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SCRIPTURAL RELATION

— OF —

RELIGION AND THE STATE

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“Here are two great objects: one is the protection of the persons and estates of the citizens from injury; the other is the promotion of religious truth. No two objects more entirely distinct can well be imagined. The former belongs wholly to the visible, tangible world in which we live; the latter belongs to that higher world which is beyond the reach of our senses. The former belongs to this life, the latter to that which is to come. Men who will perfectly agree as to the nature of the former object and as to the way of obtaining it, differ as widely as possible respecting the latter object. We must, therefore, pause before we admit that the persons, be they who they may, who are entrusted with power for the promotion of the former object, ought always to use that power for the promotion of the latter object.” — *Macaulay*.



## PREFACE.

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THIS little book claims only a humble place among many that have spoken the conscientious convictions of honest hearts upon this subject of vital interest to the Church of Christ and the State. Those who, in time of apparent peace, lift the voice of warning, often gain for themselves an unenviable name; for people who are comfortably taking their ease in fancied security from any possible danger, do not like to be disturbed; those who are ardently pursuing some favorite scheme which to them seems most timely and important, do not like to be told that they are moving in the wrong direction, that there is danger before them, that they are working for their enemy and the enemies of Christ. But faithful dealing requires that this unwelcome work should sometimes be done. The Lord has said by his prophet: "Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman; if when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's

hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman upon the house of Israel ; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." Ezek. 33 : 2-7.

It is a sense of the responsibility here imposed upon the watchman, and a vivid perception of the dangers of our time, that have prompted the sending forth of this work. The principles here treated are of primary importance at all times, and of special significance at the present. Principles alone are aimed at, and the facts of history which substantiate the positions taken, are in each case familiar to the ordinary reader ; hence, time and space are not consumed in referring to them. This little volume does not profess to compass the entire subject of the relation of Church and State ; some features of the question are altogether omitted, and others are treated in a manner to awaken thought and study, rather than in an exhaustive style.

G. C. T.



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# SCRIPTURAL RELATION OF RELIGION AND THE STATE.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### NOT SETTLED YET.

THE question before us, and to the discussion of which these pages are devoted, is, How far does the rightful exercise of civil authority extend into the realm of religion? By civil authority is meant human government, and by religion is meant the relations which individuals sustain toward the supreme object of their veneration, either in matters of faith or action.

Enough has been said to have settled the question long ago, if it could have been settled by mere logic ; and experience in the things which relate to this subject, forms many chapters in the history of the past. Those chapters contain some most impressive and decisive lessons, in the light of which it would seem that there would be no excuse for vacillation or hesitancy as to the merits of State interference in matters of a purely religious nature. But yet the question is not settled. Many centuries ago, St. Augustine laid down the principle that "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." All respectable men hold an aversion to beholding wrong doing or the effects of wrong thinking in other men. They conceive it to be their duty

to prevent the wrong ; some stop when the first means suggested by Augustine fail, others are in favor of using the latter means if necessary. They argue that men should be forcibly restrained from error, and constrained by force to do right. Following out this principle, untold torture and misery have been inflicted upon the "heretic." To accomplish this work the State has been appealed to, and its strong arm has wielded the lash armed with scorpions, every blow of which fell not only upon the quivering flesh of innocent sufferers, but upon the far more tender and sacred consciences of those to whom principles were dearer than life. Punishment for heresy has not been administered, as in other crimes, in proportion to the gravity of the offense, but according to the determination of the offender not to surrender his convictions of right. So that in undertaking the forcible reformation of dissenters or unbelievers, there is no limit beyond which the penalties must not go. The limit is only reached when the victim yields, or punishment has reached its utmost extent in death.

Yet it is to-day an open question, Shall the State undertake to constrain men to serve God ? No one contemplates carrying matters to the extent of rack and flame ; but we repeat that mild measures will not compel liberty-loving men to adopt principles and practices which are not their own. Hence any movement in that direction is sure to end either in a dismal failure or in cruel persecution. The blood of more than fifty million martyrs cries from the ground in a united protest against such work, while it may be doubted if ever one soul was brought to a saving knowledge of the truth by it. Still, there are many well-meaning Christian men who to-day are so far deceived in this matter as to be working for and demanding the interference of the civil power in the prosecution of the work of the gospel, by compelling men to conform to religious observances, whether willing or unwilling.

Strange to say, the question of extending the civil power into religious matters is not settled yet !

## CHAPTER II.

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### WHAT IS REQUIRED OF THE CHURCH?

BEFORE any one can intelligently decide as to the proper attitude of the State toward religion, he will need to have a just conception of the duties which are imposed upon the Church by its divine Head in reclaiming the sin-stricken world, and in maintaining its own development and life ; and of the duties which devolve upon the civil power as an agent in restraining crime and promoting the general welfare. To the consideration of these two points this chapter and the one following are to be devoted.

In speaking of the Church, reference is not made to any organization of Christians in particular, but to all who bear the name and represent the cause of Christ, and have accepted the commission to labor to evangelize the world. The question that forms the title of this chapter will be most satisfactorily answered by reference to the words of Christ himself, in which the commission of his laborers is stated. We cannot refer to them all, for much of the time of his earthly ministry was devoted to the work of qualifying his followers to carry forward the great work of which he drew the plans and laid the foundation. But here are some of his words : "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28 : 19, 20. This was the final commission upon which the disciples went forth to their apostleship, and under which the Church has prosecuted her

legitimate work. But it will be seen that a great deal of the work undertaken by the Church is not authorized by this commission. The forces to be used in this work were those which Jesus employed, the only ones which can touch and change the heart,—the powers of moral suasion exerted through a consistent example, and accompanied by appropriate teaching.

Again, as illustrating the manner in which the followers of Christ were to carry forward this work, Jesus said: "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" And he adds: "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5: 13, 16. The best preaching is a godly, consistent life, in which the practical benefits of the truth as it is in Jesus are evidently set forth. Nothing else will so powerfully attract men to right ways as to behold in those who profess religion the fruits of purity and holiness. This was the power with which Jesus designed that his people should go forth to the world. Equipped with the convincing testimony of a transformed and consecrated life, Christ promised also to endue them "with power from on high." Thus prepared, the little band of apostles went forth from the upper room in Jerusalem like the warrior upon the white horse, "conquering and to conquer." Rev. 6: 2. The word of God ran everywhere, and multitudes were converted, the secret of the apostles' power being in their manner of life, attended by the power of God. We read of them that men "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4: 13. To our impulsive natures it may at first seem that these gentle means would be altogether impotent to move the hearts of the great mass of humanity to forsake evil and turn to God. Our natural wills seek for other means to convince men of their ungodly deeds and persuade them to do right. Mahomet presented his creed with his



left hand while in his right hand he carried a drawn sword ; and many professed Christians, when they see that men are obdurate and will not do as they ought, but insist upon doing what they ought not, after all their powers of persuasion are exhausted, are wont to become impatient and try to get their hands upon some more effectual weapon. They seek to compel men to do what they think they ought to do. And the most convenient, carnal instrument within the reach of the Church is the sword of Cæsar, the power of the State.

But here we meet the question, Is the Church authorized to appeal to and use the civil authority to prosecute her work? To this we answer emphatically,—No ; for the following reasons : 1. Because the Bible does not authorize the employment of such means. 2. The exercise of compulsion in religious matters is totally opposed to the principles set forth in the life and teachings of Christ. 3. Such a course is destructive of freedom of conscience,—one of man's most precious heritages. 4. The work of coercing men would supercede the work of the gospel, for men cannot be converted by coercion. 5. It would result in persecution. 6. It would incite the practice of hypocrisy. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world : if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews ; but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18 : 36. The word rendered "fight" means to contend. That is, if Christ's kingdom were of this world, his servants would use human force to oppose human forces ; but his kingdom being *not* of this world, he gave Pilate the assurance that he had no intention of appealing to human agencies to accomplish its work.

Christ's professed followers have not always entertained the same ideas as those expressed by the Master. It was but a few centuries after these words were spoken that they were found employing the same agencies to enforce their religious views upon men that the Jews were then bringing to bear upon

the meek and lowly Jesus. They took hold of the arm of civil power, and moved that arm to inflict suffering and penalties upon those who did not choose to share their opinions and conform to their practices. These men thought that they were conferring upon their fellow-men a great benefit in thus compelling them to conform to their ideas. But others just as conscientious as themselves could not and would not surrender their own convictions, and consequently gave their bodies to the flames and to torture, not accepting deliverance at the expense of their principles. To place the power of oppression in the hands even of good men is a dangerous experiment, as has been proved many times. But the world has yet to furnish one single instance in which the exercise of such power has resulted in any good to mankind, or in bringing glory to Christ's cause. It cannot be so. Jesus emphatically repudiated every form of coercion as an adjunct to the promotion of his cause. No man can become a disciple of Christ except by a voluntary humiliation and denial of self, a state of mind not to be induced by force.

Hence, we conclude that all attempts to coerce men's consciences, or to enforce upon them religious observances or a religious faith, are un-Christlike, and consequently anti-Christian. This opinion we hold in regard to religious compulsion of any kind. This is not the kind of work required of the Christian Church.

On the other hand, the Scriptures teach that every follower of Christ ought "to walk even as he walked;" to live in exemplification of the principles of genuine piety; to shed abroad the gracious influences of a godly life; to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is within you, with meekness and fear." 1 Peter. 3:15. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance unto the



acknowledging of the truth." 2 Tim. 2 : 24, 25. In another place the apostle thus outlines the Christian life : "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul ; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles ; that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king, as supreme ; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men : as free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." 1 Peter. 2 : 11-17.

In these passages of Scripture, Christian character and work are set forth. The instructions are perfectly in harmony with the life of Jesus Christ ; and it may be stated without the least fear of contradiction that no individual life has ever exerted as extended an influence over the world as that exerted by Jesus of Nazareth,—an influence which like an ever widening circle now reaches earth's remotest shores, and has pervaded the centuries of the past with a constantly increasing power. But there was no trace of arbitrary power connected with his work. When his exasperated disciples impatiently appealed to him to visit retribution upon his opposers, he rebuked them, saying : "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9 : 55, 56. And so he told his apostles : "But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you." Luke 10 : 10, 11. In no instance did he instruct

them to seek alliance with the civil powers in order to have their teachings enforced upon those who would not receive them. His failure to refer them to such aid was not because at that time they were so far from the seat of authority as to have no influence and no apparent probability of ever gaining influence with the world ; it was rather because the work of the Church is a spiritual work and must be done by spiritual agencies, while the State is carnal and can only employ arbitrary power to compel men to obey its behests. In the work of grace Christ cannot join hands with Cæsar. The entire teaching of the gospel is a protest against such a union.

Paul caught the spirit of the gospel of Christ and wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." Rom. 12 : 1. And, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5 : 20. The gospel call is, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Every Christian should present the gracious call. Every church should herald it abroad. By persuasion, by sympathy, by love, by instruction, by the power of a godly example, the Church should say to the perishing sinner, "Come ; go thou with us, and we will do thee good." Christ said, "And I, if I be lifted up, . . . will draw all men unto me." This is what is required of the Church — lift up Christ. If she were faithful in that, there would be no need of the interference of the State. All men would be drawn to Christ if the Church represented the peace and purity of his kingdom. But in the absence of a consistent example upon the part of Christians, it is a fearful mistake to call upon the State to make up in arbitrary power what the Church lacks in spiritual energy.

## CHAPTER III.

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### WHAT IS THE LEGITIMATE SPHERE OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT?

