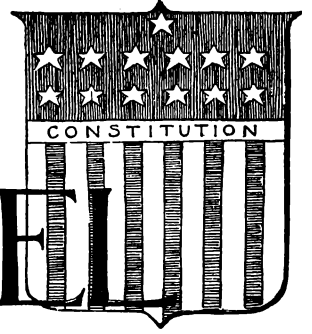


AMERICAN SENTINEL



"IF ANY MAN HEAR MY WORDS, AND BELIEVE NOT, I JUDGE HIM NOT." *Jesus Christ.*

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EDITOR.

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ABOUT as near as anyone can come to divining the purpose of "Lent," as related to Protestants, in the absence of any authority on the subject, is to say that it constitutes a sort of "indulgence" for a life of doubtful piety during the rest of the year.

It would be possible for Lent to be only this, even if it were a season instituted by the Lord; for God's institutions often become perverted. And as it was not instituted by the Lord, it is not possible that it should be anything but this.

The real purpose of penance, in the heathen system of which it forms a part, is that of an indulgence, either to satisfy a past transgression, or to provide for a future one. It is a principle of human nature—and human nature is strictly heathen—that an individual can in some way and to some extent, atone for his own transgressions. This principle crops out everywhere in an individual's way, before he becomes a Christian, of dealing with himself and with others. His own bad deeds, or those of others, are offset in his view by the later "good" deeds of the respective parties. He thinks that he must do something good in order to become good; and that he must first make himself good in this way to a certain extent, before he can come into touch with God.

Having done what he considers a very good deed, by way of penance, his conscience will be eased until he again does something that he knows to be of a decidedly different character, or until he has continued for some time in the pathway of "small" transgressions. Then he feels that he must again do something to set himself straight. So it happens that the Lenten period of penance supplies a want of human nature, coming as it does at intervals convenient for that purpose.

Upon this question of the real nature and purpose of Lent, we may cite the testimony of the papal church. That church is the author of the observance, and being in no sense a divine ordinance, it has never been perverted from its original purpose. In a late issue of Cardinal Gibbons' organ, the *Catholic Mirror*, the following observations are made by way of preparing the minds of "the faithful" for the occasion:—

"With this week begins the holy season of Lent, when according to the precept and immemorial custom of the church, we should, as far as possible, lay aside worldly thoughts, and especially worldly pleasures, and occupy ourselves with considerations which relate to our eternal salvation. This, indeed, we should do at all times; but more especially in Lent, when everything in the divine offices of our religion reminds us that the passion and death of our Lord are to be soon commemorated.

"There is no person who cannot give up something for the sake of Almighty God, in Lent—all that is necessary is the will to do so. There are pleasures, of doubtful benefit to us spiritually at all times, which should now peremptorily be abandoned. There are the very questionable amusements in which many indulge—the play-going, the reading of light literature, and the various diversions of society. During the penitential season, at least, these recreations should be utterly relinquished, and the discipline of the church should be complied with as rigorously as possible. Then it will not follow at the end that one, looking back with regret and self-reproach, will realize that the holy season for him or her has come and gone in vain."

In brief, the idea here expressed is that during this season of penance, "worldly pleasures" "of doubtful benefit to us spiritually at all times," "very questionable amusements," etc., should be laid aside, and the individual should conduct himself in a strictly Christian manner. And what makes it a season of penance is the very fact that he feels obliged to conduct himself in this way. For forty days a heathen must try to act like a Christian. And truly, if that be not a penance, we cannot think of anything that would be. Every individual who has tried the experiment knows how hard it is to try to act like a Christian before being one.

It will be said, of course, that Lent is for Christians—"the faithful"—and not for the heathen at all. But we do not care anything about the theory of Lent. We are considering only the reality of it, and the reality is that Christians can have no possible use for Lent, because (1) it has no sanction in the Word of God, and (2) a Christian acts like a Christian at all times of the year, and not merely during some period of penance. And he finds no penance at all, but only pleasure, in so doing.

To seek to gain an indulgence for a life of "questionable amusements" and "worldly pleasures" during the rest of the year, by means of the Lenten penance, is no more Protestant or Christian than to purchase an indulgence from the pope direct.

Freedom for a Million Slaves.

THE *Christian Endeavorer* is much exercised over the matter of "Sunday slavery" which is alleged to be very prevalent in this country. In its March issue it calls for the abolition of this Sunday slavery as the thing of first importance in work for the "rescue of the Sabbath." "There are," it says, "over a million people in the United States who are obliged to work on Sunday against their will."

If the SENTINEL could but reach this million and more of people, it would say to them in the name and by the authority of Him who rules over all, You are not slaves at all, but free men, if you but will to have it so. We have better tidings for you than those who remind you of your slavery. You need not wait for the success of some movement on their part to set you free by law; you are free already. It only remains that you should assert your freedom.

This, of course, you may not be willing to do; but you can do it if you will; and if you do not, your slavery will be voluntary.

You are not compelled to work on Sunday against your will. No one is compelled to do this. You are, at most, only compelled to choose between Sunday work and the prospective suffering of pecuniary loss. But pecuniary loss is not the loss of liberty. The freest individual in the world is liable to pecuniary loss.

If you are in slavery, it is only because you do not know that you are free. That, indeed, is the common condition of mankind. Freedom, full and complete, has been purchased for all. The great emancipation proclamation for the race has been issued, over a name and seal that stand for all power and authority. The only thing necessary for any man is that he shall accept his freedom.

If the slaves of the South had refused to accept the freedom offered them in the proclamation of President Lincoln,—if they had chosen to remain just as they were, refusing to believe that they had been set free, or waiting for some law to be enacted compelling them to be free, they might have remained slaves until this day. In some

instances they did, through ignorance, remain in slavery until long after the edict of emancipation went into effect. But the vast majority were willing to take at once the freedom it brought them. They immediately asserted their liberty. But people are very much slower to assert the soul liberty which is just as truly theirs.

By the sacrifice on the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ purchased this liberty for every individual of the race, so that it becomes to each a free gift. But a gift profits not unless it is accepted. By accepting this gift, it becomes the high prerogative of every person to follow always the dictates of his will and conscience.

This, of course demands faith in the word of God. It is faith that sustains the individual in asserting his freedom. His will being always to do that which is right, he simply obeys the dictates of conscience as guided by the Word, and leaves the results with God.

There is no reason whatever why any Christian should complain of "Sunday slavery." The mere fact of such complaint should be conclusive evidence of the non-Christian character of the complainant.

The Christian simply trusts his God and asserts his freedom. Whatever he believes God has commanded, that he does, without reference to any arrangements established by man. Hence he is never without the enjoyment of Sabbath rest. Human customs and regulations must, with him, adapt themselves to the precepts of God, and not the precepts of God to the rules of men.

And this is the liberty that every individual ought to assert. He must *assert* it, on the basis on which it is offered, if he is to *realize* it. If he waits for a law to compel him to realize it, he will not realize it at all. Soul liberty cannot be obtained that way.

