

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

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ABSOLUTE duties are such as pertain and belong to particular men merely as individuals and single persons. . . . With regard to absolute duties which man is bound to perform as a mere individual, it is not to be expected that any human municipal law should at all explain or enforce them.—*Blackstone.*

A GOVERNMENT, to be acceptable, must have no religious duties to perform, no religious rites to observe, no religious ordinances to administer, no eternal law to enforce, and no eternal judgment to render. In its educational work it must deal solely with those things which fit for good citizenship, and so far as it is concerned must deal absolutely with nothing else.—*Independent Patriot.*

WRITING of Sunday laws, and of exemption clauses in favor of those who observe another day, a correspondent of the *New Era*, a Prohibition organ, says:—

“As Americans who prize the principles of liberty, we do not want any law which must exempt from its operation any person because of his conscientious convictions. The State has no business to pass any law which, in its general and equal application to all, would interfere with any person’s religious rights. As a matter of fact, “such principles of (mis) government” have always been “disputed.” Is it not perfectly plain that the ground assigned for exemptions in such laws is a *prima facie* admission that the spirit of the law is religiously intolerant?

And is it not equally evident that any person who prefers to observe a different day than the majority, with all its attendant business inconveniences, does it from conscientious motives? And yet does any freedom of conscience “exist practically” when a man whose conscientious convictions are stronger than his “preferences” for a good job, is compelled by law to lose another day besides his Sabbath, and that on the pretense that another man may suffer no pecuniary loss from following his conscience?”

That Symposium on Sunday and “Civil” Sunday Laws.

It was the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church that took the first official step toward the organization of the American Sabbath Union. The general Secretary of the Union is first in the list of “representative members” appointed by the General Conference, for the four years, from 1888 to 1892. Besides him there are twenty other representative members appointed from the Methodist Episcopal Church. This gives the Methodist Episcopal Church an important connection with Sunday legislation; because the sole purpose of existence of the American Sabbath Union, is to secure and control Sunday legislation. For this reason, therefore, what comes from official Methodist sources on this subject is worthy of note, and for this reason we notice some articles in the *Methodist Review* for March and April, 1891.

In this number of the *Review* there is a symposium on “The Christian Sabbath.” The symposium is composed of an article, by Rev. L. R. Fiske, D. D., President of the Albion College, Detroit, Michigan; another by Rev. J. M. Durrell, D. D., Manchester, New Hampshire; and a third by Rev. J. W. Coxe, D. D., agent Sunday School Union, Washington, Iowa.

Dr. Fiske’s article is upon “The Divine Origin of the Christian Sabbath.” He makes some excellent statements in regard to the purpose of the Sabbath which in

themselves show the utter futility of legislation upon the subject. He says:—

The supreme purpose of the Sabbath is spiritual. Something more than rest—physical or mental—was sought. It was to be a rest in which the less valuable should be supplanted by the more valuable, in which the higher activities should take the place of those that were lower. The great question in the divine government over man was this: How can the human race be brought into the nearest likeness to God, practically live the most perfect moral life, appreciate that which is highest, and love that which is best, and in this sensuous world become more spiritual? It is very plain to every thoughtful mind that the Sabbath was ordained as a condition for this final result.

This is in harmony with the scriptural idea of the Sabbath, that is, that it is for worship and moral and spiritual elevation; and that it is the connecting link between God and men, by which he is held in remembrance. It shows that the Sabbath is wholly religious; and therefore that whenever the State presumes to legislate upon the question it is simply interfering with man’s relationship to God where the State never can rightly have any place. “Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” As to how a man observes the Sabbath, or whether he observes it at all, or not, are questions for himself to decide before God, and for the decision of which he is responsible alone to God. Therefore, the State never can touch upon this question without entering the field of religion and conscience.

Another most excellent statement by Dr. Fiske, and one which knocks higher than the proverbial kite, the “civil Sabbath” theory of the American Sabbath Union, is the following:—

If the Sabbath were only a holiday, consisting simply of a period of relaxation from physical and mental toil, it would provide an occasion for a multitude of evil influences to undermine the moral life. A day is not made sacred by indolence, but by a prevalence of spiritual activities. It is apparent to every discriminating observer that those who discard the spiritual purpose of the Sabbath largely fall into social vices far more harmful than would be practiced were the hours given to labor. The office of the Sabbath is spiritual, and practically to make it less, or other than this, is to convert it into an agency of terrible demoralization.

This has been the position of THE SEN-

TINEL always. It is absolute truth, and by it the additional truth is manifested that Sunday laws must enforce the religious observance of the day or else stand condemned as the agency of a terrible demoralization. But for the State to attempt to enforce the religious observance of the day is to work a yet more terrible demoralization, as history proves. Therefore, this truth demonstrates the fact, that Sunday laws are in themselves essential evil, and tend only to the demoralization of society and the State. Such is the work in which the American Sabbath Union is engaged, and in which, from its connection with that Union, the Methodist Church is in no small part engaged.

Dr. Fiske closes his article with the following excellent statement to the same effect as the two already quoted:—

In ordaining this day God legislated for man with the purpose of making human history, through spiritual forces, grand and more and more perfect as the years go by, and of procuring the largest benefits of the atonement in the blessedness of the world to come. In harmony with all our other interests the supreme end was the perfection of man's spiritual nature.