HAVING considered the work assigned to the Church by its Master, we now raise the question as to the legitimate sphere of civil government. Such an inquiry is entirely pertinent to the discussion of a question of a moral or religious nature; for the Bible teaches that an intimate relation exists between God and nations, and between his people and the civil power. Civil power is ordained of God. Infinite Wisdom designed and established human authorities, and ordained that there should be laws with power to execute them recognized and upheld among men. The apostle writes: "The powers that be are ordained of God." Rom. 13: 1.

This was not a part of the plan primarily presented to man by the Creator; for God desired that all creatures should loyally acknowledge his claims upon them, and abide by the pure principles of righteousness which constitute the divine will, and thus all authority would have emanated from God directly. But men chose to depart from this arrangement. They corrupted their ways and became essentially rebellious and sinful. To lead as many as possible back to himself, to induce men by the gentle persuasion of moral influences, gracious promises, exhibitions of infinite love, the pleadings of the Holy Spirit, by warnings of future wrath, by precept, example, exhortation, and spiritual influence, to give over their rebellion, forsake sin and be saved eternally, God devised and provided the gospel of salvation through Christ. He committed its work to his Church; but not to the State.

If all men would yield to the gentle influences of the gospel, and be controlled by its principles, there would be but little to be done by civil law. But mankind does not accept the peaceable overtures of grace. Few, very few indeed, are wholly subject to the law of God ; and no force can be rightfully employed to make them so. But some limit must be placed upon evil ; some restraint upon evil tendencies must be exercised, or the race would quickly perish. Men who will not be influenced by moral considerations and moved upon by the love of Christ, must be compelled at least to recognize the rights of their fellows. And as every man must give an account of himself to God, it follows that all men should enjoy the privileges of exercising their inalienable rights, and be protected in those rights which pertain to probationary life. This requires that there should be a standard of human rights, a definition of what is right or wrong as between man and man, and that that standard should be maintained by force if necessary. God employs only moral and spiritual forces to induce men to do right ; but all men are not willing to yield to such suasion, hence power and authority is delegated to nations to frame such laws as are necessary for the preservation of the natural rights of men. Paul thus states the object for which the "powers that be" are ordained : "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power ? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same : for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid ; for he beareth not the sword in vain ; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Rom. 13 : 2-4. To establish and maintain the privileges and duties of good citizenship is therefore the legitimate sphere of the

civil power. Having done this, the work of the State is accomplished.

But to do this is no small task in this world of oppression, selfishness, and deception. It requires legislation, by which principles are declared and laws made; it requires the executive force to give life to the principles enunciated by the law-maker; and it requires the judiciary, where the laws are defined and the judgment is administered between the law and the offender. To provide for these requires the existence and support of an extensive and elaborate organization which we call government.

The interests and obligations of the government and its citizens are mutual. Every citizen is interested in the maintenance of the government. It is the conservator of his peace, of his rights, and his privileges. For the protection and immunities thus secured to him, the citizen owes the government a hearty loyalty. To prove false to his country is rightfully reckoned one of the most serious crimes a man can commit.

The Latin word for "citizens" is *civis*, closely related to *civilis*, from which we have the words "civil" and "civility." So that literally, civility and good citizenship are synonymous terms. They are so practically also. And while the citizen owes a large obligation to his government, the civil power owes to its subjects the promotion of civility and good citizenship, which embraces all the conditions necessary for temporal happiness and the untrammelled enjoyment of every privilege which does not conflict with the rights of others. The greater the liberties secured for the citizen, the more successful is the government. The less there is of interference in private affairs, without jeopardizing the public weal, the better. In the distribution of its benefits the government should seek to be impartial. It is a flagrant violation of the principles of jurisprudence to gratify popular



demand by depriving a few of their rights. Even the whole nation has no right to inflict a wrong upon a single citizen in order to secure their ends, or to compel him to yield his conscience to the demands of an otherwise united community. Just laws are based upon the recognition of individual rights, with the motive of securing these to each individual, impartially and intact.

In his days, Nebuchadnezzar built a majestic image of gold. Through a similar object seen in a dream, he had learned of a supernatural power unknown to him before. He doubtless associated that power and that wisdom with the image; and was therefore prompted to erect an image representing this divine power as an object of worship. The conscience of his people acquiesced; and at the dedication of the image there were assembled a vast throng of votaries, embracing the noble and influential men of the realm. Public enthusiasm ran high. At last the signal was given when a universal offering of homage should be paid to the new deity. Public sentiment approved of the action, the law of the land upheld it, the severest penalties enforced it. But at the moment of triumph the scene was marred. Three men of all that throng stood erect and unmoved. They had no respect nor admiration for the senseless image. Their consciences protested against such foolish idolatry. They declared their honest convictions to the king; but to him it seemed the very height of presumptuous impudence that they should set up their scruples against such a manifestly sacred deity. Their consciences were condemned, and their scruples trampled into the dust. Their God-given rights were sacrificed in the burning fiery furnace.

We denounce the action of the king; and why? Because he was an idolator, and the Hebrews were the children of the true God, perhaps; but that is not the ground upon which a just condemnation of his action stands. For directly after this he manifests the same unreasonable and injudicious spirit by proclaiming that whosoever said aught against the

God of the Hebrews should be cut in pieces, and his house should be made a dung-hill. So far as good results are concerned, one action was as barren of them as the other. The wrong consisted in depriving these men of their inalienable rights, which rights are as sacred in a pagan as in a Christian. When Nebuchadnezzar undertook to force the consciences of these men, he overstepped the grounds of legitimate government; and any similar action by any ruler or government, in the interests of any religion whatever, is as truly an infringement upon the most sacred rights vouchsafed to men — the rights of private conscience.

• We therefore conclude that the duties of civil government are confined by their legitimate bounds to the promotion of the qualities of good citizenship, and to restraining that which is inimical to it; that good citizenship is compatible with the truest liberty and the most complete happiness of the people; and that in order to secure these it is necessary that the consciences of men should be left free and untrammelled.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MORALITY AND CIVILITY.

UPON reading the preceding chapter, this question may impress itself upon the mind : Ought not the State to conserve and promote the morals of its citizens? It will be best to defer the answer to this inquiry to a subsequent chapter, and in this to seek for a definition of the terms "morality" and "civility," and to discern the relation of statecraft to them. We have seen that it is the sole office of the State to promote civility, and hence the relation of statecraft to morality will depend upon the relation of morality to civility, or good citizenship. What is this relation? They are undoubtedly related in character, since both are required by the word of God. But at the same time they are not identical. And this fact, if duly considered, will lead to the proper solution of the whole question before us.

Morality is conformity to the holy law of God. One celebrated lexicographer defines morality to be "the state of conformity to the true moral standard; the conformity of an act to the divine law." Immorality is synonymous with sin; and in the language of inspiration we have the definition that "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. And again, "All unrighteousness is sin." 1 John 5:17. The apostle Paul seems to go even further than this when he tells us that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." That is, any act prompted by the natural heart, and not performed as an act of faith, is imperfect and sinful in character. From this scriptural statement we are led to another: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-



edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4 : 12. When the word of God discerns in the heart, purposes and desires that are not in harmony with its pure principles, it condemns those purposes as immoral, as sinful. Even "the thought of foolishness is sin." Prov. 24 : 9.

The ten commandments are rightfully regarded as being emphatically the law of God. They compose the recognized moral standard. Every sin, of whatever nature, is an infraction of one or more of these precepts. Morality is conformity to this perfect law in thought, word, and deed. Paul says of this law that it is spiritual; that is, it applies to the spiritual nature and faculties; and impurity in desires, dishonesty in purpose, feelings of hatred, love of the world, pride of heart, or any of the cherished evils of the heart are offenses against God and his law,—they constitute immorality.

Christ taught this doctrine in its fullness. Speaking of the sixth commandment, he said: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Again: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." This is the Saviour's definition of morality. The standard which he recognized was the ten commandments, interpreted spiritually. A similar application should be made of each one of those precepts, and it will be seen that the standard produced would be of the most searching and perfect char-

acter, any deviation from which in thought, word, or deed, is offensive to God, is a lapse from true virtue, is sin. And therefore, perfect conformity to this standard in thought, word, and deed, is morality.

It is evidently impossible for the State to enforce such a test as this, it is utter folly for it to undertake such a work. It involves a long series of the most dreadful evils for a man or a body of men to undertake the control of other men's consciences or to administer moral discipline for other men. In the first place, morality is a secret quality, determined only by the character of the thoughts, the state of the heart, and the purposes thereof. In order that these may be scrutinized, an inquiry must be instituted upon the thoughts and motives. This "holy office" was undertaken in the 13th century and onward by the Romish Church; and the infinite horrors of the Inquisition resulted. This institution was prompted by the ostensible motive of saving men from the consequences of their own erratic natures, and to correct their moral obliquity. We do not need to say that for any good purpose it was a dismal failure. It bears an awful testimony to the utter impotency of any human power to administer a moral government. Those who yielded to the pressure were no better for yielding, and those who suffered earned the reputation of martyrs.

Civility is the conduct of man in his proper relation to his fellows or to the State. A man is a good citizen when he is truly civil. It is the province of the State to promote and enforce civility, and to restrain incivility. It can do this effectually because civility relates only to overt actions.

We have said that civility and morality were related, because they are both inculcated by the Scriptures. Bible civility is included in true morality. That is, a person who is scripturally moral will be scripturally civil; but it sometimes happens that the human standard of civility is not the Bible standard.

The Bible standard of good citizenship is set forth in the thirteenth chapter of Romans. The first part of the chapter is devoted to the subject of rulers and the Christian's duty toward them. It reads thus : " Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same : for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid ; for he beareth not the sword in vain : for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also ; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues : tribute to whom tribute is due ; custom to whom custom ; fear to whom fear ; honor to whom honor. Owe no man anything but to love one another ; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet ; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor : therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13 : 1-10. The first five verses relate to the duty of submission or subjection to authority. The Bible is no party to rebellion, insubordination, or anarchy. Submission to legal authority is everywhere taught. Peter says : " Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake ; whether it be to the king, as supreme ; or, unto governors." 1 Peter 2 : 13, 14.

Submission does not always imply obedience ; and when the law of the State requires disobedience to God, a Christian cannot obey that law, as in the case of Daniel's fellows ; and in his own case with Darius ; and also in the experience of the apostles. Acts 5 : 29. But even then the Bible does not admit of resistance to established authority, but teaches longsuffering in quiet submission to whatever penalty may be inflicted. "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." 1 Peter 2 : 19. "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye." 1 Peter 3 : 14. The Bible advocates good government and loyalty toward the government.

The second duty mentioned in Romans 13, is that of paying tribute. "For this cause pay ye tribute also." The payment of dues to the government is but right, in consideration of the privileges, immunities, and protection we enjoy under it. Evasion of customs or taxes is wrong morally and civilly. On the other hand it is just that the State should return benefits for value received, and a government that does not do so is a failure.

The next duty is that of respect or honor to those in authority. It is uncivil and unscriptural to indulge in contempt for magistrates. As men, in the sight of God, all are equal. Manhood is a quality that is not dependent upon position. But as representatives of the law, rulers, magistrates, and all in authority are worthy of respect. The apostle speaks of reprobates as those "who despise government ;," "they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." 2 Peter 2 : 9. "Honor the king," is one of the precepts of the gospel.

Next we are told, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." The payment of debts is a Christian duty and is within the Christian idea of good citizenship. It is a duty which every man owes to his fellow-men to deal honestly and uprightly. Then love to his neighbor is put down as

the one necessary consideration to complete the duties of citizenship.