We say again, there is full and complete liberty for this multitude in "Sunday slavery," for their immediate realization, upon the basis God himself has established for it. God is the Author of liberty and also the Creator of man. He is the God both of the Christian and the gentile. All men should be pointed to that means by which they may know the freedom that God gives, and become forever emancipated from soul-slavery. And why should the *Christian Endeavorer* point them to anything else?

Christian Endeavorers in Conflict.

THE camp of error is never long free from divisions. How this is illustrated by the Christian Endeavorers with reference to Sunday, is pointed out by an exchange, as follows:—

"The *Christian Endeavorer*, of Chicago, which has entered upon the task of 'rescuing' Sunday from ruin, according to the 'new discovery' of Mr. Gamble, is almost as severe on the popular notion of 'no particular day,' as it is on us for our adherence to a 'particular day.' In the February issue we find the following paragraph:—

"It is to be hoped that we will hear no more of the

foolish statement that there is no divine authority for the observance of Sunday as the Christian sabbath; or the other equally untrue saying: "It makes no difference what day of the week we observe as Sabbath, so that we observe one." Followers of Christ should observe only the first day of the week, the Lord's day, the Christian sabbath.'

"This is a home thrust at the *Golden Rule*, Dr. Clark's paper, and hitherto the representative paper of Christian Endeavor, which lately declared that the specific day of the Sabbath was of no more importance to Sabbath-keeping than the clothes a preacher wears are to the sermon he preaches. Has it come to this, that Christian Endeavor leaders are so soon divided as to how Sunday shall be saved? These papers have come to such antagonism by inventing different ways of escaping, or trying to escape, from the claims of the Sabbath. God's law is a troublesome thing when men want to invade it; and the greatest of blessings when men are obedient to it."

Enforcing the Decalogue in Kansas.

THE following is the bill introduced in the legislature of Kansas, by Representative Walters, calling for the legal enforcement of the Decalogue, as mentioned in our last issue:—

"An Act to give statutory force to the Ten Commandments:

"WHEREAS, The men of the present generation have become doubters and scoffers; and,

"WHEREAS, They have strayed from the religion of their fathers; and,

"WHEREAS, They no longer live in the fear of God; and,

"WHEREAS, Having no fear of punishment beyond the grave, they wantonly violate the law given to the world from Mount Sinai; therefore,

"Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:—

"SECTION 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"SECTION 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," etc. [Each one of the commandments constitutes a separate section of the Act.]

"SECTION 11. Any man who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act shall be punished as follows:—

"For violating Section 1, \$1,000 fine; for violating Section 2, \$1,000 fine and one year in the penitentiary; for violating Section 3 or Section 4, \$500 fine; for violating Section 5, \$500 fine and six months in the penitentiary; for violating Section 6, hanged by the neck until dead; for violating Section 7, penitentiary for life; for violating Section 8, fine or imprisonment, in the discretion of the court; for violating Section 9, imprisonment, in the discretion of the court; for violating Section 10, fine and imprisonment, in the discretion of the court.

"SECTION 12. This Act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book."

If this proposed measure stood alone as the only thing of the kind which has been brought to public no-

tice, it might be dismissed as a joke. But the facts of the situation justify something more than its mere mention as a piece of "freak" legislation.

This proposed measure only contemplates in part, and on a small scale, what is proposed in the "Christian Amendment" to the Constitution, which has progressed far beyond the possibilities of a joke. That amendment says that "the revealed will of Jesus Christ" shall be "the supreme authority in civil affairs" in every State in the Union. The revealed will of Christ includes the law of ten commandments. The "Christian Amendment" would do for every State what Mr. Walters' measure proposes to do for the State of Kansas.

It is proposed that the Kansas legislature shall enact, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." As the speaking party in this enactment would be the legislature, the law would be that the legislature must be the god of everybody in the State. And the god who speaks the law having been determined in the first section of the Act, the same god would be meant by the phrase "the Lord thy God" in succeeding sections. Thus by the third section it would become blasphemy to speak lightly of the Kansas legislature, and in the fourth section this assembly would put forth the stupendous claim of having created the heavens and the earth!

Absurd as such claims would be, they are no more than what is really involved in every instance of religious legislation. For religion being the performance of those duties which an individual owes to his God, only God can rightfully command such duties; and when such duties are commanded by any party, that party by that very act assumes to be God. Every law upon the statute books of the States which enjoins the observance of the "Lord's day," involves nothing less than the claim that the law-making party is God.

Yet these "sabbath" laws are to be found upon the statute books of almost every State, and they are not generally regarded as examples of "freak" legislation. Neither, as stated, is the proposed "Christian Amendment" so regarded by the vast majority of those composing the churches and religious societies. And so strong is the support which these give to it, and so potent has their influence upon Congress been shown to be, that the "Christian lobbyists" who have charge of it at the seat of government are actually hopeful that the National Assembly will take favorable action upon it during their next session.

It should be observed also that by Mr. Walters' bill the seventh day of the week will be made the legal sabbath in the State of Kansas. For the fourth commandment plainly says "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work;" and any almanac affords proof that the day "commonly called Sunday" is the first day of the week and not the seventh. The Sunday law itself commonly specifies that Sunday is the "first day of the week." "The seventh day" and "the first day" of that division of time which the Sabbath marks, cannot be one and the same day.

"The seventh day" must mean the day before Sunday, which is commonly called Saturday.

Another point that must not be overlooked is raised by the query as to what will constitute a violation of this Act. Jesus Christ said that hatred in the heart was a violation of the commandment which says, "Thou shalt not kill," which is Section 6 in Mr. Walters' bill. See Matt. 5:21, 22. No doubt it will be acknowledged that there is no higher authority upon the subject than this. The courts will therefore be obliged to take cognizance of hatred as a violation of Section 6 of this State law, of lust as a violation of Section 7, etc., and inflict the penalties specified in the Act. The enlargement of the State prisons and penitentiaries which the punishment of such persons, together with all who were covetous, would demand, it would be needless to try to specify. The penal institutions would simply have to be made large enough to take in the entire population of the State.

If we are really to have a "Christian Amendment" to the Constitution which will make "the revealed will of Jesus Christ" the "supreme authority in civil affairs" for all the nation, it may be well that the experiment should be first tried on the small scale which Mr. Walters' bill proposes, in order that the people may judge of its utility for the wider field of national government. It would certainly be far preferable that the Kansas legislature should pass this bill, rather than that the National Legislature should pass the so-called Christian Amendment.

"What Is Wrong?"

WHAT is wrong? inquires the Rev. C. S. Bullock, in the March *Christian Endeavorer*, and proceeds to justify and answer the query as follows:—

"Every pulpit in the land guarded by law—nearly one hundred thousand men of learning and ability set for the bringing to the attention of other men the life and death message of God—and yet—

"Multiply the twelve apostles by eight thousand and how soon they would turn the word up-side-down! What is wrong?"

