

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

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RELIGION is contented with the freedom and the power which it enjoys in its own sphere, and with the place which it occupies. The empire of religion is never more surely established than when it reigns in the hearts of men, unsupported by aught besides its native strength.—*De Tocqueville.*

As American citizens, we hold to the American doctrine that human government relates solely to external affairs, and does not reach, and is not intended to control, our spiritual relations. Civil government covers the relations of citizens to each other, and to the State. Divine government concerns our relations, both individually and collectively, to the Supreme Being, and does not come under the control of State enactments. The only office of civil government relating thereto is to "hold its hands off."

A WRITER in the *Advance* reports that the General Passenger Agent of an important railroad running into St Louis, and a very good friend, fires at me spontaneously two letters which have just come to him in the regular course of business, appending to them some plain-spoken comments. He says: "You often speak about Sunday trains. Here is the great Methodist Episcopal Church applying from two points on our line for Sunday excursion trains; and they not only want to get the people to the Conference, but want to speculate on it, making something for the benefit of the churches. What can a soulless corporation do under the circumstances?" The enclosed letters are applications for trains to run to the annual Conference only on Sunday, and, as my correspondent says, are both manifestly inspired by the prospect of money-mak-

ing, being full of questions as to the control of fares, right to pick up way passengers, etc. In response to inquiry I learn that these applications are not unusual, but that some Methodist Conferences get such trains each year.

Well, why should not every Methodist Conference get all of such trains that it can each year? There is no harm in it, and there is no sin in it. That part of the matter is all right, only we wish the Methodist Conference would stop calling for laws to compel people to keep Sunday. If the Methodist Conferences would have such sermons preached all the time as we have heard from some of the Methodist ministers and bishops, we know that the people would get a thousand times more good from the preaching, than they would get harm from the Sunday train that carries them to hear the preaching. Let all the Methodist Conferences join in this good work.

The Grounds of Right.

IN further notice of Mr. Bierbower's system of "Ethics for Schools," we are brought to the discussion of the grounds of morality or right. Last week we found that the only "reasons" which he gives for the virtues, are all summed up in the one word, "selfishness." So entirely is this so that unselfishness itself is by this system turned into selfishness; thus every virtue is transformed into a vice, because selfishness is the root of all vice and of all sin. Now in examining the grounds of morality or right which this author propounds it is found that this also ends at the same place—in supreme selfishness. Thus says the book:—

As to what constitutes right, thinkers differ: some maintaining it to be a course in harmony with the necessary order of things; others, the will of God, as revealed in Revelation or nature; others, utility, happiness, or the general good of mankind. This question leads into speculative philosophy, which we shall not here enter. It is enough now to observe that, whatever men's opinions touching the ground of right, they all deem those things right which are thought best for men, and consider that morality which will bring them most happiness.

They all deem those things right which

are "thought" best for them. Thought by whom? Who is to do the thinking? Men themselves of course. Well then, if they themselves are to do the thinking, and by that decide what is best for men, then it follows that whatever men think best for themselves, that is right. This is, in fact, the statement of the book. The very next paragraph after the one just quoted, begins with these words:—

Accordingly when people are asked to do right, they are asked to do simply what is best for themselves.

Now it is a fact that multitudes of men often do what they *know to be wrong* simply because they *do* think it best for themselves. Yet, according to this system, whatever men may think best for themselves, that is right, and there is an end of it. In other words, that which a person knows to be wrong, becomes right if only he thinks it best for himself. And *that* is to be considered the ground of morality or right! But it is written: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

This latter quotation from his book suggests another thought; it says, "When people are *asked* to do right," etc. This suggests that some people are not doing right, and that they are to be asked by others to do right. But the rule has been already established that men do right when they do that which they think to be best for themselves. Now when it is suggested that any one shall be *asked* to do right, it is thereby argued that somebody else has taken it upon himself to think and decide what is best for the other man; and to decide for the other man what is right. Thus one man's views of right are allowed to be the standard of action for another man, when that other has just as much right to think for himself as has anybody else on earth. In such a system of morality as this propounded by Mr. Bierbower, there is no morality at all. It is either selfishness on one hand, or man-worship on the other, and in either case is only naturalism.

The truth of the matter is that, as respects real virtue and right, this whole book is but a series of platitudes. As regards virtue, it simply mentions as that which ought to be done, what everybody already knows ought to be done. Every person knows that he ought to be kind, cheerful, honest, truthful, deferential, and all the other things in the catalogue. The difficulty is not that men do not know that they ought to do these things: the difficulty is to do that which they know they ought to do, and which they know to be right.

Having noticed the "reasons" which Mr. Bierbower gives as to why these things ought to be done; and the reason why it is *right* to do them; it is of interest next to inquire the means by which he proposes that they may be done.

That men do not always do what they ought to do, is admitted by the book. For instance, one of the virtues inculcated is "thinking kindly of others," yet, it is admitted that some do think badly of others. Thus says the book:—

If we think badly of others, it is more the result of a bad heart than of a good judgment.

Family love is one of the virtues inculcated, yet it is admitted that in some families love is not manifested. Thus says the book:—

If one does not think highly of his parents, it is not because they are unworthy, but because he is . . . One who does not love his parents can not well take on any virtue.

Another virtue inculcated, is love for all mankind; yet, it is admitted that this is not manifested by all. Yet another virtue inculcated is kindness, which it is likewise admitted, is not always shown by all. Thus we might go through all the book, naming the virtues and finding the constant admission that those virtues are not always manifested by all. These which we have named, however, are sufficient to show that such a condition of things amongst mankind, is clearly recognized in this proposed system of morality.

