with idolatry. The American people should never be satisfied until every one of these theocratic laws are removed from the statute books of the free States of America.

Such laws as these have ever been used as a means of persecuting individuals speaking or teaching contrary to the prevailing religious opinions. Blasphemy was the charge against Christ, and under which he was crucified. Paul suffered repeatedly from these laws. The words of the town clerk at Ephesus were: "For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess." Yet the same people who condemn these people in those unenlightened times for their injustice in persecuting Paul, and others who differed with them, keep equally unjust laws upon our statute books to-day, and rejoice whenever judges can be found who are intolerant enough to enforce them.

Never will the American people, or any other people, enjoy the full benefits of free institutions until they concede to others all the rights they claim for themselves. That was one of the principles upon which this Government was founded, and must be recognized in making and in enforcing our laws. "The Government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded upon the Christian religion," says the Tripolitan treaty, made during Washington's administration, in the very infancy of our Nation, and the attempts that are made to show special favor by law to the Christian religion, and to throw into jail any one who happens to speak against it, should receive the universal disapprobation of American citizens.

All citizens in this Nation are on an equality. The Christian has just as good a right to speak against Mohammedanism as the Mohammedan has to speak against Christianity;—but no better right. The Jew has just as much right to call Christ an impostor, as has the Christian to so call El Mahdi. So, too, the infidel and Unitarian have just as much right to deny the inspiration of the Scriptures and the Trinity, as have the believer and Trinitarian to oppose the views of Robert G. Ingersoll and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Intolerance of the views of others is always to be deplored; and especially so when powerful but illegitimate force on the part of the Government is applied to crush the expression of opinion at variance with the dominant cult. People speak of these things as trifles; but they will not prove to be trifles if the spirit of persecution revives. We should keep in mind the words of England's great philosopher, John Stuart Mill. "Unhappily there is no security," says he, "in the state of the

public mind, that the suspension of worse forms of legal persecution, which has lasted for about the space of a generation, will continue. In this age the quiet surface of routine is as often ruffled by attempts to resuscitate past evils, as to introduce new benefits. What is boasted of at the present time as the revival of religion, is always, in narrow and uncultivated minds, at least as much the revival of bigotry; and when there is the strong permanent leaven of intolerance in the feelings of a people, which at all times abides in the middle classes of this country, it needs but little to provoke them into actively persecuting those whom they have never ceased to think proper objects of persecution."

There are two principles that should be strictly adhered to, and which must be adhered to if we would have the best Government. First, the Government must let the individual alone; and, second, it must compel every one else to let him alone. The only time that the Government has a right to lay its hands on a person is when he interferes with the rights of others. "If the individual," says Mr. Mill, "refrains from molesting others in what concerns them, and merely acts according to his own inclination and judgment in things which concern himself, the same reasons which show that opinion should be free, prove also that he should be allowed, without molestation, to carry his opinions into practice at his own cost. That mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions, is not desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good, until mankind are much more capable than at present of recognizing all sides of the truth,—are principles applicable to men's modes of action, not less than to their opinions.

"As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is that there should be different experiments of living; that free scope should be given to varieties of character short of injury to others; and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically, when any one thinks fit to try them. It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself. Where not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress."

W. A. BLAKELY.

"THE Sunday law can be enforced only by a denial of the right of religious liberty."

### A Striking Contrast.

WE read in the Bible that when Ezra was about to go up from Babylon to rebuild the house of God at Jerusalem, he was "ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help him against the enemy in the way." His reason for such a course, he says, was because he had told the king of Babylon that his God would protect all those that trusted him.

Now, Ezra and those that journeyed with him were God-fearing men, and, conscious of a mightier protection than any arm of flesh, they were ashamed to ask for human aid in such a perilous undertaking as this; and we read of them that they all reached their destination and lost none of the treasures that they were carrying with them, with which to build the house of God.

The candid mind can not but note a striking contrast in the course pursued by these holy men and that pursued by a body of men in our day who style themselves National Reformers. These men tell us that it is their object to build up the Church of Christ—the spiritual house of God. Ezra was on his journey to build the earthly temple at Jerusalem. Ezra was ashamed to require earthly aid when he could have had it by asking for it, while the National Reformers most earnestly petition the civil power to aid them in building up the spiritual house of God. There must be a cause for such a difference in purpose between Ezra and these men, who claim to be the followers of the same God.

It is useless to ask if the hand of the Lord is "shortened that it cannot save," or "his ear heavy that it cannot hear;" for in him, who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," there "is no variability neither shadow of turning," and there is no more restraint with him now to save by many or by few than there was in days of old.

It is sadly true, that for many years past, there has been a remarkable spiritual declension in the professed churches of Jesus Christ. Honest, God-fearing men of all denominations have noted this; many have written about it, and many more have lamented such a state of lukewarmness as prevails in the Church of Christ. But they should not appeal to earthly powers for help in such a time of need. Would it honor God should those who profess to love and serve him prostrate themselves before the State and beg the civil power to enforce "certain principles of Christianity, which are held by all," upon those who are careless and indifferent about their eternal interests? Would it savor of the spirit of Him who said "my kingdom is not of this world?"