"Think of England—the brightest part of Europe. Eighty thousand criminals; one hundred and sixty thousand drunkards; one hundred thousand prostitutes; nearly ten hundred thousand paupers, and a drink bill of one hundred and thirty-six million pounds sterling! Is that the best the gospel of Jesus Christ can do for England?"

"Look upon our own land—over seventy-three million population and about twenty million enrolled members in all branches of the church! Seven million young men, of whom but five per cent. are enrolled as members of the church, these, as a fraction of one of the million, attend church somewhat regularly, another million attended occasionally, but five million never attend. Think of arresting over one and a half million of men and women annually—fifty millions in a generation! Crime increases four and a half times faster than the population. What is wrong?"

"Here we stand upon the threshold of the twentieth century with the record of forty million people habitually absenting themselves from the house of God! We have perfect machinery and a seemingly large amount of zeal—we are doing everything that we can think of to reach the ungodly—we have tried spinning-wheels and grab-bags, theatricals and tableaux, broom drills and donkey socials. We have fiddled to them and fed them with ice cream and cake, and tickled them with funny stories, yet 'Ichabod' seems to be written upon everything we do. What is wrong?"

"Is there a power that can change these things? What is needed? Paul cries, 'The gospel is the power of God.' O, that is what is needed—power! POWER! Power in the Church and through the Church in politics to regenerate society. The only thing that can correct the things that need correction is the 'gospel.' Let us apply the gospel in liberal doses!"

Yes; it is *power* that is needed, and that power is needed in the church. But the needed power is not political power, but "the power of God." The gospel is not political power. The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16. The power comes only to those who believe, and this totally separates it from politics, for politics have nothing to do with faith.

If the Church does not have the power she needs, it is because there is a lack in believing—believing the Word of God. Jesus Christ said to his followers, as he was about to ascend after his resurrection, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. . . . And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Then why has the Church not power? Is it not because she has forsaken Christ and joined with Caesar, and is seeking for divine power to be exercised through politics, for the "regeneration of society"? God cannot lend himself to any such scheme. The Church will have to get out of politics before she will realize the power for which some in her communion long.

It seems to be a difficult matter—if not an impossibility—to secure the retracement of a single step which the Government has taken in the direction of union with the Church. An illustration of this is furnished in the action of the Senate Committee to whose lot it fell to report on the Indian appropriation bill sent up from the House. Instead of submitting it without any appropriations for sectarian Indian schools, as was provided for by Congress last year, it was reported to the Senate with a provision that during the coming year such schools shall have the same Government aid as this year, less ten per cent. The provision of Congress in the matter was that after June 30, 1897, all such appropriations should cease; and that during the year ending with that date, the appropriation should be only half that of the year previous. "It strikes us," says the *Independent*, "that the best way to cease is to cease." But the trouble is that Congress, as represented by this committee, is not seeking the best way to cease.

The "Religious Significance of the Inauguration."

THE Sunday evening following the inauguration at Washington, D. C., the pastor of the Metropolitan M. E. Church, of that city, delivered a sermon on the "religious significance" of the event. This church is one of the largest in the city, and was attended by the President at the morning service of the same day. For his text the speaker read from 2 Kings 11:12, "And they clapped their hands and said, God save the king;" also from Rom. 13:11, "The powers that be are ordained of God." Among other things he said:—

"We are a Christian nation. There is a secular theory of civil government. We have a little band of vociferous secularists and infidels, who have succeeded in giving the public an absurdly exaggerated sense of their numbers and importance, who would de-Christianize the State, who would have judicial oaths, prayers in our legislative assemblies, and Sunday laws abolished; in short, all the Christian elements of our national life. They would destroy our national inheritance and are no more patriots than they are Christians. They deal their deadly blows not merely at revealed religion, but at human liberty and progress.

"The Christian religion is the foundation of all law and all literature, and to be hostile to the Christian religion is to be hostile to the Government in which we dwell.

"The Constitution provides that Congress shall make no law regulating the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; and that no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification for any office of public trust. These simply secure religious freedom and separation of the Church from the State. They are as a bill of rights, guaranteeing to all the churches full liberty, and forbidding Congress ever to abridge that liberty. It is not a union of Church and State, but the union of Christianity and the State. A free church in a free country; each independent of the other; each fulfilling different functions, yet coöperating together to increase the reverence for law and increase the stability of the Government. The recognized religion of this land is not the Episcopalian Christianity, the Presbyterian, Roman Catholic or Methodist Christianity, but the Christianity common to all,—a common religion, a universal Christianity."

This paragraph calls for some comment. Let it be noted that there is a vast difference between church freedom and individual freedom. When the papal church enjoyed the greatest freedom, during the dark ages of her supremacy, individual freedom was at its lowest ebb. Church freedom that is not compatible with the fullest individual freedom, is nothing else than despotism. It is individual freedom that the people want. It is this that should be secured to them by the Constitution.

And it is just this freedom that is always invaded by a union of Christianity—so-called—with the State. That union may leave the churches free enough, especially if they prove to be the dominant power under the arrangement—but it invades individual freedom by combining

with religion a power which pays no respect to individual option. The State does not persuade; it commands and enforces; and when it is united with "Christianity," it is to command and enforce "Christianity" in so far as the union extends. But it is the divinely-ordained prerogative of every individual to exercise perfect freedom of choice in religion. The State says, *You must*. Christianity says, "*Whosoever will, let him come.*"

Hence there can never be union of real Christianity with the State.

Of course there is no such thing as "Episcopalian Christianity," or "Roman Catholic Christianity," or "Methodist Christianity." There is but one kind of Christianity in the world—one way of being like Christ. And for this reason a union of all denominations, or of the leading ones—with the State cannot possibly be a union of Christianity with the State.

The speaker said further:—

"The recent unanimous decision of the Supreme Court is that this is a Christian nation, destroying as a precedent the famous Tripoli treaty in which the Mohammedan power was assured that the United States was not a Christian nation. The Christian is supported in independent but friendly relations with the civil power. Our Christian life and churches have moved forward most rapidly. The increase in church membership from 1890 to 1895 was over four million. The increase of population falls far below the rate of church progress. The church has steadily and rapidly gained upon the population.

"Shall we surrender our Government to secular control? That would be treason to liberty; that would be the betrayal of the sacred trust we hold for our children; as well as disloyalty to God, and this blessed Book, which is the Magna Charter of human rights and happiness.

"We have evidence of the Christian character of the nation in the inaugural addresses of the Presidents. . . . This last inaugural has been most impressive. Listen to the opening words of the President:—

"In obedience to the will of the people, and in their presence, by the authority vested in me by this oath, I assume the arduous and responsible duties of President of the United States, relying on the support of my countrymen, and invoking the guidance of Almighty God. Our faith teaches that there is no safer reliance than upon the God of our fathers, who has so singularly favored the American people in every national trial, and who will not forsake us so long as we obey his commandments and walk humbly in His footsteps."

"This brings us to the religious significance of this ceremony. This ceremonial can be regarded in no other light than a mutual covenant. The oath of the President to serve the nation carries with it the unspoken vows of the people, to yield obedience to the laws, to support and defend the Constitution, and to invoke the same divine favor and help. The President must realize the sacredness of his office. If the powers that be are ordained of God, then surely the head of a great nation stands very near the holiest ministers of religion."