Dr. Durrell's article is upon "The Dangers that Threaten the Christian Sabbath," and is an argument to prove that this is a Christian Nation, that we have a national religion, that the observance of the Sabbath is a part of that national religion, and that, therefore, there should be laws to enforce the religious observance of Sunday. He seeks to prove that this is a Christian Nation by saying that "the mother country was, in form at least, Christian," and then inquiring whether the daughter was trained to be less so. Whether she was or not matters nothing, because the form of Christianity without the power, is worse than no pretension at all to Christianity. The Scriptures distinctly denounce the form of godliness without the power, and from such iniquity all Christians are commended to turn away. Yet all that any State can ever do in any such connection, is to make the religion which is professed only a mere form, increasing hypocrisy, and multiplying evil.

From the fact that the Declaration of Independence refers to "nature's God," to the "Creator," the "supreme Judge of the world," and "divine Providence;" because, the concluding resolution of the original articles of confederation recognizes "the great Governor of the world," and because the Constitution requires that all executive and judicial officers of the United States, and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or confirmation to so support the Constitution, he gathers the conclusion that "we have by the fundamental law of the land a national religion, and that religion is Christian."

That is a very large conclusion from small premises. In not one of the things which he has mentioned is anything said about Christ or the Christian religion, any

more than about the religion of the Deist or the Jew. And so far as the oath which is required by the Constitution of the United States is concerned, any atheist can take that just as well as any Christian. To deduce from these statements a national religion for the United States is a large contract. But when this is not only done but that religion is declared to be Christian, then the depth of the genius that could discover it, is something marvelous. In fact, any mind which can deduce such a conclusion from such premises, is perfectly able to create conclusions without any premises at all.

Next, and upon all that has been said before, he declares that the observance of the Sabbath is a part of our religious system recognized by law. And this is how he make the observance of the Sabbath a part of the national religion of the United States. Having thus established his national religion, and the observance of the Sabbath as a part of it, he notes some of the dangers that threaten it. He mentions the mail service, the Sunday paper, Sunday trains, frivolity, irreverence, and indifference on the part of the Church. In order to do away with these perils, he says, "the members of the evangelical churches of the country, constitute at least twenty per cent. of the population, and church-goers number more than half of the people of the United States;" and upon this he declares:—

We are strong enough to effect a reform if we only awake and let our voices be heard. If we all do so, and follow up our public protests by conscientious work at the caucus and ballot-box, politicians will treat us in a very becoming and respectful manner. It is time that God's people should be making themselves felt in American politics.

Yes, religious reform is a fine thing to carry on at the caucus and the ballot-box. And such work by the clergy always has been very conscientious—and so has the work of the Inquisition. When the churches put their dependence in politics, then worse corruption will follow than ever could be without it. Have they no faith in God, that they must appeal to politics?

Another danger which he mentions and which he calls a "grave mistake," is "trying to make the Sabbath a day of rest on purely secular grounds." This is another stroke that hits hard a goodly number of the leaders of the American Sabbath Union, at least in their public speeches. But the greatest danger is *in this danger*, and is, as he says, that

the assertion, by the enemies of the Christian religion, that the sanctity of the Sabbath rests on no religious obligation, and that rest should be "enforced by the State, on the grounds of public and general utility," has made some Christians doubtful as to the wisdom of placing the observance of the day on religious grounds at all.

It is worth while for the "civil" Sunday law workers to study these passages. They do not realize that their compromising, sophistical, "civil Sabbath" argu-

ment is a sword that cuts both ways. They had better stop that method of working and stand with Dr. Durrell openly for the enforcement of Sunday observance upon religious grounds. The Doctor closes his article with this sentence:—

The State and the Church are separate in our polity, and can never come into organic union; but the State and Christianity were married in 1776, and "What, therefore, God hath joined together let man put asunder."

Yes, it is a very nicely planned scheme, that the State and the Church are separate, but the State and Christianity are united. It is precisely the showing that was made by the bishops to Constantine in A. D. 311 and 312. It was represented that Christianity was a distinct thing from the Church; and as a matter of fact this was true, but not in the sense in which they meant it. And upon this showing Constantine formed a union between the State and Christianity as it was represented to him. But as soon as the union had been formed then it was made to appear that the Catholic Church was the one in which that Christianity was represented. And what Constantine and the bishops had joined together has been forbidden, in every nation but this, to be put asunder.

Dr. Coxe's article proposes "Remedies for Sabbath Decline." The first remedy which he suggests is to "define the issue," and "draw the lines accurately," that is, that there should be made a clear "distinction between the obligation of the Sabbath under civil law and that which is due under religious enactment." The way he does it is this:—

The obligation to observe the Christian Sabbath is rooted primarily in the divine revelation of duty in the Old Testament; that of the civil Sabbath in the equally divine revelation of need in human nature. We aim to secure the integrity of the civil Sabbath: we seek to promote the sanctity of the Christian Sabbath.

Yes, and it is the same "we" who aim to do both. It is the Church and the Church alone, which seeks, and has always sought to promote the sanctity of the Christian Sabbath by aiming to secure the integrity of the "civil Sabbath." There never has been a Sunday law made or enforced except in behalf of the Church.

The clear cut distinction upon which Dr. Coxe insists is further illustrated by his next paragraph, in which the second remedy is proposed which is, that they "must begin in the right place" and immediately upon this says, that "Nehemiah gave us a good example." Then in telling how Nehemiah worked out that good example, he says:—

He began with the nobles of Judea. He first rebuked them for profaning the Sabbath day. He appealed to the religious motive.

