

THE AMERICAN SENTINEL.

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

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DR. WILBUR F. CRAFTS has resigned his pastorate of the First Union Church, New York City, to become the field Secretary of the American Sunday Union. His work is to be a sort of general organizer and worker up of sympathy and support for National religious legislation.

WE devote considerable space this week to the movement for a Sunday law in California. Although this is of more special interest to Californians, we believe it will be read with interest by people everywhere. We are sure that it may be read with profit in any State, for the same arguments that apply here may be used wherever it is proposed to enact such a law.

THIS winter will be a rallying time for those who are zealous for Sunday laws, all over the land. In many States, efforts will be made to this end. We desire to make the *Sentinel* of special use in every part of the country, and so our friends will confer a favor on us by supplying us with all the information possible concerning any movement which may be started in their respective States toward the enactment of Sunday laws. Give us the particulars in such shape that we can substantiate any statements that we may make, and we will make the *Sentinel* of use to you in your local struggle for the rights of all the people as against the wishes of a class.

JANUARY 1 the Presbyterian ministers of Minneapolis, Minn., held a meeting and decided to inaugurate a Sunday crusade in that State, and also to join in urging Congressional action. It was decided to "wage war against Sunday breakers, and to strike for an era of better laws, and for the better enforcement of existing statutes." Sunday papers were denounced, and Congress was called upon to abstain from patronizing them. It was the sentiment of the clergymen that some more effective legislation was positively necessary,

and a move will be made in that direction. The ministers of other denominations in Minneapolis have signified their intention of joining their Presbyterian brethren in this crusade against the Sunday papers.

In an article entitled, "Catholicism and the Public Schools," in the November (1888) *North American Review*, Gail Hamilton writes thus:—

"No system of public schools can survive the narrow intellectual tyranny of forcing both sides of a controverted history to accept, as unquestioned truth, the belief of either side. Let every vestige of sectarianism be not only willingly, but eagerly and thoroughly, removed from the public school; and then let us, if need be, stand for the unsectarian public school with hand to the sword."

It is evident that National Reformers will not find it all clear sailing in their endeavors to make our public schools the instruments of an American hierarchy.

The Latest Sunday-law Petition.

THERE is now being circulated quite extensively a petition to the California Legislature, asking that body to enact a Sunday law. From some things, which it is not necessary to name here, we feel as though it is not being circulated as extensively as it might be, and we believe that there is an effort on the part of those who are behind it, to keep its contents a secret from all except those whom they are quite sure will favor it. Be that as it may, we propose to give the matter a little more publicity than it has yet had, and to that end shall give the substance of what is on the petition, with some comments.

The fact that the petition is the work of the California Woman's Christian Temperance Union, is no secret. It is so stated in bold letters on the face of it. Underneath this statement are the words, "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work." Ex. 20: 8, 9. And by the side of this is the following text of Scripture: "Hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." Eze. 20: 20. What logical connection these texts can have with a petition for a Sunday law, is more than we can imagine. They both refer to the seventh day of the week, and not to the first, and this fact is well known by every member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Even if they

could by any possibility apply to Sunday, they would be out of place on a petition for a "civil Sabbath," as it is called, if that is what they are after; and this also they very well know. We are therefore forced to the conclusion that what they want is a law that will enable them to have Sunday treated as though it were the Sabbath which God gave to his people, and commands men to observe. In short, they want the State to enforce an act of religion on purely religious grounds.

Next follows the petition itself, which reads as follows:—

"To the Honorable, the Senate and Assembly of the State of California:

"Greeting: We, the undersigned, residents of —, in the county of —, State of California, in view of the dissipation and demoralizing influences arising from the desecration of Sunday in the State, earnestly and respectfully petition your honorable body for the enactment of a Sunday law that shall give laboring men a day of rest; prohibit the carrying on of all unnecessary business; prohibit barbarous, unseemly, and noisy amusements, such as theaters, processions, concerts, games; and also the opening upon Sunday of all places where intoxicating beverages are sold; also providing, by proper legislation, for the enforcement thereof."

Following this is the blank space for signatures. There are a few points in this to which we wish to call the attention of the people of California, and especially of the honorable members of the Legislature. The first is the statement concerning the "desecration of Sunday." The word "desecration" is the exact opposite of "consecration." Nothing can be *desecrated* unless it has first been *consecrated*. But you will search in vain for any record of the consecration of Sunday. In fact, but few people presume to argue for any express divine sanction for Sunday observance. Therefore "desecration" is not a proper word to apply to Sunday labor or amusement.

But pass by the question of Sunday sacredness. One thing is clearly shown by its use in this petition, and that is, that the petitioners propose to get such a law as will enable them to prohibit anything that would be a desecration of the day if it were sacred. They propose to have a law that will enable them to make people *act* as though they regarded Sunday as a holy day, whether they really think so or not. They want the State to make people who are not religious act as though they were, and to force *their* forms of religion on those who do not believe them.

The required law must "prohibit the car-

rying on of all unnecessary business." Who is to decide what business is necessary, and what is not? The man who carries on the business is the best judge of whether or not it is necessary, but it is obvious that the law would be a dead letter if he were allowed that privilege. "Unnecessary business" is very indefinite. Suppose a man is a mechanic. He has a job on hand which he cannot finish according to contract unless he works on Sunday. He may think that such work is necessary; but our observation of the administration of Sunday laws convinces us that it would not be so regarded by those in power.