The question of religious legislation should interest every Christian, but not in the way the National Reformers de-

sire it to interest them. These men claim that it would greatly benefit the Church to "convert the State" and have the State forward the Church in its work of saving souls; but the Saviour declares that the devil is the prince of this world, and the Apostle Paul declares, that this is the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. Now if the Church of Christ prostrates herself before the civil powers of this world, can she expect any help and support from them? It looks more like the Church becoming converted to the State than of the State being converted to the Church. In all past history of State religion, we find the Church conformed to the world, instead of the State being "transformed."

It is, indeed, high time for Christians everywhere to be aroused at the very thought of such a move being successful. If the Church seeks for secular power to support her in converting souls does she not savor of that spirit which would fast and pray for power to smite with the fist of wickedness, which God has so condemned? The fast that God has chosen is to "loose the bands of wickedness and let the oppressed go free." Already some have been cast into prison, for conscience' sake, because of religious legislation in our land, and if the Church would move in the council of God she would seek to let these oppressed ones go free instead of seeking to "lade men with burdens grievous to be borne."

The God of heaven would have his followers trust him. His eternal principles of justice, love, and truth will stand on their own merits without the aid of human support or national legislation. When a church seeks the State for support, it is because she has lost the vital principles of godliness; and the fearful words uttered by God to ancient Israel is true of her: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that He will not hear."

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help."

S. O. LANE.

### How to Preserve the Schools.

THE Roman Catholic hierarchy in this country, following the orders and adhering to the policy of Rome, have undoubtedly determined to push forward a parochial school system, and propose building, sooner or later, a parochial school by the side of every Roman Catholic Church. Their success in carrying out this design depends on Protestants. If we ignore their demand for consideration, if we make the schools Protestant schools, if we consider it a sufficient ground for the exclusion of a man from the school boards, and a teacher from the working force, that he is a Roman Catholic, and insist on disregarding Roman Catholic opinions and offending Roman Catholic sentiment in our

text-books, we must expect to drive the children of Roman Catholic parents out of the public school into the parochial school. They will not send their children into schools where their faith is misrepresented, and where they are forbidden representation in the teaching and the government. If, on the contrary, we make and keep the schools public schools, if we make them so broad that no one is excluded by any moderate religious prejudices, and so thorough that no private school can compete with them, we may count on the parental instinct to support them in spite of the opposition of a hierarchy which objects, not to specific teaching, but to any teaching not under its own control. The No Popery agitators are the unconscious allies of the Papacy in its campaign against the public school system. The true defenders of that system are those who are resolved to maintain it with a curriculum which can secure the approbation of broad-minded men of all religious faiths.—*The Christian Union*.

AFTER stating the facts in the case of R. M. King, the Tennessee farmer, arrested and imprisoned for Sunday labor, the *Baptist Examiner* says:—

On the point of law we do not profess to speak—the courts will decide that—but we have no hesitation in expressing a decided opinion as to what the law should be. If the trial Judge interpreted the law correctly, the Legislature of Tennessee should make haste to change it. Cases similar to this have occurred within recent years in Pennsylvania and other States, and in every instance they have been acts of persecution, of which every right-minded Christian man should be ashamed. Laws of this kind are a relic of the Dark Ages, and cannot too soon be expunged from the statute book.

Besides all which, the good people of Tennessee seem to be straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel in this matter. Would they not deserve more respect if they first prosecuted the officials who run needless freight trains and noisy horse cars; the men who in the cities seriously interfere with the quiet and peace of Sunday, before pouncing on peaceable farmers with all the terrors of the law? Take a fellow of your size, State of Tennessee; tackle the big corporations and the rich owners of factories, and first compel them to observe the law. It will be time then to turn your attention to the poor farmers, the milkmen and the barbers.

Nevertheless, the *Examiner* does not wish to be understood as opposed to all Sunday laws. However, the logic that condemns them in one case condemns them in all, and we have no hesitation in saying that they ought to be swept from our statute books as a whole.

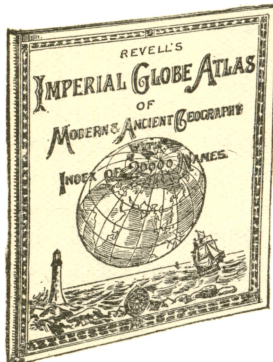
AN exchange pertinently asks: "Where was the necessity of laboring to prove that this is a 'Christian Nation,' as a reason for a Sunday law, if it be only a civil rest day that is wanted? For such a purpose what is the difference whether the nation is Christian or not?"

SUNDAY laws are both un-American and antichristian.

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THE *Congressional Record* reveals the fact that American Sabbath Union petitions for the passage of a Sunday law are still being presented to Congress.

It is proposed to so amend the old Sunday law of Pennsylvania as to allow the sale on Sunday of cigars and soda water, and to give persons accused of its violation the privilege of trial by jury. The amendment is meeting bitter opposition, especially the provision for trial by jury.

THE Supreme Court of Illinois has decided that the Salvation Army has a right to parade the streets of Chicago. This is only just. The Salvation Army is not our ideal of a religious organization, but it is certainly justly entitled to the same rights and privileges enjoyed by other organizations.