Now, what help does the book give, or what source of help does it suggest, to enable men to do the good which is required? When it is admitted that to think badly of men is evidence of a bad heart rather than a good judgment, what remedy is proposed for the bad heart? Here it is:—

We should make it a habit of judgment to think well of everybody until we learn the contrary.

Can a bad heart be made good by "a habit of judgment"? More than this, where is the habit of judgment to come from? As he thinketh in his heart, so is he. Then, as to think badly of another is more the result of a bad heart, than of a good judgment, this is to say the judgment is bad also. In other words, the bad judgment is the result of the bad heart. Then if the heart is bad, how can it possibly be that the judgment may form a habit to think well. This is to say that the heart

can reform itself, that the bad heart can make itself good. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." But the Ethiopian can not change his skin, neither the leopard his spots. The heart being bad, it never can make itself good, nor can it ever create a habit of judgment that will think well of everybody.

Yet, we are reminded that the book does not say *without qualification* that the habit must be to think well of everybody. You are only to think well of everybody "until you learn the contrary." Then, we suppose this system of morality and virtue would allow it to be virtuous to think ill of men. But "charity," and that is morality, "thinketh no evil," at any time.

Again, the book says, that if one does not think highly of his parents, it is because "he is unworthy," and such an one can not well take on any virtue. In this case, therefore, the key of the whole situation lies in that unworthiness being turned into worthiness. Lack of love for his parents is evidence of a fault in himself, and until this fault is remedied, he can not well take on *any* virtue. How, then, shall the fault be remedied? Well, only nine pages before this statement, under the heading of "Love for all," are these words:—

Nobody can be unkind to one whom he well knows. . . . It is our duty, therefore, to know men well enough to love them.

But if a man does not know his parents, who in the world can he know? And if he does not know them well enough to love them, how can he ever find anybody whom he can know well enough to love? Especially when the reason that he does not love his parents is not in them but in himself. The lack of love for his parents is admitted not to be in his lack of knowledge of them, but *in his own unworthiness*. This brings us to the same point as before, that the fault is not primarily in the judgment, nor in outward circumstances but in the heart. And if the condition of the heart is such that he does not love the very ones whom he knows best and to whom he owes the most of all on earth, then how is that heart to be brought to a condition in which it will love anybody? The book says that it shall be "by thinking of them more and understanding them better." But his heart is already impure, unloving, and bad, how, then, can thoughts of love come from it? The Ethiopian can not change his skin. The heart can not change itself. If love is not in the heart, it can not appear in the thoughts, nor in the life.

Again, when an individual does not find kindness manifesting itself in his conduct toward others how shall this lack be remedied? This book says it is "the object of ethics to engender *this kindly feeling* as the most general *guarantee of morality*."

How then is it proposed that this system of ethics shall engender kindly feeling? Here is the "how":—

This may be done by concentrating the will unswervingly upon it and keeping the resolution to be continually kind.

Yes, that is quite a nice prescription if it was worth anything; but everybody knows by a lifelong experience, that it is utterly worthless. Every person knows for himself that he has attempted many a time to concentrate his will unswervingly upon such things as that, and he knows that his will has swerved many a time. Everybody knows that he has made resolutions of this sort an infinite number of times—New Year's days, birthdays, and many other anniversaries—and he knows that the difficulty is not in making the resolutions, but in *keeping them*. It is written, and it is the living experience of every man on earth, that "that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that do I. . . . I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."

There is over every man *a law* which prevents him from doing the good that he knows, and that he wills to do—a law which causes evil to appear in the very best efforts of men to do strictly and continually what is right. That law is as fixed as the law of the seasons or of gravitation: and it will hold every man in the bondage of an everlasting and wretched captivity unless he will be delivered by Him who is above that law, that is by Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has power and grace to deliver men from this law of sin and death, and to clothe them with the power to do the good, not only which they already know, but all additional good that may be made known by the Spirit of God. Professed philosophers, eminent teachers, and would-be saviours, in large numbers, have set forth systems of morality and rules of life; but they not only failed to bestow the power to perform, but they themselves failed to perform the duties which they enjoined. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, the Lord, is in that he not only set forth the grandest system of right known to the universe, but he imparts *the power to perform it*. Therefore no man need ever be ashamed of "the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God, unto salvation to every one that believeth." And the power of God, working in him who is of faith, enables him "both to will and to do" of God's good pleasure.

Without this power no man can ever do

the good that he knows. Not to do the good that he knows is immorality. To tell him that he ought to do the good that he already knows, without telling of the power by which alone he can do it, does not help him a particle. To tell him of the power by which alone he can do it, is to point him to Jesus Christ. To point him to Christ, to obtain this power, is to inculcate faith in Christ, because the power is manifested only to those who believe in him. This is to teach distinctively a religious and even a sectarian doctrine. Therefore the culmination of the logic of the whole matter is that upon which THE SENTINEL has always insisted, that aside from a living faith in Jesus Christ, there is no morality in this world; and that, as the State can not teach faith in Christ, by which alone morality can be attained, the State can not teach morality.

This work was committed by Christ to the Church. To the Church, and not to the State, he said, "Go and teach all nations whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, *I am with you.*" Upon the Church, not upon the State, he bestowed the gift of the Spirit of God, by which is manifested the power of God to men, enabling them to will and to do the good which every one may know. Instruction in morality, therefore, can be given only by the Church of Christ through the power of God. If the professed church of Christ has lost the power and Spirit of God, that is her fault. But when this loss is discovered, let not the State, either by the professed church, or by any other consideration, suffer itself to be drawn into any attempt to do the work of the Church, and supply her lack. Let the civil Government keep its place, and attend to that which is civil. Let the State inculcate the principle of civil rights, not moral right. This the State can always do with profit. But the State can never touch the ground of moral right, without obtruding its clumsy form into the realm of faith and conscience, and working only irreparable wrong.

