

"IF ANY MAN HEAR MY WORDS, AND BELIEVE NOT, I JUDGE HIM NOT: FOR I CAME NOT TO JUDGE THE WORLD, BUT TO SAVE THE WORLD."

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RELIGION AND REVOLUTION.

A LITTLE more than a hundred years ago, the civilized world stood within the shadow of the greatest tragedy of modern times. It was the eve of the French Revolution.

Thrones which stood in fancied security were to be rudely shaken, and institutions and doctrines which had grown venerable under the sanction of time and tradition, were to be overturned and lost in the great upheaval.

To-day, we are still in the era of revolution. The causes from which political and social mutations take their rise, having their seat in the selfishness of human nature, are not eradicated by the changes which they produce. Neither the lapse of time nor the civilization of the nineteenth century, afford us immunity from their operation.

There are ominous signs upon the horizon of our own national future. In a manner more or less perceptible to all, the air is darkened by the shadows of coming events. It is fitting at such a time that we should note the real causes which culminated in the convulsion of a century ago, and the extent to which, as concerns them, history may be repeating itself to-day.

The French Revolution is commonly spoken of as an outburst of atheism. That this was a prominent feature of the Revolution no one denies; but it is proper to inquire, What pro-

duced the atheism? Man is not naturally an atheist. And if we look into the condition of society and the church, as it was in France just prior to the Revolution, we shall find abundant cause for the irreligion which at that time burst forth like a devastating flood upon the realm.

"There were twenty-three thousand monks in France," says Ridpath; "there were sixty thousand curates and vicars; there were thirty-seven thousand nuns; there were two thousand five hundred monasteries; one thousand five hundred convents, and sixty thousand churches and chapels. In all there were a hundred and thirty thousand persons who

the nobility, one fifth to the communes and the king. This made three fifths."¹

This three fifths of the land was the richest and most valuable land in France. Of the value of that part belonging to the clergy we are told: "Its possessions, capitalized, amount to nearly four billion francs; the income from this amounts to eighty or a hundred millions, to which must be added the dime or tithes,—a hundred and twenty-three millions per annum; in all two hundred millions, a sum which must be doubled to show its equivalent at the present day; and to this must be added the chance contributions and the usual church collections."²



Street Scene in the French Revolution.

enjoyed themselves in the work of saving France from her sins. But they did not begin with themselves.

"There were a hundred and forty thousand nobles in France. . . . The noble families numbered thirty thousand. On each square league of territory, and for each one thousand of the inhabitants there was one castle, one noble family. France was not only saved but she was ennobled. It required a great deal of land to support properly the dignity and office of one of her saviours. The abbey of St. Germain des Pres owned about nine hundred thousand acres. One fifth of all the lands of France belonged to the clergy, one fifth to

Coming to particulars, it is stated that four hundred monks at Premontre possessed a capital of forty-five million livres, from which they derived a remedy of more than one million livres. The Benedictines of Cluny, two hundred and thirty-eight in number, enjoyed an income of one million eight hundred thousand livres. The abbot of Clairvaux had a yearly income of more than three hundred thousand livres; the archbishop of Strasburg had an income of more than a million, etc.

In Mexico, when the French monarchy under Maximilian was overthrown, the value of the church property was \$300,000,000, and its income was more than that of the Mexican Government. In the United States, the amount of untaxed church property, as shown by the census of 1890, is \$679,630,139. Of this the Roman Catholic Church,—the church of France and Mexico, holds \$118,069,746; but even she is second to the Methodist Church, which holds in the aggregate of her various bodies property valued at \$132,140,179.

In France, at the time of the Revolution,

¹ "History of the World," Vol. III, chap. xlvii.
² 75.

there were twenty-six millions of people of the laboring classes, and upon them rested the burden of supporting themselves, the privileged classes, and the government. They were taxed without mercy, while the nobles and clergy were exempt.

As a straw showing which way the wind is blowing, it is worthy of note that a bill has been recently introduced into the New York legislature, which provides for exempting from taxation "the personal property of every minister of the gospel, or priest of any denomination, or every such minister or priest who is permanently disabled by impaired health from performing the active duties of the ministry, and every such minister or priest who has reached the age of seventy-five years; and the real estate of such minister or priest or such disabled or aged minister or priest, provided such real or personal estate do not exceed the value of one thousand five hundred dollars."

The parallel is being even more rapidly drawn with respect to the theory of government. Of the epoch which ushered in the Revolution, the historian says: "At this epoch nearly the whole activity of France was displayed in the *government*. The government was everything. It was meant to be so. The doctrines of paternalism in the State were completely triumphant. The theory reduced to a formula ran thus: It is the duty—the business—of the State to teach men what things to do, and of the Church to teach them what things to believe. As for man, it is his business to be governed. That is—and was—the object of his creation. He must receive with unquestioning simplicity and obedience whatever is doled out to him by the noble and the priest to whom his management, his interests, his destiny, in this world are entrusted."

There was in such a system no development of manhood, no formation of stable character, no quickening of the conscience. The moral nature was dwarfed; all the better impulses of human nature were palsied; hate and malignity were engendered; and the scenes depicted in our illustration were only the inevitable result when once restraint was thrown off.

To-day, in our own land, the doctrine of paternalism is fast displacing the theory of government espoused by the founders of the Republic. The sphere of individualism has been contracted to very narrow limits. Men are taught that their first duty to the State is obedience to the law, whether the law be good or bad; they are taught to set "law" above justice, thus virtually ignoring their prerogative of self-government, which asserts that they are free from obligation to any form of legalized wrong.

The Church, with all her religious allies, has entered the arena of politics, and assumes the right to dictate the law for nation, State, and city. The Church and the aristocracy of wealth, control the government; and the people—the mere toilers and producers—exist to be governed and to pay the taxes. The doctrine of individual inalienable rights is relegated to the background; the scheme of government has been transferred from the basis of individual rights, recognized by the Declaration of Independence, to the undefinable one of the "best good of the majority." And the clergy and the "nobles," the "better classes," speak for the majority.

The French Revolution was a struggle for the mastery between the privileged classes and the people. "It was," says Ridpath, "simply a revolt, an insurrection of the emancipated mind of France against the tyranny of

her social, civil and religious institutions—a rebellion of man against his masters—a struggle of the human spirit to break an intolerable thralldom which had been imposed upon it by the past." The spirit of self-exaltation, making unscrupulous use of the power pertaining to wealth and station, had made the multitudes slaves both in soul and body, to human taskmasters. It had bound them in the chains of both a civil and a spiritual tyranny. And when the spirit of liberty in the breasts of the downtrodden asserted itself and burst those chains, the popular demonstrations against the Church and religion were as natural as were those against the nobles and royalty.