We are reminded by this of another occasion when some vows were made by a "Christian nation" of old,—

the nation of Israel, as they were assembled around the basis of Mount Sinai. There was a covenant made there,—a covenant of the people to obey the voice of the Lord which they had heard from amid the flame and smoke upon Sinai's top. But only about a month later they were found worshipping a golden calf. This occurrence casts no light shadow of suspicion upon the vows of a "Christian nation" to live uprightly. With many, indeed, in the Church as well as without, it is a question whether the American "Christian nation" are not even now engaged in worshipping the golden calf. Considering this subject from the standpoint of its "religious significance," we are certainly warranted in these observations.

The speaker proceeded to define the duties of "the covenant into which we enter as a people" by virtue of the President's inaugural oath. These are, as defined, the duty of reverence for the laws and for those in authority, and the duty of giving our best endeavors to the purification of politics. In this connection he said:—

"We pledge ourselves anew to our country as a Christian commonwealth. The future of the nation is safe only as we are Christians. Those who are lifting up their voice against the Bible, against the sabbath, against our Christ, are the enemies of the best interests of the country. The nations of the past that have gone down in night have sunk because of corruption. Our present condition comes largely because of our lack of faith in God. Let public immoralities be suppressed; let the Lord's day be reverently held, and Sunday newspapers, Sunday traffic, and Sunday labor as far as possible be suppressed. Let our laws be such that it will be easy for men to do good, and hard for them to do wrong. The only bulwark of our nation is Christianity; and without it we have no hope of perpetuity."

This only makes still plainer the idea of the speaker that these "unspoken vows" of the people are to be fulfilled through Christianity. No other view, indeed, would be in harmony with the doctrine that "this is a Christian nation." No other view would invest the President's inaugural with a "religious significance."

The speaker would have done better if he had placed reverence for the right above reverence for the laws and for those in authority. The "laws" are not always right; and "those in authority" not above the right. Reverence for the right is the only safeguard of liberty.

What effect such teaching as this setting forth the "religious significance of the inauguration" will have upon the Administration, remains to be seen.

THE activity of Christian Endeavor organizations all over the land in the work of securing Sunday enforcement, is indicated by a plan of work outlined in the *Golden Rule*, of March 4, to be followed by each local society in all the States. This plan is based upon a system of credits to be allowed for proficiency in organization for "Sabbath reform" work, and especially for achievements in securing cessation of Sunday work. The credits range from one, to be allowed for each "Lord's Day Com-

mittee" organized by a local society, to two hundred for initiating "a movement that shall by persuasion or law cause the discontinuance of any Sunday paper," and three hundred for securing "the discontinuance of Sunday trains on any railroad." The society securing the largest number of these credits will be presented with a "Lord's Day banner" at the coming international convention in San Francisco next July.

Sumptuary Laws.

THE *Union Signal* of March 4 makes the following observations on the subject of "Sumptuary Laws:—

"It seems that sumptuary laws are not so bad after all—when applied to women. We have yet to see a single protest against the enactments of certain municipal councils whereby it is made illegal for women to wear in the theater the 'big hat' of the period. To this we do not object; indeed, we only wish that the law applied to all public assemblies, since it would be much better for the health of the women and far more convenient for those who come to see. We would gladly witness the adoption of a law that women when out walking, should wear no garment that came within three inches of the ground, and we urge it upon our women legislators to introduce such a law in the interest of the public health.

"A speaker recently stated before a Woman's Club in New York that a young lady who had promenaded Fifth Avenue (its most aristocratic street) had kindly submitted the street gleanings of her skirts to a bacteriologist, who captured therefrom seven different kinds of contagious disease microbes. And yet intelligent women insist on dragging their skirts behind them because they think it is more 'stylish.'

"But we cannot help being amused to notice that in this land of 'personal liberty' and 'individual right,' where anything so drastic as a 'sumptuary law' is not to be for a moment tolerated, nobody has raised even a faint little warwhoop in view of the fact that women are now under strict 'sumptuary law' as to their headgear. 'What shall we eat? what shall we drink? and where-withal shall we be clothed?' may become matters of legislation after all. This is a wonderful age, and we have now established a precedent (a solemn thing to do) for the invasion of the 'liberty of the subject.' After this anything is possible."

Yes; "anything is possible" when legislators once get fairly started in the line of legislation upon the question of what people shall eat or wear. It is of course easy to see in the law against "high hats" in theatres, what is rather facetious than oppressive. There might be nothing very oppressive in a law to compel ladies walking on the streets to wear no garment reaching lower than three inches above the ground. It is quite desirable that street sweeping should be left to those appointed to such work by the city authorities. It is very desirable that people should dress healthfully, eat proper food, and get a proper amount of sleep. Nevertheless we are none of us anxious to be regulated in such matters by legislative fiat. There is a vast step between the con-

dition of being desirable and that of being enforceable at law.

However, it is not unlikely, as suggested, that such questions as "What shall we eat? what shall we drink? and wherewith shall we be clothed? may become matters of legislation after all." But every act of legislation in this direction, trivial as it may be in itself, undermines a principle that is anything but trivial in its relation to the welfare and happiness of the people. This is the real objection to sumptuary legislation.

THE Omaha *World-Herald* remarks that "amid the political differences that sometimes engender the worst of feeling among men bound together as citizens of a great nation it is well that we should be occasionally reminded that this is a Christian nation." In other words, it is well that we should be occasionally reminded of something which, from all appearances, we should never mistrust to be a fact.

The Right of Private Judgment.

AN article in the *New York Independent*, of March 11, contains the following:—

"No better illustration of the rigid control which the Catholic Church exercises over the consciences of its members can be given than the rules it lays down as to what they may or may not read. We give some of these rules as promulgated only last year by the present rather liberal pope as popes go. Here is one:

"Books of apostates, heretics, schismatics, and all other writers which defend heresy or schism, or in any way tend to overthrow the basis of religion, are absolutely forbidden."

"Every book which defends our Protestant forms of faith is thus absolutely interdicted. Here is another rule:

"Likewise are forbidden books of non-Catholics which professedly treat of religion, unless it is known that they contain nothing contrary to Catholic faith."

"It is not enough, it seems, to forbid books which defend heresy or schism, but any book on religion written by a Protestant is forbidden unless it is known that there is nothing in it that contradicts any part of the Catholic faith. But we are further told in another rule that books by non-Catholic writers which are not on religion, such as novels, we suppose, or scientific treatises, may be read even although they may 'merely incidentally touch on truths of faith.'

"Next follow, in the document from which we quote, the rules about the Holy Scriptures. No edition of the Bible in the original tongues, and no ancient version in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic, or any other language of the earlier church, prepared by a non-Catholic, is allowed to any except those engaged in theological or biblical studies, and to them only, provided no attack is made 'in the prefaces or notes, on dogmas of the Catholic faith.'