Of course he appealed to the religious motive. There was no other motive to which he could appeal. And as Dr. Durrell and Dr. Fiske in their articles plainly show, there is no other motive to

which appeal can ever rightly be made. The government in which Nehemiah was an officer was a theocracy, a religious government. The Church and the State were one. And whenever Nehemiah's example is urged, it can be done only upon the theory of a religious government, a union of Church and State. It is logical enough, therefore, that Dr. Coxe should urge, as the next remedy, "the vigorous enforcement of righteous laws," because of the fact that this is a Christian Nation," and should exhort the pulpit to "lead in this new crusade for the recovery of the holy day."

He closes with a long exhortation in which he strongly urges the enforcement of "civil enactment" upon the basis of the word of God because "the Bible is the common law of England," because the "statutes of King Alfred" enforced the "ten commandments and sundry other laws from Moses, of a moral character;" because "these laws have never been repealed;" because "America is the child of England, the inheritor of her laws, usages, and spirit;" and finally because "the roots of our national life run back to good Alfred's realm [reign?], and our laws through his to Sinai."

And such is the substance of the symposium of the *Methodist Review* on "The Christian Sabbath." The *Methodist Review* is the magazine of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church started the American Sabbath Union. The American Sabbath Union exists solely to secure the enactment and enforcement of Sunday laws, both State and national. Therefore this all proves again that which THE SENTINEL has shown time and again, that the Sunday-law movement is religious altogether, with not only not a single civil element about it, but no place for any. The whole thing is but a scheme to make the ecclesiastical superior to the civil power in this country, and to make the State the servant of the Church to execute her decrees.

A. T. J.

Sunday Legislation in British Columbia.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Colonist*, a paper published in Victoria, British Columbia, writes to that paper as follows concerning the proposal to adopt a Sunday law in that Colony:—

I would like to call attention to the most serious aspect of this whole business of introducing Sunday laws, and trying to enforce the same in British Columbia. To begin with, I would suggest that it may just be possible that the larger number of voters throughout this city and throughout the Province would be decidedly averse to anything that would tend in the least measure to hinder the entire and unrestricted freedom of all classes of our people. But apart from that, it seems to be a conclusion arrived at by all men of intelligence, that no majority has any right, either in or out of Parliament, to coerce the minority, or to impair in any measure the freedom of any member of any community. For instance, it is proper for legislatures to make laws having in view the maintenance of

order, the keeping of the peace, or defense from invasion; because all parties are alike interested and concerned in the enforcement of these laws. It would perhaps also be in keeping with good government to insist that all days should be held to be sacred, that no intoxicating liquors shall be sold or exposed for sale, on either day of the week; that falsehood shall at all times be accounted perjury; that cheating in any way shall be considered to be fraud; that gambling of any kind (even to playing marbles for keeps), shall be punishable; but to enact laws that have for their mission the intentional attempt to force even a minority of the peaceable people into observing any certain day of the week in a manner entirely inconsistent with their own ideas of right and wrong is merely a subversion of freedom, a tampering with the rights of an intelligent people; and has the full peculiar flavor of a dish that has been prepared, cooked, and served up as a portion of the *menu* of an intolerant church.

Such laws are not only unreasonable, ungenerous, obnoxious, and absurd, but their tendency and effect are alike harmful and would do more to stir up strife and ill-will and hatred among the sovereign people, and to pollute and defile the free air of our lovely Province, and toward the desecration and defilement of our hearths and homes, and the dethronement of what is indeed and in truth the truest kind of religious liberty, than all the combinations of evil influences that ever beset any community of people. In such a matter let each be a law unto himself.

Let us maintain order, keep the peace, defend our homes, be loving and kind and honest and good and true on the Sunday, and let us maintain order, keep the peace, defend our homes, and be loving and kind and honest and good and true on every other day of the week as well.

Let the air be so free that the sounds of innocent joy that strike over hills from our holiday pleasure haunts shall echo to other lands the full, free, lofty name of LIBERTY.

Another gentleman writes to the same paper thus:—

Sunday is not the Sabbath. Therefore the commandment of the Decalogue does not apply to Sunday. Believing this I can not comprehend on what grounds "Nemo" justifies the Hon. Mr. Robson's Sunday law. If Sunday is an institution of a church, its observance is binding only on the members of that church. One might just as reasonably ask the Legislature to enact a law compelling every one to attend his church and to accept his church's service, as add to the statute book a law forcing them to observe the day his church has set apart for worship. Does he not see that when he admits that Sunday is not the Sabbath day, he completely "gives away" the case of the Sabbatarians. He makes the observance of the Lord's day a matter of liberty and not a matter of law. The day was when those who advocate Sunday laws were logical. They passed laws compelling men not only to observe the day, but to attend the church, by law established. The world has outgrown laws binding men's consciences in these matters.

This man apparently admits that if Sunday were the Sabbath it would be right to enforce it by civil law; but that is a mistake. The seventh day is the divinely appointed Sabbath, but it would be monstrously wicked to make a law requiring everybody to keep it as such. God has nowhere committed such power to men.

THE only favorable conditions for the development of an individual, are those of freedom to carry forward the best that is in him or her. For any other human being to have the power to restrict him or her in that direction is harmful to both.—*Jarvis Plummer.*

Compulsion.