The points of good citizenship having been stated, the ten commandments are now appealed to, to show that the code of civility set forth by the apostles harmonizes with the principles of righteousness. See verse 9. It is often said that the decalogue forms the basis of human laws. Not so. The essential element of God's law is piety or morality. It means purity of heart. Such a law, man cannot administer. Nor does it come within the rightful sphere of civil authority to undertake to enforce one principle of the decalogue because it is the will of God, or because of its relation to moral character.

Civility is but an outward garb, whose praise is of men; morality is of the heart, whose praise is of God.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE STATE NOT A PERSONAL MORAL AGENT.

REVERTING to the question that was suggested at the opening of the previous chapter, we proceed to inquire into the nature and extent of the responsibility of the State in regard to the personal character of its citizens.

Some false ideas exist in reference to the moral accountability of a nation. What is the State? What constitutes a government? It is a body politic, a community organized and maintained for the purpose of securing protection in the exercise of legal privileges to its component individuals. Government derives its strength from the consent and cooperation of its subjects. Abraham Lincoln very happily expressed the true ideal of civil government as "a government *of* the people, *by* the people, and *for* the people." There are different forms of administration, but a just government must recognize the people and their interests as being the one great object to be considered. And the highest compliment that can be paid to any nation is found in the contentment, happiness, and prosperity of its people. This can only be attained when the government represents the people, when every citizen and his interests become a part of the State. Such a government is composed of its individuals and is just what its individual members make it. Those who compose the government determine its character, and every one of these men is accountable to God for his acts and influence in public as well as in private life. And how much farther, we ask, can the responsibility be carried?—No farther; for beyond

the individuals that compose a State there is no one to bear moral accountability in the matter.

Variations in the form of government do not modify the positions here taken ; for a just government represents the people, whether it be vested in a hereditary sovereign, or in persons elected by the people themselves. If a sovereign arrogates despotic power, he perverts justice, and assumes individually the responsibility of his actions. But a sovereignty is as truly a creature of the people as is a republic ; and while it is the duty of the government to care for and protect its citizens, it is even more incumbent upon the citizens to foster and sustain the government. Thus we see that governments are wholly impersonal, both as to individuality and accountability. Hence the merits or demerits of a nation attach to each of the individuals who compose the nation in proportion to the influence they exert in national affairs. The sins of a nation may be traced to their origin as readily as the sins of an individual. For every such sin some person or persons are responsible, and it will not be difficult for the Judge of all the earth to locate the responsibility. It is a familiar saying that corporations have no souls. Quite true ; and when a corporation turns out to be a fraud, the law looks for the promoters, and puts upon them as individuals the responsibility of the evil deeds perpetrated under the name of the corporation. Nobody has ever heard of a company or corporation, as such, being tried for penal offenses. These facts duly considered will dissipate much of the mist that hangs about the question of a nation's responsibility as a moral agent.

The question as to whether the State is qualified to act as a guardian of the religion and morals of its citizens, can, in the light of what we have seen, only be answered in the negative. And there are other considerations that render this conclusion still more cogent. Men owe their highest duties to God ; and morality is conformity to God's will. One

man has no right to assume control over another in this matter. And the State has no more of a right to dictate religion and morality than an individual would have. So long as it remains a fact that "every one of us shall give account of *himself* to God" (Rom. 14:12), it is most important that every one should have liberty of conscience and action to conduct himself after that manner in which he shall choose to meet the solemn account.

Among the most sacred heritages of men is the right of conscience. Fidelity to conscience is the measure of character. A true man is true to his convictions and to his principles, and he will yield everything, even life itself, rather than surrender this right. It is an endowment of the Creator, designed to be enjoyed by all men alike. It is only by the exercise of this right that men can be held to a moral accountability. Therefore, whatever work the State may undertake for the moral benefit of her subjects, the right of private conscience must be respected. Morality is the antithesis of sin; sin is immorality. And we have seen that the civil power cannot undertake to detect nor even to define sin. It cannot judge of sin, for that is born and nourished in the heart.

But there is something in civil jurisprudence that corresponds to sin in the divine government, and that is crime. These two terms relate to transgression. "Sin is the transgression of the [divine] law," and crime is the transgression of human laws. Crime is not always sin. It would be if civil laws were always based upon the principles brought out in a previous chapter from the 13th chapter of Romans. Daniel committed a crime in praying to God. His companions committed a penal offense in not worshipping the image, but they committed no sin. Hundreds of thousands have been convicted of crimes, whose only fault was their fidelity to the truth of God. They suffered because their oppressors failed to distinguish between crime and sin, and



to draw the line of human jurisdiction between them. There was a time when in the United States of America it was a crime punishable with heavy penalties for a citizen to neglect to seize an escaped slave and return him to bondage, while to do so was a grievous sin.

And again, we see that sin is not always crime. It is not a crime to meditate evil, to entertain impure desires, to have covetous eyes, but these are sins. The infraction of human requirements or of the rights of citizenship constitutes crime; but an offense against purity of heart is sin. And from the very nature of sin, or immorality, we see that it is not possible for human law to control it. Any effort in that direction would result in persecution or in producing hypocrisy.

What estimate could be placed on the character of one who, without any conscientious promptings, allowed himself to be forced into the observance of religious forms or rites? How would that man be regarded, who, to please a popular demand or to avoid an uncomfortable pressure, would yield his avowed convictions and accept a creed that was forced into his hand by human authority? Of what value would a man be to society who would thus surrender his God-given rights and the charter of his manhood? He would gain nothing in the respect of any respectable person. In the eyes of his community he would be ranked as a sycophant, a hypocrite, a traitor to the highest trust that was ever committed to man. He who would thus fail to maintain his position as a man accountable to God only for his religious life, would be altogether unworthy of any other trust. If he possessed any convictions, or was sensible of any compunctions, his self-respect must ever be put to shame, and his peace be continually disturbed by an injured conscience.

Yet when the State undertakes the censorship of the morals of its people, it can only lead men to take just such a step as has been indicated. It does not and cannot work upon the heart; it has no power and no means by which to

change the convictions of men ; it only seeks to control the actions and bring them into harmony with its behests, while the sense of duty is unchanged, and the principles are violated. If this work succeeds, the fruits will be a generation of hypocrites, a community the members of which are not true to their moral sense, who are false to their sense of right, false to their privileges and duties as accountable beings. It would be unsafe to live in such a community, for those who would sacrifice all these high considerations for policy's sake would be wanting in moral strength, and would become a menace to the security of the rights of others. Having been themselves coerced into a false position, they would not hesitate to trample upon the rights of their fellow-citizens. Having violated their sense of moral obligation, having seen their own claims for respect and regard ruthlessly ignored, they could readily be led to overrun the claims of others for consideration. Surely no government can afford to engage in such work as this.

Another consideration which should ever debar civil government from undertaking to correct the moral obliquity of its citizens is this : Not only is the State powerless to control sin and enforce morality, but the individual is powerless to control sin in his own person. No person can by any exercise of strength, will, or resolution, break the power that sin has in his own life. Every human attempt to cope with sin has proved a failure and is destined to do so. How then can a State do for its citizens what no man can do for himself? How could a community of lepers legislate the disease out of their midst? As well may civil governments undertake to counteract the evils of the human heart. They have tried it in years gone by, but the attempt has made either martyrs or hypocrites of the subjects, and monsters of the zealots.

The only force that can oppose the power of evil is that represented by the gospel of Christ. "It is the power of

God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i : 16. Only the power of God can match the power of Satan. But God works by different methods from those employed by the State. The latter accompanies its behests by no persuasions. It does not entreat obedience and respect. "It lays its strong hand upon the offender with an unmistakable "Come along" that has no savor of mercy or forbearance. But not such are the methods of divine goodness. Says Paul: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Says Christ, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me." The Father says: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." These words represent the true spirit of the gospel. Moral principles can only be cultivated by moral influences. A good character can only be formed by a voluntary choice of the good, and then the will must be mightily assisted by the grace of God. Faith in Christ as the Saviour from sin brings the soul into connection with divine strength and breaks the bondage of sin.

How utterly unfit the secular power is to engage in such work! Will Jesus yoke up with the police court to fit men for heaven? Are policemen laborers together with God? Shall human prejudice and weakness sit in judgment upon men's religious principles? Preposterous! Let us relegate such ideas to those dark and bloody ages where they have their dreary habitation.

There are certain conditions that are favorable to the development of virtue and moral character, which the State may and ought to foster. Enlightenment and freedom encourage morality. Liberty of conscience and judgment induce men to think for themselves. Let a State provide for the intellectual development of the people by schools, by the

printing press, by the promotion of the arts and sciences. Let it secure to each one of its citizens freedom to act for himself in matters of religious duty ; let it leave the question of a man's religion and religious observances entirely alone.

Then let the Church, equipped with the word of God and the Spirit of the Master, go forth to gather in souls for Christ's kingdom. The harvest is great and the returns are precious. It is a time to make the heart of the worker rejoice as he looks abroad to-day over the fields that are glowing with the noonday light of knowledge and progress. The spirit of freedom is abroad, men are hastening hither and thither in search of truth. Error has perceived its golden opportunity, and is multiplying its votaries. Shall not truth awake? Shall not her forces cast off the works of darkness and gird on the armor of light? If in this auspicious time the professed Church of Christ shall rely upon Cæsar instead of depending upon God to do the great work at hand, it will thus commit a greivous mistake. As well might a father commend the culture of his tender family to the government. To do so would be an open confession either of apathy or pitiable weakness.

## CHAPTER VI.

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### THE RELATION OF THE STATE AND CHURCH.

IN view of the preceding chapters, this one may seem to be redundant. But the questions involved cannot be too well understood. It is the imperative duty of every citizen of this country, and in fact of every other country, to understand this matter well. The issues before us swell this subject into vast proportions with important considerations for the present hour. Many good people do not understand either what the relation of religion and the civil power is, or what it ought to be. More than this, they are insensible to the intimate relation which this question sustains to freedom of conscience, and to the preservation of that equality among men in the sight of the government, which is indispensable to justice.

What the relations of the State to the Church and of the Church to the State are, and what those relations ought to be, are two distinct propositions. For it is a fact attested by some of the most dreadful epochs of history that these relations have not always been what they ought to have been. They have each of them often been found trespassing upon the territory of the other, and every such infringement has proved a disaster.

Let no one deceive himself with the idea that we have outlived the time when men need to trouble themselves about this matter; that men are no more to be called upon to suffer for conscience' sake. It is true that some centuries now intervene between us and the time when the Church of Rome, allied to the power of the empire, sat supreme, drunken with



the blood of martyrs, "and death and hell followed" the footsteps of its career. But let us not forget that human nature is in itself incapable of improvement, and that it is moved upon by the same malign spirit that has ever dogged the pathway of God's cause, to cast down and destroy his people and his truth. And even in our day these evil promptings are finding avenues for the exhibition of their real character, and they are seen to be the same that they were in the Dark Ages. Satan does not yet fully control human affairs, thank God; but he loses no chance to put in his malicious work to destroy the truth. In no way has he ever found a more satisfactory method of working his dreadful designs than when he could, by placing the civil power in the hands of one set of religionists, incite them to persecute, to slay their fellow-men—their fellow-servants even—those whom they ought to have loved with the same love with which Christ loved all men. And if Satan in these days can induce men to follow the same diabolical work, he will be no less pleased than he was in the days now gone by.

