**“National Reform in the South” American Sentinel 3, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the late National Reform Convention, the reports from the South showed that the South is “solid” for National Reform, as well as in some other respects. One preacher said he had been preaching National Reform principles for twenty years. Another said he thought the South would lead in this “reform,” and “it would be a shame to the South if it did not.” While we are sure that it would be everything else but a shame to her if she did not, we must confess that it would be perfectly in keeping with her efforts on more than one occasion in the past, if she should take a leading part in the National Reform movement. Twenty-seven years ago last spring the South started out in a scheme of “National Reform.” That too was, in a measure, in the direct line of what is now called the National Reform movement. The preamble of the Confederate Constitution, thus ordained and established, reads as follows:- {AMS August 1888, p. 57.1}

“We, the people of the Confederate States, each State acting in its sovereign and independent character, in order to form a permanent federal Government, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity-invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God-ordain and establish this Constitution of the Con-federate States of America.” {AMS August 1888, p. 57.2}

That so far as it goes is strictly a National Reform Constitution. It contains the name of Almighty God. In it the people invoked “the favor and guidance of Almighty God.” According to National Reform principles that Constitution was “imbued with a divine life,” and the nation confederated under it should have lived forever. But it didn’t live forever worth a cent. Nor will this coming National Reform government live forever any more than that one did. {AMS August 1888, p. 57.3}

No, we do not doubt in the least that “the South will lead in this reform;” it is directly in her line of things. {AMS August 1888, p. 57.4}

It is not religion which we oppose but irreligion; we are combatting not Christianity but hypocrisy, for enforced religion is nothing else but enforced hypocrisy. {AMS August 1888, p. 57.5}

**“A Calm View of National Reform” American Sentinel 3, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

The above heading exactly describes a National Reform sermon to which we listened Sunday forenoon, June 4. The sermon was delivered by Dr. J. L. McCartney, of Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Penn., a man who is a gentleman in every sense of the word, and with whom we formed a very pleasant acquaintance in the few interviews we had with him. We are the more pleased that we had the privilege of listening to his sermon, because, while the Professor is a National Reformer by birth and education, as well as from principle, his presentation of the subject was a calm, dispassionate one, entirely free from that bigoted, boastful spirit so characteristic of those who make them-selves (and National Reform) so conspicuous in the *Christian Statesman*. While Professor McCartney is not a professional exponent of National Reform, he is undoubtedly one of its best representatives. {AMS August 1888, p. 57.6}

As a text for his discourse, and the warrant for the National Reform movement in the United States, the Professor read Deuteronomy 17:18, 19. That text reads as follows:- {AMS August 1888, p. 57.7}

“And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites; and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them.” {AMS August 1888, p. 57.8}

As the reader will at once conclude, these verses are a part of the directions concerning the duty of the king of Israel. But before it can be decided whether or not they form a warrant for the National Reform movement in this country, we must know something of the context, and accordingly, we quote verses 14 and 15 of the same chapter:- {AMS August 1888, p. 57.9}

“When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; thou shalt in any wise set him over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose; one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.” {AMS August 1888, p. 57.10}

The statement, “Thou shalt in any wise set him over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose,” takes the text away from the National Reformers, by showing that there is no analogy between the nation of Israel and the United States of America. That nation was under the direct supervision and leadership of God. It never was a democracy in any sense of the word. The Lord himself selected the family which should furnish the priests; with his own voice he called Moses, who was leader of the people for forty years; and he also designated Joshua as his successor. The people had no voice in the matter. All they had to do was to render obedience to the commands of the leader whom God himself set over them. And so it was through the time of the judges. Although the Lord did not always select the ruler in the same way that he did Moses and Joshua, everybody who is acquainted with Jewish history knows that the people did not choose the one who was to judge them. The case of Gideon is a sample. He had been chosen by the Lord to deliver Israel from their oppressors. When the proper time came, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he gave the people evidence that he was the one whom God had chosen, and they followed him. When the people became restless, and wanted a king, it was the Lord still who set the king over them. The people had nothing to do with the selection of their ruler. Now, unless the National Reformers are willing to make the claim that this Government should be conducted on the same plan that the Government of Israel was, the people having no voice in the choice of their rulers, they have no right to use the instructions given to Jewish rulers as a guide for the official conduct of the Governors of States, or the President of the United States. {AMS August 1888, p. 57.11}