"AND they gave them drink in vessels of gold, and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king, and the drinking was according to the law; none did compel; for so had the king appointed to all the officers of his house that they should do according to every man's pleasure.—Esther 1.

The religion of Christ is not one of force. The royal wine at the king's feast was forced upon none; it would have been a violation of the king's law to force it upon any; for the law was that every man should drink it according to his pleasure. If any man felt the need of it the wine was free to him, free without money or price; and if he did not want it he was not compelled to drink it.

It was forbidden to none, and forced upon none. A man deserved no praise for drinking it, and merited no censure for not drinking it. It was like God's grace in the gospel, that is for all who may feel the need of it. It matters not how vile and sinful the man may feel himself to be, he is not forbidden to go to Christ. And indeed, the more conscious he is of his sinfulness, and the more he feels the need of the royal wine, the more he appreciates the king's grace in providing it for him; and the more is displayed in him the riches of the glorious kingdom of grace.

All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him,
This he gives.

The king made no requisition upon the poverty of his subjects to aid him in providing the feast for them, but he taught them as God taught Paul when he said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee."—He taught them that he was rich enough and loved them enough to bear all the expense of it for them.

The feast was designed to show the riches of his glorious kingdom. And that is what God's grace does; it shows the riches of grace; that God's grace is rich enough to save a sinner, a dead, helpless, bankrupt and impoverished sinner, one who has not only not a good thought or desire to contribute, but who is a willing subject of sin and an enemy to God. God's grace is rich enough to save just such a sinner; and if it is not that rich, then not one sinner has ever been or ever will be saved.

It is antichrist to force it upon any. Christ did not force himself or his religion upon anybody. When a certain Samaritan village would not receive him, he went with his disciples to another village; nor would he destroy them for it, though solicited by James and John to do so; but he rebuked them for making a request so contrary to his spirit. There has been recently a good deal of talk, by religious people, about Sabbath keeping, and a disposition is seen to force men to keep it as a religious institution. Now is that of the Spirit of God?

Rev. M. A. Gault, of Blanchard, Iowa, has said:—

Whether the Constitution [of the United States] will be set right upon the question of the moral supremacy of God's law in the Government, without a bloody revolution, or not, depends upon the strength and resistance of the forces of antichrist.

He calls opposition to the religion of force antichrist, when the truth is, that the religion of force is antichrist.

He further said,

Don't think that we are advocating war, but if we are not successful in the use of other means, as it was with the anti-slavery question after they had agitated, and petitioned, and used the ballot, they drew the sword; so shall we as a last resort, be compelled to use the sword and the bullet.

The plea is that this is a Christian Government, but that is not true, for there is but one Christian Government, and that is the government of that kingdom that is not of this world. This is a civil and not a religious Government, a Government of all sorts of people—black and white, Jew and Christian, believer and unbeliever—one in which the rights of the Jew are secured as well as the rights of the Christian, the unbeliever as well as the believer, and in which they are each and all members of the same civil body, and equals before the law.

It is one of the chief glories of our Government that it is one in which religion is free; and it becomes every citizen of the country, whether religious or irreligious, to see that it is kept free, and that there shall be under no form, even the semblance of a union of Church and State.

It will not do to give undue influence and power to any religious denomination, whether Protestant or Catholic. "It is good," said the eminent historian J. L. Motley, in his *Dutch Republic*, "that the world should not forget, how much wrong has been endured in the sacred name of God. It is good that these crimes should be remembered and freshly pondered."

The Roman Catholics, when they controlled the religion of the world, let no mode escape them, in which human beings have ever caused their fellow creatures to suffer. Men, women, and children, old and young, nobles and paupers, opulent burghers, hospital patients, lunatics, dead bodies, all were indiscriminately made to furnish food for the scaffold and the stake.

A poor Anabaptist guilty of no crime but his fellowship with a persecuted sect, had been condemned to death. He had made his escape, closely pursued by an officer across a frozen lake. It was late in the winter, and the ice had become unsound; it trembled and creaked beneath his foot-steps but he reached the shore in safety. The officer was not so fortunate, the ice gave way beneath him, and he sank into the lake uttering a cry for succor. There was none to hear except the fugitive he had been hunting. Dirk Williamzon, for so the Anabaptist was called, instantly obeying the dictates of a generous nature, returned, crossed the dangerous and quaking ice, at the peril of his life, extended his hand to his enemy and saved him from

certain death. Unfortunately for human nature, it can not be added that the generosity of the action was met by a corresponding heroism. The officer was desirous, it is true, of avoiding the responsibility of sacrificing the preserver of his life, but the burgomaster sternly reminded him to remember his oath. He accordingly arrested the fugitive who, on the 16th of May following, was burned to death under the most lingering tortures.—*See Motley's Dutch Republic.*

Motley was not a religious historian, and may therefore be credited as free from religious bias. These results follow in the wake of religion that is forced upon men. It grows up slowly and insidiously at first, but eventually gets control of men and governments; and then in the name of Christ, persecutes, oppresses, and murders all who do not bow the knee to it.—*R. in Gospel Messenger, Primitive Baptist.*

Establishment of Religious Liberty in Virginia.