The atheism of the French Revolution was the legitimate fruit of the spiritual despotism imposed upon the people by the Papacy. In the papal system, the spirit of self-exaltation finds its fullest and most conspicuous embodiment. By it a mortal man, under the name of pope, is exalted to the place of God, while other fallible mortals, such as cardinals, bishops, and priests, are held up to their fellow-mortals as invested with the authority and prerogatives of God. And when man is put in the place of God, the result is always a spiritual tyranny. It cannot possibly be otherwise; for the power and wisdom of man cannot rise to the level of divinity. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" but the spirit of man cannot give liberty in the religious life. The despotism breeds revolt; and revolt, when directed against religion, naturally manifests itself in atheism. The papal religion is full of the seeds of this baleful fruit.

"The religion of the French Revolution," says Prof. Goldwin Smith, "was a State church which, deserted by the convictions of the people, but retaining their outward allegiance, reduced them to hypocrisy and to atheism."

There is nothing in Christianity that tends to the violence of revolution. The revolution accomplished by Christianity is the revolution of the individual. Christianity means freedom through the Spirit and power of God; and having this soul freedom, men are more desirous of imparting the same blessing to others than of laying violent hands upon the fabric of government. They seek to promote the welfare of themselves and of mankind through the uplifting power of the gospel of Christ, rather than by the violence of carnal warfare; and while conducting themselves at all times as the champions of the cause of humanity and the rights of the people, will if possible, follow after the things which make for peace.

Had the people of France known the freedom of the gospel instead of the despotism of the Papacy, the terrible scenes of the French Revolution would never have been. But the seeds of atheism, and of resistance to the restraints of both God and man, had been sown by a religion which put man in the place of God, tradition and dogma in the place of God's word, and the law of man in the place of conscience. The prevailing conditions gave opportunity for its perfect development, and the world shuddered at the harvest. But the lesson was not sufficiently understood and appropriated by mankind. And now, in these United States, as well as elsewhere in the civilized world, the same influences are at work to bring man into a position where they will be ready to make a like mad and blind effort to reform government and society, and realize the good to which they feel they have a birthright claim. But

* 2 Cor. 3:17.

the hope of mankind lies in the divinely-revealed assurance that the Author of liberty and of every blessing is about to take the affairs of earth into his own hands, to root out of it all things that are evil, and to usher his righteous people into the eternal era of happiness and peace.

THE HARMONY(?) OF ERROR.

The following extracts from "Our Mail Bag," in the *Christian Herald and Signs of Our Times*, the first under date of Aug. 1, 1894, the other under date of June 5, 1895, afford an excellent illustration of the harmony(?) of error:—

Victoria Dodd, Denison, Iowa. How should Sunday be spent by those who profess to be Christian people?

They should obey the divine command to refrain from all labor and secular things, and devote the day to the service of the Almighty and to physical rest and recuperation. To spend the whole or even part of the day in the reading of newspapers or secular literature is a violation of the spirit of the injunction. Attendance at the house of worship and a hearty compliance with the religious ordinances instituted by the Church, are among the privileges that should never be neglected. These are among the "means of grace."

Fannie E. Crewe, Mass. Is there any command given after the resurrection of Christ to keep Sunday or any day holy?

The New Testament does not mention any explicit command being given after the resurrection. From the early Christian writers we learn that the observance of the Lord's day was universal in the Church. It was not observed, however, as the Jewish Sabbath, with restrictions and penalties, and with minute regulations as to what should, and should not be done on that day. . . . Some Jewish converts wanted to compel the Gentiles to keep Saturday holy, according to the Jewish law, as some people are trying to do still; but the Apostle Paul wrote that they need give no heed to such teachers, and to let no man judge them as to the Sabbath. Col. 2:16.

This is the sort of blowing hot and cold that becomes necessary in attempting to sustain the false sabbath while rejecting the true.

If there is no divine command for Sunday, and there certainly is none, by what right does the *Herald* say of Sunday: "They should obey the divine command to refrain from all labor," etc., on that day?

Self-stultification could scarcely be more complete than it is in these two answers. The first assumes a divine command for Sunday observance; the second admits that there is no such command, and that Sunday does not take the place of the Sabbath.

The lugging in of Col. 2:16 in this connection is in perfect keeping with the consistency shown in these two answers. The 17th verse states plainly that the days concerning which the apostle was writing were the festivals belonging to the typical system: shadows of things to come.

THE ONLY REMEDY.

"Is it not perfectly manifest," says the *Christian Statesman*, of February 22, "after all our comparatively fruitless efforts to cure our festering political corruption by other means, that the only adequate remedy is to bring our nation into acknowledged subjection to the perfect and purifying law of Christ?" This it says in behalf of the so-called Christian Amendment which it is trying to have fastened upon the national Constitution.

The "purifying law of Christ" does not

consist in the written words of an acknowledgment, but is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which makes the believer free from the "law of sin and death."¹ It is the very life of Christ, which he lives in the believer's heart.² It is therefore altogether above and beyond the reach of the United States Constitution. Only a very low and altogether earthly view of the purifying law of Christ could ever have conceived it as being applicable to the nation through the Constitution.

It is an easy thing to make an acknowledgment or profession of Christianity; but mere profession accomplishes nothing. So long as the hearts of legislators and of the people are filled with the natural depravity of human nature, so long will "our festering political corruption" remain uncured, whatever profession may be inserted into the Constitution.

KEEPING SUNDAY RELIGIOUSLY.

As an argument in behalf of Sunday "laws," it is said that such legislation as is called for does not infringe upon any person's rights of conscience, since it does not require that Sunday should be kept religiously.

Just what would constitute a religious observance of Sunday, in the minds of those who make use of this "argument," we are not told. But it is not their nor any person's ideas upon this point that determine the propriety of Sunday legislation from the standpoint of interference with conscience. That must be determined by the truth, as defined by Him whose word is truth. And the truth is that refraining from work upon the first or any other day of the week, so as to acknowledge that day as a weekly rest day, is a religious act. It must of necessity have this significance.