We wish especial notice to be taken of the fact that such a law as is petitioned for would naturally lead to religious persecution. We shall prove this on two counts.

First, take the man who conscientiously observes the seventh day of the week. If he is a laboring man, he is obliged to work six days in order to support his family. His conscience will not allow him to work on the seventh day, and therefore, since he must work on Sunday in order to make a week's work, it follows that his conscience obliges him to work on Sunday. His conscientious convictions of duty, first to God, and then to his family, will not allow him to do otherwise. Now if that man shall be punished for his Sunday labor, his punishment will be nothing but persecution for conscience sake. His punishment is solely on the ground that his religion differs from that of his neighbor. This charge cannot by any possibility be refuted. We say that work under such circumstances is necessary, no matter what the nature of the work is. Of course we except the disturbance of any congregation; that is not allowable on any day in the week.

Second, take the man who has not rested on the seventh day. He may make a profession of religion, or he may not. It matters not whether he violates his conscience by working seven days in the week or not. If he sins against God by working on Sunday, then he is answerable to God. Now if he be prosecuted for not keeping Sunday,—that is, for not conforming in that respect to the form of religion held by the majority,—his prosecution will be religious persecution just as much as in the case of a man who in a heathen country should be punished for ignoring the gods of that country. Put them in the best light you can, it is a fact that Sunday laws do logically lead to religious persecution.

A few years ago there was a rigid Sunday law in Arkansas. When it was enacted, it was ostensibly for the sole purpose of closing up the liquor saloons. Did it stop with that? No; it did not even begin with that. Not a saloon was closed; but quite a number of peaceable farmers were persecuted almost to the death. You may say that that persecution was only the work of bigoted persons. Granted; but are you sure that there are no bigoted persons in California? And are you ready to pass a law that will give bigots the power to persecute inoffensive citizens?

Another indictment: The petition calls for

the prohibiting of all barbarous amusements on Sunday. Under this head would be classed prize fighting, cock fighting, and bull fighting. But in this petition the Woman's Christian Temperance Union shows itself to be far behind the times, and behind public sentiment, for there is a law prohibiting such things every day in the week. We have very distinct recollection of reading of several instances in which the police made a raid upon parties engaged in such barbarous sports. The framers of this petition may say that they know this. Then their petition is an insult to the law, in that it asks for its enforcement only on Sunday. In any case, they virtually declare by their petition that barbarous sports are not objectionable, provided they are not indulged in on Sunday. We cannot agree with them; and we believe that in this respect our legislators, even though they be non-professors, will show themselves to be ahead of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. We do not believe that they will enact a law that will virtually legalize barbarous sports six days in the week.

One word more, concerning the matter of closing saloons. When we urge that such a law as is desired virtually sanctions the keeping open of saloons on six days of the week, we are told that the law is demanded in a special manner on Sunday, because people are idle then, and there is more opportunity for them to be decoyed into the saloon. The fallacy of this plea may be seen by the fact that people are no more idle on Sunday than they are at night during the week, and especially on Saturday night after six o'clock. Many a laboring man spends all his wages on Saturday night, yet the petition makes no note of this. The simple fact is this, and it cannot be denied, that they want to have Sunday strictly observed as a day of rest and worship; and all the plea that the law is desired in behalf of temperance, is nothing but a blind. It has not the first principle of temperance in it. We believe that the law-makers of this State are too intelligent to be deceived by any such pretensions.

We have made this article long enough, and have only considered the *face* of the petition, and that is not half of the document. We shall consider the remainder of it elsewhere, under the head of, "The Back of that Petition."

E. J. W.

Exalting Themselves Above God.

EVERY man is a free moral agent so far as human authority is concerned. God alone has the right to hold him responsible for the exercise of his choice in matters of morality and religion. If it was according to the will of God that a man should give up this right of choice to any individual or nation, then God could no longer hold him responsible; *for no person can be held responsible for the exercise of his choice in a matter wherein his liberty of choice has been removed.* Thus the advocates of national Christianity are working to take away man's moral responsibility to God.

A. DELOS WESTCOTT.

How Are the Powers That Be Ordained?

THE Scripture says that "the powers that be are ordained of God." How is it done? Is it direct and miraculous, or providential? Jeremiah 27:1-8 shows that the power of Nebuchadnezzar as king of Babylon was ordained of God. Did God send a prophet or a priest to anoint him king? or did he send a heavenly messenger, as to Moses and Gideon? Not at all. Nebuchadnezzar was king because he was the son of his father, who was king. How did his father become king? Thus: In 625 B. C. Babylonia was but a province of the empire of Assyria, and Media was another. Both revolted at once. The king of Assyria gave Nabopolassar command of a large force, sent him to Babylonia to quell the revolt, while he himself led other forces into Media, and put down the insurrection there. Nabopolassar did his work so well in Babylonia that the king of Assyria rewarded him with the command of that province, with the title, king of Babylon. Thus we see Nabopolassar received his power from the king of Assyria. The king of Assyria received his power from his father, Assurbanipal. Assurbanipal received his from his father, Esarhaddon. Esarhaddon received his from his father, Sennacherib. Sennacherib, from his father, Sargon, and Sargon received his from the troops in the field, otherwise from the people. Thus we see that the power of the kingdom of Babylon and of Nebuchadnezzar the king, or of his son, or of his son's son, was simply providential, and sprung ultimately from the people.