"Much more is it forbidden to read any edition of the Holy Scriptures in the vernacular prepared by a non-Catholic.

"Since experience has proved that, on account of man's boldness, more evil than good arises if the Sacred Books are allowed to all without check in the vulgar tongue; wherefore all versions in the vernacular, even though made by Catholics, are entirely forbidden, unless approved by the Holy See or issued under the care of bishops, with notes taken from the holy fathers of the church and from learned Catholic writers.

"Prohibited are all versions of the Holy Scriptures made by whatever non-Catholic writers, in whatever vulgar tongue, and those especially which are spread broadcast by Bible societies, again and again condemned by the Roman pontiffs, since they entirely discard the most salutary laws of the church relative to the issuing of divine books. But these versions are allowed to those who are engaged in theological or biblical studies, on observing the regulations set forth above."

"If any Catholic wants, for any reason, to read a book thus forbidden, he must ask permission not of his confessor, but of his bishop; and this permission must not be easily granted, for the rule says that this permission may be given 'only in chosen cases and for good and sufficient cause,' 'only in urgent cases' and 'for single books.' Furthermore, bishops must 'proscribe and take out of the hands of the faithful' any forbidden books that have been circulated. And still further, no Catholic layman is allowed to publish any book on religion without episcopal permission, and no priest can publish on any subject, religious, scientific or social, without such license."

All this is of course utterly contrary to the principle of individual freedom of judgment in religious matters, which is the very essence of religious liberty. It shows how complete is Rome's antagonism to that liberty of which she has claimed to be the champion. Upon this point of the individual right of private judgment, Protestantism claims to stand in complete opposition to Rome. But how fully is this claim sustained by leading exponents of Protestantism? What difference is there in principle between Rome's dictum on the subject, as quoted above, and the following from that very Protestant journal, the *Golden Rule*, organ of the Societies of Christian Endeavor, in its issue of March 4:—

"ENDEAVORER, *Princeton*, III:

"You say that through your own unaided study of the Bible you have become convinced that you should change your church and denomination, and you are especially grieved that you must take this step in opposition to the earnest wishes of your mother. Pardon me if I say that no one should take such a serious step as this relying merely upon his own judgment. You should seek the advice of your pastor, and of others who are wiser than you."

In other words: After you have talked with God on the subject of your duty, and He has spoken to you, don't move in the matter until you have had a talk with some man! After consulting with God, don't fail to consult with your pastor and other fallible mortals around you, and thus avail yourself of their superior wisdom! It would not be safe to take God's word alone! Of course, God's word is all right in itself; but you need some human

power and wisdom to make you understand it! This is Rome's position exactly, only Rome, with more worldly wisdom, simply brings the individual to the human authority direct, and thereby saves herself much trouble in the management of her adherents. The very essence of Romanism is the interposing of human authority between the soul and God, and the very essence of this "Protestantism" is the same.

We would not quote this if it were not fairly representative of most of the Protestantism of to-day. Protestant instructors are almost always ready to give this advice to those whom they would guide under such circumstances. They do not make it compulsory upon any, to be sure; they can present no commands from the Church "authorities" forbidding an individual to be guided by his own conscientious understanding of God's Word. But they go as far as they can in the way of persuading him to set aside his own mind, and be moved, like an automaton, by the mind of another. They differ from Rome only in the means employed, not in the principle involved or the end sought.

What does God himself say about this? James 1:5 gives the answer: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask [not of his pastor or his 'wiser' friends, but] of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." True Protestantism believes these words, and leaves every individual free to make them a rule of life.

The Cry of "Treason."

BY A. SMITH.

WHEN Ahaziah, a certain king of Judah, was slain by Jehu, king of Israel, his mother, Athaliah, daughter of the wicked Ahab and Jezebel, saw her opportunity to usurp the government, which she did by slaying "all the seed royal" except one, the infant son of the king, and reigning instead of the rightful heir.

For six years she held the scepter, but at the end of that time the young prince, Joash by name, was brought forth from the temple, where he had been hidden by his sister, who was the wife of the high priest, and by the principal men of the land was made king and placed upon the throne of Judah amid the acclamations of the people. But when Athaliah saw what had been done she rent her clothes and cried "Treason! Treason!"

Now, who in this instance was guilty of treason, the lawful king or the subverter and usurper of the government? The answer is obvious.

At the present time there is a large class of people in the United States who, in their mistaken zeal to promote religious legislation, are seeking to subvert the Government from the principles upon which it was founded by our forefathers (the most Christlike in principle of any government ever founded by man) and change it into a religious despotism. Those who oppose this innovation

are charged with treasonable purposes; and the passions of men, fired by false applications of patriotic principles, are invoked to frenzy against them as subverters of the Government.

There is real danger threatening our political institutions, and it requires a cool unbiased judgment to meet the issue.

It seems that the bill of Mr. Walters of Kansas, to give the Decalogue legal force in that State, was introduced in all seriousness, according to *The Examiner*, of this city. "The bill," says this journal, "has already passed to its third reading, and as we go to press Mr. Walters announces his intention of forcing a final vote during the present week. He says that he is meeting with the greatest encouragement from the citizens of his State, and even were he so inclined, he would not now dare to retreat.

A Week of Prayer for "Sabbath Observance."

APRIL 4-11 has been designated by a committee representing the Sunday observance movement, as a "week of prayer for the observance of the Lord's day." Three especial subjects of prayer are set forth in the announcement, as follows:—

"1. That God will bestow such influences of the Holy Spirit as shall quicken the consciences of all Christians that they may give more earnest heed to His command to hallow the sabbath in their homes and in public by refraining from such acts as will tend to weaken regard for the Lord's day.

"2. That He will lead Christians to obey the important part of the fourth commandment: 'Thou, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy stranger,' and to understand that it is a greater sin to require another to do a wrong than to do it ourselves; and that no one obeys God fully in this command until he has done all in his power to secure for those in his employ an opportunity for the enjoyment of sabbath rest and worship.

"3. That He will lead to victory all who are striving to enforce the laws against the open saloon on the sabbath, and such amusements as disturb the peace and quiet of the day."

We are fully in sympathy with the desire that Christians and all others should be led to a better observance of the Lord's day, and trust that this special season of prayer may bear fruit to that end.

In reading the above, however, our eye is caught by the phrase, "the important part of the fourth commandment." This gives rise to some queries. What is the important part of the fourth commandment? This call to prayer for its observance sets forth "Thou, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy stranger" as the important part. In seeking an answer to the query it might be pertinent to inquire, What is the unimportant part of the fourth

commandment? Is it that part which specifies which day it is that must be observed as the Sabbath or Lord's day? Certainly this committee did not mean to imply that Sunday observance is not a thing of great importance. Take Sunday out of their aims and calculations, and let no other definite day be substituted, and there would be neither point nor force in this call to prayer for sabbath observance.

That part of the fourth commandment specified in the call is important, certainly. But it is not *the* important part of the command. Every part of it is important. Every part of every divine command is important. It is of the highest importance. This is a characteristic which attaches to every word that God has spoken to man.