The Government of Israel was a true theocracy; a perfect union of Church and State; the Church and the State were one. National Reformers profess that they want nothing of the kind; we think, indeed, that none of them contemplate giving up the right of franchise, and having the Lord appoint the chief ruler of their country, without the ceremony of conventions and general elections. In fact, it is our firm opinion that the great majority of them would refuse to acknowledge such a ruler as the Lord would select. Then if they do not want such a state of things,-if they really deprecate the idea of Church and State union,-they have no business to quote from the directions given to ancient Israel, as a precedent for their proposed changes in the Government of the United States. {AMS August 1888, p. 57.12}

It matters not how much they try to make this Government correspond to that of ancient Israel, they can never make it actually a parallel to that. In that Government God was the actual ruler, he chose that nation out of all the nations of earth, as the depository of his law, designing that it should hold up the standard of divine truth, so that all people who should be inclined to accept the truth might flock to it, and become enrolled among the citizens of Israel. But when the Jews proved recreant to their trust, and, instead of letting the light of truth shine from them to the nations, extinguished that light by their heathenish practices, God cast them off. Since that time he has claimed no special nation as his own. He still has a people called Israel; but they are those in every nation who humbly walk in the way of truth. Their only badge of citizenship is the possession of the Spirit of Christ; and often they are unknown to all except God. Therefore since God has and claims no distinct nation or people as his own, it follows that any attempt to model a Government after that of Israel would be simply to establish a theocracy with human power substituted for that of God. This would be a model, not of ancient Israel, but of the Papacy. {AMS August 1888, p. 57.13}

The Professor enumerated various things which he termed the Christian features of our Government. Chief among these were: (1) The exemption of church property from taxation; (2) the right of Christian ministers to solemnize marriage; (3) the administration of judicial oaths; (4) the appointment of chaplains in the army and navy; (5) the appointment of fast and thanksgiving-days; (6) the use of the Bible in the public schools; and (7) laws concerning a civil Sabbath, and suppressing such things as tend to hinder people in their worship on the first day of the week. In addition to these, he cited the recognition of the Christian religion by the early colonies, and the mention of “the great Governor of the world,’ by those who met to ratify the Articles of Confederation. These things, it was claimed, mark this country as a Christian nation, and therefore the organic laws of the nation should contain a declaration of this fact, thus making this a Christian nation in name as well as in fact. The idea that the existence of any or all of these forms makes this a Christian nation,-that we are a Christian nation because the Catholic Church, like some vast railroad corporations, gets along without contributing its share towards the support of the Government; because the clerks in our police courts mumble over oaths to indifferent witnesses who grunt out an assent; because the Government pays certain men a salary to go through, in a perfunctory manner, a form of service every Sunday to men who listen because the regulations require them to,-we say that the idea that any or all of these things make this a Christian nation, is as absurd as was Tertullian’s idea that birds and beasts pray. Said he:- {AMS August 1888, p. 58.1}

“Every creature prays; cattle and wild beasts pray and bend the knees; and when they issue from their layers and lairs, they look up heaven-ward with no idle mouth, making their breath vibrate after their own manner. Nay, the birds, too, rising out of the nest, upraise themselves heavenward, and instead of hands, expand the cross of their wings, and say somewhat to seem like prayer.”-*Tertullian on Prayer, chap. 29*. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.2}

If the things that Professor McCartney mentions do or can make this a Christian nation, then we can also adopt Tertullian’s opinion concerning beasts and birds, and we shall have not only a Christian nation, but a Christian universe. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.3}