THE cause for the celebrated memorial of James Madison, which appeared in a late *SENTINEL*, was the introduction in the Virginia Legislature of a bill making a provision for the "teachers of the Christian religion." In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, dated at Richmond, January 9, 1785, Madison gave the following account of the bill:—

A resolution for a legal provision for the "teachers of the Christian religion" had early in the session been proposed by Mr. Henry, and, in spite of all the opposition that could be mustered, carried by forty-seven against thirty-two votes. Many petitioners from below the Blue Ridge had prayed for such a law; and though several from the Presbyterian laity beyond it were in a contrary style, the clergy of that sect favored it. The other sects seemed to be passive. The resolution lay some weeks before a bill was brought in, and the bill some weeks before it was called for; after the passage of the incorporating act [incorporating the Protestant Episcopal Church], it was taken up, and, on the third reading, ordered by a small majority to be printed for consideration. The bill, in its present dress, proposes a tax of blank per cent on all taxable property, for support of teachers of the Christian religion. Each person when he pays his tax, is to name the society to which he dedicates it, and in case of refusal to do so, the tax is to be applied to the maintenance of a school in the county. As the bill stood for some time, the application in such cases was to be made by the Legislature to pious uses. In a committee of the whole it was determined, by a majority of seven or eight, that the word "Christian" should be exchanged for the word "religious." On the report to the House, the pathetic zeal of the late Governor Harrison gained a like majority for re-instating discrimination. Should the bill pass into a law in its present form, it may and will be easily eluded. It is chiefly obnoxious on account of its dishonorable principle and dangerous tendency.—*Writings of James Madison, volume 1, pages 130, 131.*

One of the noblest characteristics of our early statesmen and patriots, as Madison said, was their jealous regard for our liberty. The least step toward infringement aroused the protests of Americans everywhere; and as a result of this spirit

Henry's bill providing for the teachers of the Christian religion raised opposition in every part of the State, and such a protest went up from the patriots of Virginia that Henry's bill went down forever, and in its stead Jefferson's act for establishing religious freedom was passed, and still remains on the statute books of Virginia an everlasting monument to the liberality of Jefferson, Madison, and their co-workers. Jefferson's bill, in which he ever took a just pride, and which will always remain among the first of our early State papers, is as follows:—

AN ACT FOR ESTABLISHING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

Well aware that Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy Author of our religion, who being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his almighty power to do; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporal rewards, which proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labors for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, more than our opinions in physics or geometry; that, therefore, the proscribing any citizen as unworthy the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to the offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow-citizens he has a natural right; that it tends also to corrupt the principles of that very religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing, with a monopoly of worldly honors and emoluments, those who will externally profess and conform to it; that though, indeed, these are criminal who do not withstand such temptation, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles, on the supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he being of course judge of that tendency will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government, for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt actions against peace and good order; and, finally, that truth is great, and will prevail if left to herself, that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate, errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or sup-

port any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever; nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods; nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion; and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or effect their civil capacities.

And though we well know that this Assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, has no power to restrain the acts of succeeding Assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this act irrevocable, would be of no effect in law, yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural right.

Jefferson took more pride in this "Act for Establishing Religious Freedom" than anything else he ever wrote, except the Declaration of Independence. The following is a portion of an interesting letter written to his warm friend, James Madison, dated at Paris, December 16, 1786:—

The Virginia act for religious freedom has been received with infinite approbation in Europe, and promulgated with enthusiasm. I do not mean by the governments, but by the individuals who compose them. It has been translated into French and Italian, has been sent to most of the courts of Europe, and has been the best evidence of the falsehood of those reports which stated us to be in anarchy. It is inserted in the new Encyclopedia, and is appearing in most of the publications respecting America.—*Works of Thomas Jefferson, volume II, pages 55, 56.*

An incident occurred during the adoption of this report that illustrates the breadth of views of the founders of our political system, and shows the extent of the religious liberty that we enjoy in this country. In his "Autobiography," Jefferson says:—

The bill for establishing religious freedom, the principles of which had, to a certain degree, been enacted before, I had drawn in all the latitude of reason and right. It still met with opposition; but, with some mutilations in the preamble, it was finally passed; and a singular proposition proved that its protection of opinion was meant to be universal. Where the preamble declares, that coercion is a departure from the plan of the holy Author of our religion, an amendment was proposed, by inserting the words "Jesus Christ," so that it should read, "A departure from the plan of Jesus Christ, the holy Author of our religion;" the insertion was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend within the mantle of its protection the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mohammedan, the Hindoo, and infidel of every denomination.—*Works of Jefferson, volume I, page 45.*

Jefferson endeavored to effect this disestablishment a decade before. Speaking of the General Assembly of 1776, Parton says:—

Petitions for the repeal of statutes oppressive of the conscience of dissenters came pouring in upon the Assembly from the first day of the session. These being referred to the Committee of the Whole, led to the severest and longest struggle of the session. "Desperate contests," as Jefferson records, "continued almost daily from the eleventh of October to the fifth of December." He desired to sweep away the whole system of restraint and monopoly, and establish perfect liberty of conscience and opinion, by a simple enactment of half a dozen lines:

"No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religion worship, ministry, or place whatsoever; nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods; nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief: but all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion: and the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or effect their civil capacities."

It required more than nine years of effort on the part of Jefferson, Madison, and their liberal friends, to bring Virginia to accept this solution of the religious problem, in its simplicity and completeness.—*Parton's "Life of Jefferson," page 210.*

But, thanks to their earnest efforts, the principles of entire religious liberty were adopted, and a century of unparalleled progress both to religion and Government has resulted. The duty of the American citizen to-day is to see that this liberty is secured to every citizen, and that the intentions of these great men shall not be thwarted.