We have yet another article to present upon the system of ethics propounded in this book; therefore we shall close this one with the single observation that the grounds of morality or right presented by Mr. Bierbower—are only *sinking sand*, and will swallow up in both civil and moral perdition, all who put their trust in them.

A. T. J.

THE object of the Sunday reform movement is not single—it means more than merely a release from compulsory labor. It would punish voluntary labor, other than laid down by its narrow limits—which is rest and worship. Whenever we enact a compulsory worship law, we shall have turned back the hands of progress and freedom to the days of darkness and horror implied by the "Blue Laws" and the Inquisition.—*Western Herald.*

Some Observations on National Reform.

THE following from the *Christian Nation*, an organ of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, will be of interest to the readers of THE SENTINEL:—

A subscriber has propounded to us a series of questions, asking for our reply to each one.

Question 1.—Would it not be the proper way to settle the trouble in the church to leave it to a vote of the church whether members can vote and hold office? Would it not be all right to petition Synod to do this?

Reply.—The church has already declared that voting and holding office under an immoral Government is sin.

Question 2.—Is not voting and paying taxes the same thing, or on the same principle: one helps to put the man in office while the other pays his salary.

Reply.—Government is of God, for the good of those who are under the Government. Because men have made it immoral, does not relieve us, as Christians, from paying our just proportion of its legitimate expenses for promoting the temporal welfare of the people. Neither does our paying this proportion involve us in the sin of the Government. Christ paid taxes for the support of a government which was in open rebellion to him.

Question 3.—Does not the Bible tell us to choose out men for office?

Reply.—Yes, it does. And when this Government is ordained and established in God's name, as was the government to the citizens of which that instruction was given, we will be ready and happy "to choose out men for office," and take a few offices ourselves occasionally.

We suppose that inasmuch as "the church has said that voting is sin," those who are in "the church" will have to abide by that decision or else get out of "the church." It would seem, however, that it would be altogether more satisfactory to Christians to know what the Bible teaches on the subject than to know what "the church has already declared."

In the eighth chapter of Acts is recorded the baptism of "a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure." It is related that Philip preached the gospel to this man, and that coming to water he baptized him, but no hint is given that Philip required the eunuch to resign his office. Evidently Philip was not a Reformed Presbyterian. And it is also evident that at that time "the church" had not decided that, "holding office under an immoral Government is sin."

Another thought. Are we to understand from the *Christian Nation* that only "moral governments" are ordained of God? What about the Roman Government under which Paul lived? Is it not much more reasonable and much more scriptural to believe that by the very act of placing social beings together in this world, God ordained that they should govern one another in social matters? that he ordained that civil government should exist? and that that government should be carried on by the people either directly or by chosen representatives, or rulers, irrespective of their moral characters? To hold otherwise outlaws all government except the Church, or that which the

Church shall endorse, and really makes government a thing to be enjoyed only by those who are religious, or at least by those who live among those who are religious. And then only the religious have any right to participate in it, which brings us again to the National Reform conclusion that infidels should be disfranchised, or banished, and that only Christian men should be eligible for office. Well may the National Reformers say: "We will be ready and happy to choose out men for office; and take a few of the offices ourselves occasionally." Certainly they will; they will see to it that the offices are properly filled—by themselves. C. P. B.

Not a Christian Government.

TO THE EDITOR: In the *Christian Nation*, of November 19, we find the following:—

A committee of ministers and laymen, headed by Dr. I. N. Hays, of Pittsburg, Pa., about three weeks ago called on President Harrison and urged that Christ be suitably acknowledged in his forthcoming Thanksgiving proclamation. We regret to place on record that he refused the committee's request, stating that he did not believe it would be in harmony with our institutions.

The same request was made the year previous with like result. Some have always held that the Government of this country is not Christian. This view is confirmed by the President, who, of all men, should understand the character of the Government of which he is the head. Now a question arises: May an individual or nation approach God apart from Jesus Christ the Mediator, and the Governor of nations? It is written, "Thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, were created by Him and for Him." Will the editor please consider it and speak his mind? SAMUEL ALLEN,

Balm, Pa., Jan. 8, 1891.

This demand for a formal recognition of the sovereignty of Christ appears to have its origin in a looseness of phraseology and a consequent confusion of ideas. It may be well enough in ordinary conversation to call a people who, as a whole, accept the Christian religion theoretically, a Christian nation, because no one is deceived by that expression. But before basing an argument on any word it is necessary to make sure that the word, as used, expresses an exact and correct idea.

Does Mr. Allen really believe, that in the proper significance of the word, the American people are a Christian Nation? And if they are not a Christian Nation how can they possibly have a Christian Government? A Christian, strictly speaking, is a man who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, and who, because of his acceptance of Christ, has been adopted into the family of God. Are all the people of this country Christians? Are there even a majority of Christians in the Nation? If not, how can we possibly be a Christian Nation?

Jesus himself said "My kingdom is not of this world." It is no part of his plan under the present dispensation to impose his authority on unwilling hearts. An official recognition of Christ as the ruler of this country would be a recognition of a claim which he has never authorized to be made on his behalf, and would be a

misstatement of fact. There can be no question about God's supremacy in all matters to the extent to which he sees proper to interfere; that he overrules even the actions of wicked men to work out his plans is a truth which can not be successfully disputed; but the personal sovereignty of Christ is, as yet, a sovereignty of love only. He reigns by love in the hearts of those who voluntarily receive him as their King.