But the Professor complained that there has been, in this country, a gradual elimination of everything that is Christian. For instance, Thomas Jefferson refused to issue a proclamation for a day of thanksgiving, on the ground that it was unconstitutional. Now, here is a plain question: If Grover Cleveland should neglect or refuse to appoint any thanksgiving-day this year, would the country be any worse off? Would it be any less Christian than it now is? The answer can be nothing else but, No. Will people who live wholly selfish lives, remember their Creator any the more because the President calls upon them to return thanks to him? Not a particle. He cannot make the people one iota more grateful than they would be if he made no thanksgiving proclamation. So far as any practical good is concerned, he might as well call upon everybody to ask a blessing upon every meal they eat. Those who feel thankful will return thanks no matter if a day is not appointed for thanksgiving; and for those who do not feel thankful, to go through the form is mockery. So we think that it is well that it is unconstitutional to appoint thanksgiving-days, and it would be better if our officials would conform to the Constitution in this respect; for them there would be less caricature of sacred things. The day when the Constitution is so changed as to make the requirement of religious forms constitutional, will mark the beginning of an era of national, enforced hypocrisy. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.4}

Concerning the exclusion of the Bible from the public schools, Professor McCartney said: “Has it come to this, that the teacher must refrain from telling the child that God made him, and that Christ saves him, lest he should offend to the quick some unbelieving soul?” Well, why shouldn’t it come to this? The infidel pays as much money for the support of the school as his believing neighbor does, and therefore has as much right as the other. The Professor would not think of forcing himself into an infidel’s house, in order to teach his children concerning Christ. But the school-house is the property of the infidel as much as of the Christian, and his wishes are as much to be respected. It is not a matter of sentiment but of right. To be sure, it is pitiful that children should be allowed to come up ignorant of the great truths of the Bible; but so long as this is a free country, and there are men who are opposed to the Bible, we can’t see how it can be avoided. There is ample provision for all who wish to be instructed in the Bible, and to have their children so instructed; and when a man is commissioned to preach the gospel, he should do so faithfully, no matter whom he offends. But the public school-teacher has no such commission. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.5}

It is strange that men will be so blind in regard to this question of the Bible in the public schools. Strange that they cannot see that it must either result in endless controversies, or else to the teaching of the Bible with its truths so emasculated that it will be but hollow mockery. There are a great many different theories held by those who regard the Bible as sacred. The Unitarian would not want his child taught that Christ is God; the Universalist would not want his child taught that they who reject Christ will be doomed to writhe in eternal torment; and there are differences on scores of points among the more orthodox. Of course each individual who clamors for the Bible in the public schools, expects that his particular belief will be taught; he doesn’t propose to have his child taught what he regards as heresy. So in order to avoid offense to anybody, the real, vital truths of the Bible will not be taught; and when the Bible is not taught in a way to convert the soul, its teachings amount to nothing. We have too much reverence for the Bible to wish to see it lowered to the standard of a mere text-book, divested of its spiritual power. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.6}

The Professor made the usual disclaimer of any intention on the part of National Reformers to unite Church and State. Said he: “Making a religious State does not establish a State religion. There is no proposal to recognize one denomination more than another.” Thus they make an arbitrary definition of Church and State union, and then say that they are opposed to that. The Professor’s statement is an admission that the recognition of any one denomination by the State would be a union of Church and State. Then will he tell us what name he would give to the recognition of all of them? Surely if one would be a union of Church and State, the other would be seventy and seven fold such a union. Nobody will deny that there was a union of Church and State in all Europe in the Middle Ages. But there was as much difference between the various orders of Catholic monks as there is now among the various denominations of Protestants. Sometimes one order would be specially recognized, and sometimes another, yet Catholicism was all the time supreme. So for this Government to recognize Christianity in any form, would be just as much a union of Church and State as that was. No matter what form of Christianity is patronized by the State, it will be only a form; the real principle always leaves as soon as the Church coquets with the State. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.7}

Here is one of the Professor’s significant sentences: “We are the farthest possible from proposing a union of Church and State; and yet, my friends, there are worse things than that.” Undoubtedly; but this world has never yet seen a worse thing. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.8}