W. A. BLAKELY.

What and Whither?

"My kingdom is not of this world." "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the thing that are God's," and other New Testament texts in the same trend set forth principles, fidelity to which requires the severance of religious from civil matters. Any departure from such principles must therefore be antichristian, as is also any religious doctrine or practice that has ever been enforced or maintained by civil law, since whatever is Christian must be supported by Christian means. As baptismal civil legislation has in all probability seen its last days, and Catholics and quasi-Catholics probably can not again, or will not, by man's menaces and laws, force those to discard their scriptural baptism or have their children sprinkled, who have in such matters taken God's law as their guide, no further discussion of that phase of the subject is necessary, save to call attention to the fact that these things bear the stamp of error upon them, because they have been heretofore enforced by civil legislation; truth needs no such support. But with Sunday observance the case is different. The power of civil law is still invoked in its favor. Papists, by their agencies, and Protestants, through the National Reform Association, the American Sabbath Union, the third party, and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, are all uniting to enforce the observance of Sunday by civil law. The former are repeating their tactics of the ante-Reformation era when they supplanted the Sabbath of Jehovah, honored by Christ and the primitive Christians, by a festival taken from the pagan sun-worshippers. The first Sunday law was that of the pagan Emperor Constantine, who, to save his tottering empire, introduced Christianity as a State religion.

This law given March 7, A. D. 321, began thus: "Let no work be done on the venerable day of the sun," etc. Enforced

idleness in those days, as in ours, was no gain to the Church and community since it produced more of crime and debauchery on Sunday than on any other day. The next step, therefore, was to compel the religious observance of Sunday, and a theory was already extant to meet the exigencies, for the great Catholic Father Augustine wrote: "Many must be brought back to the Lord, like wicked servants, by the rod of temporal suffering." (Schaff's Church History.) Of this theory Neander says: "It was by Augustine, then, that a theory was founded . . . which introduced the germ of that whole system of spiritual despotism, . . . which ended in the . . . Inquisition." The enforcement of Sunday laws by the Church, through the agency of the State, was the beginning of those awful persecutions and atrocious crimes which blackened the historical annals of Europe, while American history is also besmirched by persecutions and hardships arising from Sunday laws, as these have been enforced under the Protestant regime.

The history of the Augustine age is now repeating itself, with this difference: then pagan and papist formed an alliance, now it is Protestant and papist. The results of those alliances then will be the results now, a European Sabbathlessness. To enforce idleness is one thing; and to take rest voluntarily and in obedience to God's command is quite another; the former may be secured by law, but the more consistently such law is enforced, the blacker will Sunday become as a day of crime; the latter has even a better chance of succeeding by gospel methods, if evangelical energy will take the place of ecclesiastical inertia, if ministers, with faith in God and in the regenerating power of his gospel, will persuade men instead of trying to coerce them, then Sabbath observance will stand on its own merits as it did before Constantine's time. It can and must be secured through education and persuasion only, and not by coercion. The gospel persuades men to reverence sacred things from motives of love, and does not compel them by force, therefore to do by law what ought to be done by the gospel is antichristian.

One great weakness about this civil Sabbath observance movement is, that to be consistent with American sentiment and to conciliate those from whom opposition will come, attempts are made to remove from the "Sabbath Reform" movement all religious features, and to seek the enforcement of Sunday on utilitarian, sanitarian, and civil grounds. This is but an entering wedge like Constantine's edict, which to reconcile the pagans, did not contain a single Christian sentiment; and Sunday observance, which then had its start, to conciliate the Christian afterward, was fancifully and gratuitously associated with our Lord's resurrection. In the words of President Lincoln: "You can fool all

of the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all of the time;" so some of the people may believe that no religious legislation is sought, yet there are some who can not be misled. The meetings of the various societies back of this organized effort are held in churches; its literature is decidedly religious; its *personnel* consists of ministers and church members, and its leading organization has the following in the Constitution:—

The basis of this Union is the divine authority and universal and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath—as manifested in the constitution of nature; declared in the revealed will of God; formulated in the fourth commandment of the moral law; interpreted and applied by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; transferred to the Christian Sabbath or Lord's Day by Christ and his apostles; and approved by its beneficial influence upon national life.

There are many difficulties attendant upon religious legislation, while history is replete with accounts of suffering and misery which such legislation has caused, and whatever religious practice or doctrine stands in need of it it is to be condemned as an error by the principles of justice, liberty, and the Bible.

H. B. MAURER.

More than Physical Rest Wanted.

First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. Mark 4:28.

It is a notable fact that for all that is said about a Sunday rest being so much needed for the poor laboring man, but few laboring men are putting forth exertions to obtain it, or are heard in the lecture field championing it. If they are undergoing an Egyptian bondage as would appear from the claims of some, it indeed seems strange that their cries and groanings should not be heard. About the only men who are heard championing a compulsory Sunday law are ministers.

This being the case, suspicion naturally arises as to whether this is not, after all, simply a religious scheme gotten up in the interests of the Church. But we are calmly assured that this is not the case; that the Sunday law is not intended to compel anybody to be religious, but that it is simply in the interests of the poor laboring man,—to give him a day of *physical* rest, and make Sunday simply a *civil* Sabbath.