It would indeed be a glorious thing if Christ was crowned King by even one nation upon earth, but that can only come to pass through the action of the individuals of which that nation is composed. It could not be done by a simple vote of the majority, even if the majority were so disposed.

Would it not be a mockery for the President to announce, officially, that Christ is Lord paramount in this country when every smart schoolboy knows that the devil has a great deal more to do with the Government of the country and with the habits of the people than Christ has?

Brooklyn, the home of the *Christian Nation's* editor, from which Mr. Allen quotes, is called "the City of Churches." Surely there, if anywhere, the fact of Christ's rulership should be visible. Yet what do we see? Less than 300 Protestant churches and more than 3,000 saloons, not to speak of other establishments whose business it is to promote the interests of the devil's kingdom. The churches are open for business one day in the week, and for an hour or two at different times during the week; the saloons are open for business at least six days in the week and eighteen hours a day. The people who support the churches think they are doing as much as can reasonably be expected of them in subscribing to building funds, paying pew rents, and attending a few stated services; the people who support the saloons go there for their own pleasure and think very little of the money that it costs them. The simple fact is that a very small proportion of Brooklyn's population of 800,000 serve Christ a little, and for the most part as a matter of obligation; a very much larger proportion of the same population serve the devil a great deal and that willingly.

And the other big cities, with the exception of Philadelphia, and, perhaps, Boston, are much worse than Brooklyn. In the country districts there is much less open or visible wickedness, but there is also much less active and aggressive goodness. The difference between the country and the city in the matter of moral and spiritual tone is, therefore, more a matter of intensity than of quality.

Then, look at the character of our governments. In New York City, Tammany Hall reigns, and Tammany is dominated by saloon-keepers, some of them of the most disreputable character; would it not make the devil laugh if our Tammany Mayor

should issue a proclamation declaring that Christ is the Supreme Ruler, and that he derives his authority from Christ? Or, to take a step higher up, how would such a proclamation look if issued by Governor Hill, who is in league with Tammany and owes his office to his shrewdness in the use of the most indefensible kind of political tactics?

And, whatever may be the opinion of the reader as to the character of our Federal Government in the hands of those now in charge of it, an official recognition of Christ's over-lordship would be quite as incongruous coming from Washington as it would be if issued from Albany or from our own City Hall; for the difference between the Kingdom of Christ and the government of this world is not a mere matter of degree, but one of kind. His kingdom is a spiritual and not a material one, whether good or bad.

If it were merely a question as to whether goodness or badness was the most prevalent feature, then every Democrat would be bound to assume that the devil is king wherever the Republican party is in power, and every Republican would be bound to assume that the devil is king wherever the Democratic party holds power—that is, if they each believe the accounts of things given in their respective party organs.

The very absurdity of this suggestion is, of itself, a sufficient reply to the demand that Christ should be recognized by a government under the control of one of these parties, or of any other party, as the personal sovereign of this country.

We who do joyfully accept Christ as our Lord and Master, can do better work for him than to demand a formal recognition of his authority from those who in fact, and in their personal conduct, repudiate that authority,

Let us see first that we set his will before us as the *one* thing to be accomplished in our lives both in our private and public relations. Let us also seek earnestly to do all that we can to encourage goodness and to discourage badness. And above all, let us strive to hasten the coming of the Kingdom of Christ by persuading all whom we can persuade to forsake sin and consecrate their lives to his service.

And as citizens of this "alien country," let us, who are, by virtue of the new birth, natives of the heavenly Jerusalem, seek the peace of the land in which our lot is providentially cast, as the Jewish exiles were commanded to seek the peace of the Babylonian empire while held in bondage there.—*New York Weekly Witness, January 28, 1891.*

STOP for a moment, and look at the nations that have made religion compulsory. Where are they? Did they succeed? You cannot shove people into the kingdom of God. They must go there voluntarily.—*Chicago Chronicle-Record.*

The Persecuted Jews and the Duty of Free Nations.

No one who impartially studies the melancholy past of the Jews can rise from the perusal of their history but with the mingled feelings of admiration and commiseration—admiration for their greatness, and glorious achievements, and commiseration for their sad decline and cruel sufferings.

But you say this is a matter of the past and belongs to the dark periods of barbarism! Not so. In the five million Jews who live to-day in Russia we have the most abject subjects of oppression and persecution.

To publish in full the awful experiences suffered by the unhappy victims of the anti-Jewish restrictive laws of Russia would startle the world with some of the most terrible tragedies of martyred innocence, devotion and patriotism ever written in any language.

In order to have an intelligent comprehension of the full significance of these infamous anti-Jewish laws, it is necessary to study the general attitude of the Russian Government toward the Jews. It is well known that Russia retains the worst form of mediæval darkness and despotism, inasmuch as with her Church and State are identical. Those who do not belong to the orthodox Russian Church are not regarded as true Russians. Jews are, therefore, both heretics and aliens before the Russian laws. But it may be inquired, do not the followers of other creeds suffer with the Jews under the application of the same principle? By no means. This exclusive principle is not carried out in reference to other religionists, because of the fear on the part of the Russian Government that such action might result in serious international complications. And this fear is not without reasonable foundation. But it must be remembered that the Jews in Russia have no natural protectors. No national church can take up their cause, and to no paternal government or fatherland can they make their appeal on the score of obligation. It is, however, above all things, this truly pathetic picture of the helplessness and friendlessness of these persecuted Russian Jews that gives strength and eloquence to the mute appeal of their cruel wrongs and heartrending sufferings.