Again, he said that “many good men in Scotland have been tempted to go back from the Free Church into the Established Church, simply because there is so great a tendency toward secularism, and the Established Church stands as a bulwark against infidelity.” Why did they ever leave the Established Church? Simply because it was only a religious shell. It was the conservator of a form of religion, but was destitute of converting power. Now, frightened at the flood of iniquity, which the Saviour himself, and also his apostles, said should increase, and imagining that the world must all be “converted,” they choose a form of godliness for all, rather than real godliness for a few. In the above statement of the Professor’s is seen the real hollowness of the National Reform movement. {AMS August 1888, p. 58.9}

The speaker cited the Scripture mottoes which he saw on the drinking fountains in Scotland, the Corn Exchange and other buildings in London, and statues, pictures, etc., in Germany, and said: “All this to me was very beautiful, as indicating the character of those who reigned.” “I felt that religion was an element that pervaded society.” Perhaps the Professor is more susceptible to religious influences than we are, but we care more for deeds than for words. The actions of those who reign, and of the common people, are to us a better indication of the quality of the religion that pervades society, than any inscriptions can be. We remember that the high priest who sat in judgment on our Saviour, had the name of God bound upon his forehead; and texts of Scripture were worn on the foreheads and forearms of the very men who shouted, “Crucify him.” True religion shows itself in something besides inscriptions and phylacteries. We cannot understand how men so strict personally as the Reformed Presbyterians are, can look with complacency upon a national religion that is only an empty shell. They seem to be infatuated with the name of “national religion.” {AMS August 1888, p. 59.1}

We can notice only one more statement, and it is a very suggestive one. Speaking of Sunday laws, he remarked that some “complications” have arisen in their enforcement, but that most States have now an exemption clause in favor of those who observe the seventh day. Said he: “There are fears on the part of such [observers of the seventh day] that National Reform may result in persecution. Whatever may be the result, there is nothing further from the hearts of those who are in this movement.” We were sorry that he left the matter in this unsettled state. “Whatever may be the result,” they do not intend to persecute anybody. We believe that, at least so far as Professor McCartney is concerned; but we would like to have had him tell the people his opinion as to what the result might be. With the disgraceful record of Arkansas and Tennessee so fresh, it is easy to conjecture what the result may be. The Professor doesn’t think there will be any persecution, because, as we learned in private conversation, he thinks that those who keep the seventh day will obey Sunday laws out of deference to the majority. The record of the past shows that in this he is mistaken. {AMS August 1888, p. 59.2}

We do not see how such men as the Professor can satisfy their conscience by saying that “whatever may be the result,” they don’t mean to harm anybody, when they must know, and do know, that the success of their movement can result in nothing else but persecution to dissenters. Here is the picture: A boy is standing on the top of a cliff, with a huge rock just balanced on the edge; below there are a great many people; just before he gives the rock a shove, he calls out: “You folks down there seem to be greatly afraid that this rock will hurt some of you; but I want you to understand that whatever the result may be, I have no evil designs toward any of you; I am going to roll this rock down the cliff merely to gratify myself, and not for the purpose of injuring you; it won’t hurt you unless you happen to be in its way.” Very consoling isn’t it? Cannot our friends, the National Reformers, see themselves somewhere in the above picture? E.J.W. {AMS August 1888, p. 59.3}

**“Let There Be No Alliance with Rome” American Sentinel 3, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Presbyterian Union of New York City is composed of the Presbyterian ministers of that city. In their meeting February 28, the discussion turned on the question, “How far is the Roman Catholic Church our ally, and how far our enemy?” From a report of the proceedings we take the following points of interest:- {AMS August 1888, p. 61.1}