Does some one say that this cannot be? Let such beware, let them be admonished to look closely at the influences that are now moulding society and moving the world. Let them watch carefully the trend of political and ecclesiastical events; let them take notice of the prestige that the Church is gaining in the political world, and the readiness with which statesmen listen to her counsels and heed her directions. It will not be difficult in all these things to see premonitions of coming danger. A vivid sense of this danger is our only safeguard. The situation need not be viewed with the eyes of an alarmist; it is a subject that requires sober thought and not hasty conclusions. It demands deliberate study, a close discernment, a fine discrimination between the true and the false, between logic and sophistry, between the genuine and the specious, for, as stated at the outset, this question is not settled yet; and it never will be settled till it is settled right,

and it never will be settled right till He comes whose right it is to reign, and the government is administered by Him who reigns in righteousness.

It is true that in some respects the State and the Church occupy common ground. They are both established by divine authority ; they are both recognized in the same Bible ; they are both designed to promote and conserve the interests of humanity ; and they are both to do their work in behalf of human beings. But none of these considerations are such as to render their work interchangeable or mutual. Though they were ordained by the same authority, they were ordained for purposes that are entirely distinct. Though the Bible recognizes them both, it draws an unmistakable line between them and between their fields of operation. And although they are each designed to work for the good of mankind, the objects at which they are aimed are as far apart as heaven and earth. They do not do the same work for the same individual. The success of each depends upon its keeping to its legitimate work, and avoiding any interference with the work of the other.

The query of the proverb, "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned ?" is applicable to the Church that intermeddles with politics. The hands of the Church are blackened, her gold becomes dross by such contact. The work of the Church is spiritual : that of the State is carnal. The Church cannot engage in such work and retain her purity and her influence for holiness. She thus forsakes her Lord and Master for the service of Cæsar. On the other hand, when the State aspires to act the part of a spiritual guardian for its people, it transcends its commission, becomes antichrist, and destroys the very work it essays to do. No benefits ever come to the Church by the State acting in collusion with the Church, or in extending to her any special favors. Such favors are fatal to true spirituality, because pure and undefiled religion is a plant of heavenly origin ; it

must be nourished by divine light and grace, ministered to by an unseen power. It cannot be forced to healthy growth in the hothouse of public favor, or derive its strength from rulers or parliaments. The introduction of earthly elements blights its purity and stamps it as mongrel.

In her work the Church should not seek any commission from the State, nor any power or authority to enforce its tenets or any precept of the divine law or gospel. Its commission was long ago given by its great Founder, and to carry on its work the Church should rely solely and exclusively upon the power with which she is vested from on high. With this the Church is fully equipped to every good work ; she has no need of any alliance with the carnal power, nor can she form such an alliance but at the sacrifice of her covenant with Christ. Let the Church pursue her high calling with earnestness and humble trust in God, and she will merit from the State all the protection and consideration that she needs from that quarter. But whether she receives from the State all that she deserves or not, or if she receives nothing but persecution and pain, that does not for one moment alter or modify the claims of God and humanity upon her ; nor should it affect her policy, or deter her in the work of presenting the crucified and risen Christ as the Saviour of the world, both by her testimony and the power of a godly life. Earthly governments are subject to change ; men are unstable and susceptible to impulses ; but the gospel of Christ never changes ; the commission of the great Captain of our salvation reads just as it did eighteen hundred years ago. Kingdoms, empires, and republics have arisen and crumbled to ruin, but the truth of God has not altered one jot or tittle. The same work is going forward that was instituted by the Son of man. Why should the Church of God seek to put her trust in princes in whom there is no help ?

As has been shown, the gospel does not teach nor admit of insubordination and anarchy. It teaches men to be sub-



ject not only for wrath but also for conscience' sake; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. It teaches Christians to "honor the king" or rulers; it condemns those who despise authority and speak evil of dignitaries; it teaches us that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong, and that if we be called on to suffer for righteousness' sake we are even to rejoice because we are thus made partakers of Christ's sufferings. We may well claim that the loyalty taught in the Bible is of the most perfect type. Christianity is in no way inimical to civil authority, but promotive of it so that even when the State comes into conflict with the Higher Authority which the Christian must ever acknowledge and obey, he will without resistance take those consequences of his actions which the law imposes, and by which its claims will be satisfied, at the same time preserving integrity to God and the truth. Where the legitimate sphere of civil government is apprehended and adhered to, there will be no such conflict. There is no conflict between right principles of political economy and Christianity; but even when rulers and law-makers misapprehend their sphere and transcend their rightful prerogatives, there is no excuse for disloyalty in the followers of Christ.

We learn from these considerations that the State and the Church are both ordained by the word of God, and were designed to occupy the same territory, and each to work for the good of mankind. But there is a line of demarkation between them over which it is perilous for either to cross. That the State owes to the Church just what it owes to every citizen, and no more; that with prosecuting the specific work of religion it has nothing to do, and can do nothing; that for the State to take up the work of the Church would be as fatal to that work as the work of an American Indian on a half-finished painting of Raphael would have been fatal to the design of that great artist.

## CHAPTER VII.

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### WHENCE PERSECUTION ARISES.

THERE is scarcely another word in our language at which every human instinct recoils with such horror as at the sound of the word "persecution." Persecution is the infliction of pain or punishment without just cause. As harshly as the very name of it grates upon our ears, yet the annals of the past are red with it on every page. To behold one poor mortal persecuting another is a sight at which mercy and justice weep together. And if Heaven can become indignant, as we understand indignation, certainly it must become dark in that bright world when it resounds with the cries of oppression for conscience' sake, with the clanking of chains, the sighing of the prisoners, the groans of the dying martyrs. Yet such sounds are familiar ones in the ears of the infinite Judge. Justice waits to settle for all those deeds of darkness and cruelty that have been done in the name of religion. We involuntarily ask, How is it possible for men, made in the image of God, willingly or willfully to inflict torture on the simple account of differences of opinions or practices, when those differences do not in the least affect the interests of the persecutor? Many will say that such things could not be possible except in the Dark Ages or in lands where the light of the gospel has not shone.

But no one who has a good knowledge of the facts will answer thus. It is a fact that the spirit of persecution is an element of human nature. Under the promptings of Satan it improves every opportunity to manifest itself. Many of us will not have to look very far from our own doors to per-

ceive the cause from which this malign disposition arises. Most of us have had more or less practical experience in this work of persecution ourselves, so that by close introspection we shall be able to discover the primary sources from which it springs. Probably we have never assisted in burning a heretic, or in putting one to rack ; but there are many steps and degrees in this terrible business before we reach the climax of malevolence. Happy for us if we have never taken any of these steps. But if we have, we can answer the question that is suggested by the title of this chapter. For the whole stupendous system of malignant oppression grows out of these principles that are inherent in the natural heart. Let us see. We, it may be, have seen some people for whose course of faith and action there was, to our mind, no shadow of reason or excuse. We have tried, perhaps, to show them their error, but all to no purpose ; they have been obdurate and stubborn, and unreasonably persistent in their foolishness ; and we have cast them out of the synagogue of our confidence and esteem ; we have cut them off from our sympathy, we almost wish some calamity would come along to show to them the folly of their course. It is just possible we have felt thus toward some of our own household of faith when they have differed with us upon some question not involving the sincerity of their purposes. We have gone further ; our tongue, that cruel instrument of persecution, has inflicted needless pain and unjust punishment upon those whose greatest crime was that they did not see as we did, and thus they have been made to suffer at our hands on account of their own honest convictions.

It may be that the reader has not done any of this kind of work at all, and yet he will be sure to recognize the picture as a very familiar one even in this day of broad toleration.

What is all this?—It is persecution. Whence does it arise?—From the natural feelings of the heart. Now if those feelings are nourished till Satan comes along and intensifies

them a hundredfold, and power is given to gratify them, deeds of darkness and Satanic cruelty will follow. It is to be hoped that many are clear of any trace of such work ; but before we decide that we are, let us look carefully along our backward path to see if there are any standing there with hearts made sore by our unkindnesses, our lack of consideration. If we see one soul, however humble he be, standing thus, let it be to us a reminder of our having harbored the elements of persecution in our own breasts. Let it admonish us of how nearly we have stood in the footsteps of those whose lives we execrate.

All such work is from beneath. The Spirit of God cannot prompt any such work, for the fruits of the Spirit are "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." There is not a single element of persecution in any of these blest characteristics. But among the works of the flesh we find enumerated, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, heresies ; these have "persecution" written across their foreheads. These familiar elements of persecution are here brought out so that we may make a practical answer to the question as to whence the great evil itself arises. It is probable that most of us can judge of its nature and discover its origin in the weak spots of our own experiences ; especially if the Spirit of God will but enable us to obtain a clear view of what we were by nature. Let us thank God if by grace we have been restrained from following the evil promptings of the enemy to carry it to violence.

It will be seen that there are two impulses that lead men to persecute their fellows, even in those degrees which are so common with us. One is vindictiveness, pure and simple ; the other out of politeness we will call zeal. But it is a misdirected zeal since it cannot be prompted or sanctioned by the Spirit of God. It is contrary to the Spirit of Christ, and consequently is none of his. Its true name is bigotry. Bigotry, vindictiveness, persecution ! Their relation is undis-

puted. What a triad of vipers! Be astonished, ye heavens, when this awful alliance parades before the world in the name of Jesus Christ! Repeatedly has this ghastly burlesque been enacted to the intense gratification of the forces of perdition. Transforming slightly the words of Madam Roland, we may well exclaim, O Holy Religion, what crimes have been done in thy name!

Let each one candidly ask himself the question, and unflinchingly answer it in the sight of a compassionate Saviour, in the sight of a God of love and justice, Do I cherish toward any human beings, however false their conception or deep their folly in matters of faith may appear, any other than thoughts of loving forbearance and solicitude, such consideration as makes them in the sight of God of equal value with myself, and a sincere desire to take them by the hand as we believe that Christ has taken us? If toward any fellow-being, high or low, we have in our hearts any other than thoughts of charity, any trace of bigotry or vindictiveness, let us be careful, it is the dragon spirit; and it only waits encouragement and a medium through which to speak, and there will be persecution.

Does the reader think that this chapter is unnecessarily personal and direct? That it brings the work of persecution too close home to our times and our hearts? Such a thought may be answered in the language of the apostle, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." Rom. 14:22. If we allow in ourselves, even unconsciously, that which we condemn in the world, we thereby subject ourselves to condemnation. It is only by making the study of this question a personal and individual matter, that we can discover the real origin of persecution. Persecution is a greivous sin wherever it be found; but sin does not exist in the abstract, it is both practical and personal. Every sin lies at the door of its originator and perpetrator. The atrocities of past persecutions are not charged to an



imaginary corporation, but to the individuals who instigated and executed them. The unspeakable crimes of the Inquisition will be traced by the all-seeing Judge through the system that fostered them to the individual hearts that conceived them. Torquemada and his co-adjutors will not be able to screen themselves behind papal decrees or the popular clamor. Hence the question becomes an intensely personal one, and to whatever degree the spirit of persecution may exist in our day, every whit of its energy comes from the animus of individual hearts, and the responsibility of it will be traced to those hearts by the scrutiny of the judgment.