To show the hideous character of the spirit that animates the whole Russian system, it is only necessary for a Jew to become a convert to the Russian Church, in order to be immediately freed from all the degrading restrictions on his freedom of movement and his choice of a profession. He is also helped pecuniarily by a stated sum down and a release from taxation for a specified term. If he is married, his conversion procures him a divorce.

By a profession of conversion to the Russian faith a Jew may also escape the

consequences of any misdeed against a fellow-Jew, for, to quote the Russian code, "in actions concerning Jews who have embraced Christianity, Jews may not be admitted as witnesses if an objection is raised against such admission." All that a Jew, therefore, need do in order to escape any legal process against him by a brother Jew is to be converted to the Russian Church, and his victim is powerless to secure satisfaction. And yet, notwithstanding all these powerful temptations held out to them to abandon their religious convictions and traditions, they still cling to their faith with all the fervor that characterized their ancient devotion.

It is difficult to bring home to the minds of the citizens of free nations the misery and degradation caused by this diabolical system of legislative and administrative persecution of Russian Jews. Our sympathies are stunned at their very source by the awful spectacle of a whole community—an entire race—crushed beneath a system of studied injustice and oppression on the part of a great and so-called civilized government.

It is now high time for the free nations of the world to utter their protest against this system of barbarous despotism, and to demand of the Russian Government that its Jewish subjects shall enjoy at least the elementary rights of human beings, liberty of movement, freedom in choice of a career, and equality with all orderly citizens before the law.—*Mail and Express*.

Self-Condemed.

SOME months since, in remarking upon the liberality of Thomas Paine, we said:—

An important difference between Paine and many of his modern disciples, is, that whereas he conceded to others the same freedom of opinion that he claimed for himself, the average "Freethinker" of the present day is about as intolerant as a Jesuit.

The editor of *Freethought* was very indignant at this statement, and called upon us either to cite proofs or else acknowledge that we had made a false statement. We did neither, but simply waited. Now the very gentleman who waxed so wroth over this matter, though no longer editor of the *Freethought*, furnishes us in that paper abundant evidence that our statement was true, at least, so far as he is concerned. March 7, he says:—

Most Christians fail and make an assignment to the devil trying to discover any reason why they should oppose religious exercises in the Legislature or anywhere else, and they are excusable in doing so. If religion is a good and beneficent thing, the more places it can be found the better. Only people who know that Christianity is a fraud can have a sufficient excuse for objecting to its enforcement, so long as they advocate the enforcement of anything.

That is to say that in opposing religious exercises in legislative bodies and elsewhere under State patronage, Christians virtually admit that religion is not a good thing; for, says Mr. Macdonald, in sub-

stance, *if religion be a good thing it ought to be enforced*. In other words, he admits that did he believe in religion he would be in favor of enforcing it; that is, he would be a National Reformer of the most pronounced type. But he is not a believer in religion, he is an infidel, and furthermore he believes, or, at least, professes to believe, *infidelity* to be a good thing, a very good thing; not simply that it is a matter of indifference what men believe, but that it is very much better for men not to believe in religion, that is, not to believe in the Christian religion. It follows just as naturally as night follows day, and as logically as it is possible for any conclusion to follow a reason, that had the ex-editor of *Freethought* the power he would enforce infidelity upon everybody, at least to the extent of giving it State support, and of putting it everywhere that the State has the power to put it. In short, with him tolerance is not a matter of principle at all, but simply of power. Does not the ex-editor of *Freethought* stand self-condemned? And if he is a representative Freethinker, did we not well say that "the average Freethinker is about as intolerant as a Jesuit"? We know that there are many noble exceptions, but we fear that as a class Freethinkers are neither more free themselves nor more liberal toward others than are other men, and why should they be? for they deify human nature, and human nature is intolerant.

We maintain that the truth or falsity of religion has nothing whatever to do with the question of the propriety of giving it governmental recognition and support. To be of any value religion must be free; service to God must be voluntary; God has made it so, and men and governments should leave it as God has made it. Indeed, in the very nature of the case, it can not be otherwise without destroying religion itself and the reasons for its very existence. In order for it to remain a good and beneficent thing, religion must be kept separate from the State. Mr. Macdonald should remember the words of Paine:—

All religions are, in their nature, mild and benign, and united with principles of morality. . . . How is it that they lose their native mildness, and become morose and intolerant? By engendering the State with the Church, a sort of mule animal, capable only of destroying, and not of breeding up, is produced, called the Church established by law. . . . The Inquisition in Spain does not proceed from the religion originally professed, but from this mule animal engendered between the Church and State.

To prevent this engendering, the Church and the State must be kept entirely separate, and who has as good a right, or who can so consistently insist that they shall be kept separate as those who above all others are interested in the Church and in preserving its purity? In the Scriptures no sin is denounced more strongly than is the sin of spiritual adultery, and who more than Christians, or

who indeed but Christians, can consistently insist that the Church shall not again prostitute herself to the State? that it be not again said of her, "The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her"? C. P. B.

A Few Words from Jefferson.

[The following valuable contribution to our early religious liberty literature is from the pen of Thomas Jefferson, written in Virginia in the year 1781, in Query xvii of his notes on the State, and subsequently published in English and French. It describes the religious state of Virginia during the major part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.]

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN VIRGINIA.

THE first settlers in this country were emigrants from England, of the English Church, just at a point of time when it was flushed with complete victory over the religions of all other persuasions. Possessed, as they became, of the powers of making, administering, and executing the laws, they showed equal intolerance in this country with their Presbyterian brethren who had emigrated to the North.