Take, for instance, Queen Victoria, queen of Great Britain. How did she become so? Simply by the fact that she was the first in the line of succession when William the Fourth died. Through one line she traces her royal lineage to William the Conqueror. But who was William the Conqueror? He was a Norman chief who led his forces into England in 1066 and established his power there. How did he become a chief of the Normans? The Normans made him their chief, so that in that line it is clear that the power of Queen Victoria sprung from the people.

Take the other line. The house that now rules Britain, represented in Victoria, is the House of Hanover. Hanover is a province of Germany. How did the House of Hanover get into England? When Queen Anne died, the line of succession was George of Hanover, who became king of England under the title of George the First. How did he receive his princely dignity? Through his lineage, from Henry the Lion, son of Henry the Proud, who received the Duchy of Saxony from Frederick Barbarossa, in 1156. Henry the Lion, son of Henry the Proud, was a prince of the House of Guelph, of Suabia. The father of the House of Guelph was a prince of the Allemanni, who invaded the Roman Empire and established their power in what is now Southern Germany, and were the origin of what is now the German nation and empire. But who made this man prince? The savage

tribes of Germany. So that in this line also the royal dignity of Queen Victoria springs from the people.

Besides this the imperial power of Queen Victoria as she now reigns is circumscribed, limited by the people. It has been related, and we have seen it in print, although the story may not be true, yet it will serve to illustrate the point, that on one occasion Gladstone, while Prime Minister and head of the House of Commons, took a certain paper to the queen to be signed. She did not exactly approve of it, and said she would not sign it. Gladstone spoke of the merit of the act, but the queen declared she would not sign it. Gladstone replied, "Your majesty must sign it." "Must sign it!" exclaimed the queen, "Must sign it! Do you know who I am? I am the queen of England!" Gladstone calmly replied, "Yes, your majesty, but I am the people of England." And she had to sign it. The people of England can command the queen of England. The power of the people of England is above that of the queen of England. She, as queen, is simply the representative of their power.

They are not personal sovereigns in themselves who are referred to in the words, "The powers that be are ordained of God." It is the governmental power, of which the sovereign is the representative, and that sovereign receives his power from the people. Outside of the theocracy of Israel there never has been a ruler who has justly ruled on earth, whose dignity was not derived from the people, either express, or permissive. It is not any particular sovereigns whose power is ordained of God, nor any particular form of government. It is the genius of government itself. The absence of government is anarchy. Anarchy is only governmental confusion. But the Scriptures say, "God is not the author of confusion." God is the God of order. He has ordained order, and he has put within man himself that idea of government, of self-protection, which is the first law of nature, which organizes itself into forms of one kind or another, wherever men dwell on the face of the earth; and it is for men themselves to say what shall be the form of government under which they shall dwell. One people has one form; another has another. This genius of civil order springs from God; its exercise within its legitimate sphere is ordained of God, and the Declaration of Independence simply asserted the eternal truth of God when it said, "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." Whether it be exercised in one form of government or another, it matters not. The governmental power and order thus ordained is of God.

If the people choose to change their form of government, it is the same power still, and is to be respected still. The power is still ordained of God in its legitimate exercise, in things pertaining to men and their relation to their fellowmen; but no power, whether exercised through one form or another, is ordained of God in things pertaining to God, nor has it anything whatever to do with men's relations toward God.

We have before shown that the Constitution of the United States is the only form of government that has ever been on earth that is in harmony with the principle announced by Christ, demanding of men only that which is Cæsar's and refusing to enter in any way into the field of man's relationship to God. This Constitution sprung from the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and on this point simply asserts the truth of God.

The American people do not appreciate to the one hundredth part the value of the Constitution under which they live. They do not honor in any fair degree the noble men who pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, that these principles might be our heritage. All honor to those noble men. All integrity to the principles of the Declaration of Independence. All allegiance to the Constitution as it now is, under which we live, which gives to Cæsar all his due, and leaves men to render to God all that they, instructed by the word of God, guided by their own conscience, enlightened by the Spirit of God, may see that he requires of them. May the sweet face of Heaven shine in infinite pity upon the poor deluded souls who think they are doing God service in their efforts to subvert the Constitution and men's liberties under it, by a religious amendment. And may Heaven's twice blessed mercy be on and about the poor people who have respect for Jesus Christ and their right to worship God, when these people shall have accomplished their purpose.

A. T. J.

The Back of that Petition.

On another page we made some comments on the petition for a Sunday law, which is now being circulated in this State, showing up some of its bad features. We now propose literally to examine the other side of the matter. Following is an exact copy of what is on the back of the petition, emphasized words and all:—

California the Only State in the Union Without a Sunday Law

[EXCEPT THE STATE OF NEVADA.]

We propose to have one; to that end will you kindly see that this is printed in the local papers in your place, and get editorials in favor of it, and distribute the papers with the same largely, and send for Petitions and secure all the signatures possible.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., December 1st, 1888.

Dear Friends:

The repeal of the Sunday Law has robbed us in this State of our day of rest—the kindest gift of God to the toilers of earth—the sweetest day of the week to the worker, and every virtuous home.

How long shall we remain in bondage to Sunday desecrations, open saloons, and all the orgies consequent upon these wicked practices on God's holy day?

Let us have one quiet rest day in seven, when all men shall close up their secular business, or such as is not necessary to be carried on during that day.

That each may have a day with their families and worship God in accordance with the dictates of their own consciences, uninterrupted by noisy street parades emanating from open saloons, or where intoxicating drinks may be sold and drunk on the sacred Sabbath.