That the spirit of persecution should be extant to-day is just as natural as that sin should exist, or that human nature should have retained its inherent qualities, or that Satan should still be at work, influencing the hearts of men. It will always be abroad in the earth, so long as sin prevails. Because we do not discern it, does not prove its non-existence; for we cannot tell what is in the hearts of men, not even what is in our own, until circumstances bring it out; and it is often the case that those who stand ready to persecute are those who make the loudest pretensions of liberty, and cannot see their own hearts nor foresee the results of their own actions. No man ever acknowledged himself to be a persecutor; those who engage in this work invariably imagine that they are working in self-defense — that they are really the aggrieved party after all. He who undertakes the task of compelling men to do as he thinks they ought is in his own estimate doing God service. So that if we ask the man with the fagot in his hand if there is any persecution going on; he is not aware of any except that his helpless victim has been tormenting him for some time, and that will soon be over.

It should be said to such, as our Saviour said to his impatient and irritated disciples, who were fretting at the treatment they and their Master were receiving at the gates of a certain village. The people would not receive them, and

they suggested that fire should be called down from heaven upon them for their inexcusable unbelief. Said Jesus, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." All who have such feelings need to learn from the meekness and gentleness of Christ what Christianity is. For "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." 2 Tim. 2:24, 25. "In meekness instructing those that oppose the truth." Had this been the policy of those who have professed the Christian name, the cause would have had a far different history from that which it now has. The Inquisition, the fagot, the sword, the prison, ostracism, and banishment would never have been called upon to act a part in making converts to the Church.

Although we have ascertained that persecution arises from the natural tendency of the human nature, and that the manifestation of it is traceable to individual responsibility, still its activity must have the support of power derived from some source. So far as personal power goes, an individual may carry on the work of persecution; but this is too limited in most cases to satisfy the one who has undertaken the work.

There is a spirit which has often made its appearance, that would gladly sweep godliness and goodness from the earth. This is the real animus of persecution. But, as has been observed, Satan does not fully direct in the affairs of the world. It is his plan, however, to obtain control of all the power he can. If he can induce men and women to act in their private capacity as his agents, he is pleased; if he can enlist the energy and devotion of a whole community, he is even better pleased; but we may imagine that neither of these pleases him so well as to be able to control the power of the government, and direct that power against the work and people of God. Hence, when a sufficient number of individuals composing a nation are brought into sympathy with

his schemes, it becomes a comparatively easy matter to produce persecution in that nation. It is not necessary for the success of his schemes that these individuals should know whose cause they are really serving; indeed it is better for the plan that they should not know; that they should actually imagine that they are working for Christ; for then not only the evil-minded will be enlisted, but many well-meaning people will be brought into the ranks of the enemy of truth, while they bear the name and wear the uniform of Christians. What could please his Satanic majesty quite so well as that?

When men in the service of Christ lose the spirit of the Master, forget the nature of their commission, and become possessed of a determination to carry their points by human force, they have crossed the line and joined the enemy, and what they imagine is zeal for Christ is vindictiveness and bigotry, the very animus of persecution. Having dropped those gentle means through which Jesus works in them with divine power, they gladly grasp the secular arm that is extended, and with this seek to compel men to do what they think they ought to do. When bigotry and vindictiveness are equipped with the civil power, may Heaven pity the heretic, for he will find no pity on earth. Satan rejoices; religious zealots with blinded eyes have in their hands the sword of Cæsar, and Persecution, full-fledged, stalks abroad.

Another of the causes that give rise to persecution, and which is one of its inherent elements, is the moral weakness of the aggressive party or forces. Persecution has never been waged in behalf of the truth. The truth can afford to wait *on* and wait *for* God. Truth will "keep," and it will at last prevail, whatever may oppose it. The truth is an emanation of the divine mind, and has in it an invincible power through which it will in the end, saith God, "accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55: 11. It works only through the

means prescribed in the gospel. It cannot force itself upon men by arbitrary means and retain its purity. It must be voluntarily received into the heart in order to be truth to the individual who receives it; hence the truth never works by violent means. It does not require such means, for behind it is the strength of the infinite God. It cannot use them because such means would invalidate the truth.

God will care for his own truth; he has never authorized any man or government to enforce it. But he has commissioned all the powers of the world above to work in its behalf. He who stands on the side of truth stands with the great and finally victorious majority. Even though, compared with self-exultant forces of oppression, the strength of the truth may appear small, still —

“Truth crushed to earth will rise again;  
The eternal years of God are hers.”

Jesus Christ is the embodiment of truth. He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” The same truths that Jesus taught and that find exemplification in his life are contained in the written Book. Jesus says, “Thy word is truth.” Since Jesus is the truth, no man can receive the truth as it is in Jesus, except he receives Jesus himself. And he who has Christ Jesus will certainly have the mind of Christ. If this be the case, then his character will be in harmony with the following: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Phil. 2:5-8. Nothing will be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, each will esteem others better than themselves.



To Jesus was given all power in heaven and in earth. Matt. 28 : 18. He had "power over all flesh." John 17 : 2. He was equal to the Father. But although he possessed such power, he never descended from the true dignity of his great work to compel any man to receive him or his word. As we have seen in a former chapter, he disclaimed any disposition to do anything of the kind. He draws men to himself, but he never drives them. Men cannot be driven toward the driver. Like the true shepherd, Jesus goes before his flock, and they follow, attracted by the power of his love, his gentle voice, and his unselfish devotion to the good of others. He encourages his followers with these words : "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed ; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8 : 31, 32. There is freedom and joy with the truth of God as it finds its way to the hearts of men. How free from every taint of oppression and persecution ! It has behind it the power of the Infinite One ; it is urged upon the conscience by the heavenly agencies under the gentle suasion of offers of pardon, peace, love, and liberty. If men will not accept, it can wait ; but there is consciousness of strength in the cause of God that gives to the believer unspeakable confidence in Him in whom he believes. It arms him with fortitude to do and to bear, knowing that his cause will be vindicated at last.

But when we cross the line into the dominion of error, how changed all things become. Error requires the assistance of carnal measures. As it cannot have help from above, it must seek that which comes from beneath. This is the only strength it has ever had. Error does not always employ force ; it more frequently uses deception and persuasion. It uses every possible art to win followers, and is not scrupulous as to the character of the means, so long as the end is accomplished. But we may set it down, that



while error is not always represented by physical force, the truth of religion never is. It can only be used in connection with that which is earthly, and not with the spiritual. If coercion be introduced into any sacred work, it would at that moment lose its sacredness. So that when any religious work or system employs human force in its prosecution, we may know that that is not the work of God.

It is a tacit confession of the weakness of their cause when those who profess to be working for God appeal to Cæsar for assistance. No one who has the truth has any need of such help, nor can he afford to accept it if it were offered him. But the impotency of error leads its advocates to seek such help. Those who have for their faith and practice, "Thus saith the Lord," and can point to the example and precept of Christ as a basis for what they teach, are not found at Cæsar's gate pleading for enactments and decrees to give force to their doctrines. Those who teach the pure word of God have the energy of the Holy Spirit to attend their words, and they need no earthly alliance. But when the gold becomes dross, when the words of man take the place of the word of God, then the heavenly energies are withdrawn, and to support the tottering cause the civil arm is brought into requisition.

In argument the truth never needs to sacrifice its dignity, and the wrong side often tries to make up in billingsgate and violence what it lacks in logic or fact. We have learned to look upon this manifestation as conclusive evidence of weakness, and to look with pity or contempt upon him who has no better support for his cause. The same will invariably be found true of the religious or professedly moral cause whose promoters descend from the platform where moral suasion and spiritual agencies only are used, and undertake to compel men by physical stress to accept their theories or practices.

Persecution is never used except in support of a cause that is morally weak and rotten, and scripturally unsound. Hence we place moral weakness among the causes and sources of persecution. Persecution is made to supply the lack of moral power. What a wretched substitute !

## CHAPTER VIII.

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### WHERE SHALL THE LINE BE DRAWN?

WE have seen that the State cannot do the work that has been assigned to the Church by her Lord; that when it undertakes that work, it ceases to be the work of Christ and becomes antichrist. We also see that the Church of Christ cannot retain her purity and do the work of a politician. The question will now arise, Where shall the line be drawn between the civil power and the work of the gospel? There must be a clear distinction; their work is not interchangeable. They work for the welfare of the same individuals, and the same individuals are closely related to both bodies, yet neither can do the work of the other. Notwithstanding their close relationship as vehicles of good to all mankind, we need not hesitate to answer this most important question by saying that the line should be drawn at the point of total separation.

This is a Christian view of the matter, taken in the light of the teaching of the Scriptures and the unvarying testimony of past experience. There can be no reasonable doubt about this, in view of the abundant and explicit evidence before us. Let it be emphatically restated that there is no work that the State and Church can do in conjunction, acting as Church and State. They cannot join hands except at the peril of the legitimate work of both, and therefore a clear-cut line of separation should ever be maintained between them. Any infringement of this condition is fraught with danger, not only to the citizen, but to the cause of true religion and of true state-craft as well.

These words are written with a profound impression that they convey the truth upon this vital question, with the earnest prayer that this truth may be deeply impressed on the mind of every reader, and with the ardent wish that it might become the ruling sentiment of every country on earth; for herein lies public safety, the integrity of the government, the security of individual rights, and the success of the gospel.

Some who adopt this position in theory desire to see it modified in actual practice, and do not hesitate to curry favors for *their* Church from the civil power. There are some people who are teetotally opposed to any union of State and Church when it means their State and somebody else's Church, but look very pleasantly upon the scheme when it is their State and their Church. Indeed, there is where the great majority of the people really stand upon this subject. There are poor people who would look with envy and spite upon another of their class who accepted an invitation to ride in a rich man's carriage, but who would be very gracious next day if they were invited to do the same thing. So there are plenty of Protestants who think it is perfectly awful, an outrage upon every consideration of equity, and a dreadful reproach on religion, to see the papal abomination standing where it ought not, at the right hand of secular power, but who would hold up both hands and shout themselves hoarse to see *their* Church standing in the same place. That is just as broad a platform upon the question of the separation of Church and State as some men care to occupy.

But there is a better place for honest people, and many such there are, who seek for right principles, and having found them, are willing to abide by them, wherever the line may be drawn. Such our readers are taken to be. It is in this confidence that the position before stated has been taken, that the separation of the Church from the civil power should be entire and complete. In taking this position no one places himself alongside the infidel or the anarchist.

He who stands on these grounds stands by the Bible. He stands in the full light of the genius of Christianity and is in accord with the teachings of its great Founder. History justifies the stand he has taken, and every consideration of justice declares that his position is right.

In order for certain ones to see the rectitude of this position it will be necessary for them to divest themselves of some preconceived errors. Here is one of them: It has been said that ours is a Christian nation; and the conclusion is that as such it should, in its national capacity, take up Christian work, and interest itself in the promulgation of the principles of Christianity. There are two questions that are here placed before those who make this claim: Is it a Christian nation? If it be so, ought it to take an unchristian course to show that it is Christian?

What evidence have we that this is a Christian nation? Is it so claimed on the character of the people who compose it? Are they all Christians? The most that can be said is that some of them are, and it goes without saying that some of them are not, and we all know that the "nots" outnumber the "ares" two to one. Even among those who pretend to be such, it is often a mere name that they have taken to spread as a thin covering over their selfish and wicked lives. When we consider the sin and crime of modern society, it is a bold statement to claim on the basis of our social and personal standing that even ours is a Christian nation. Shall we look into the lives of our statesmen and political leaders for the testimony that ours is a Christian nation? All will say they would rather not; but if we do, we shall not find them worse than the lives of public men in other nations. Many of them are good men, men of honesty, integrity, and ability; men in whom the people with propriety place confidence and esteem; but are they as a class distinctly and pre-eminently Christians? Are they bright examples of the meekness and gentleness of Christ? They have never been charged with being such.