Rev. Philip Schaff, D.D., the ecclesiastical historian and professor in Union Theological Seminary, opened the discussion. He said that the origin of the Roman Catholic Church was involved in obscurity. It may have originated on the day of pentecost; it may have originated at Corinth, or it may have originated much later. In any event the precise time could not be fixed. He claimed that the Pope, but not the church, is antichrist. That the Pope and the church are not one, and that Second Thessalonians refers to the Pope alone, claiming that this was the view held by Calvin, Melancthon, and Luther. He said that the Roman Catholic Church must hold to all the cardinal doctrines, such as the Trinity, divinity of Christ, justification, sanctification, good works, and others. He emphasized the historic character of the church and that under its claim of infallibility it could not abandon one of the cardinal doctrines and live; that it was the largest church of Christendom, with its 200,000,000 members, and should be the ally of Protestantism. {AMS August 1888, p. 61.2}

Rev. Dr. John Hall, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, was the next speaker. Each point that Dr. Schaff raised Dr. Hall answered, and when he said that he could not realize how so learned a man, a professor in the chair of church history in a Presbyterian theological seminary, could advocate an alliance with the historic enemy of truth, justice, and morality, he was enthusiastically applauded. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.1}

He held to his clear and logical style of argumentation, but his deep interest and earnest convictions upon this important subject, led him into such bursts of eloquence that he carried his audience before him with irresistible force. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.2}

Dr. Hall said that he had lived among Catholics; had preached in a parish where there were three Roman Catholics to one Protestant; he had been to Rome and met the cardinals, to whom he had been introduced. He knew Romanists and Romanism, priesthood and laity, better, probably, than any person present. He said the Pope was the church and the church was the Pope, and that both are antichrist, “so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” The Pope and Romanism stand and fall together. Paul denounced this antichrist, this son of perdition, as the workman of Satan; that Satan who had overcome the first Adam, and with all the subtlety of his nature endeavored to overcome the second Adam, but had failed. Satan had endeavored to overcome Christ by offers of that temporal power which the Church of Rome now holds out, and the offer was made by the same arch conspirator. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.3}

Moses’s fight was continually against apostasy. Satan does not ask the people at first to become atheists, but he asks them to place alongside of the true God other gods also. This is what the Roman Catholic Church asks and does. Satan was satisfied when the Jewish kings set up the temple of the living God, provided they had Baal and Ashtaroth in their groves. As to the origin of the Roman Church, a careful reading of history showed that it was from Constantine, who was a shrewd statesman, a politician and murderer, that it had sprung. Out of heathenism, Judaism, and Christianity, were taken those portions of their several services that would appeal to the sensualism of man, and with these playing upon the inborn sentiment of natural religion, Christ was kept out of the heart. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.4}

Dr. Schaff had referred to the decrees of the Council of Trent, acknowledging the divinity, kingship, and priestly offices of Christ. Dr. Hall said that it was true, but it was not fair to quote a portion and not the whole of the decrees. Read them through and in their logical connection, and you would find that they were completely Romish; the doctrine of justification is ignored, Christ’s office as a Saviour is rendered wholly void; and every leading doctrine of the religion of Christ had been manipulated until it was of none effect. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.5}

The decrees of the Council of Trent claimed ten virtues for the priesthood, traditions, penances, purgatory, indulgences, and in Mariolatry, to one in the atonement of Christ. Christ’s divinity was merged in the infallibility of the Pope, the influence of the Holy Ghost merged in the confessional interferences of the priesthood, and instead of bowing to the kingship of Christ, the devotees of the Roman system kissed the toe of St. Peter’s statue. No Catholic is permitted by the decrees of the church to be “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” and his soul goes blindly into purgatory in order that the church may receive money for saying masses for his soul. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.6}

As to the church’s influence, no devotee of heathenism in Japan but lives a freer life than does the slave of Romanism. There is no truth of the decalogue that it has not broken, no truth of Christianity that it has not assailed. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.7}

It is claimed that the marriage relationship has been defended by the Romish Church, and yet there has been no greater insult offered to that holy relationship than celibacy and monasticism and their attendant evils. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.8}

It is said that Romanism educates. It does so in places where it has no other way to carry on its aggressive work, and when it does educate, it does so always at your expense; but where it can get along without it, it does not educate. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.9}