A weekly rest day is wholly a religious institution. It was given to man as such by the Creator. Gen. 2:2, 3; Ex. 20:8-11; Eze. 20:12, 20. Rest from secular work is an essential part of the keeping of the Sabbath commandment. And from the very fact that the Sabbath is wholly a religious institution—since it is "the Sabbath of the Lord"—and that rest from secular labor is an essential part of its observance, such weekly rest upon Sunday must have a religious significance. Being exactly similar to the Sabbath rest which God commanded, so far as regards the performance of secular work, it is either that rest itself or a counterfeit of it; in either of which cases its significance is religious.

A counterfeit dollar bill has the significance of money, and is intended by its maker to serve the purpose of money. So it is with the Sunday sabbath. It must of necessity have the significance of the institution which it professes to be, or of which it claims to be a pattern; and that significance is wholly religious.

Hence the weekly Sunday rest which is demanded by Sunday "laws" is a religious act, and the plea that such "laws" do not require any person to keep Sunday religiously, is of no force. By the very fact of requiring Sunday rest, they require a religious observance, and hence go entirely beyond the legitimate sphere of civil legislation.

Let the truth be kept in mind that the Sabbath is wholly a religious institution. This is shown by the fact, already pointed out, that it is "the Sabbath of the Lord." God has stated expressly that the Sabbath is his and not man's. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." See Ex. 20:

8-11; Isa. 58:13; Eze. 20:12, 20. In the light of this fact, the impropriety of human sabbath "laws" may be seen in full. The Sabbath is God's sign between himself and his people. It is the mark of his Godhead, pointing out him who has creative power, and who is therefore the true God. Hence man has no business to meddle with it. Even a trademark is recognized in human law as the property of its originator. No other party is allowed to appropriate it. How much more, then, is God's Sabbath sacred to him—to the high and holy purpose specified in his law, as the memorial of him who has power to create and redeem! Yet men speak of the Sabbath as though it were their common property, to be put to their own uses and legislated upon as they see fit!

The American Government is very jealous—and properly so—of its currency. It punishes counterfeiting with severe penalties. It will not allow any imitation of that which constitutes its currency, whether of coin or paper, and whether it be intended to serve the purpose of money or not. Its secret service officials promptly seize and confiscate all such imitations, no matter if obviously intended to serve only as medals or as advertisements. And why will not men recognize the principle in its application to that which is infinitely more sacred and important,—the memorial or "sign" (Eze. 20:12, 20) of God between himself and his people? Why will they not treat God's sacred things with at least as much respect as is made obligatory with regard to man's things? Oh that all men would recognize the iniquitous folly of enacting sabbath "laws," and cease to intrude with their human legislation upon that which is holy unto the Lord.

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SUNDAY "LAWS."

THE various bills relating more or less directly to Sunday now before Congress and several of the State legislatures, render timely an examination of the origin and nature of Sunday "laws."

The first "law" of this character, a copy of which has been preserved to us, is Constantine's edict of A. D. 321. Sozomen says that it was "that the day might be devoted with less interruption to the purposes of devotion." And this statement of Sozomen's is indorsed by Neander.¹ This reason given by Sozomen reveals the secret of the legislation; it shows that it was in behalf of the church, and to please the church.

By reading Constantine's edict, it is seen that they started out quite moderately. They did not stop *all* work; only judges, townspeople, and mechanics were required to rest, while people in the country might freely and lawfully work. The emperor paraded his soldiers on Sunday, and required them to repeat in concert the following prayer:—

Thou alone we acknowledge as the true God; thee we acknowledge as ruler; thee we invoke for help; from thee have we received the victory; through thee have we conquered our enemies; to thee are we indebted for our present blessings; from thee also we hope for future favors; to thee we will direct our prayer. We beseech thee that thou wouldst preserve our Emperor Constantine and his pious sons in health and prosperity through the longest life.²

This Sunday "law" of A. D. 321 continued until 386, when "those older changes effected by the Emperor Constantine were more rigorously enforced, and, in general, civil transac-

tion of every kind on Sunday were strictly forbidden. Whoever transgressed was to be considered, in fact, as guilty of sacrilege."³

Then as the people were not allowed to do any manner of work, they would play, and, as the natural consequence, the circuses and the theaters throughout the empire were crowded every Sunday. But the object of the "law," from the first one that was issued, was that the day might be used for the purposes of "devotion" and the people might go to church. Consequently, that this object might be met, there was another step to take, and it was taken. At a church convention held at Carthage in 401, the bishops passed a resolution to send up a petition to the Emperor, praying "that the public shows might be transferred from the Christian Sunday, and from feast days, to some other days of the week."⁴

And the reason given in support of the petition was, "The people congregate more to the circus than to the church."⁵

In the circuses and theaters large numbers of men were employed, among whom many were church members. But, rather than to give up their jobs, they would work on Sunday. The bishops complained that these were compelled to work; they pronounced it persecution, and asked for a law to protect those persons from such "persecution." The church had become filled with a mass of people, unconverted, who cared vastly more for worldly interests and pleasures than they did for religion. And as the government was now a government of God, it was considered proper that the civil power should be used to cause all to show respect for God, whether they had any respect for him or not.

But as long as the people could make something by working on Sunday, they would work rather than go to church. A law was secured forbidding all manner of Sunday work. Then they would crowd the circuses and the theaters, instead of going to church. But this was not what the bishops wanted; this was not that for which all work had been forbidden. All work was forbidden in order that the people might go to church; but instead of that, they crowded to the circus and the theater, and the audiences of the bishops were rather slim. This was not at all satisfying to their pride; therefore the next step, and a logical one, too, was, as the petition prayed, to have the exhibitions of the circuses and the theaters transferred to some other days of the week, so that the churches and the theaters should not be open at the same time. For if both were open, the Christians(?), as well as others, not being able to go to both places at once, would go to the circus or theater instead of to the church. Neander says:—

Owing to the prevailing passion at that time, especially in the large cities, to run after the various public shows, it so happened that when these spectacles fell on the same days which had been consecrated by the Church to some religious festival, they proved a great hindrance to the devotion of Christians, though chiefly, it must be allowed, to those whose Christianity was the least an affair of the life and of the heart.⁶

Assuredly! An open circus or theater will always prove a great hindrance to the devotion of those "Christians" whose Christianity is the least an affair of the life and of the heart. In other words, an open circus or theater will always be a great hindrance to the devotion of those who have not religion enough to keep them from going to it, but who only want to use the profession of religion to maintain their popularity and to promote their selfish interests. On the other hand, to the devotion

¹ "Church History," Vol. II, p. 298.

² Eusebius Life of Constantine, book iv., chap. xx.