Are the laws of the nation Christian?—No. Except in a few instances they have no relation to any religion whatever; even the fundamental conditions of Christianity are not touched. If the laws of our country form its Christian character, it is certainly but a very poor representative of true religion. It requires neither repentance toward God nor faith in Christ; and these are the first and essential steps in a Christian career. It does not prescribe any of the Christian graces for its subjects; it is not forgiving and merciful toward the transgressors, nor long-suffering, nor gracious. It does not beseech men to turn to God; indeed it would be hard to tell what it does do that would afford any good grounds for the claim under notice, so far as its laws and regulations are concerned. If its citizens as a class are not consistent Christians, its exactors and law-makers are not righteous, nor its laws Christian, then we shall have to ask further proof before accepting this claim.

Oh, yes; here it is. Our government favors the Church; there is a very friendly feeling springing up between our rulers and law-makers and the influential men of the Church. The Church is gaining in prestige with the powers that be. Her influence with Parliament is increasing each year; our Church is calling for laws in her interests, and the government replies, Here am I. Ah, that is it. This is a Christian nation because it stands ready to promote the interests of the Church. It already goes so far as to enjoin certain Christian measures by law, and it will doubtless go further as circumstances require. This is the evidence sought for. It must be admitted that just such evidence does exist; but there is danger in that fact. This is not Christian, it is anti-christian, as already proved. It was antichrist in Rome, it is antichrist in Russia; what else can it be in our own fair country?

Ours is a good nation among others. We take a justifiable pride in our citizenship. We have much reason for

thankfulness for the privileges and benefits that are conferred upon us through its administration ; but it is not Christ's kingdom. No such pretensions should be made, for we cannot attain to that position as a nation any more than we can grasp infinite qualities and make them ours.

But if we, by some superhuman effort of our imagination, forget the facts in the case and allow that this is a Christian nation, then where should the line be drawn between the Church and the State? — Just where we have already placed it, on strictly neutral grounds. There would still be the same necessity that the separation should be kept complete. But how can a Christian nation remain neutral and quiescent upon the subject of religion? Replying to this question it might be asked, How would it be possible for a Christian nation in this present world of sin and probation to be anything else? It has been abundantly shown that it cannot be. Let us ask again, If this be a Christian nation, ought it to take an unchristian course to show that it is Christian? All will say that it ought not. But the enactment and enforcement of religious laws or laws requiring the observance of religious duties are unchristian and antichristian. What then would be a Christian course? A Christian is a follower and imitator of Christ. "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2 : 6. That is good doctrine, and is iterated and reiterated many times in the Scriptures. But our nation cannot become Christlike in its character or in its course of action. It cannot manifest the Spirit of Christ ; but "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his ;" and the same is true of a nation.

Christ's mission was in behalf of sinners ; and laws are in the same behalf. They are not for the righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient. But how different are their attitudes toward the sinner. Christ holds out mercy, pardon, love. The State holds out wrath. "He is the minister of

God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Rom. 13 . 4. Now if this be a Christian nation, let it act the part of a Christian. Let it send out its policemen with Bibles instead of clubs. Let them proclaim on the street corners in behalf of the State that if a man sin against the State seven times in a day, and seven times comes and says, I repent, he shall be forgiven. Let them proclaim that the Judge is waiting to be gracious and to forgive all who repent and believe, though their crimes be like scarlet.

"Oh, no," we hear, "that would never do." But that is Christianity and nothing else; hence if this be a Christian nation, let it act as a Christian should act. But some will say that a Christian nation should still act in its capacity as a civil power and exert that power in behalf of Christianity. But how would that result? Let it establish the rites of religion upon a legal basis, and enforce them? Let it interpret religious faith and duty and require the people to conform to that interpretation? The State can speak to the people only through its laws, and its only power to make the laws effectual is an arbitrary power, so that if it undertakes the work of making Christians of its citizens and of promulgating religious principles, it must do so by force. It must embody those principles in legal enactments with penalties attached, and call upon its executive and judiciary to execute the laws and enforce the penalties. As milder penalties prove ineffectual those that are more severe will be found necessary; and the cause of Christ having been transferred to antichrist, persecution follows as a necessary consequence. This being the only way in which it is practical for the nation to take up Christian work, it becomes a pertinent question as to whether it ought to take an unchristian course to show that it is a Christian nation.

It would seem that there could be but one answer to this question, and that answer would, if it be adopted, forever

debar the State from interference with religious matters to any degree whatever.

In the first place, then, this is not a Christian nation ; and it is but a hollow pretense for sentiment's sake that calls it so. In the second place, if it were a Christian nation, the only thing it could do for the cause would be to provide equal privileges for all ; to promote the public good by making secure the rights of individuals and encouraging useful knowledge ; and by keeping its hands off the consciences of the people, leaving them free to worship what they choose as they choose, or not to worship at all.

Therefore the only place where the line should be drawn between Church and State, the only place where it can be drawn with safety to the liberties of the people and the welfare of God's cause, is upon the ground of impartial neutrality, so that the distinction between the cause of God and that of Cæsar may ever be most plainly observed.

No, no, this is not a Christian nation ; there is no such thing on earth, nor ever has been, nor will be till after the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ ; till he comes whose right it is to reign ; till sin of every form, oppression and violence are forever banished, and the people of God, created anew in soul and body, offer immortal praises to our God in the world that shall not end. Of the people of that country we read that they "shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever." Of its officers it is said, "I will also make thine officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness." There will be no persecution there, for "violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction in thy borders : but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Then the sun will be put to shame, for "the sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee ; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." This description of the only Chris-

tian nation the Bible recognizes, is found in Isa. 60 : 17-22. It is described in many other scriptures, but it is a kingdom yet to come. In another chapter it is said: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." There will be no death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. No curse, no sin, no strife, but eternal peace and joy and blessedness. Such will be the character of the first and only Christian nation. May we all be citizens of that country.



## CHAPTER IX.

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### IS IT LAWFUL TO PAY TRIBUTE ?

ANOTHER question growing out of that of the relation of Church and State is the one referring to the taxation of church and ecclesiastical property. Should church property be thus exempted? Again consistency requires a negative answer. No other position can be taken by those who believe in the total separation of Church and State. As we look candidly and closely at the question, we shall discover many good reasons for declaring this position. It is evident that whoever does take it must strike directly at the over-towering cupidity of the natural heart, that leads men gladly to accept all such favors that are extended to them, without stopping to scrutinize very closely the source whence they come, or the principles that may be involved in receiving them. There is a gratification in receiving monetary favors that forms a temptation hard to resist in most people when a favorable opportunity comes along; and it is not going too far to say that it is a pity the Church does not set the world a better example in this respect than she does. The Church, of all institutions, cannot afford to barter her birthright for a mess of pottage, nor sacrifice her position as the light of the world, for covetous considerations. Therefore, in the investigation of this subject the thought of the money involved should be waived for the earnest consideration of the real principles that underlie.

There is a right and a wrong side to every question. The importance of being on the right side is often greater than the intrinsic importance that attaches to the question itself. It

may be so in this case; certainly it is. For the saving of any sum of money would not compensate for the sacrifice of any principle. If there be a moral phase to the question, that should receive first attention. There is such a side to it, and upon it the Saviour was not silent in his teachings; and certainly we shall not do better than to ascertain what he has taught upon this point.

The subject was brought to his attention in the following manner: his enemies came to him and asked, "Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar's. And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's." Luke 20: 22-25. The bearing of this precept of our Saviour upon the subject of the relation of Church and State, is very broad and comprehensive. It covers the entire ground, and sheds light upon many questions that arise. It teaches that there is a plain distinction to be drawn between that which pertains to Cæsar, or the civil power, and that which belongs to God. The civil power has its work to do and its means for accomplishing it; and God has his work and means. Those that belong to the civil power bear the stamp of earthly authority; and that which pertains to God's work, bears the impress of the divine hand. There is a remarkable degree of wisdom conveyed in this saying of Christ, for the distinction that it makes is one that may be carried into all the relations of life. Everywhere we meet the obligations of life. Every step brings us face to face with some duty; some of these pertain to this world, some we owe directly to God. This belongs to God, that to Cæsar. This we owe to the State or to society as citizens; that we owe to God and humanity, as Christians. It is true that as Christians under God we owe a faithful discharge of all these duties. We are taught by

this injunction, that upon all men rest binding obligations both to God and the secular power; and that, because a man is a Christian and counts himself a member of Christ's kingdom, he is not thereby freed from any obligation imposed upon men by the State. What is true of the individual is true also of the Church as a body of individuals.

The tribute money was Cæsar's; it should be paid to him; and there is no possible reason why, if it were the duty of Christ's disciples to contribute to the support of the oppressive Roman empire, it is not still the duty of every Christian and of every church to pay to the civil government its just dues, and to render to Cæsar the things that belong to him, as well as to be faithful in the other feature of the precept. It would have been a sufficient accusation for his enemies if they could have successfully maintained the charge that Jesus repudiated the paying of tribute by his people. It would have been tantamount to treason, and his condemnation would have been most certain and easy. Christ met the issue squarely, and left on record a wise precept, which his Church would do well to study in all its varied bearings, and conform to in all their relations with the world. It is not a sufficient excuse for ignoring this precept that the State does not exact the tribute. The principle involved is of such importance to the standing of the Church that she cannot afford to sacrifice it without protest, even if the State does consent.

From what we learn in the circumstance of Christ's paying tribute to the temple, at Capernaum, it is easy to discern our Saviour's sentiment upon this matter. Here Peter was confronted with the question, "Doth not your Master pay tribute? He saith, Yes." He did pay his rightful dues to all, and Peter well understood that. However, in this instance the Lord easily proved that as Lord of the temple there could not be anything required of him. "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them," he wrought a miracle

to show his willingness to conform to the usages of the land, which do not involve disobedience to the divine law.

It would be perfectly safe for the Church, as it certainly is for the individual, to follow the example and teachings of her Lord in this as well as in all other matters. Not only has the Saviour spoken upon this subject, but the apostles also make it a point in their teachings. Said Paul, "For this cause pay ye tribute also ; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues ; tribute to whom tribute is due ; custom to whom custom ; fear to whom fear ; honor to whom honor." Rom. 13 : 6, 7. Are tribute and custom due to the State ? Then let the Church of Christ set a good example by paying it.

It is sometimes urged that the Church should be exempt from taxation because her influence and work are auxiliary to the welfare of the State and community at large. While we may believe that, there are others equally interested in the government who do not allow the claim. We believe it, but if it be true, it signifies nothing, for the same claim might with equal propriety be set up by any worthy enterprise whatever, be it social, educational, commercial, or financial. They all contribute to national success. But how are they enabled to do so ?—Through the protection of the State ; through benefits derived from the civil authority without which they could not exist. Therefore it is due to the State that they should contribute to the public welfare ; otherwise they have no right to continue under the government. In return for the guardianship of the State, these associations are called upon to pay tribute, to bear their proportion of the expenses of the government. The Church has her share of the benefits of the law ; why should she not pay for these as well as others ? The Church is not doing the work of the State, nor has the State any call to do the work of the Church,



though it undertakes to aid in this work when it exempts ecclesiastical property from taxation.