It is utterly useless to engage in prayer for Sabbath observance without believing that every part of God's Sabbath commandment is supremely important, not excepting that part which says, "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Those who would realize profit from this occasion, must believe this, and give every part of the command their sincere "Amen."

"Lord's Day Congress" in Lowell, Mass.

BY F. C. GILBERT.

THE New England Sunday Protective League held another of its congresses on March 4, in Lowell, Mass., for the purpose of agitating the enforcement of Sunday sacredness by law. It seemed evident that the afternoon audience were not wholly inspired with the spirit of the movement, which caused the leaders some displeasure. The real spirit was, however, in no wise lacking among the prime movers.

Rev. O. H. Denney, who conducted the devotional exercises, read from the thirteenth chapter of Nehemiah, and thought the lesson was very applicable to present conditions. The same principles inculcated by that man of God should be instilled in the minds of the people at the present time. The same power which Nehemiah used to compel the men of Tyre to desist from "selling fish on Sunday," should be swayed by the leaders of religionists to-day, he said. And in the course of his growing eloquence he asked, "Nehemiah had authority to compel those people to refrain from selling fish on Sunday. What will God say when asking us [meaning the preachers] if we used our infallible authority in the same way, and we reply we did not"? "We should as ministers of the gospel compel these people to desist from selling their modern fish on Sunday, such as Sunday papers, cigars, soda-water," etc.

We had always thought that there is only one person in this world who claimed infallible authority, but it appears that the popes are legion. Where in the Bible do the preachers find that God endowed them with "infalli-

ble authority" to seek power from legislatures to enforce their ideas of Sunday sacredness upon the whole people? Where has the Lord authorized them to lay their hands upon the people to make them desist from selling their wares on Sunday? I suppose the chapter on "infallible authority" must be in the same volume which records that Nehemiah told the people to desist from selling fish on Sunday, and which says that the first day of the week is the Sabbath.

In the address of welcome, Rev. F. K. Stratton confessed that the ministers of the city were apathetic to this phase of the Sabbath (Sunday) question, and hoped there would be a reformation hereafter,—that the ministry would often tell the people they ought to have Sunday laws, and why. He too administered scathing rebukes to the various kinds of modern "fish" sold on Sunday, and protested against their breaking down the modern Sunday. Hence he accorded the Congress a hearty welcome, believing it to be very timely, and hoped it would be the beginning of a successful crusade against all the evils of desecration, etc., etc.

The next speaker, Rev. S. T. Ford, in response to the welcome for the city churches, was not as harmonious on the issue as his predecessors. In fact he was quite "heterodoxical," as he expressed it, and his speech confirmed the statement. He believed in the entire separation of Church and State, and that no legislation should be secured for the sacredness of the day. He said that man could not be made religious by law, and all laws which sought to enforce religion were contrary to the doctrine of Americanism. There is but one way a man becomes devotional, and that is by having his conscience awakened by the Spirit of God. And he remarked that all laws designed to enforce religious dogmas were simply avenues toward uniting Church and State. He thought that the only ground upon which these Sunday laws could be secured was the economic phase,—that people had a right to have one day's rest in seven from labor as a matter of physical necessity. It was apparent his speech did not have a soothing effect upon the ministers generally, but it certainly was a relish to hear one man, in such an assembly, express some vital truths on the subject of religious liberty.

A paper on "the authority of the Lord's day" was read by Rev. S. M. Dick; but that the Lord designed a definite, specific, twenty-four hour period, was regarded as foolishness by the speaker. He said it simply meant that the Lord designed that man should rest on a given day; and when the community or the State or country declared which day it should be, then, remarked the speaker, that is the day that the Lord blessed. Of course as long as the people had decided in this nation that the first day of the week was *the* day, everybody ought to keep that day, for the Bible was authority for the sanctity of the day. We were reminded of what the Apostle Peter said relative to people wresting the Scripture to their own destruction. How sad to hear people, especially those claiming to be in a special manner the repre-

representatives of Jesus Christ, distort his sacred word, and make it contradict itself, thus making God a liar.

He cited several instances where fearful damage was done because the day was not observed, and he remarked that the very steam engines wore as much on that day as they did on all the other days of the week combined! Great is the Sunday of America!

Mr. Kneeland, Secretary of the League, took charge of the question box, and gave a statement of the workings of the society. Among the questions asked, one was, "What is the object of Sunday laws?" The reply was, "The object of Sunday laws is to preserve the State." Thus the people are being educated to believe that unless Sunday laws are secured, and the sacredness of the day enforced by these State laws, this Government cannot be preserved. Several other questions were asked and answered, the tendency of nearly all being to annul the idea of seventh-day observance, to set forth the importance of first-day observance, and the necessity of its observance by legal statute.

In outlining the work of the League, to secure a rest day for everybody, he spoke of the acceptance of the presidency of the League by United States Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, and his belief relative to Sunday: "I believe thoroughly in a day of rest, which shall be largely devoted to the contemplation of divine themes and to the worship of God and teaching his law; and in protecting this observance against disturbances by secular labor, or other discords, by law." It is on this line that the League is working,—that the State should make laws compelling people to refrain from labor in order that they might be religious on that day. Or as Dr. Kneeland said: "We must have laws to protect the sacredness of Sunday." He urged the people to give their names which he might present to the various governmental functionaries when necessary, in order that the League may secure power to carry out its end. He spoke of their success thus far, and said they had not lost a case or been refused a thing by either the courts or commissioners, or legislatures, and had no doubt whatever of their ultimate success. He mentioned the fact that there were four bills at the present time pending in the Massachusetts legislature, all of which were presented through the direct or indirect influence of the League. There were bills being presented in other legislatures of New England favorable to their work, and he hoped they would be passed. He told the people of Lowell if they had any influence with their representatives in the legislature, to bring it to bear upon these men to pass these bills; and, said he, "if they refuse, just put them out of the way next time, and give them a back seat."

Thus it is evident what these people are after; and when they secure this power, woe to such as refuse to obey their mandates. The signs on the religio-political horizon are ominous; the clouds are even now gathering thick and fast. Let every lover of liberty awake, and gird on the armor to stand through this rapidly-approaching conflict.

Taxation of Church Property.

By Madison C. Peters, Pastor Bloomingdale Reformed Church, N. Y. City.

THE assessed value of New York City church property, exclusive of parsonages, is \$51,217,525. Walk up Broadway from Rector Street, and out Fifth and Madison Avenues, and from these streets alone you can see the under-estimated value of church property in New York. The Great estates of Trinity and the Collegiate churches alone are estimated at \$50,000,000. Two hundred millions of dollars is something like a conservative estimate of the value of church property of the metropolis, and when we remember that the assessed value of the real estate of the city is less than \$2,000,000,000, it can easily be figured out how highly oppressive exemption becomes to other taxpayers. The taxes have to be paid, and the property that is exempt, or rather omitted from the tax roll, is simply spread upon the other property. Everybody's tax goes up at least one-tenth. The American people would rise up in rebellion against direct taxation for church support, but what is exemption from taxation but an indirect State support of the Church, a virtual subsidy for its support, and at the expense of the general public? The State avoids a deficiency in its revenues by transferring to other property increased taxation, not by the voluntary action of the taxpayers, but by the compulsion of law, all of which is out of consonance with our republican institutions. The founders of our Republic wisely separated Church and State. But if we are taxed for the support of churches, it cannot justly be said that the Church and State are separated.