³ Torrey's Neander, p. 300.

⁴ *Ib.*

⁵ *Ib.*, note 5.

⁶ *Ib.*

of those whose Christianity is really an affair of the life and of the heart, an open circus or theater will never be a particle of hindrance, whether open at church time or all the time. But those people had not enough religion or love of right to do what they thought to be right; therefore they wanted the State to take away from them all opportunity to do wrong, so that they all could be Christians. Satan himself could be made that kind of Christian in that way; but he would be Satan still.

Says Neander again:—

Church teachers . . . were in truth often forced to complain that in such competitions the theater was vastly more frequented than the church.⁷

And the church could not stand competition; she wanted a monopoly. And she got it. And the "church" wants a monopoly to-day.

This petition of the Carthage convention could not be granted at once, but in 425 the desired law was secured; and to this also there was attached the reason that was given for the first Sunday "law" that ever was made, namely: "In order that the devotion of the faithful might be free from all disturbance."⁸

It must constantly be borne in mind, however, that the only way in which "the devotion of the faithful" was "disturbed" by these things was that, when the circus or theater was open at the same time that the church was open, the "faithful" would go to the circus or theater instead of to church, and, therefore, their "devotion" was "disturbed." And of course the only way in which the "devotion" of such "faithful" ones could be freed from all disturbance, was to close the circuses and the theaters at church time.

In the logic of this theocratical scheme, there was one more step to be taken. It came about in this way: First, the church had all work on Sunday forbidden, in order that the people might attend to things divine. But the people went to the circus and the theater instead of to church. Then the church had laws enacted closing the circuses and the theaters, in order that the people might attend to things divine. But even then the people would not be devoted, nor attend to things divine, for they had no real religion. The next step to be taken, therefore, in the logic of the situation, was to compel them to be devoted—to compel them to attend to things divine. This was the next step logically to be taken, and it was taken. The theocratical bishops were equal to the occasion. They were ready with a theory that exactly met the demands of the case, and the great Catholic Church father and Catholic saint, Augustine, was the father of this Catholic saintly theory. He wrote:—

It is indeed better that men should be brought to serve God by instruction than by fear of punishment, or by pain. But because the former means are better, the latter must not, therefore, be neglected. Many must often be brought back to their Lord, like wicked servants, by the rod of temporal suffering, before they attain to the highest grade of religious development.⁹

Of this theory Neander remarks:—

It was by Augustine, then that a theory was proposed and founded which . . . contained the germ of that whole system of spiritual despotism, of intolerance and persecution, which ended in the tribunals of the Inquisition.¹⁰

The history of the Inquisition is only the history of the carrying out of this infamous theory of Augustine's. But this theory is

only the logical sequence of the theory upon which the whole series of Sunday "laws" was founded.

Then says Neander: "In this way the church received help from the State for the furtherance of her ends."

This statement is correct. Constantine did many things to favor the bishops. He gave them money and political preference. He made their decisions in disputed cases final, as the decision of Jesus Christ. But in nothing that he did for them did he give them power over those who did not belong to the church, to compel them to act as though they did, except in that one thing of the Sunday law. Their decisions, which he decreed to be final, were binding only on those who voluntarily chose that tribunal, and affected none others.

Before this time if any who had repaired to the tribunal of the bishops were dissatisfied with the decision, they could appeal to the civil magistrate. This edict cut off that source of appeal, yet affected none but those who voluntarily chose the arbitration of the bishops. But in the Sunday "law" power was given to the church to compel those who did not belong to the church, and who were not subject to the jurisdiction of the church, to obey the commands of the church. In the Sunday "law" there was given to the church control of the civil power, that by it she could compel those who did not belong to the church to act as if they did.

The history of Constantine's time may be searched through and through, and in it will be found that in nothing did he give to the church any such power, except in this one thing—the Sunday "law". Neander's statement is literally correct, that it was "in this way the church received help from the State for the furtherance of her ends." And it is "in this way" that the "church" is still demanding and receiving help from the State, and getting it only too often.

JOINING HANDS WITH THE PAPACY.

It is a sorry spectacle to lovers of civil and religious freedom when Protestantism, in the persons of its leading representatives, stretches out the hand to the Papacy for an alliance with that religious despotism in the "battle for righteousness" against "atheism" and "lawlessness." Such spectacles are becoming more and more frequent. One of the latest was presented in Columbus, Ohio, on Sunday evening, February 23, when a leading "Protestant" minister of the city, Rev. J. O. Jackson, delivered a eulogy upon the Catholic Church, closing with these words, as reported in the *Ohio State Journal*, of February 24:—

Then there is the noble stand the pope and the church has taken in the encyclical upon the labor question. There is much, also, that might be said in praise of the Catholic attitude on the social purity question, and in the divorce reform. She is one of the main anchors of the family in our American life. In the temperance reform the trumpet of the Baltimore Council gave a clear sound; and in Ohio and other States her bishops are rendering hearty and valuable service. On the Sabbath question, what a noble utterance was that of Mgr. Seton, of Jersey City, when we were having our struggle in the "Greater New York."

I wish now, as a Protestant minister, to say to my fellow-churchmen, that in the struggles for morality and reform which are ahead of us in this country, we will need all the help from Catholics we can get. If they are treated as they ought to be, treated as fellow-Christians and members of the same household of faith, we will find their 10,000,000 of people coming into line with us; and in all probability furnishing the decisive force that shall win the battle for righteousness. We are now facing foreignism, atheism,

and lawlessness of all sorts. None but fools will slight those sincere and godly Catholics who are naturally our best allies.

It is one thing to join hands with Roman Catholics upon the plane of their own individuality, and quite another thing to unite with them when acting under the direction of "the church." In the latter case it is simply a union with the Papacy,—with a religious system which is altogether unrighteous.

While we should have only words of welcome for the Catholic people of our land, as individuals, in every good purpose and work, no support whatever can properly be given the unchristian system under which they have the misfortune to be in bondage. But when support is sought from the Catholic bodies in our land, it is the support of the Papacy that is asked, and it will be given in that way which will best serve the interests of the Papacy in this country.

MORE SUNDAY SELFISHNESS.

[*New York World*, March 9.]

ALBANY, March 9.—The proprietors of a small theater in Brooklyn have found it necessary to give Sunday concerts because a rival establishment does so.

The venture is not profitable, and in order to be rid of annoying competition they persuaded Senator McNulty to introduce a bill putting an end to all Sunday entertainments of any description anywhere in the State, and to all public singing, except in churches. This bill is still in the Codes Committee.