The poor Quakers were flying from persecution in England. They cast their eyes on these new countries as asylums of civil and religious freedom; but they found them free only for the reigning sect. Several acts of the Virginia Assembly of 1659, 1662, and 1693, had made it penal in parents to refuse to have their children baptized; had prohibited the unlawful assembling of Quakers; had made it penal for any master of a vessel to bring a Quaker into the State; had ordered that those already here, and such as should come thereafter, should be imprisoned till they should abjure the country; provided a milder punishment for their first and second return, but death for their third; had inhibited all persons from suffering their meetings in or near their houses, entertaining them individually, or disposing of books which supported their tenets. If no capital execution took place, as did in New England, it was not owing to the moderation of the church, or spirit of the Legislature,—as may be inferred from the law itself;—but to historical circumstances which have not been handed down to us.

The Anglicans retained full possession of the country about a century. Other opinions began then to creep in, and the great care of the Government to support their own church having begotten an equal degree of indolence in its clergy, two-thirds of the people had become dissenters at the commencement of the present Revolution. The laws, indeed, were still oppressive on them, but the spirit of the one party had subsided into moderation, and of the other had risen to a degree of determination which commanded respect.

The present state of our laws [in 1781] on the subject of religion is this. The convention of May, 1776, in their declar-

ation of rights declared it to be a truth and a natural right that the exercise of religion should be free; but when they proceeded to form on that declaration the ordinance of Government, instead of taking up every principle declared in the Bill of Rights, and guarding it by legislative sanction, they passed over that which asserted our religious rights, leaving them as they found them. The same convention, however, when they met as a member of the General Assembly in October, 1776, repealed all *Acts of Parliament* which had rendered criminal the maintaining any opinions in matters of religion, the forbearing to repair to church, and the exercising any mode of worship; and suspended the laws giving salaries to the clergy, which suspension was made perpetual in October, 1779. Statutory oppressions in religion being thus wiped away, we remain at present under those only imposed by the common law or by our own Act of Assembly.

At the common law, *heresy* was a capital offense, punishable by burning. Its definition was left to the ecclesiastical judges, before whom the conviction was, till the statute circumscribed it by declaring that nothing should be deemed heresy but what had been so determined by authority of the canonical Scriptures, or by one of the first four general councils, or by some other council having for the grounds of their declaration the express and plain words of the Scriptures. Heresy, thus circumscribed, being an offense at the common law, our Act of Assembly of October, 1777, chapter 17, gives cognizance of it to the general court by declaring that the jurisdiction of that court shall be general in all matters at the common law. The execution is by the writ *de hæritico comburendo*.

By our own Act of Assembly of 1705, chapter 20, if a person brought up in the Christian religion denies the being of a God, or the Trinity, or asserts that there are more Gods than one, or denies the Christian religion to be true, or the Scriptures to be of divine authority, he is punishable on the first offense by incapacity to hold any office or employment ecclesiastical, civil, or military; on the second by disability to sue, to take any gift or legacy, to be guardian, executor, or administrator, and by three years' imprisonment, without bail. A father's right to the custody of his own children being founded in law on his right of guardianship, they may of course be severed from him, and put, by the authority of a court, into more orthodox hands.

This is a summary view of that religious slavery under which a people have been willing to remain, who have lavished their lives and fortunes for the establishment of their civil freedom.

The error seems not sufficiently eradicated that the operations of the mind as

well as the acts of the body are subject to the coercion of the laws. But our rulers can have authority over such natural rights only as we have submitted to them. The rights of conscience we never submitted, we could not submit. We are answerable for them to our God.

The legitimate powers of Government extend to *such acts only as are injurious to others*. But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg. If it be said his testimony in a court of justice can not be relied on, reject it then, and be the stigma on him. Constraint may make him worse by making him a hypocrite, but it will never make him a truer man. It may fix him obstinately in his errors, but will not cure them.

Reason and free inquiry are the only effectual agents against error. Give a loose rein to them, they will support the true religion by bringing every false one to their tribunal, to the test of their investigation. They are the natural enemies of error, *and of error only*. Had not the Roman Government permitted free inquiry, Christianity could never have been introduced. Had not free inquiry been indulged at the era of the Reformation the corruption of Christianity could not have been purged away. If it be restrained now the present corruptions will be protected and new ones encouraged.

Was the Government to prescribe to us our medicine and diet, our bodies would be in such keeping as our souls are now. Thus in France the emetic was once forbidden as a medicine and the potato as an article of food.

Government is just as infallible, too, when it fixes systems in physics. Galileo was sent to the Inquisition for affirming that the earth was a sphere; the government had declared it to be as flat as a trencher, and Galileo was obliged to abjure his error. This error, however, at length prevailed, and the earth became a globe, and Descartes declared it was whirled round its axis by a vortex. The government in which he lived was wise enough to see that this was no question of civil jurisdiction or we should all have been involved by authority in vortices. In fact, the vortices have been exploded and the Newtonian principle of gravitation is now more firmly established on the basis of reason than it would be were the Government to step in and make it an article of necessary faith. Reason and experiment have been indulged and error has fled before them.

It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself. Subject opinion to coercion: whom will you make your inquisitors? Fallible men—men governed by bad passions, by private as well as public reasons. And why subject it to coercion? To produce uniformity. But is uniformity of opinion

desirable? No more than of force and stature. Introduce the bed of Procrustes then, and as there is danger that the large men may beat the small, make us all of a size by lopping the former and stretching the latter.

Difference of opinion is advantageous in religion. The several sects perform the office of a *sensor morrum* over each other. Is uniformity attainable? Millions of innocent men, women, and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch toward uniformity.