The churches enjoy no immunity from the operations of the laws of God. They place roofs upon their buildings to keep out the rain, and put up lightning rods to prevent the lightning from striking them. If God does not vary his laws for the benefit of the churches, why should the State be expected to do so?

It is argued that many churches are not self-sustaining at present, and that to tax them would render them still less so. Thousands are less able to provide for their children because of the tax collector. Why should the laborer pay taxes upon his humble home and the religious corporation be exempted? Make all property bear its just and equal share of taxation and you lessen the laboring man's burden. When the workingman feels that his burden is heavier because the magnificent possessions of the Church are omitted from the tax roll, do you wonder that the Church loses its power over him? Tax churches and only those able to bear taxes will dare to be extravagant. Tax churches, and modest buildings will be erected where they are most needed instead of a few imposing structures in the fashionable quarter. Every taxpayer in the State has his percentage of State tax correspondingly increased because of the needlessly expensive church properties of the cities,—churches which he may never enter.

The saloon keeper by force of law is compelled to help pay the taxes on my church, in the use of which I

denounce his infernal traffic. If the saloon keeper is taxed to support my church, in all fairness he ought to have something to say in its management. "No taxation without representation."

Churches are undoubtedly a public benefit, but if the doctrine of benefits be furnished as a reason for exemption on behalf of religious corporations, it refutes itself by proving more than the State can admit without bankrupting itself, for there are other institutions which are public benefits. It costs the community something to enjoy property, and if the Church paid taxes, it would pay only its honest share to secure its enjoyment of the use of property.

Taxation of church property is to the interest of American principles, and in harmony with the experience of nations. Taxing one man for the propagation of another man's religion is admittedly unjust, and, moreover, it is a relic of the principle of Church and State alliance inherited from the Old World, and not yet eliminated from our political system.

Sunday Laws and "Works of Charity."

By James T. Ringgold, of the Baltimore Bar.

To prohibit every kind or phase of activity, even of the body, upon the first day of the week, would evidently involve the keeping of the entire population in a condition of dreamless sleep during the "sacred hours." For, if allowed to dream, some of them would inevitably toss about. And it is in vain to hope that the mass of the American people will ever be induced by the most stringent Sunday law to adopt for fifty-two days in the year the peculiar form of religious devotion attributed to certain Oriental "fakirs," which consists in assuming an uncomfortable position, and maintaining it indefinitely, awake, yet entirely oblivious to external things, and motionless in every muscle. In order to save themselves, then, from the obligation of including the administration of narcotics to the entire population every Saturday night among the "police powers" of the State, the enactors of Sunday laws are forced to put a "saving clause" into these statutes. This saving clause not only fatally betrays the true character and purpose of all Sunday laws, but introduces into them an element of uncertainty, which it is safe to say would cause them to be nullified by the courts if they were anything else but Sunday laws. The standard saving clause of Sunday laws is "works of necessity and charity excepted." Such works as these, then, are allowed on Sunday when other works are not. Why?

If Sunday laws are designed to prevent interference with the civil rights of some persons by others, how come either of the exceptions to be made? It is evident that a work might be charitable in the strictest sense of the word so far as A is concerned, and necessary, from his standpoint, to be done for him by B, and yet infringe

some civil right of C's. In such a case, where anything but a Sunday law is concerned, the law rightly and consistently declines to admit the charity of B or the necessity of A as any excuse for the violation of C's legal rights. Though I find a tramp starving, I may not rob a store to feed him. On the other hand, if Sunday laws have a civil purpose respecting the individual, and are designed to prevent his exhausting himself by continuous labor, why should he be permitted to do works of charity any more than any other work on Sunday? Is it not obvious that he may be quite as readily exhausted by such works as by work of any other kind? As a matter of fact, all persons who engage in what are called charitable works testify to their exhausting effects upon the physical strength, whatever spiritual benefit they may involve. These savings, then, of the Sunday laws, thus considered, sufficiently refute the suggestion that any civil right is intended to be or is in fact protected by them.

But the saving of works of charity does more than this. It betrays frankly the true nature and purpose of all Sunday legislation. The question of charity is a question of religion altogether. The civil law has and can have no concern with the matter. The civil law says, "You shall not stretch out your hand to smite your brother;" religion says, "You must stretch out your hand to help your brother." The civil law has no means of determining what is or is not charity, or of enforcing any obligations thereof. It cannot possibly discriminate between works of charity and works of any other sort. In forcing this discrimination upon the courts, by means of the saving of works of charity from the penalties of the Sunday law, the American legislatures have simply forced the courts to deal with a question of religious faith and dogma. Hence it is said: "The means which long-established and common usage of religious congregations show to be reasonably necessary to advance the cause of religion may be deemed works of charity."—*Dale vs. Knapp, 98 Pa., 389.*

But not only are the courts thus forced to examine into a question of religion pure and simple—they are launched on a shoreless sea of uncertainty without compass or rudder by this saving of works of charity. They are no more competent to deal with the religious question of what is or is not a work of charity than with any other point of religious doctrine. The uncertainty thus injected into the law is well illustrated by the preceding case.

This held that a contract of subscription towards the erection of a church was valid as an act of charity. If so, on what ground is the actual building of the church on Sunday unlawful? Or the quarrying of the stone for its walls, or the dressing of timber for its interior? In a word, where are we to stop in the degree of closeness of connection between the act in question and "the advancement of the cause of religion?" It does not seem possible that the subtlest judicial ingenuity will succeed any better in the future than it has in

the past, in affording a satisfactory answer to this question.

Again, it seems hardly consistent with the facts of the case, or with verbal accuracy, to make charity synonymous with religion. All charity is a matter of religion, but all religion is surely not a matter of charity. Religion concerns itself with man's relation to Deity, first of all, and, as a necessary part of that relation, with his duty to his fellow-man. It is only in this latter connection that it comes to embrace charity. Belief and devotion, public or private, are no part of charity. And while the duty of charity is a religious duty, its performance is not necessarily concerned with the advancement of religion in the sense of the propagation of religious belief or the support of churches, etc.

The fact seems to be that the framers of Sunday laws did not regard these things as work at all; and when they made their exception of works of charity, they had in mind the relief of physical pain, the assisting of people in trouble, the doing of kindly, friendly acts, etc., etc. But surely this would throw down many bars which the advocates of Sunday laws are earnest to keep up. It would not merely allow, but include among the duties of Sunday charity every practicable provision for the decent and orderly entertainment of the poor on Sunday, such as the opening of free libraries, museums, and the like, the running of free excursions, etc.