Unless the Sabbath is observed, we are on the way to Spanish bull-fights after the Lord's Supper, and the riot and doom of Gomorrah in the end.

The Sabbath was ordained by God at creation,

expressly to minister to man, this noblest being, and his immortal interests.

Let us keep the window of the Sabbath open between earth and Heaven, lest earth become the vestibule of hell.

The hand lifted against it is feeling for one of the central pillars that prop the temple of American liberty.

Let the Sabbath be overthrown, and all other moral restraints would soon fall with it, and Paris, Babylon, Sodom, would soon finish the story.

Let the American Sabbath, radiant with more than natural sunshine, brighten onward into earth's millennial rest and glory.

If we want to diminish crime, pauperage, and taxation, to lighten the people's burdens and to increase their power to bear them, then stand fast by the American Sabbath. It is the common law of our land; let it be of our hearts also.

That which demoralizes and debauches the people ruins the nation.

The Christian Sabbath has done more for America than all her fertile soil, her fine climate, her rivers, lakes, forests, gold-mines, or coal.

It has civilized and ennobled her men, purified and exalted her women, and taught her children to revere the name of their country next to that of their God.

We appeal to you in behalf of "God and Home and Native Land," to petition the Senate and Assembly of the State of California to grant to the people of this golden land a Sunday Law, that shall give to rich and poor alike a day of rest. A day in which we can serve God according to the dictates of conscience.

Respectfully yours,

MRS. M. E. CONGDON,

Supt. Dept. Legislation and Petitions,
California Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

It will be seen from the very first paragraph that the framers of the petition mean business. "We propose to have one," say they, in reference to the Sunday law. Well, if printing their document in the local papers will be any help to them, they are welcome to our services.

Pay special attention to the first paragraph of the address. It says: "The repeal of the Sunday law has robbed us in this State of our day of rest." We wonder if that is the reason why some of the good women of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union are occasionally found engaged in secular labor at their places of business on Sunday. If what they say means anything, it means that they cannot rest since the Sunday law was repealed. We are not chiding them for their neglect to rest on Sunday. They have a perfect right to work, for in this State there is no law, either human or divine, which forbids them. But what folly to say that the repeal of the Sunday law has robbed them of any rest. It is the veriest cant, designed to arouse the sympathy of the legislators for the poor women of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, who find it impossible to take their much-coveted rest on Sunday, because there is no law to compel them to! This resting on Sunday must be a terrible thing, since it requires a law to drive them to it.

But it isn't for their sakes after all that they want the Sunday law. They can keep Sunday just as well as they ever could, if they want to. It doesn't make any difference how much somebody else may work or play; that doesn't hinder them from resting. We know hundreds of people who find no trouble whatever in resting on the seventh day of the week, yet there never was a State law enforce-

ing its observance, and it is with the majority of people the busiest day in the week. No: it isn't because the good women of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union cannot rest to their hearts' content, but because they have not the power to compel somebody else to rest, that they make this petition. We submit that others are as well qualified to judge when they need rest, as these people are to judge for them.

The second paragraph is worse yet. Note it carefully: "How long shall we remain in bondage to Sunday desecrations, open saloons, and all the orgies consequent upon these wicked practices upon God's holy day?" Really these good women are worse off than we supposed. They need a crusade started in their behalf. In bondage to Sunday desecration, open saloons, and all the orgies that are consequent thereupon! Something ought to be done to deliver them from this bondage of corruption. We don't know of anything better than the preaching of the gospel. We don't like the role of the Pharisee, but we cannot refrain in this connection from saying how thankful we are that we are not in a like condition. We will tell the truth, even though it savor of boasting. We have lived in California since long before the Sunday law was repealed, and we have never been in bondage to any open saloon, nor to any of the consequent orgies. We have been a free man in this respect. Will our friends excuse our light treatment of this matter? It is too absurd for serious consideration.

Next follows an appeal for the suppression of all secular business, in order "that each may have a day with their families, and worship God in accordance with the dictates of their own consciences." Again we say, too bad! What pitiful straits these people are in, to be sure. Truly they must be in a most galling bondage, when it requires a State law to enable them to act according to the dictates of their own consciences. We imagine that the trouble is with their own consciences. Is it possible that any thinking man cannot see through this pitiful plea? They talk as though there were a law compelling people to do business on Sunday. One would imagine that those who would like to keep Sunday are held back by oppressive laws, instead of being left as free as the wind to do as they please. But this is just the trouble. They are not content to be free to do as they please; they want everybody else to be compelled to do just as *they* please. They cannot enjoy liberty unless they can use their liberty to oppress somebody else. And this shows that they know really nothing of what true liberty is.

We did think that in the first and second paragraphs they made about as humiliating confessions as could be asked of anybody, but the fifth paragraph reveals a much worse condition. They say: "Unless the Sabbath is observed, we are on the way to Spanish bull-fights after the Lord's Supper, and the riot and doom of Gomorrah in the end." Who would have imagined such a thing of those eminently pious women? We certainly never

should, although we have been accused of charging them foolishly. But the "we" must refer to the women of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, for it is signed by a representative of the Union. Whether or not it includes the "Dear Friends" to whom the petition is sent, we cannot say. If it does, we wish to be counted out, for we are not on the way to a Spanish bull-fight, or any other kind of a fight. And we here state our positive conviction that the man who does not keep Sunday, but who nevertheless minds his own business, is a good deal farther away from Spanish bull-fights and the like, than are the persons who need a State law to make them keep Sunday "in accordance with the dictates of their own consciences."