This looks plausible, and to quite an extent allays suspicion. But still there remains just a lingering query why it is only the *religious* who are interested in this *civil* affair, and as Sunday is a *church institution*, how it is that these divines can be laboring for it only in the interests of man's *physical* nature. Indeed, it looks like quite a freak in human nature.

But let us compare these ideas with a few quotations from some of the authentic documents and representative workers in this movement and see if this is the objective point in this movement. First, the

American Sabbath Union in its Constitution thus declares its object:—

The object of the American Sabbath Union is to preserve the Christian Sabbath as a day of rest and *worship*.

The Blair Sunday rest bill of the Fiftieth Congress closed thus:—

The same shall be construed so far as possible to secure to the whole people rest from toil during the first day of the week, their mental and moral culture, and the *religious* observance of the Sabbath day.

Rev. W. F. Crafts, before the Knights of Labor, in Chicago, November 29, 1888, said:—

A weekly day of rest has never been permanently secured in any land except on the basis of religious obligation. Take the *religion* out and you take the rest out.

Joseph Cook, in one of his Monday morning lectures, said:—

The experience of centuries shows that you will in vain endeavor to preserve Sunday as a day of rest unless you preserve it as a day of *worship*.

And Mrs. J. C. Bateham, Superintendent of the Sabbath observance department of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, in the *Christian Statesman*, of April 11, 1889, said:—

We want it for the purpose for which God designed it when he bade us keep it holy, not for frivolity and amusement, not for sleep and idleness, not for the Sunday newspaper, with its demoralizing literature, but for reading which is elevating and improving, including the word of God, and for *attendance upon church services*.

This puts a rather different face on the question. In the light of these statements all this palaver about a civil Sabbath, and wanting a Sunday law simply that the poor laboring man may have *physical* rest vanishes into thin air. It reminds us of the tramp who stopped at a house and thus ingeniously addressed the landlady: "Madam, would you please be so kind as to give me a drink of water, for I'm so hungry I don't know where I'm going to sleep to-night." So with the clamorers for Sunday laws. They want a *civil* Sunday law because the *religious* observance of the day is so small they do not know how they are going to *fill their churches*.

The whole policy of this movement appears to be in the line of the advice given by a minister in San Diego, California. He said:—

In this thing you must not ask for too much at first. Ask just what public sentiment will bear, and when you get that, ask for more.

It is manifestly actuated by selfish aims—to get control of the civil power that it may be used as a tool to play into the hands of the Church. First, they want a law compelling a man to rest. But this only paves the way to coddle (or cudgel) him up to go to church and worship—with his pocket book at least. It is on the plan of the Western farmer who wanted more money to buy more land to raise more corn to feed more hogs to get more money to buy more land to raise more corn, etc. So these Sunday-law advocates want a compulsory Sunday law to

make more people keep Sunday to get more to attend church to get more money to pay more preachers to get more laws to make more Sunday-keepers, etc. They want the whole earth—by law.

W. A. COLCORD.

Morality by Law.

Don't leave moral work to be done by the law. We do not want to see our ministers acting as searchers and informers. Others can do that. They have a work which others can not do. It is theirs to do the work which their great Example did. He saved men from their sins, but not with the sword of Cæsar.—*Iowa State Register*.

If moral work was left to be done by law it would never be done, because it is not the province of law to make men moral. It is away beyond the power of law to implant morality in the heart, or even to beget in the heart the desire to be moral. Anything short of the gospel of Christ can have nothing to do with implanting moral principles and moral impulses in the human breast, and whenever anybody talks about legislating morality into man he talks about an impossible thing. Morality is conformity to the moral law, and no man and no woman has ever in this world conformed to the moral law without divine help, because the law is spiritual and reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart. And whenever we hear people talk about Sunday laws in the interest of morality, we set it down that such persons know but little about morality, or that they want laws that will lay down what a person shall think, and laws that will map out what a person shall believe and what he shall not believe. But this would involve the Inquisition, for how can it be known what a person's thoughts are if he does not choose to divulge them, except they be wrung from him by the rack and the thumbscrew, and by similar persuasive measures?

The work of the minister of Christ is truly, as the *Register* says, "to do the work which their great Example did." If they do this they will preach his gospel and cease to wire-work legislatures in the interests of morality and of the Church. The minister of Christ should never engage in any political work—not even to vote—as a minister, and not even as a Christian. If he feels he must take part in civil affairs, let him do it as a man, as a citizen merely, and not as a religionist. Our Government is a civil Government and is for the citizen, for the good of man in this life, and it has nothing to do with the other life, and for a man even to vote with the intention of fashioning legislation in the interest of any church creed, or of any religious tenet, would be using the franchise in an unlawful way.—*Fresno (Cal.) Inquirer*.

God never orders a draft for his army; all must be volunteers.—*Ram's Horn*.

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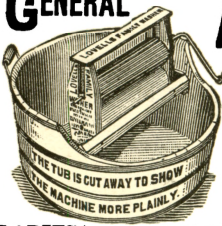
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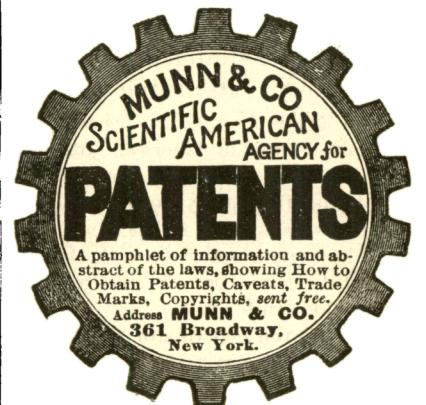
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NEW YORK, APRIL 23, 1891.