There are many good people who feel that they are doing an act of charity when they combine to send a lot of poor children to the country for a week day, while nothing would induce them to have any part or lot in such a trip if it were made on Sunday. Again, the question might readily arise, Whose charity is it that excuses work under the Sunday law? Assuming that it is a charity in me to charter a steamer and take down the river a number of poor families on Sunday, will that fact be a defense for the captain and the engineer of the vessel, who work for pay as on other days?

Could the company recover the money I had agreed to pay if the agreement was made on Sunday? These considerations are adduced with the view of enforcing the proposition that the saving of works of charity in the Sunday laws introduces an element of uncertainty as to their meaning and application which renders their fair and uniform enforcement according to any fixed standard of interpretation impracticable, and would cause the courts to declare any other than a Sunday law absolutely void on account of the impossibility of construing its provisions by the light of any determinate principles known to the law.

A BILL has been introduced in the New York legislature to prevent the publication in the newspapers of portraits of persons without first having obtained their written consent to the publication. The measure, if passed, would enormously curtail the business of newspaper illustration in this State.

A New Sunday Bill at Albany.

"New York World," March 9.

WHEN Senator Wilcox at Albany declares, as he does in his proposed amendment to the Penal Code, that it shall be an indictable offense to play "the game commonly known as baseball" on Sunday, we know what he means. But when he also prohibits "all shooting, hunting, fishing, playing, horse-racing, gaming, or other public sport, exercise or shows," the average mind finds it hard to follow him.

Is all "playing" on Sunday to be made a crime by law? Is fishing on Sunday to be prohibited? Is riding a bicycle a "public sport, exercise or show?" If Senator Wilcox does not mean what he says, what does he mean? If he means what he says, we might profitably swap legislation with Kansas, where they only propose to enact the Ten Commandments into statutes.

Politics and Religion.

"Present Truth," London, Eng.

WHY is it that in society which considers itself cultivated the two tabooed subjects are "religion" and "politics?" No doubt because so many people, who are admitted even to the best society, are unable to control their tempers, or speak with calmness and moderation respecting subjects in which their personal interests are involved, or concerning which their personal prejudices are crossed. In discussing politics it certainly is quite natural that there should be heat and rancour. Here individual prejudices are likely to hold sway and to govern more or less the language and demeanour of those who indulge in political conversation. But in the realm of true religion, the religion of Jesus Christ, prejudice has no place.

There must be, it is true, assured and fixed conviction. But that is quite a different thing from prejudice. Conviction is indeed the natural foe and conqueror of prejudice. Two persons whose hearts are filled with the conviction of the eternal truths of true religion pure and undefiled, may talk together of the hope that is in them with joy and delight. Nothing in word, or act, or look, would pass between them which could mar the amenities of any social gathering. In their hearts prejudices do not exist,—they have been driven out by the conviction and acceptance of religious truth.

Politics cannot exist without prejudice. Indeed it is nothing else than the personal and individual interests, desires, and feelings, of different men and bodies of men, countries and sections of countries, brought into activity and antagonism. It is unavoidable that the partisanship here should be intense. But in the realm of true religion there is no room for partisanship, there can be no selfish interests or desires. Politics, it is evident, cannot be

otherwise than disturbing in its tendency; it is inevitable from its very nature. But the very contrary is the fact in the case of true religion from its very nature.

What, then, is the trouble? Why should these two things, direct opposites—the one which makes the most for war, and the one which makes the most for peace—be classed together as the two greatest elements of disturbance, and equally denied admittance to the drawing room? The one, it is true, contains every uncomfortable and disagreeable possibility, but the other contains none. The reason of this strange and ill-assorted companionship in exile is that true religion is utterly misapprehended. That which is thought to be religion, and discussed as religion, is not the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but the visionary politics of an unknown future.

THE absurdity of the application of the ordinance against "loud noises" in the District of Columbia, made by the would-be guardians of Sunday sanctity against the Sunday newspaper, and sustained recently by Judge Kimball, is set out in the following by the Washington *Star* :—

" The bells sound clear across the sky
With warnings deep and grand,
Policemen loudly tap their clubs
For order in the land.
The engine whistle screams above
The rattle of the train;
Societies go marching to
The lusty band's refrain.

" Then fiercely come the horrid shrieks
Of cars around the curves;
And clanging gongs play havoc with
The most enduring nerves.
But still we lightly smile and vow
Peace has not wholly flown,
For you, O naughty newsboy, are
As mute as any stone!"

A PRESS dispatch from Albany, N. Y., dated the 8th inst., states that a State senator and a number of the Assembly have been asked to introduce in the legislature a bill providing for a censorship of the press, the work of the censors being to read all articles intended for publication and "to eliminate all libellous matter and all matters deemed inimical to the interests of the State or any official thereof." This of course would be in plain contradiction to that provision of the Constitution which forbids any congressional interference with the freedom of the press; but it would seem that the would-be reformers of these days know little and care less whether their schemes are in harmony with the National Constitution, or not. There are many straws like this which are showing the direction of the wind.

In the opening paragraph of his inaugural address, the President assures the people of the United States that "Almighty God" "will not forsake us so long as we obey His commandments and walk humbly in His footsteps." An exchange points out that inasmuch as Inspiration has testified of the Almighty that "Thy way is in the

sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known" (Ps. 77:19), the assumption that the people are able to "walk humbly in His footsteps" was a "pretty bad break" on the part of the speaker. That is what usually happens when religion gets into political speeches for political effect.

A GREAT mass meeting was held in Cooper Union, New York City, the evening of the 11th, to favor ratification of the Arbitration treaty between this country and Great Britain. Before the meeting had progressed very far, however, it became evident that about half of those present were not in favor of the treaty. When the resolutions in favor of arbitration were about to be submitted, the comparative quiet of the meeting gave place to pandemonium, in which the "peace" men and the opposing faction became decidedly belligerent. A battle was averted only by the determined efforts of a strong force of police.

It is a curious thing that while public sentiment is so universally against allowing two men to fight with their fists to maintain their "honor," it should at the same time be so largely favorable to war for the purpose of maintaining the "honor" of the nation. Do the awful horrors of war make this method of maintaining "honor" a more desirable one for nations than for individuals? How is this?

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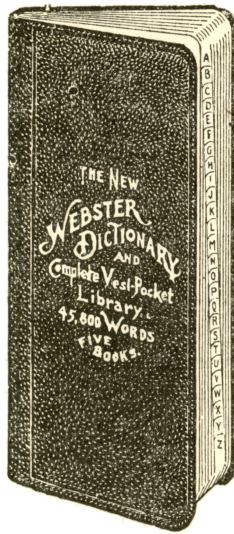
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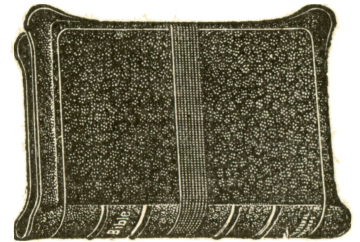
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