From the paragraph which says that Sunday has civilized and ennobled the men of America, and "purified and exalted her women," we have additional evidence that they fear lest they shall speedily be drawn away to barbarous amusements, unless the State shall interpose a Sunday law. They present themselves before the Legislature in the attitude of supplicants pleading for a law which will preserve them from disgrace.

Actually we don't believe that these women fear anything of the kind, although that is what they say. If they were not so anxious to cover up the real intent of their movement, they might be kept from involving themselves in so many absurdities.

Just one more point: It is stated that "the Sabbath was ordained by God at creation expressly to minister to man, this noblest being, and his immortal interests." So it is the "immortal interests" of man that they want to have the State take in hand. Now we submit that if the California Legislature does its duty by the mortal interests of the citizens of California, it will have its hands full for this session, without legislating for the world to come. "The whole boundless universe" isn't theirs yet.

But notwithstanding the statement that the Sabbath was ordained by God at creation, they go on in subsequent paragraphs to call for the enforcement of "the American Sabbath." Was it the American Sabbath that God ordained at creation? Our Bible says that it was "the Sabbath of the Lord." It is curious how things do get mixed in these petitions, but it is due, no doubt, to the bondage in which the framers are held.

Well, we think that we have dissected this affair sufficiently for this time. Put into plain language, it means just this: "We are determined to have Sunday kept, in form at least, because we want it so; and we cannot rest, in spirit, until everybody else shall be compelled to do just as we profess that we ought to do." We do not believe that the Legislature will pay attention to any such flimsy, self-contradictory, and manifestly selfish plea as that.

E. J. W.

"WHEREVER and whenever religion is blended with government, it must necessarily be degraded into a mere ecclesiasticism, and so rendered hopelessly incapable of taking one single step in advance of the laws in the enlightenment and regeneration of mankind."

Sunday Parades.

In the Washington Sunday Convention Dr. Crafts in speaking against Sunday parades in the army said: "Sunday parades make Sunday the most laborious of the week."

This statement is like a good many others made by that gentleman; it is simply untrue. The writer of this note spent five years in the regular army, and he knows that Sunday *with the parade* is the least laborious day of the week. Sunday is always the easiest day to the regular soldier. But what are these Sunday parades which are such a dreadful persecution to the American soldier, and which so outrage his rights of conscience? This: Generally there is an inspection of quarters, soldiers, arms, and accoutrements at 9 o'clock Sunday forenoon. And at this the troops are generally called into ranks for perhaps a half an hour. With this exception and the exclusion of the regular guard, there is literally nothing at all for the soldier to do from sunrise till sundown on Sunday. He is not called upon to do anything. At sundown there is the regular roll-call, when every soldier must again fall into rank to answer to his name. At this time also, especially in large garrisons and garrisons near cities, there is generally a parade. The whole time occupied is not much if any more than half an hour. They have to fall into rank anyhow to answer to their names, and the parade is nothing more than all the companies in a garrison being formed into line. In breaking up to march to their quarters they are generally marched past the commanding officer.

That is literally all that there is in Sunday parades in the army. And with it all Sunday is the easiest day in the week for the soldier. On that subject Doctor Crafts does not know what he is talking about. A. T. J.

Why the California Sunday Law Was Repealed.

THE Oakland *Tribune* of January 19, in announcing a call for a meeting to be held on Tuesday evening, January 22, in the interest of a State Sunday law, used the following language:—

"Ever since the repeal of the California Sunday law, the Christian people of the State have been dissatisfied. This is the only State in the Union wholly without law in reference to the Christian Sabbath. It is believed that if the voice of the people could have been taken at the time of the act of the Legislature repealing the law, a very large majority of the best citizens in the State would have opposed the repeal, and they would now favor the enactment of a similar law. It is known that in the Legislature now in session, a new bill, not unlike the former, will be introduced, and its enactment is not very improbable. If the people could vote, it no doubt would become law. In view of such facts, the call of a public meeting in our city is timely."

From the above, a stranger would get the idea that the repeal of the California Sunday law six years ago was an underhanded proceeding,—that it was sprung on the people when they were not thinking, and carried through before they had a chance to protest.

As a matter of fact, the case was exactly the reverse of this. The matter was before the people for nearly a year. Following is a brief history of the case:—

Some of the church people sought to rigidly enforce the Sunday law. They entered into it with enthusiasm, and thought they saw success just ahead. Some of them made boasts of what they would do to those who had the presumption to work on *their* Sabbath. Arrests were made by the wholesale. A few convictions were obtained in different parts of the State, for the movement was general. One or two cases were appealed to the Supreme Court. Thus the matter attracted the attention of everybody, and the eyes of many in distant States were turned toward California.

Of course there was opposition. It was the year of a State election, and the Republican party of California espoused the Sunday cause. At the State Convention a plank in favor of the Sunday law was adopted with the greatest enthusiasm. No other plank in the platform received one-fourth the attention or applause that that one did. When the Democratic Convention was held, that party declared for the repeal of the law. This was the sole issue between the two parties in California that year, and the campaign was a most exciting one. For months the principal topic of conversation was the Sunday law. The papers were full of it, and there was not a political speech made in which it was not discussed. The ministers all preached on it. Everywhere it was the one thing before the people.