ON THE WRONG TRACK.

THE would-be reformers who are trying to Christianize this nation through the agency of civil law, are on the wrong track. They should be devoting their energies to the spiritual welfare of the Church, instead of trying to force religion upon the masses. The spiritual interests of the Church are in great need of attention. But our self-appointed and self-heralded "reformers" care nothing that the lamp of piety burns dimly in the sanctuary, while they with carnal weapons seek to gain control of worldly governments. Says the *Christian Instructor*:—

We cannot but feel that the sappers and miners are busy at work under the foundation of our Christian system. They do not proclaim their object, and perhaps many of them are not aware of what will be the result of their present operations. . . . They belong to orthodox churches, and are supposed to be feeding the sheep of Christ with pure doctrine. And yet by their learned criticisms upon the Scriptures they are doing more than open infidels to shake the foundation of faith and bring the Lord Jesus into contempt.

The *New York Observer* takes note of this utterance with the remark: "This may seem severe language; but that there is some warrant for it is patent to multitudes of intelligent and reverent souls." This is certainly so. It is painfully patent to lovers of piety and the pure doctrine of God's word, and it is also patent to multitudes of others who find in it an opportunity to point the finger of scorn at the Church and make light of sacred things.

The spiritual condition of the Church—in its confusion of multiplying sects and diversities of doctrine—is alarming, and aptly expressed by the prophetic utterance, "Babylon is fallen." God's word is criticized in the pulpit; sermons upon political and municipal reform topics are dealt out to the multitudes

⁷ *Ib.* ⁸ *Id.* p. 301.

⁹ Schaff's Church History, Vol. II, sec. 27.

¹⁰ Church History, p. 217.

perishing for the bread of life; fairs and festivals, parties and ridiculous shows, desecrate the house set apart to the worship of God, and furnish revenue for his treasury in lieu of the offerings prompted by love. Upon every point of truth there is division; upon error* alone is there unity. And yet we see this divided and fallen Church entering the domain of civil government to dictate reforms to "the powers that be" in the affairs of municipal, State and national legislation. "Physician, heal thyself!"

“ARE RIGHTS DIVINE, OR NATURAL?”

UNDER this heading, the *Truth Seeker*, of this city, takes exception to the view advocated by the AMERICAN SENTINEL, and asserts that rights are natural, and not divine!

One of the *Truth Seeker's* propositions is this: "Our rights co-exist with our bodies." Certainly they do. But does this disprove that they are divine in their origin? By no means. God did not create man, and then at some future time by direct revelation endow him with rights; but he created him a social, moral being, and in that very act of creation made inherent in him certain inalienable rights, "among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." This was recognized one hundred and twenty years ago as a self-evident truth by Thomas Jefferson, a Liberal, but is to-day denied by the *Truth Seeker*, and apparently for no better reason than unwillingness to recognize an intelligent Creator.

It is true, however, that human rights are not a matter of revelation; that is, they are not dependent upon revelation; they are self-evident, because they exist in the very nature of man.

We unhesitatingly, and without compunction of conscience, reduce to abject servitude the lower orders of animals, and compel them to serve us. Why have we not the same right to do this with our fellowmen, who are perhaps not our equals in point of intellect? Simply because by creation they are our brethren. "All men are created equal." The difference which now exists is due to environment, to heredity, and other causes. But these unfortunate members of the race have the same inherent rights that their more fortunate fellows have.

It is true also, that while rights are not dependent upon revelation, that they are most generally and most fully seen and protected where the light of revelation shines most clearly. Every man who learns that he is morally responsible to God, realizes within himself that he must be left free to discharge that responsibility according to the dictates of his own conscience; that as no man can answer for him to God, so no man has the right to dictate any course of action to him in things pertaining to God. The tendency of moral responsibility is to develop manhood in man, and to that cause more than to any other is due the degree of liberty which is enjoyed in the world to-day.

It was the declaration of independence, adopted by the German Princes at Spire, that made possible the American Declaration of Independence. Profoundly impressed with the truth of their individual responsibility to the Author of their existence, the German Princes asserted their right to freedom in all

things relating to God; and to-day we enjoy liberty of conscience because of the recognition of the great principle which they asserted.

We marvel that anybody should deny, or care to deny, moral responsibility, or the divine origin of human rights. We confess that we cannot appreciate the enmity against God that denies his instrumentality in such matters.

DOINGS IN WASHINGTON.

THE National Reform forces are playing a desperate game in Washington. At the hearing on the Sunday bill for the District on the 2nd inst., they utterly failed to put in an appearance, apparently letting the whole thing go by default. But, as intimated in these columns last week that they probably would do, they secured a private hearing before the the House Committee for the District of Columbia on the 6th inst.

On this occasion W. F. Crafts, and a number of ladies, belonging to the "Woman's Sunday League of America" appeared before the committee in behalf of Sunday legislation.

On the fifth inst. a substitute for the Morse Sunday bill was introduced into both houses of Congress: in the House by Mr. Wellington, of Maryland, and in the Senate by Mr. McMillan, of Michigan. The following is the text of this bill:—

A BILL

To protect the first day of the week as a day of rest and worship in the District of Columbia.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it shall not be lawful for any person to keep open any place of business nor maintain a stand for the sale of any article or articles of profit during Sunday, excepting apothecaries, for the dispensing of medicines, and undertakers, for the purpose of providing for the dead, or others for the purpose of charity or necessity; nor shall any public playing of football or baseball or any other kind of playing, sports, pastimes, or diversions disturbing the peace and quiet of the day be practiced by any person or persons within the District of Columbia on Sunday; nor shall any building operations or work upon railroad construction or other labor, except works of necessity and mercy, be permitted upon said day; and for any violation of this Act the person offending shall, for each offense, be liable to a fine of not less than five dollars nor more than fifty dollars, and in the case of corporations there shall be a like fine for every person employed in violation of this Act laid upon the corporation offending.

Sec. 2. That it shall be a sufficient defense to a prosecution for servile labor on the first day of the week that the defendant uniformly keeps another day of the week as holy time and does not labor upon that day, and that the labor complained of was done in such a manner as not to interrupt or disturb other persons in observing the first day of the week as a day of rest and worship.

Mr. Crafts spoke in favor of the substitute which differs from the original principally in that it does not assert any divine authority for the first day of the week.