It is claimed that the Roman Church holds in check the turbulent spirits that have caused our strikes, and that we should join hands with it to keep this power under restraint. That 60,000,000 of people should conciliate 8,000,000 of enemies to their liberties in order to keep in check a small portion of our body politic! No; a thousand times better that these misguided people should strike, and strike, until they learn how to appreciate the laws of our land and their own good, rather than that the iron band of superstition and spiritual death should be riveted about their arms and souls until they could not move. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.10}

The Presbyterian Church should not form such an unholy alliance. It was our duty to magnify Protestantism, the Christianity of the Bible, and not make an unholy alliance with error. He had no word against the individuals of the Church of Rome, but against that church he should always raise his voice. {AMS August 1888, p. 62.11}

When Dr. Hall had concluded, the Rev. Howard Crosby, D.D., pastor of the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church, arose and commenced his address with the question, “Why should we not join with the Roman Catholic Church in the fight against infidelity?” He paused and deliberately said, “Because the Roman Catholic Church makes infidelity.” The answer was electrical. The audience cheered and applauded for several minutes. Dr. Crosby continued: “The Roman Catholic Church has been called an historic church, and we are asked to make it an ally because it is such. Look at Mohammedism, Buddhism; they, too, are historic. Shall we join with them on account of their antiquity?” {AMS August 1888, p. 62.12}

“When does an apple get so rotten that it ceases to be an apple?” said the doctor. “Let us not be deceived by the virtues of those who are superior to their religion, into fellowship with that which is unfriendly to our every interest.” {AMS August 1888, p. 62.13}

**“Back Page” American Sentinel 3, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Pope has secured a convention with the Government of Colombia, South America, by which there is secured to the Papacy the protection of Catholicism as the State religion, the exemption of religious buildings from taxation, and the exemption of the clergy from military service. The clergy will have entire control of the Government schools and universities. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.1}

The Rev. T. L. Cuyler, D.D., is a man of such standing that he can be allowed to say with freedom what would be called rank heresy in others. Speaking of the votes which were cast for Miss Willard, in the Methodist General Conference, as editor of the New York *Christian Advocate*, he said in the New York Evangelist of June 14:- {AMS August 1888, p. 64.2}

“Miss Willard is a lady of rare gifts and graces, yet she is in danger of exchanging her lofty position as a Christian philanthropist, for that of a political wire-puller. Woman in yonder missionary meetings is beautiful; but woman in a political caucus or committee, is hardly an object for angels to admire.” {AMS August 1888, p. 64.3}

To all of which we heartily say, Amen. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.4}

We are opposed to the so-called National Reform movement, not because if it succeeds our position as dissenters might be made uncomfortable, but because it is in no sense a reform. It is a step backward, and a long step too. It is a return to the policy of the Dark Ages-a substitution of the shell of Christianity for the kernel. Some may think that it is better to have even the *form* of Christianity without the substance, if we cannot have the reality; but we do not think so. Empty shells are of no earthly use except to take up valuable room. And so the empty shell of Christianity, which “National Reform” would give us, would serve simply to crowd out vital Christianity. As Christians we are opposed to the National Reform movement; and everyone who loves real, vital Christianity ought to be arrayed against it. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.5}

The *Christian Statesman* of June 28 has an editorial strongly condemning the late National Republican Convention for its “lack of Christian character and purpose,” which closes with the following words:- {AMS August 1888, p. 64.6}

“The convention illustrates accurately the irreligious character of our political system, in which infidels like Ingersoll, and Presbyterian elders like Harrison, of Indiana, sit together in the same councils, having agreed beforehand that differences in religion shall be no hindrance to their fellowship.” {AMS August 1888, p. 64.7}

Well, why should differences in religion be a hindrance to their fellowship in civil and political councils? Is not the proper administration of government of just as much importance to an infidel as it is to a Presbyterian elder? Are not an infidel’s rights just the same, and just as sacred, under civil government as are those of a Presbyterian elder, or anybody else, and *vice versa*? If not, why not? Is it not the truth that “all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”? And is it not to secure these ends that Governments are instituted among men? Every person who has any regard for the Declaration of Independence must answer, Yes. Well, then, again we ask, Why should differences in religion be any hindrance to their fellowship in securing to themselves life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? But such a political system doesn’t suit the *Christian Statesman* at all. It wants a political system established in which agreement in religion shall be the sole basis of civil fellowship; a political system in which every citizen’s religion shall be put to the test in every campaign. And that will be but the Papacy over again. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.8}