Of course every voter turned out on election day. The result was that a Democratic Governor and a Democratic Legislature was elected. The State Government, which had previously been strongly Republican, became by that election just as strongly Democratic. Everybody knew that it was because of the Sunday law. The Republican party well knew that its defeat was due to its espousal of the Sunday law. The first thing that the Democratic Legislature did when it convened, was to fulfill its pledge to repeal that law. The members could not in conscience do otherwise, because their promise to do so was that which secured their election. That is the whole history.

And now for the *Tribune* to say that "it is believed that if the voice of the people could have been taken at the time of the act of the Legislature repealing the law, a very large majority of the best citizens in the State would have opposed the repeal," is arrant nonsense. The one who believes that, will believe anything. If the voice of the people is not heard at the polls, especially when the main issue has been the subject of discussion for months, then we should like to know how that voice could be heard. Everybody who has lived in California for the last seven years, or who was here during the campaign of 1882, knows that we have related the simple facts. The California Sunday law was repealed because the majority of the people said that they wanted it repealed. Whether or not the sentiment of the majority has changed materially since then, remains to be seen. Let the matter

have a fair trial before the people, and if the majority want a Sunday law, it will appear. But let no one seek to appeal to sympathy by pleading that a fair trial was not had six years ago.

We are well aware of the fact that an effort is being made to push the matter of a Sunday law through this Legislature as quickly and quietly as possible; but we shall do our part towards securing a full and free discussion of it. Of the meeting to influence legislation in behalf of the Sunday law, we shall have something to say next week. E. J. W.

"Shall the Constitution Be Modified?"

THIS is the question which the *New York Independent* has been propounding to some of the most prominent men in the country. The *Independent* asked: "Has there been such advance in political science and such development of this Nation during the past hundred years, as to demand any considerable modification in our Constitution? If so, in what lines should it be made?" After asking in particular if there should be a readjustment of the executive and legislative branches of the Government to each other, the *Independent's* letter closed with these words: "Please treat the question from your own point of view, and follow your own lines of thought," thus leaving every man free to suggest any change which, in his mind, the Constitution might need.

The *Independent* of January 10 contains several replies to the letter of inquiry, and some of them are so exceedingly pointed that we print them here. We first quote from the short letter of that eminent scholar and historian, Hon. George Bancroft. He says:—

"I have your letter asking what changes had better be made in the Constitution. I know of none; if any change is needed, it is in ourselves, that we may more and more respect that body of primal law."

Good! Such an answer does honor to the man who made it. Would that National Reformers might take a few lessons in political economy from George Bancroft. There is more of sound sense and the science of good government in that short answer than in all the volumes of National Reform literature.

We next quote the words of Justice Bradley, of the United States Supreme Court. He says, "I would have no change," and adds:—

"I think it is a most happy arrangement that sudden whiffs and gusts of popular feeling are not always able to execute and carry out the rash purposes with which they are inspired."

Still more pointed is the following from Justice Gray, of the United States Supreme Court:—

"I am so old-fashioned as to think that the Constitution, administered according to its letter and spirit, is well enough as it is. And I am of the opinion of the late Governor Andrew, that it is not desirable to Mexicanize our Government by proposing constitutional amendments as often as there is supposed to be a disturbance in its practical working."

Better still is the following answer by Mr. Justice Blatchford, of the Supreme Court of

the United States. We quote his letter in full:—

"I am satisfied with the Constitution as it is. It cannot be bettered. Constitution tinkers are in a poor business. If there are ills, it is better to bear them than fly to others that we know not of."

Of course this is rank atheism in the eyes of National Reformers, but it is so much the better on that account. That which they call heresy is the real, true religion of the Bible.

One more quotation closes the list. It is the last paragraph of a long letter by Francis Wharton, LL.D., and is as follows:—

"The Constitution itself requires no amendment, but what is required is the removal from it of the patches impairing its symmetry, its comprehensiveness, its elasticity, its durability, which have been imposed on it by the judiciary."

These are all good utterances. It is a good thing to know that the sound, thinking men of the Nation are in favor of preserving the Constitution as it is; but, alas! "Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider."

Whose Country Is This.

At the convention of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, last fall, Mrs. Mary T. Lathrop made one of the principal speeches, in the course of which she said, addressing the press and politicians of New York:—

"You have sold out our civilization by the sea-coast, have imported pauper labor, for fear you would have to pay honest wages to workmen. The manufacturers of this country, who are falling on the necks of laboring men with many tears during this political campaign, have been sending their paid agents over to Europe to bring this kind of people here, until *you have trodden on our Sabbath*, and sold out our civilization in these great Eastern populations to the Philistines."

It seems as though people are getting pretty well advanced, when they can reprove others for treading upon "our Sabbath." God pronounces a blessing upon those who turn away their foot from the Sabbath, from doing their pleasure on his holy day; and when the American people shall enact laws against the violation of *their* Sabbath,—the rival of the Sabbath of the Lord,—we cannot see how much better they will be than the man of sin, "the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped." Then we shall have not only Papal Rome, but Papal America.

As to the Sunday Papers.

WHEN the subject of annihilating Sunday papers was under discussion by the preachers day before yesterday, various remedies were proposed. One of them was that the ministers should not print the notices of their services in the Sunday papers—boycott them, in short. That is an old story,—

Said Aaron to Moses,
Let's bite off our noses.

Somehow they always get in. Some deacon or elder, more interested in the business than in the spiritual welfare of the church, and who knows that advertising is the life of all enter-

prises, comes around, and, explaining that the minister is a little high-strung and old-fashioned in his notions, asks for an insertion of the notice.