This work is assumed by the State, but the burden comes upon those who pay its taxes. When a portion of the property in a community is released from taxation, the result must be that that which is held must bear a heavier burden. If in a town where there is property to the value of ten millions, one million is held by the churches and is exempted from taxation, then one tenth of the taxes raised from that source is raised to support the churches. But in our day it is not generally supposed to be the proper thing to support religion by legal taxation. This has been done; but it is looked upon as a relic of the dark past, and very properly so. But there is practically no difference between remitting taxes and making an appropriation out of money raised by taxation. If a church owns property which should pay a tax of ten pounds, and that tax is remitted, it is done upon the same principle that the State would donate ten pounds to that or another society. This fact is commended to the special consideration of those who are opposed to the establishment of State churches, that is, to having the people at large taxed to support religion, and yet do not hesitate to court and accept the exemptions under consideration. We are virtually doing the same thing by excusing the Church from doing its share in the maintenance of the government. It is a gift to the Church out of the public revenues, and the amount must be made good by increased taxation upon other property.

In the colony of Victoria, there was, up to 1875, the sum of £50,000 given annually to the churches out of the public treasury. Since that time the gift has been withheld, and very many think that to stop the gift was a step in the right direction. Undoubtedly it was so; but what is being done in the same colony at the present time may be gathered from a consid-



eration of the vast amount of church property now held in Victoria, absolutely free from taxation. Were this large amount of property bearing its share of the public burden, either the revenue would be increased or the burdens of others would be appreciably lightened.

As already said, this is a gift to the Church from the secular power. The Bible estimation of such a gift is stated in the following language: "Thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous." Deut. 16:19. It would be a hard impeachment of the Church to say that this does not apply to her, for that would imply she was neither wise nor righteous. In fact, there is no place in which they will apply with more force than to the Church of Christ. The Church needs to keep herself "unspotted from the world," and in a place where she can bear a plain testimony to the powers that be, as well as people in private life.

Not only do the favors thus received serve to pervert righteousness and plain speaking of the truth, but they lead to even greater wrong through the temptation that is thus placed before men and churches in the largest cities, where through this exemption, property may be held for speculative purposes, for the rise in value and for rental. Cupidity leads the Church to hold and rent premises for purposes that are in direct antagonism to the work of the Church. Of course these facts will not lie very heavily on the consciences of those whose chief anxiety is to keep the Church wealthy or self-supporting. To such it is simply a good stroke of business. But it should have great weight with those who are jealous for the purity and spiritual power of God's cause; who are anxious that the conduct of the Church should comport with her profession and high calling.

From every point of view except that of covetousness, the situation demands that the Church should stand clear of the State in this matter. And it ought not to be said that

this consideration counts more with the Church than any and all others. The work of the Church should rest upon the devotion of those who profess the Master's name. Benevolence is not only a Christian grace, it is also a moral duty; and the more it is cultivated, the more and the greater the grace that will attend it.

Some Christians have rightly perceived this question, and have placed their influence on the side of the truth. The Baptists are, as a people, opposed to any alliance between Christ's people and Cæsar. They are calling for reform in this matter. The denomination of Seventh-day Adventists, at the session of their General Conference held in America in February, 1893, unanimously passed the following preamble and resolutions:—

“In view of the separation which we believe should exist between the Church and the State, it is inconsistent for the Church to receive from the State pecuniary gifts, favors, or exemptions; therefore,—”

"Resolved, That we repudiate the doctrine that Church or other ecclesiastical property should be exempt from taxation; and further,—

3. "Resolved, That we decidedly protest against such exemption, and favor the repeal of all legislation under which this exemption is granted."

[illegible][illegible]

## CHAPTER X.

### HOW ABOUT SUNDAY LAWS?

ONE of the most prominent questions of this whole controversy, one that from the first union of Church and State has ever been a prominent one, is that which forms the subject of this chapter. To follow its history in the introduction and enforcement of Sabbath or Sunday laws with any degree of minuteness would require a volume. Only the principles will be aimed at here, though in order to come at the principles, it may be necessary to notice some events with which the inception of such laws are associated, and through which they found their way into human statutes.

The character of the whole question at issue is involved in the subsidiary one now before us. If it be right for the State to enforce religious dogmas and practices; if the civil power by right can control men's consciences, regulate their practices, and prescribe their duties in those things that relate only to God, then Sunday laws are proper, and no one should say aught against them. If the State is authorized to sit in the temple of God as God, ordaining what men shall do and what they shall refrain from doing, in order that God's will may be done by them, then this book is altogether superfluous; and all the protests that have ever been uttered against the exercise of arbitrary power over the conscience, and in behalf of religious liberty and equality, have been ill-conceived, untimely struggles against a tyranny that was ordained by Heaven in spiritual things, to be exercised by those who happened to be in power. Then all the blood shed by martyrs and saints is but the fruit of rebellion and stubborn-

ness, testifying to the obduracy of the men who chose to die rather than violate their sense of right, their understanding of the divine will. Then the real heroes of those dreadful days were those who gloated in death and destruction in the name of religion. Thank God, there is a mighty IF standing at the head of this horrible proposition. Let a view of the conclusion to which the claim of validity for such laws would lead, arouse every observer to a sense of their real character. We repeat that the whole question of whether one man is authorized to domineer over the conscience of another, is wrapped up in this of the real character of those laws by which it is attempted to compel men to refrain from labor upon, and hold in sacred veneration, a certain day, whether they have any heart in it or not.

Every consideration of liberty, of equality, and of individual accountability, unites in a vigorous protest against such laws. The holy principles of the religion of Jesus Christ, the universal testimony of the Bible and of history combine to stamp this work as an unwarrantable infringement of the sacred rights of conscience vouchsafed to men by their Creator. It is not necessary to reiterate the sentiment that the religion of the Bible with its hallowed institutions is the best thing in this world. But it is equally true that the greatest curse this world can produce is that religion, or a pretense of it, in the hands of vindictive or bigoted men who are armed with the civil power.

The Sabbath is purely a religious institution, and is suggested only by the facts related in the Bible. There is absolutely nothing in nature to give us the idea of the weekly period. The fact that God rested upon the seventh day, blessed and sanctified it, and commanded us to keep it, furnishes the primary basis of all Sabbath obligation ; in truth, it is all the obligation there is, if we rule out man-made laws. By this expression it is not intimated that the authority for the Sabbath is defective or weak ; for if God has spoken, if

his own lips have given us the word, nothing can be added to that authority. Two thousand years after its institution, the Sabbath law found a place in the decalogue, where it was spoken and written by Jehovah himself. The institution was recognized and observed by the Saviour, who declared himself to be Lord of the Sabbath day. This declaration doubtless rested on the fact that he was the active Creator of all things; and of this the Bible gives abundant testimony. The worlds were created of the Father through the Son. See Heb. 1 : 2 ; John 1 : 3 ; Col. 1 : 16, 17. Hence, he it was who rested upon and blessed the Sabbath, and sanctified it; and consequently is its Lord. The Sabbath is Christ's rest day, established and owned by the Son of God. In its establishment man had no share; it was given him, filled with spiritual blessings, to keep and honor as a reminder of his God and Saviour. As an outward sign it is the great connecting link between God and his people, between heaven and earth. There is neither human image nor superscription upon it. It is heavenly, spiritual, divine.

But in the sight of men, the Sabbath has lost much of its brightness and power because it has been eclipsed by another, a human substitution, bearing the stamp of the civil power. This innovation appeared for the first time in the early part of the fourth century, clothed in the armor of an imperial edict. Constantine has gained the high distinction of being called the first Christian emperor. Certainly he was the first who in his imperial capacity espoused the cause of the Christian Church, though his private character as a Christian is subject to much criticism. His dominion was rent by factions, even the Christians were divided among themselves; and between paganism and Christianity there seemed to yawn an impassable gulf; and yet this man undertook the seemingly hopeless task of strengthening his realm by uniting those conflicting elements. He summoned a grand council for the purpose of reconciling the bishops in their



disputes; he also projected a great scheme of compromise for the purpose of uniting the pagan and Christian systems. How well he succeeded need not be discussed here; it is certain he succeeded better with the latter project than with the former. It was easier to reconcile pagans to Christians than it was to reconcile contending Christians to one another. As a result of his efforts, there appeared upon earth that showy fabric known as the papacy, into every figure of which were woven the glossy threads of ancient heathenism. In this period, A. D. 321, was heralded to the world the first Sunday law bearing the impress, not of the divine, but of the human, being signed and sealed by Constantine. This law, though it was the first civil enactment in favor of Sabbath rest, was not after the divine law; for it directed the refraining from labor upon the first day of the week, while the commandment of God requires the observance of the seventh day; but it was designed by Constantine to help on the work of conciliation between heathenism and Christianity, and this purpose it served admirably. Sunday had for ages been the outward token of the worship of the sun, from which it received its name; it was coming into favor as a rest-day, a feast-day with the Church; and by this stroke of expediency both tendencies were strengthened, and the two systems united in exalting with civil and religious honors this day, which was destined to overshadow the ancient Sabbath of Jehovah.

Since that time there have been Sunday laws promulgated, but no Sabbath laws; and these have been of every degree of stringency. This first one, by Constantine, was slack in its requirements, but it formed the groundwork; and public sentiment soon called for and obtained such a re-enforcement of the demands of Sunday as, while it placed obloquy and contumely upon the Sabbath and its observance, brought the people to a stricter regard for the Sunday under the force of penalties. The enactments that have since then found their way to the

statute books of different countries, are not, of course, different in principle from their famous predecessor of A. D. 321.

The friends and advocates of these laws defend them from two standpoints,—as religious measures, and as civil regulations. To those who object to religious legislation, they are represented as purely civil in their nature, enacted for the temporal good of mankind; while to those who have no scruples upon the subject they are shown to be wholly in the interest of religion. Let us look at these Sunday laws both as civil and religious enactments, and see how they will bear scrutiny. If they are purely in behalf of the secular interest of mankind, then the query at once presents itself, Why are the churches *only*, so zealous in procuring them? We have never heard of an infidel working for such laws. But the claim that Sunday laws have any other than a religious signification has no foundation. It may be for the benefit of man to have these days of rest; so it is that he should have stated hours for rest; but a man may pursue his labor at any hour he chooses. The law may regulate the number of hours that shall constitute a day's labor and entitle the laborer to his reward, but it does not undertake to locate those hours.

But it may be seriously questioned if such laws would not be regarded as needlessly oppressive, especially if they undertook to designate the day upon which all men should do their resting. It should rather be left with each one to decide whether he will rest or not, and whether he needs rest or not. It is certainly good for some men to take rest; it would be better for some men not to take so much of it; it would be better for some not to use certain kinds of food, and for all not to use tobacco. Laws upon these points, regulating what men should or should not eat, might be in many cases promotive of good, but they would be condemned as unnecessarily interfering with individual freedom. So with the laws whose only object was to cause men to

rest for their physical good or for the good of the State upon a stated day in each week ; they would certainly be regarded as oppressive if they were merely civil regulations ; so that if they have any acceptable defense it must be found in the religious significance attached to their action.

If it be but a civil institution that these laws are designed to establish, then it is clear that it is set up in counter-distinction to the religious Sabbath enjoined by the Bible,—the seventh day. In that case we have another instance in which the civil law undertakes to contravene the law of God. We have, moreover, a portion of the Christian Church assiduously contending for the establishment by law of a civil rest day distinct from the Bible Sabbath, which they entirely ignore.