What has been the effect of coercion? To make one half of the world fools, and the other half hypocrites; to support roguery and error all over the earth.

Let us get rid, while we may, of those tyrannical laws. It is true we are as yet secured against them by the spirit of the times. I doubt whether the people of this country would suffer an execution for heresy, or a three years' imprisonment for not comprehending the mysteries of the Trinity. But is the spirit of the people an infallible, a permanent reliance? * Is it Government? Is this the kind of protection we receive in return for the rights we give up? Besides, the spirit of the times may alter, will alter. Our rulers will become corrupt, our people careless. A single zealot may commence persecution, and better men be his victims. It can never be too often repeated, that the time for fixing every essential right on a legal basis is while our rulers are honest, and ourselves united. From the conclusion of this war we shall be going down hill. It will not then be necessary to resort every moment to the people for support. They will be forgotten, therefore, and their rights disregarded. They will forget themselves, but in the sole faculty of making money, and will never think of uniting to effect a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war, will remain on us long, will be made heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive or expire in a convulsion.

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.—*New York Times*.

* On this point, too, Mill emphasizes the assertion made by Jefferson, and utters a warning that should be heeded by every lover of liberty. He says:

"But unhappily there is no security 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 where there is strong permanent leaven of intolerance in the feeling 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."

A New and Valuable Publication on Religious Liberty.

EVERY discussion of political questions, as a matter of course, stimulates research; and research often brings to light very important contributions to our political literature. As an illustration of this is the new work entitled, "American State Papers Bearing on Sunday Legislation," compiled and annotated by William Addison Blakely, Counselor at Law, Ann Arbor, Michigan. This octavo volume of nearly four hundred pages, contains some rare documents on religious legislation that have long since been out of print and are only now and then seen in an obscure corner of some large library. These old papers are important not only for the sound political principles enunciated, but also to show the ideas that the founders of the American political system held concerning the relation of civil government and religion.

The question of Sunday legislation is not by any means a new question. The editor of this work has half a dozen or more old reports of Congress on the question, besides a number of memorials and petitions—one from the State Legislature of Indiana—all matter exceedingly interesting

to those interested in any way in this question. The following is from a review of the work by the *University of Michigan Daily*:—

The work contains the ideas and opinions of many of the founders of our American political system upon Sunday legislation, extracts from the national and State Constitutions, and other Government documents bearing on the question. Among others there are the opinions and decisions of Jefferson, Madison, John Adams, Patrick Henry, Col. R. M. Johnson, Chief Justice Terry, Justice Orton, Judge Cooley and General Grant. The editor has made a careful selection of documentary evidence relating to the Sunday question, and has by these extracts and reports not only shown Sunday legislation to be contrary to the spirit of many of our Constitutions and to the judgment of some of our leading statesmen, but he has also made a valuable contribution to the literature of this subject. The copious annotations and foot-notes give evidence of careful and painstaking work.

In addition to the foregoing features, it contains, in whole or in part, the decisions of the Supreme Courts of the States of Ohio, California, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Arkansas, on the question of the constitutionality of Sunday laws, and of the reading of the Bible in the public schools, with numerous notes from various other decisions in England and America.

All the Sunday laws of the United States, together with the provisions of the

State Constitutions guaranteeing or restricting religious liberty, are also accurately transcribed in full from the original statute books of the several States and Territories.

This new publication will prove a valuable help to all persons studying the question of the justice of Sunday laws from the standpoint of an American. It is an octavo volume, marginal notes, extra laid paper, vellum cloth, gilt top, uncut edges, price \$2.50. A popular edition is also issued which is sold at \$1.25. Address the editor, William Addison Blakely, Corresponding Secretary of the Religious Liberty Society, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

No intolerance is equal to religious intolerance. It is just as far removed from the truth, and the freedom and breadth inspired by truth, as the devil is from God. None can afford to place themselves in the clutches of this monster of the Dark Ages, and all should remember that our only protection from it consists in creating and maintaining a clear, full, and sharply defined separation of Church and State, especially in educational work.—*Independent Patriot, Lamoni, Iowa.*

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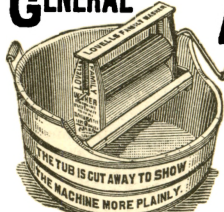


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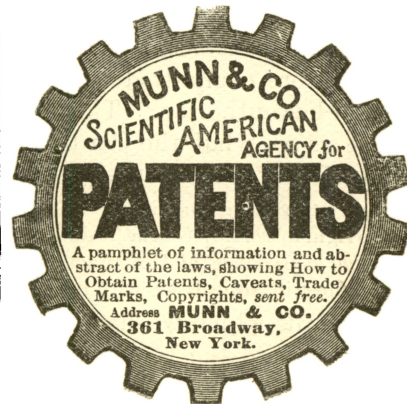
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NEW YORK, MARCH 26, 1891.

NOTE.—Any one receiving the AMERICAN SENTINEL without having ordered it may know that it is sent to him by some friend, unless plainly marked "Sample copy." It is our invariable rule to send out no papers without pay in advance, except by special arrangement, therefore, those who have not ordered the SENTINEL need have no fears that they will be asked to pay for it simply because they take it from the post-office.

NOTWITHSTANDING the efforts of the Sunday-law hosts, of that State, re-enforced by the American Sabbath Union, California is still free from the thralldom of a Sunday law. It is pretty sure to remain so for two years at least.

DR. WINDTHORST the leader of the Catholic party in the German Reichstag is dead. Dr. Windthorst had for years virtually held the balance of power in the politics of the German Empire, and it was he who compelled Prince Bismarck to rescind the May laws, which weighed heavily on the Roman Catholics of Germany, and deprived them of privileges enjoyed by the Protestant clergy and people.