Another remedy was that the papers be shown that their financial interests would be promoted by stopping the obnoxious issue. That was tried once in this city. During the early part of 1866 there was a three weeks' revival meeting in the Methodist Church Block. The evils of Sunday papers were dwelt on. Efforts were made to convert the offenders. It was stated that if any publisher would reform he could be sure of the solid and profitable backing of a great share of the community. One paper tried it. Its sole reward was a large assortment of resolutions, thanks, and prayers. It lost a number of the subscribers it had, and gained no new ones to speak of. It was a victim of what the worldly would call "a confidence game." After trying it a while it resumed its Sunday issue, and intends to continue its publication indefinitely.—*Chicago Tribune, November 23, 1888.*

The following words of appreciation of the AMERICAN SENTINEL, and of sympathy for its work, are from the bishop of Hayti:—

"Permit me to say how heartily I agree with you in deploring the movement (characterized, as I believe, with more zeal than knowledge), which seeks to procure Sunday legislation by the Congress of the United States, as the same has begun to take form in the Blair Bill and Amendment to the National Constitution. Such a mixture of political and ecclesiastical functions in society, embodied in this legislation, from my point of view, is nothing less than the Babylonian adultery and spiritual apostasy hinted at by the apostle Paul, and so fully delineated by John, the revelator. Hence, I applaud you with all my soul for having sounded the tocsin and lifted the warning voice to put the people of the United States on their guard against this awful danger, so insidiously being sprung upon them, and I not only wish you hearty success in accomplishing that end, so as to avert the danger, if it still be probable, but I also pray the Giver of all grace to let his blessing rest upon your laudable endeavors in this direction. At any rate you will have the satisfaction of having done your duty under the circumstances to the best of your ability; and your sure reward for having so done will rest with Him who is faithful and true, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear."

The following estimate of the Blair Sunday Bill is correct. It is taken from a letter written by the editor of the *Daily Democrat*, of Grand Rapids, Mich.:—

"I do not think there is or can be any question about the unconstitutionality of the Blair Sunday Bill. Technically, I think there is no question; and, so far as broad fundamental principles are concerned, the movement is certainly one which violates the most vital of the inherent principles on which our Government was founded, and is one of many modern attempts to crystallize and petrify the shell of a religious system, the true essence of which is rapidly evaporating.

"Of course, as the essence disappears, the importance increases in the minds of some of strengthening the shell, of preserving intact the outward forms and non-essentials.

"It is a symptom of religious ossification."

THE Signs of the Times

FOR 1889.

A Sixteen-Page Paper, Published Weekly, at Oakland, Cal.

FOR THE



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EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

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MISSION DEPARTMENT.

In the Missionary Department will be published reports from the various mission fields, both home and foreign, together with brief descriptions of the fields and their wants.

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In the past no part of the paper has met with more favor than the Temperance Department. Many temperance societies have used the SIGNS regularly in their meetings, and the publishers hope to make this feature of it still more interesting in the future than it has been in the past. This Department will contain not only the very best temperance matter obtainable, but also short articles relating to the preservation of health, including the discussion of proper food and dress, and correct habits of working, eating, sleeping, etc.

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GENERAL ARTICLES.

The general articles published in the SIGNS are the very best selected and original matter obtainable. The articles are usually short, and always clear and pointed. Much of the matter in this department is written especially for this paper, but selections are also carefully made from the leading religious papers, only the very best being taken. Altogether the publishers feel safe in saying that no other paper published will furnish so great a variety of equally good matter for the year 1889 as will the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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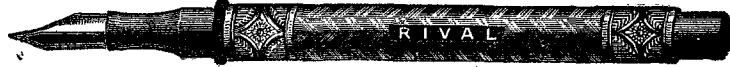
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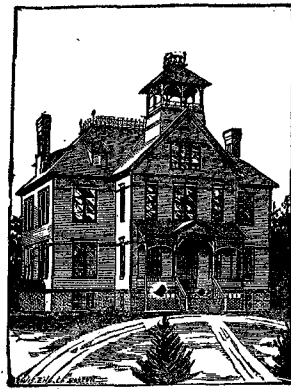
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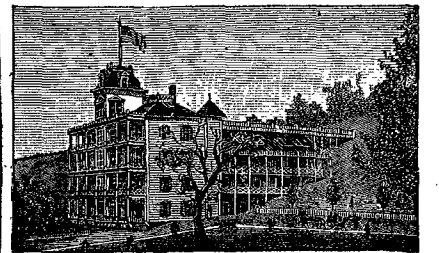
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The American Sentinel.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY 6, 1889.

NOTE.—No papers are sent by the publishers of the AMERICAN SENTINEL to people who have not subscribed for it. If the SENTINEL comes to one who has not subscribed for it, he may know that it is sent him by some friend, and that he will not be called upon by the publishers to pay for the same.

NEXT week we shall publish in full, the letter which Cardinal Gibbons wrote to W. F. Crafts, on the strength of which 7,200,000 names were counted as affixed to the petitions for a National Sunday Law. The letter itself is the most complete refutation of the claim that the Cardinal signed the petition officially in behalf of the Roman Catholics. But our comments upon the letter will accompany it next week.

THE *Minneapolis Tribune*, of October 31, says:—

"The Pope advises peaceful agitation by Catholics in America, looking to the restoration to him of temporal power."

And in their efforts to restore to the Pope his temporal power in Rome, they will be sure to secure their own political power in this country; and the political religionists of Protestantism are helping them.