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.

SAMUEL T. SPEAR, M. D., D. D., LL. D., one of the editors of the *Independent*, and author of several books, is dead. Of his work on "Religion and the State," the *Independent* says: "This volume is the best exponent of the doctrine, which was earnestly his and ours, that Church and State should be absolutely separated, that Church property should be taxed, and that the Bible should not be required to be read in the public schools."

AN attempt to pass the ten commandments through the Common Council of Cincinnati, recently, failed. It appears that in his testimony before a committee, Deacon Richard Smith, of the *Commercial Gazette*, testified that he believed that the ten commandments could not be passed by the Common Council without bribery. This made some of the councilmen angry, and subsequently one of them introduced the ten commandments, and moved they be passed under the suspension of the rules. The chairman ruled the motion out of order, and so the commandments remained unpassed.

A WESTERN paper complains that in the Sunday law of Pennsylvania "no exemption is made in favor of those Jews and seventh-day Christians, who observe Saturday as their Sabbath," and remarks that "the latter especially have been singled out in several cases for prosecution or persecution." We believe that both these statements are true, the former certainly is, but the law would be better, not in kind but only in degree, if it made an exemption in favor of seventh-day Christians. Such laws are wrong in principle, and exemptions are really a confession of this fact.

THE *Catholic Review* is calling for the formation of a Catholic party in the United States similar to the Catholic party in Germany. In urging this, it says:—

As far as law-making is concerned, Christianity is a very dead affair in America. It is for this reason we would like to see the formation of a strictly Catholic political party, to do the legislative work which the sects have failed to do. Such a party would have no greater strength than its numbers, its careful organization, its sincerity, and its usefulness would earn for it. . . . It could unite with any party in the enacting of Christian laws, and it certainly would arrest the rooting out of Christianity, a process now going on successfully.

This is simply saying that Catholics would unite with Protestants in securing legislation favorable to those features of Christianity common to Romanist and Protestant alike; that is, these great bodies would, as the National Reformers long since proposed, simply join hands in resisting what they are pleased to call "political atheism," which is simply a logical and consistent divorce of Church and State. Those who trust to the differences between papists and Protestants to preserve religious liberty may awake by and by to the fact that they have trusted to a broken reed.

THE *Colonist*, of Victoria, British Columbia, comes to us containing an article boldly challenging the authority of Sunday as a sacred day, and asserting that it is not the Sabbath by divine appointment. This is one effect of the demand for more stringent Sunday laws, and one rather unlooked for by its friends. But the raising of this question does not seem to discourage the Sunday-law advocates in the least. It is true that it is a point that will not bear too close scrutiny, but the absence of divine law seems only to make them the more anxious to secure human laws; so while the demand for Sunday laws stimulates this wholesome inquiry as to its claims, the inquiry increases the demand.

WE have been severely criticised for the statement made some weeks ago that "the Puritans hanged, but did not burn, persons accused of witchcraft." We are, however, confident that the statement is true. A patient and careful search of the best histories to be found in the libraries of this city has failed to reveal even a hint of any mode of execution of witches in this country, other than hanging; and we are also in receipt of a letter from the well-known writer, W. S. Nevins, of Salem, Massachusetts, in which he says: "There was never a witch burned in New England." Mr. Nevins is engaged in writing a history of Salem witchcraft, and his ability as a writer, and his facilities for research, give assurance that this work will be the best ever written.

Lee & Shepard, Boston, will bring this book out in May, and we shall embrace the earliest opportunity to give our readers definite information concerning it.

APRIL 5, Rev. H. E. Mott, of Dubuque, Iowa, delivered a sermon upon the subject, "Shall the World's Fair Be Opened on Sunday?" "The church was crowded," says the *World*, "and among the congregation was Senator William B. Allison. The preacher took strong ground against the opening of the Exposition on Sunday, stating that it could only accommodate the residents of Chicago who could visit the Fair as often as they desired on week days.

"At the close of the sermon Mr. Mott asked all those in favor of closing the Fair on Sunday to rise. Almost the entire congregation rose, but Senator Allison kept his seat. Various interpretations are put on his action, but it is generally considered that he intended to signify his opposition to the preacher's position."

FIRMLY relying, ourselves, on the truths of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favored, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observance, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure.—*Queen Victoria*.

WE have received Volume 1, Number 1, of the *Quarterly Register of Current History*, published by the Evening News Company, of Detroit, Michigan. Its design is thus stated by the publishers:—

The purpose of the *Quarterly Register* is the bringing together at intervals of three months, of such matter appearing in the daily newspapers as may be valuable for permanent preservation. The *Quarterly Register* is not a publication to be read and thrown aside, but one to be carefully preserved and periodically bound up into volumes. In this form there will be few books in the family library which will have a more direct interest to every member, as it will deal with matters familiar in every one's recollection. The want of some such publication has been, no doubt, widely felt. Newspapers are too bulky for preservation, and being necessarily ill-digested, and rarely indexed, are, even when bound, almost useless for reference. The result is that recent history, while the most interesting to the generation which has participated in it, is the most difficult to find any convenient record of. Henceforth it is hoped this want will be supplied in the *Quarterly Register*.

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