"IN the western part of Rhode Island are many Seventh-day Baptists. Recently one of the political parties selected *Saturday* as the day for the special election to Congress. Another party alleged that it was done to disfranchise the Seventh-day Baptists. A convention of Seventh-day Baptists, on Monday, February 16, resolved that they could not take part in an election held on Saturday; whereupon one candidate withdrew, declaring that he would not be in an election where any part of the citizens were disfranchised on account of their religious belief. This is probably," says the *Christian Advocate*, of this city, "as peculiar an introduction of religion into politics as has been seen."

It is stated that in a recent sermon on civil and religious liberty, Cardinal Gibbons said that the Catholic Church has always been the zealous promoter of civil and religious liberty, and that "whenever any encroachments on these sacred rights of man were perpetrated by professing members of the Catholic faith, these wrongs, far from being sanctioned by the church, were committed in palpable violation of her authority." This sounds well, but let us see what the Cardinal calls religious liberty. He says:—

A man enjoys religious liberty when he possesses the free right to *worship God* according to the dictates of a *right* conscience, and of practicing a form of religion most in accordance with his duties to God.

The words which we have set in italics are the key to the Cardinal's real sentiments. A man to enjoy religious liberty

must *worship God* according to the dictates of a *right* conscience. The trouble with the Catholic Church is that it has always claimed the right to define worship to God, and to judge the conscience. Certainly the Cardinal has not abated aught from that claim. "Rome never changes," and the Cardinal is a genuine Romanist.

THE first complaint under the law forbidding the sale of cigars on Sunday, says the *Sun*, was heard in the Dorchester District Court, in Boston, a few days ago. Postmaster Jones, of the Dorchester Post-office, was the purchaser, a druggist was the accused, and a policeman made the complaint. At the trial, the clerk who waited upon Mr. Jones testified that he had previous knowledge that Mr. Jones was a sufferer from bronchial catarrh, and that he sold the cigars to him for purely medicinal use. Mr. Jones corroborated this testimony. Judge Churchill read the law which permits the sale of cigars on Sunday as a drug, gave his decision that Mr. Jones was entitled to his regular medicine, and dismissed the complaint.

OF Sunday observance in Great Britain and Ireland, the *New York Observer* says:—

Mr. Lawson, M. P., has given notice of a motion for opening museums on Sundays. There are three hundred and fifty-seven museums, galleries, and public libraries in the United Kingdom. After an agitation extending over thirty-five years, twenty-five are opened on the Lord's day, and the attendants are deprived of Sunday rest. At the Guildhall and Liverpool efforts to open the museums and public libraries on Sundays have failed. The attempt of the *New York Herald* to establish itself as a daily newspaper seven days a week in London has signally failed. No daily newspaper in Great Britain publishes a Sunday edition.

Referring to the English Colonies, the same paper remarks that Sydney Sunday concerts for money have been suppressed. In Victoria a law has been passed prohibiting the publication and sale of Sunday newspapers.

The Sunday-law agitation is world-wide and means much more than many think. It is especially significant when we consider the fact that it is *one* thing that Protestants and Catholics are agreed in forcing alike upon Jews, non-religionists, and seventh-day Christians.

It seems not at all improbable that the Reformed Presbyterian Church will be rent in twain over the action of the Pittsburg Presbytery, in suspending seven popular young ministers for holding that it is not a sin to vote under a Constitution which does not recognize God as the source of all power. Writing to the *Christian Nation*, Rev. C. Wylie says:—

The Reformed Presbyterian Church presents the appearance of two companies of an army engaged in conflict with each other. Time and strength which ought to be employed in combating the foes of Christ and his cause are employed in bitter conflict among ourselves. One stage of the conflict is

already past. The result is, seven young ministers have been suspended. The next stage will be reached at the approaching meeting of Synod. The subject in controversy is not local, but concerns the entire church. It is expected that the whole church, ministers, elders, deacons and members will rank themselves on the one side or the other.

This statement being true, the outlook for the Reformed Presbyterians, as a body, is not promising, "Revolutions never go backward," and it is not at all likely that this revolt in the Pittsburg Presbytery can be quelled even by vote of the Synod.

A REPORTER of the *World* has been investigating the matter, and says that the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in this city, is open on Sunday—not indeed to the public, as many, especially of the working people, are painfully aware—but

to favored friends of the Trustees. Provided with one of the printed tickets which the Trustees, or some of them, use for the purpose, their friends can visit the Metropolitan Museum on Sunday, and have it all to themselves. Half a dozen employees are kept on duty there on Sunday, at public expense, to open doors and care for the coats of the visitors.

Which only shows that which we have often had occasion to remark, namely, that there is a good deal of humbug about the whole Sunday-closing business. The reporter watched the side door for some time and saw a number of people enter and leave the building. The greatest number seemed to have first attended church somewhere, as some of them carried prayer-books. It would be well if both they and the Board of Trustees would carry their religious studies far enough not only to carry prayer books, and to read the Golden Rule, but to become imbued with its principles. If the Museum is a proper place for a select few on Sunday, it would be a proper place for the general public, especially for those who can not afford the time to visit it upon other days.

THE *Plaindealer*, a Michigan paper, tells of the sentence imposed by the Tennessee court upon R. M. King, for Sunday work, and then says: "There seems a strong probability that these terribly outrageous sentences will soon be the rule all over the country; for, without the most earnest and active effort in opposition by every liberty-loving citizen, fearfully rigid and obnoxious and unjust Sunday laws will be enacted, and vigorously enforced by the general Government."

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