THE *Union Signal*, the organ of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, gives the AMERICAN SENTINEL a notice, and says of it, among other things, "The paper antagonizes the very things we advocate." We are sorry to know that. The AMERICAN SENTINEL antagonizes nothing except union of Church and State, or religious legislation by the civil Government, which is the same thing. The *Union Signal* evidently understands this, for it mentions "religious legislation" as the thing to which the SENTINEL is opposed, and therefore it declares itself an advocate of such legislation. We have been severely censured for saying this in the past, but we hope we may be absolved now that the organ of the W. C. T. U. has declared for union of Church and State.

NEXT week the *Sentinel* will contain, among other live matter, a quite full report of the proceedings of the meeting held in Oakland, January 22, for the purpose of influencing legislation in behalf of a State Sunday law, and also a review of the remarks of Senator Blair before the U. S. Senate, December 21, in behalf of his Educational Amendment Bill. These will be articles that nobody will want to miss. When you have read them, lend your paper to your neighbor. Better still, induce him to subscribe between now and then, so that he will have the *Sentinel* for himself, and then you can lend yours to somebody else. But then the same thing would work with him, too, and you ought to keep your papers for future reference. We don't see any other way for you to do than to induce everybody near you to subscribe. See if you cannot do that.

A GENTLEMAN writes to us from a town in Illinois, to state that he has been a lay member of the M. E. Church for seventy years, and has never heard either a minister or a lay member express a desire for a union of Church and State. We don't doubt his word in the least, but it doesn't prove anything. Fifty men might swear that they never saw a certain other man commit a theft, and yet that other man might be a highway robber. One man's ignorance can never be used as an offset to another's knowledge. We have heard and seen such a wish expressed many times. And what is more to the point, there are thousands who would indignantly repudiate any such desire, who are nevertheless zealously working for the same object under another name.

IN our last issue but one we mentioned the great pressure upon the columns of the SENTINEL, and said we hoped that a change might soon come in the shape of more frequent publication. The change has come sooner than we dared hope, and with the last number we began the weekly publication of the SENTINEL. This volume will consist of forty-eight numbers, of which this is the second. We are sure that our friends will be glad for the change. For twice the money that they have been paying, they will receive nearly four times as much reading matter. This, of course, is not financially to the benefit of the publishers, but we hope that our efforts will meet with so hearty a response in the way of subscriptions, that the loss will be counter-balanced.

THE *Catholic Home*, a paper published in Chicago, referring to the movement which is getting under headway in that city, "to abolish the Sunday slavery, and to suppress Sunday crime," says the Catholic sentiment in that city, which has lain so long dormant under flagitious outrage, is now awakening and is anxious to do battle for home and altar, and declares that new vigor will now be put into the struggle of good citizenship against anarchy. The statement that the movement is for the suppression of "Sunday crime," shows what their idea of good citizenship is. It is strange that they cannot see that such a movement, instead of being against anarchy, is in reality in favor of disregard to the laws; for by their opposition to "Sunday crime," they give tacit leave to criminals to break the laws on other days with impunity.

IN the recent Illinois Sunday Convention, Dr. Herrick Johnson, in a speech against Sunday newspapers and special Sunday trains, exclaimed: "Oh, for the breath of the Puritan! Oh, for a little of the Puritan Sabbath!" When it is remembered that in the days of the Puritans everybody was compelled to attend church on Sunday, it will be seen that our conclusion that the Blair Sunday Bill is in reality a bill to increase the attendance at church, is fully warranted. The following items from the laws of the Puritans of Connecticut will show what may be expected when the churches, under the leadership of

such men as Dr. Johnson and Dr. Crafts, combine to revive Puritan customs and the Puritan Sabbath:—

"No one shall be a freeman, or give a vote, unless he be converted, and a member in full communion of one of the churches allowed in this dominion."

"No man shall hold any office who is not sound in the faith and faithful to this dominion; and whoever shall give a vote to such a person shall pay a fine of one pound. For a second offense he shall be disfranchised."—*Clarke's History of Intolerance.*

That is a picture of the final result of the legislation which Senator Blair has introduced; the people who read this will not have to live many years before they see the reality.

OUR watchful and vigorous contemporary, the *American Sentinel*, of Oakland, is making a valiant war against the fanatics who are attempting to chain us to a national or Christian Sunday. Although the movement is led by a false Shepard [Col. Elliott F.], and although the whole thing is false, all liberty-loving people should remember that falsehoods often prevail when not checked by truth.—*Jewish Times and Observer.*

THE business of Sunday legislation, or rather the attempts thereat, is now thriving in this State. A bill has already been introduced into the California Senate, making it a misdemeanor to conduct, maintain, or open, a bull-fight, bear-fight, prize-fight, cock-fight, horse-race, gambling-game, or to conduct or visit a dive or melodeon on a Sunday. No doubt the framer of that bill thinks that he has done a very pious act, and is blissfully unconscious that by that very act he has virtually declared that it is all right to do any of those things on any other day than Sunday. Thus a premium is put upon vice, by the very law which is claimed to be opposed to it. And this will always be found to be the case in religious legislation by the State. It ever has been and ever will be only a cloak for the commission of greater crimes than were committed before.

FOLLOWING is the Roman Catholic idea of popular education, as set forth by the *Catholic Review* of April, 1871:—

We do not indeed prize as highly as some of our countrymen appear to do, the ability to read, write, and cipher. Some men are born to be leaders, and the rest are born to be led. The best ordered and administered State is that in which the few are well educated, and lead, and the many are trained to obedience.

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