Mr. Crafts told of the Sunday "laws" in force in the States, and held that Sunday is recognized under the federal laws. The President is exempted from the necessity of signing bills on Sunday, the statutes require suspension of studies at Annapolis and West Point, and these, together with similar requirements, make forty-six State and federal acknowledgments of Sunday. Sunday is an inheritance from our fathers which should be observed as a principle of government.

This is an excellent illustration of the readiness of some people to take a yard if you give them an ell. The law provides that students at Annapolis and West Point shall not be required to study or recite on Sunday,

and this fact is urged as a "reason" why everybody else should be forbidden to work that day!

The hearing on the 11th inst. before a committee of the House, on the proposed religious amendment, was one of more than ordinary interest. The time allotted was two hours, the same to be equally divided between the friends and opponents of the measure. The Reformers were to have half an hour to open their case, then those who opposed the amendment were given an hour. The advocates of the amendment having half an hour in which to close.

The first half hour was used to little purpose, as nothing new was developed.

The principal speech against the amendment was made by Rev. Dr. Lewis, of Plainfield. Dr. Croffut, of Washington, Mr. Putnam, of New York, Mr. Jenkins Lloyd Jones, of Chicago, General Burney and Attorney Abraham, both of Washington, also spoke against the amendment. Mr. Allen Moon, president of the International Religious Liberty Association, yielded his time to Dr. Lewis, which gave the doctor the principal speech, as it gave him double time, which was used to good advantage.

Prof. Coleman, of Philadelphia, undertook to close the argument for the Reformers, but he was soon swamped with questions from the members of the committee, and yielded the floor to Dr. McAllister. This was the signal for the committee to turn all their guns on him, and instead of occupying but two hours, the hearing occupied about four hours. This was of no advantage, however, to the friends of the amendment.

If there was anything lacking to confirm the members of the committee in the belief that the amendment should not be reported favorably, it was furnished by Dr. McAllister. Representative Lewis, of Kentucky, who showed himself thoroughly familiar with the Sunday Mail Reports written sixty-six years ago by Hon. Richard M. Johnson, led out in asking Mr. McAllister hard questions. Mr. Lewis secured from the doctor an admission never before made in a public hearing, namely, that the Reformers desire that every theological question shall be the subject of congressional enactment under the proposed amendment, and also that they intend that if Congress and the courts decide that Sunday is the sabbath, that everybody shall be compelled to keep it without any regard to their religious belief.

"When the hearing closed," remarked a bystander, "it was perfectly evident that the National Reformers had not a friend left on the committee," and it is perfectly safe to say that there is not the slightest danger that the resolution proposing this amendment will be reported favorably by this committee.

We expect to give our readers further details as soon as we receive an official report of the hearing.

SHALL EXECUTIVES IGNORE VOID STATUTES?

[By Addison Blakely, Ph. D., Lecturer in Political Science and History, University of Chicago.]

THE statements now and then made in certain quarters that it is the duty of the executive to enforce law as he finds it, but not to construe it, in the light of political history, is absurd. All government was originally carried on by one department. In the early stages of the evolution of the State, one institution answered all the purposes of the State. The executive department defined law, applied the law, and executed the law; but as experience showed that this one-man power was ex-

* The Sunday-sabbath, which has no Scriptural support.

tremely liable to oppose justice, the modern idea of three grand departments, each being a check upon the other, sprang into existence. First, there was the king, then the counselors of the king, and finally, the differentiation of these counselors into the judicial and legislative departments.

But law is separate and distinct from each of these three departments of government. The law is over them all, and each is amenable to the law. The idea that the legislature is the creator of and above law is, in the light of political evolution, absurd. The truth of the matter, as drawn from political history, is that the legislature defines what law is. The judiciary applies the law to the particular case at issue. The executive enforces the law as it has been applied. All three departments are under the law, and the action of each must be governed by law.

Each officer, therefore, whether legislative, judicial or executive, swears that he will support the law and act in accordance with its provisions. Each official, therefore, swearing to support the law, must have some understanding of it in order to support it; and his understanding of it becomes, to him, the law. In other words, in order to support it he must have some idea of what he is to support; and this "idea" of what the law is, is, in legal parlance, termed "construing" it. Every man, therefore, who has an idea of what law is, construes the law, and any one denying the right of an executive officer to construe the law would deny his right to have any idea of what the law is. He must either be an ignoramus or *non compos mentis*. The mere statement of the case reduces the proposition to absurdity.

The executive, therefore, must construe the law and totally ignore void statutes, and the law will hold him accountable for any palpable neglect in refusing so to do. A case in Mexico recently came to the writer's notice. A judge, in a fit of anger, passed the death sentence upon a man absolutely contrary to all law and reason. The executive, through sympathy with the judge, or out of ignorance, executed the sentence according to the order of the judge. The case necessarily attracted a great deal of attention. It had hardly become known, however, before both the judge and the executive officer were arrested for murder, and were condemned accordingly. The justice of the sentence must be conceded, for otherwise there could be no official conduct of a judge which would be ground for impeachment. If he is to be the sole judge of what the law is, his decisions could not be appealed from; but in our system of government there is no such thing as absolute independence vested in any official. The legislature passes upon the acts of the judiciary and the executive by a limited power of impeachment; the executive passes upon the acts of the legislature and judiciary by means of a discretion in the enforcement of law, and the judiciary reviews the acts of the legislature and passes upon the acts of the executive by means of its judicial procedure. In this way each department exercises certain checks and balances over each of the other departments, though acting within a sphere of its own, and yet at the same time by virtue of the nature of this limited control, the independence of each is maintained. This is known in its perfection as the American system of checks and balances.

One of the most notable instances of the relation of the executive to the judicial departments came prominently into view during Jackson's administration. Chief Justice Marshall rendered a decision contrary to Jackson's idea of what the law was in a certain case;

and when the sentence of Marshall was brought to Jackson's attention, he said: "John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it." It is needless to add that the decision of the court was not carried out.

The very purpose of the differentiation of government into three departments was to effect this result. It was to subject every decision of government to review by persons looking at the matter from different points of view. The purpose was to afford protection to any who might suffer from the action of some one department by having the action reviewed by some other department. Whenever the executive becomes the mere machine of the judiciary the life and object of our present system are gone. There might as well be but one department of government as three departments doing merely the work of one. Government exercises a power that is almost absolutely despotic, and for this despotic power to be used by any one man or any one set of men is manifestly opposed to the purposes of the framers of our Constitution, and to the whole theory of republican government.