But if Sunday laws be religious laws, and in fact they are no other, then we have religion by law, with all the evils that follow in its train. It is an attempt to force men's consciences by the arm of the law ; to compel them to render obedience to religious behests even though they have no heart in it. There is in such a movement all the elements of persecution — religious zeal misdirected, which we have called bigotry, united to the power of civil law for the purpose of imposing penalties upon non-conformists. There is also present in this case, as in all others of religious oppression, the lack of divine authority for the position taken, and an exhibition of weakness which renders the cause itself impotent to move men's hearts ; and hence the reliance upon the arm of Cæsar.

It is quite possible that to some minds there will be an apparent inconsistency in the position here taken in drawing conclusions upon the civil or religious aspects of this question. But the appearance of inconsistency arises from the complex and anomalous situation in which we find the Sunday cause. Sunday observance as an institution is purely and wholly a creature of human invention. It bears an anal-

ogy to the Sabbath in the fact that it is weekly in its recurrence; but if it had been of monthly or annual recurrence its actual relation to the Sabbath would have been no more remote than it now is. It does not rest upon the divine precept or example. It has neither blessing nor sanctification, consequently it is not sacred or holy. It is not a memorial of rest or of creative power, and has no spiritual significance attached to it, except that which men can impart. As a memorial in the Christian ritual it is neither significant nor pertinent to anything. Christ did not rise one day in seven, and he never alluded to the fact that he rose upon the first day, much less that there was anything in that fact suggestive of the abrogation of the Sabbath of his resurrection. He left, through example and precept, memorials of his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection in the ordinances of the Lord's house, but no intimation of Sunday-keeping.

These facts are referred to, not for controversy upon the Sabbath question, but to show that Sunday observance was established by human, not by sacred authority; and that in its original position as the "Venerable Day of the Sun," by which title Constantine refers to it in his edict, or in the position in which it was placed by emperor, councils, and popes, there has not been imparted to the day any element which Christians are bound by the moral law to recognize.

The laws by which it is sought to enforce its observance are *purely* and *wholly religious*. These have for their sole basis the idea of bringing people into harmony with their duty to God, as some men apprehend duty. The specious claim put forth upon certain occasions, when policy requires it, that the design of Sunday laws is to secure liberty and health for the laboring classes, does not touch the real animus of the movement. Its ultimate and sole object in the minds of its originators was to promote the influence and inter-



ests of the Church by constraining men to attend to her ordinances. Whether the primary object of the present advocates be the extension and up-building of the Church or the individual good of their fellow-men, need not be discussed; it is not for us to judge in that matter; doubtless very many work purely from the higher motive. But we have in the situation the anomalous circumstance of a professed Christian people seeking to enforce religious laws, emanating, not from the Lord of the Sabbath, the Head of the Church, but from earthly powers. Certainly there is complexity here. It is not a sufficient excuse in this day of enlightenment that we are taking up the work begun in the past. We live when men ought to have better conceptions of truth and of true liberty.

But the strongest and most valid objections to Sunday laws are not drawn from the unscriptural character of Sunday as a successor of the Sabbath; they do not rest upon the fact that the Bible does not enjoin Sunday rest. Indeed, this objection had no place in this present argument except as showing the contradictory situation in which the question is placed by its advocates, who call for civil legislation of a religious character to enforce the claims of a purely human institution under the name and character of a genuine divine institution which they ignore and often repudiate. Allowing that the Sunday was the divinely appointed day of rest, set forth in the most explicit manner by the Lord himself, still it would be altogether impious and impolitic from a Christian standpoint to ordain laws to compel men to observe the day. It would in that case be a matter pertaining exclusively to the individual and to God, and with which the State by right has nothing to do. Upon this point all the considerations heretofore presented bear with peculiar force. It is the work of the Church to persuade, by moral influence; by teaching and example, all men to do right. In this work the Christians have the word and Spirit of God to



assist them, but the moment the State undertakes this work, it distinctly becomes antichrist.

Forcing men to remain in-doors, to refrain from labor, or to attend church on Sunday, will not make Christians of them ; it is possible it might make hypocrites of many, but Christians of none. No one can keep the Sabbath in a manner pleasing to God or profitable to himself, who does so by any other constraint than a sense of the love and the goodness of God. The Sabbath must be presented and accepted in this manner. Received in this way, it does not become a burden, an incubus, but a blessing, as it was designed to be.

The claim that it is necessary to enforce the observance of a day of rest as a civil measure, is without the least foundation in the real condition of affairs. Is it to prevent drunkenness or lawlessness? These ought to be controlled and restrained upon every day. Is it to be enforced because special efforts should be made to keep order upon Sunday, and that disorder is admissible upon other days? Incivility upon Sunday is incivility upon any day, and should be prevented. It is perhaps because those who wish to go to church and worship upon that day are liable to be disturbed if others are permitted to be at liberty. It is unquestionably the right of all to claim protection from the State in their lawful assemblies or in the exercise of their private devotions ; but these matters may be carried too far. Does it disturb me when I start out to church and see my neighbor going in another way upon pleasure or to his business? If I choose to say yes, then should the law compel my neighbor to go to church with me in order that I may not be disturbed by the thought of his wickedness?

This question brings before our minds all the horrors of the Inquisition ; to answer it in the affirmative is to justify all the persecution that has ever taken place under the name of religion. Christian assemblies are held upon all days, and no one thinks of going out upon the street to stop

traffic upon Monday or Wednesday because there is a prayer meeting or a Conference going on inside. But if a man be quietly at work in his garden, half a mile away from the church, upon Sunday, it is a great disturbance to some of the worshipers who happen to know it; there is an itching to see that man brought to church by the policeman, if need be. Because most people choose to go to church upon that day, it is held that he has no right to choose how he shall spend the day; their consciences must speak for him.

No, no; it is a false view of the function of true religion that inspires people with such impulses; it is the idea that men should be left to do as they choose, providing they choose to do as we think they ought; otherwise, they should be compelled to do as we think they ought. If God had designed that arbitrary force should be used to induce men to be religious, he would have provided some means to supply that force in a practical way without destroying the work itself; but he has nowhere revealed such a force, nor has he committed such work to any men or combination of men.

Sunday laws or Sabbath laws enacted and enforced by the civil power are altogether wrong in their conception, and oppressive in their execution, so far as they interfere with a practice of what is civil and proper upon any day of the week. The duty of observing the Sabbath is one which men owe to God, and not a duty which they owe to the State. A man can fulfill all the duties of citizenship without keeping any day; and when he has fulfilled the duties of citizenship, he has done all that the State has any right to require of him.

"Every man who conducts himself as a good citizen, is accountable alone to God for his religious faith, and should be protected in worshiping God according to the dictates of his own conscience."—*George Washington*.

"Firmly relying, ourselves, on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we

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

“And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity to discharge.”— *Queen Victoria's Proclamation to India, 1859.*

## CHAPTER XI.

### DANGER AHEAD.

THE ocean of human life is traversed by many currents of thought and sentiment; some drift this way, some are drifting that way, but few are drifting directly toward the desired haven. There is one harbor which every thoughtful and earnest mariner hopes to make sooner or later,— a place of refuge and safety from which he can overlook the troubled waters which now rock and toss his fragile craft, and realize that they are all behind him,— that peril and anxiety are in the past; that clouds and tempest will no more threaten nor cause him unrest. But the only way to reach that peaceful spot is to study closely the chart, to consult often the compass, keep the helm steady in spite of waves, to “take reckonings” frequently, and see that we depart not from the instructions under which we sail. The Bible is the book of instructions, the Holy Spirit points out the way. Thoughtful, calm courage, and earnest, persevering efforts will, with faith in God, bring us safely through.

The Church of Christ is particularly exposed to danger. Every erratic current of human passion or folly strikes her with full force. She is tempted by delusive worldly inducements to depart from the right way. Storms of trial and persecution have hedged up the way, but to those who have faithfully kept the word of patience the hand of divine grace has ever been extended. There have been times of special danger when the enemy has come in like a flood, and it has seemed that all would be lost, but God has never for a moment changed his purpose of bringing safely through all this turmoil a people for himself.

The greatest peril to which the Church has ever been exposed is from the current of popular favor. There is such a temptation to run with the tide, especially when the tide goes in the direction we wish to go. Direct opposition or persecution will never destroy the work of God. "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church." The violent dealings of those who oppose God's work recoil at last upon their own pates; while their acts of injustice and cruelty awaken in the oppressed, every energy of resistance, and invoke in their behalf the compassion and special grace of Heaven. But when the world smiles upon the Church, when statesmen and rulers stand ready to do her bidding, when arbitrary power to dictate to the people is offered her, then comes the critical moment of trial. It requires special wisdom and strong faith in God to enable the Church at this moment to realize that her only strength is in the Lord; that her only armor of power is the beautiful robe of Christ's righteousness; that her safety consists in doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. The sentiment expressed by our Saviour in these words: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you: for so did their fathers unto the false prophets," is abundantly justified in the history of the Church. Prosperity and power are the parents of apostasy, as has been proven many times.

"The whole history of the Christian religion shows that the Church is in far greater danger of being corrupted by the alliance of power than of being crushed by its opposition."  
— *Macaulay*.

"Many imagine that the doctrine of the gospel requires the support of civil power. They know not that it advances without this power, and it is often trammelled and enfeebled by it."— *D'Aubigné*.

It is true that all the currents of human sentiment are not at the present time favorable to the popularity of the Church and the work she has in hand. Satan has dropped none of



his schemes. He works upon different minds in different ways, according as he can manipulate them. If he can drive some men to take up arms in open rebellion against the God of heaven, he is pleased to hear their ribald boasting and their coarse shouts of defiance. Others he lulls to sleep under the influence of stupid indifference to the claim of God; but his masterpiece is to obtain control of the work of God by seducing the Church with the glamour of worldly glory, with the praise and flattery of men. He comes with the very same temptation that he once presented to the great Head of the Church. He takes the Church up into a high mountain, showing her all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and says, "All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." The devil is presenting these same temptations to the Church to-day. The kingdoms of the world are at the disposal of the Church if she will do Satan's bidding. It is true the condition is not couched in these words, for that would not do; but it is not difficult to discover the source of such an offer, and we know without question what the condition would be. May the Church and people of God have courage to enable them in this trying hour to reply, in the words of the Master, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Look abroad in the world, and in all Christendom we see the enemy leading the professed Church of Christ up the heights where stands Cæsar's palace; the earthly powers are waiting and listening to her requests. In the United States of America, that land of boasted liberty and religious equality, the government, both in its legislative and judicial capacities, has declared that it is a Christian nation, has taken up the work of the Church, and in violent opposition to the great principles laid down by the founders of that republic, has begun the sad work of trampling under foot the most sacred privileges of its citizens, bestowed upon

all men by their Creator, and guaranteed to them by the national Constitution, — the rights of conscience. The political institutions of that country were established upon the two great principles of civil and religious liberty and equality; but in its history the first has been ignored, while millions of blacks were enslaved in the South; and now the second principle is being ruthlessly sacrificed to please a popular and powerful Church. This great revolution of sentiment and situation in that country, is one of the most striking signs of our times; but we see the same elements at work elsewhere, even at home. Demands for legislative restrictions upon the actions of men in matters of religious duty, calls for help from the civil power, are being sent in, and these calls are not meeting with an indifferent reception. The Church has power in political matters, and those who love official honor and a political career will not forget it.

This is the greatest danger to which the Church at the present time is exposed. It was in the quagmire of popular favor that the Church lost her high standing in the days of Constantine. It was here the Church buried her spirituality and lost the power of the presence of God. She lost her purity of character, and became henceforth the mother of abominations.

Is there no warning in these things for us? Verily, "these things happened unto them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

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