AND now it is seriously proposed to make voting compulsory in this State. What then will those do who have scruples of conscience against voting? Our Reformed Presbyterian friends who think it a sin to vote under our Constitution as it is, should be on the alert or they may find themselves compelled to choose between violating the law and violating their consciences.

"THE Sunday civil bill," says the *Union Signal*, "makes the largest appropriations made in years, footing up \$36,000,000." There must be some mistake about this matter. The time may come when there will be a "Sunday" civil bill appropriating money for certain purposes, but no such bill is before this Congress. The bill in question is the Sundry Civil bill. The wish of the good ladies who run the *Union Signal*, was probably father to the thought that it was a Sunday bill.

THE founder of the American Sabbath Union writes to *Our Day* that it is significant that the American Secular Union, which held its annual meeting in Ohio, instead of condemning all Sabbath laws, as formerly, asked only for the "repeal and prevention of all laws enforcing the observance of Sunday as a religious institution, rather than an economic one justified by physiological and other secular reasons." As there are no Sunday laws that enforce its religious observance, this "plank" "nailed on the fog," is waste timber.

We would like to know how the Secular Union is going to get around this? It has admitted the propriety of Sunday laws on certain grounds, and now it is told that those are the very grounds upon which all Sunday laws now in existence, and all that anybody wants, rest. We think it is about time that the Secular Union revises its demands and ceases to encourage Sunday-law hypocrisy by catering to the so-called "civil Sabbath," which at best is only a religious institution masquerading in civil garb for the sake of power that it could not otherwise obtain.

WRITING to the *Twentieth Century*, Julian Hawthorne falls into the common, but inexcusable, error of attributing the burning of witches to the Puritans. The Puritans hanged, but did not burn, persons accused of witchcraft. Only two legal executions by burning ever occurred in this country, and these were not in Massachusetts but in New York City, in Colonial times. The victims were negroes accused of a plot to burn the city.

"THE sapient Legislature of Illinois," says an exchange, "under the guidance of the Protestant clergy, proposes to make it a penal offence in that State to claim to be Christ, or to be personally divine." The proposed statute is of course aimed at the man Schweinfurth, who has, for several years, claimed to be Christ, and has secured quite a following. It is, however, a matter which the State has no right to touch, and we doubt not that should the Legislature pass any such bill the Supreme Court of the State would declare it unconstitutional.

ACCORDING to the "Pearl of Days," Sunday is kept by the mass of the people of Victoria, British Columbia, notwithstanding the fact that saloons are in some cases open, and that railway and steamer excursions are frequent. The churches are well attended and the Young Men's Christian Association is said to be doing a good work. All of which goes to show that Sunday keeping depends more upon the moral and religious tone of the people than upon the operation of civil law.

IN an article in *Our Day*, for January, Rev. W. F. Crafts says:—

The case of a Seventh-day Adventist, arrested for working upon the Sabbath, is going up from this State [Tennessee] to the United States Supreme Court, with Hon. Don M. Dickinson for attorney. There is little chance for question that a State has the power to forbid all persons to work on the rest-day, but it would seem to be a harmless kindness to except private work, not trade, by those who keep another day.

And that is all that Mr. Crafts has to say deprecating a most palpable violation of natural rights. The persecution of seventh-day Christians, with him is simply the

withholding of a "harmless kindness"! Mr. Crafts and all who are of his way of thinking should remember that what was formerly thankfully accepted as religious toleration is now demanded as a religious right. A free people, not only seventh-day Christians but non-Christians, should spurn such "harmless kindness," and demand their God-given and inalienable rights!

It seems that there is scarcely any limit to the beneficent (?) uses to which a Sunday law can be put. In Tennessee the Sunday law is used to persecute conscientious observers of the seventh day. In New York, and elsewhere, it has been turned to account by corrupt officers as a convenient means of levying blackmail upon saloon keepers. The following item from the *World* shows that the law has not yet been exhausted, but is still a power in the hands of shrewd and thrifty officers:—

"Policeman Power, of the Madison street station, arraigned Samuel Posner, a tailor, of No. 131 Division street, at the Essex Market Police Court, yesterday, on a charge of keeping his store open Sunday. The tailor said in explanation that the policeman rapped on the door, and on his plea that he wanted to purchase a coat to wear on Sunday, he admitted him. The policeman had picked out an eighteen dollar coat, and the tailor said that the policeman wanted to beat him down to nine dollars. Upon his refusal, he arrested him. Justice Murray held the tailor for trial."

INTEREST in Bible reading, if not in Bible study, will be increased by the reading of "Letters from the Holy Land," No. 5, of the "Young People's Library." The book, whose author writes from personal knowledge and observation, is, as the "publisher's note" says, "replete with interesting information and illustrations of oriental life," and will be read with interest by both old and young. An appendix on the "Geography of the Holy Land" adds much to the value of the book. Price, post-paid, in cloth, 50 cents, in paper covers, 25 cents. Address, Pacific Press, 43 Bond Street, New York, or Oakland, California.

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