It is therefore evident that it is the duty of the executive to pass upon the constitutionality of statutes at all times. It is therefore the duty of the executive officer to refuse to enforce any unconstitutional Sunday statute on the ground that it is unconstitutional, no matter what may be the pressure brought to bear upon him.

In swearing to support the Constitution, in the eyes of the law he refuses to enforce or even to recognize as law any statute contrary to the constitution which he swears to support. It is therefore just as much a duty for the executive officer to pass upon the constitutionality of a Sunday statute as it is for the judiciary officer, and he has no more right to arrest persons under an unconstitutional statute than had the Mexican executive officer to execute a man under the illegal and despotic decree of the Mexican judge.

Jackson's idea of constitutional law is the only one that the American people can logically accept. Any other idea is opposed to our whole system of law and theory of government. The law on this point is very tersely stated in the following decision from the Supreme Court of Kansas:—

"It is claimed by counsel for plaintiff in error, that the point raised by instruction is, that inferior courts and ministerial officers have no right to judge of the constitutionality of a law passed by a legislature. *But is this law?* If so, a court created to interpret the law must disregard the constitution in forming its opinions. *The constitution is law,—the fundamental law,—and just as much to be taken into consideration by a justice of the peace as by any other tribunal.* When two laws apparently conflict, it is the duty of all courts to construe them. If the conflict is irreconcilable, they must decide which is to prevail; and the constitution is not an exception to this rule of construction. If a law [statute] were passed in open, flagrant violation of the constitution, should a justice of the peace regard this law [statute] and pay no attention to the constitutional provision? If that is his duty in a plain case, is it less so when the construction becomes more difficult?"*

CIVIL government pertains only to that which the term itself implies—that which is civil. The purpose of civil government is civil, and not moral. Its function is to preserve order in society.

* Mayberry v. Kelly, 1 Kansas Reports, p. 116.

RELIGIOUS RIGHT IN THE UNITED STATES.*

"ALL men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." The first and greatest of all the rights of men is religious right. Religion is the duty which men owe to their Creator, and the manner of discharging it. The first of all duties is to the Creator, because to him we owe our existence. Therefore the first of all commandments, and the first that there can possibly be, is this: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord thy God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment." Mark 12: 29, 30.

This commandment existed as soon as there was an intelligent creature in the universe; and it will continue to exist as long as there shall continue one intelligent creature in the universe. Nor can a universe full of intelligent creatures modify in any sense the bearing that this commandment has upon any single one, any more than if that single one were the only creature in the universe. For as soon as an intelligent creature exists, he owes his existence to the Creator. And in owing to him his existence, he owes to him the first consideration in all the accompaniments and all the possibilities of existence. Such is the origin, such the nature, and such the measure, of religious right.

Did, then, the fathers who laid the foundation of this nation in the rights of the people—did they allow to this right the place and deference among the rights of the people which, according to its inherent importance, is justly its due? That is, Did they leave it sacred and untouched solely between man and his Creator?

The logic of the Declaration demanded that they should; for the Declaration says that governments derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed." Governments, then, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, can never of right exercise any power not delegated by the governed. But religion pertains solely to man's relation to God, and to the duty which he owes to him as his Creator, and therefore in the nature of things it can never be delegated.

It is utterly impossible for any person ever, in any degree, to delegate or transfer to another any relationship or duty, or the exercise of any relationship or duty, which he owes to his Creator. To attempt to do so would be only to deny God and denounce religion, and even then the thing would not be done; for, whatever any man might do, his relationship and duty to God would still abide as fully and as firmly as ever.

As governments derive their just powers from the governed; as governments cannot justly exercise any power not delegated; and as it is impossible for any person in any way to delegate any power in things religious; it follows conclusively that the Declaration of Independence logically excludes religion in every sense and in every way from the jurisdiction and from the notice of every form of government that has resulted from that Declaration.

This is scriptural, too; for to the definition that religion is "the recognition of God as an object of worship, love, and obedience," the scripture responds: "It is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14: 11, 12.

To the statement that religion is "man's

* From chap. V., "Rights of the People."

personal relation of faith and obedience to God," the scripture responds, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." Rom. 14:22.

And to the word that religion is "the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it," the scripture still responds, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5:10.

No government can ever account to God for any individual. No man nor any set of men can ever have faith for another. No government will ever stand before the judgment seat of Christ to answer even for itself, much less for the people or for any individual. Therefore no government can ever of right assume any responsibility in any way in any matter of religion.

A DANGER SIGNAL. WHAT WILL THE END BE?

BY H. F. PHELPS.

DEMANDS for religious legislation have been very urgent for some years. When these are seen to be futile, threats of political boycott follow. And now demands are being made for open declaration as to the religious faith and standing of officials and political aspirants.

Governor McKinley, although acknowledged as "a staunch Methodist and an active worker in the Methodist Church," is denounced as "a shouting Methodist on Sunday and a political wire-pulling demagogue the rest of the week," because he gave a position of trust to a Roman Catholic, which certain religious-political schemers thought should have been given to a Protestant. And some are also demanding that Mr. Reed shall publicly avow his religious proclivities, and thus in effect bid for political support on the strength of his religion, as though religion were a thing for barter, a thing of the head and not of the heart.

But the latest in this line is that which occurred in St. Paul, Minn., recently. A meeting was held in the interests of better Sunday observance, led by Mrs. W. W. Nicholas, State President of the W. C. T. U. Representatives were present from several organizations and denominations: the Street Mission; Christian Endeavor Mission School; the Baptist Young People; the Christian Citizenship and Law and Order Leagues; the Epworth League; the Woman's Christian Temperance Unions; with several ministers, some of whom advocated "a strictly Puritan sabbath."

It seems that Senator Nelson, of Minnesota, has been receiving protests from some of his constituents against the passage of certain bills now pending in Congress, involving religious legislation. And as the servant and representative of his constituency he has presented these protests in Congress, to which act these latter day "reformers" take exception. The report says:—

A protest was made by all present against the action of Senator Nelson, March 2, when he presented petitions at Washington of citizens of Minnesota against Sunday observance legislation. It was decided to appoint a committee to write to Senator Nelson, asking him to state more clearly his views, the union giving him the benefit of the doubt.

It is one of the rights of the American citizen to petition or protest against any

measure presented in our legislative halls; and it is the duty, and often the pleasure of their representatives to receive and present such. But these religious zealots would deny this right of protest.

But do not these people know, can they not see, that all these demands that public officials and political aspirants shall define themselves upon religious matters are violations of the spirit of the National Constitution, which says, "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or position of trust under the United States"? Do they not know that they are requiring a religious test?

And do not these people know that such a course is only opening the way for even the most contemptible, time-serving politician to declare himself religiously and enter the churches? And are they ready and willing to extend the right hand of fellowship to such as these?

It is encouraging to know that all of our representatives are not time-serving politicians, but that some would rather return to private life than yield the principles of religious liberty under such class legislation as is constantly being urged forward.



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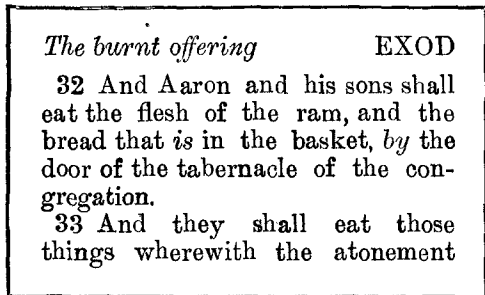
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WE have been much impressed by the fact that the States having the largest proportion of Baptists have the worst Sunday laws. Did Roger Williams live in vain?

THE Commissioners of the District of Columbia have reported adversely on the Morse Sunday bill, saying there is no necessity for such legislation and that it would work a hardship on the people.

At the present time there are in six States and the Dominion of Canada about a score of cases pending against Seventh-day Adventists for refusal to keep the statute-intrenched sabbath of the popular churches instead of the Sabbath of the Lord.

ROBERT T. NASH, a Seventh-day Adventist, was on the 10th inst. convicted at Aberdeen, Miss., of "violating the sabbath" and was sentenced to pay fine and costs amounting to \$27.80, or in default to spend nearly eight months in the chain-gang. His offense was hoeing corn on Sunday.

THE trend of the English Church Rome-ward may be plainly seen in this fact stated by the London *Echo*: "Father Black states that the number of the Anglican clergy in England and Scotland now engaged in hearing confessions is between 1,200 and 1,500; while the number so engaged fifty years ago might safely be reckoned under a score."

A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST at Pleasant Plains, Ala., has been indicted and will be placed on trial about the 27th of April for "forcing his children to labor on Sunday." The said children are all old enough to be members of the Seventh-day Adventist church, and work on Sunday from choice, but that makes no difference. Being minors the law does not permit them to have or to exercise any conscience; nor would the case be materially different if they were of age. The secret of this charge is that Alabama has no "law" forbidding voluntary Sunday work by the individual, hence the only way to reach this Adventist is by prosecuting him for "compelling" his children to work.

WE have not heard the result of the Adventist trials in Lake County, Tennessee, at the time of going to press with this paper, but doubt not that the accused were promptly convicted.

The Adventists do not deny working on

Sunday. They do deny that such work is in any proper sense a nuisance, but they make no attempt to conceal the fact that they regard Sunday only as one of the six working days. They feel that the fourth commandment leaves them no option in the matter: they must remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. God has by his divine commandment separated one day of the week from all the others, and duty to God requires that all who would obey him shall respect that distinction. This the Adventists do in all good conscience by treating the seventh day and it alone as sacred to rest and worship. To do otherwise would be to put no difference between the holy and the profane and so to deliberately sin against God.

The work which these people do on Sunday does not disturb others, it does not prevent others from keeping the day if they so choose; it offends only religious prejudices and for this they are punished by the State of Tennessee.

IN its regulations for its adherents during "Lent," the Catholic Church manifests its attitude toward the temperance question by the following, published "by order of his eminence the cardinal," in the *Catholic Mirror* (Baltimore), of February 29: ". . . Those who avail themselves of this indulgence are not allowed to use flesh meat and fish at the same meal, and they are earnestly exhorted to perform some other act of mortification, such as abstinence from intoxicating liquors." Yet the Catholic Church in this country favors the Sunday excise law.

THE *Herold der Wahrheit*, a Seventh-day Adventist journal published in Hamburg, has been prohibited in Russia, where it had quite an extensive circulation among the German colonists. As the *Herold* is wholly devoted to the presentation of Scripture truth, and has no political complexion whatever, this action of the Russian government amounts simply to an effort on the part of man to block the pathway of God's saving truth. As such it is a piece of folly; for God has said, "My word . . . shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55:11. This has proved true through all ages of time; but earthly governments seem never able to learn the lesson.

A CORRESPONDENT in Pennsylvania writes us of an A. P. A. lecturer, who said recently, that he believed that the time was not far distant when every Protestant preacher who would not spread the American flag over his pulpit and preach patriotism would be invited to step down and out and take a seat in the audience.

"Another A. P. A. speaker," says our correspondent, "discussing the objects of the society, said, 'We want America for Americans; and we want one religion in America, and that the American religion.'"

Our correspondent wrote to the latter speaker, asking him if the A. P. A., as an organization, would indorse such sentiments. The reply was that he spoke only for himself, and that not all A. P. A.'s would go so far as he went, but that he believed that all would erelong.

Of such sentiments our correspondent very pertinently says: "I can see nothing but Romanism in them." And there is nothing but Romanism in them. We do not believe that such utterances correctly represent the A. P. A. If we are to have a religious despotism in this country it might as well be the despotism of the Roman Papacy as of an image to it.

What the American people need to know to-day is the power of the gospel, the sufficiency and supremacy of the word of God, and the right of private judgment. Christian liberty, and not organized despotism, is the foe of Papacy and of priestcraft, under whatever name it appears.

THE San Francisco *Examiner* recently printed the murder statistics of the United States from 1886 to 1895, inclusive. The figures showed that the increase in this terrible form of crime has been steady and rapid, there being in 1895, 10,500 homicides,—over seven times as many as were chronicled in 1886. And the indications for 1896 certainly do not now lead us to hope that we have reached a turn in the tide. Yet while the powerlessness of law to suppress the worst form of crime, or even to prevent its increase, is thus demonstrated, some religious "reformers" are pointing us to human law as a remedy for immorality and sin! Legislators are being urged more and more to pass laws which will Christianize the nation! It is all delusion and folly. If murder cannot be suppressed by law, much less can an individual or a nation be made Christian by the same power.

RESPECTABILITY is the world's standard of morality. It is the morality of outward forms—of human custom and law. God's standard of morality, on the other hand, is his divine law of ten precepts, which represents the morality of his own life. It is sad to see the churches of our land turning from the power of God's law to that of man's law,—abandoning God's standard of morality for that of the world.

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