**“A Congressman’s Opinion” American Sentinel 3, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

A correspondent of the Sentinel, in Washington City, obtained an interview with Congressman Mason, of Illinois, and sent us the following report. It reached us in June but too late for publication in the July Sentinel. We gladly give it place. Its points are well taken. Mr. Mason said:- {AMS August 1888, p. 64.9}

“The bill is remarkable in many ways, and I cannot now, for want of time, discuss the same as fully as I would like. But I am surprised that a man of Mr. Blair’s opportunities should wholly ignore a class of citizens who worship on the seventh day instead of on Sunday. In the first place, the constitutional right to worship would be imposed, in my opinion, by this bill. And to say that a person who keeps Saturday instead of Sunday shall not be allowed to work on any other particular day of the week, is, in my opinion, a deprivation of the rights of property, and a substantial violation of that part of the Constitution which says that a citizen shall not be deprived of his life, liberty or property, without due process of law.” {AMS August 1888, p. 64.10}

It is simply childish for Senator Blair to provide that such a citizen may not do any work on Sunday “to the disturbance of others.” He knows if he is familiar with history, and knows anything about the natural bent of the human mind, that any labor, however simple, or however retired, would be “to the disturbance of others,” if the “others” were strongly of the belief, as many are, that Sunday should be a legal day of rest. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.11}

There are people in this world who are “disturbed” if your dress does not suit them, and the Senator might as well prescribe the fashion to dress as to say that those who worship on Saturday *shall* worship on Sunday. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.12}

I wish to be understood as saying that I do not believe in disturbance of public or private worship on Sunday or Saturday, but what I wish to say is that this bill or any bill seeking to fix a day of worship, by law, against the conscience or judgment of a large class of our citizens, is thoroughly unconstitutional, un-American, and, in my humble judgment, un-Christian. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.13}

I am informed that under State Sunday laws, members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Seventh-day Baptist Church, have been tried and convicted for performing their ordinary duties in a peaceful way, on Sunday, after having observed Saturday as their day of worship, and those persons have been committed to prisons. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.14}

Such action is certainly unconstitutional. Suppose for instance, the Sunday Bill is passed, and, in 1889, two-thirds are converted to the belief that we should worship on the seventh day. Then the law would be changed to fit the demands of the majority-religious liberty becomes a political foot-ball-the Church and State would be united, and the most sacred article of our Constitution, which protects the inherent rights of the minority, would be destroyed. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.15}

The *Interior* says:- {AMS August 1888, p. 64.16}

“When George Washington was presented with his little hatchet, his fingers ached to cut something with it. It is admitted that George was a good little boy, and meant no harm by chop-ping down the cherry tree. It has been so ever since. When power is put into an American *parvenu’s* hands-and we are all parvenus in this country, more or less-his fingers burn to exercise it, and if there is no useful work in sight he is sure to do mischief-and is very liable to anyway. If he has the self-confidence of combined egotism and inexperience, he is irrepressible in his ugliness of purpose.” {AMS August 1888, p. 64.17}

This is just the position we take with reference to the National Reformers. There are very many good people among them. There are many well-meaning persons who are anxious to see laws enacted for the better observance of Sunday. They say that they do not wish to infringe in the least upon the rights of others. But they don’t know what they would do if they had the power. As the boy who has a brand new, sharp knife, cannot rest content until he has tried its edge, so the man who comes into the possession of power to which he is unaccustomed, must needs test his new thy to see how it works. He may not mean any harm, but power is a very dangerous tool in the hands of an inexperienced person. If you would have religious liberty, keep out of the hands of even the best of men every semblance of power to persecute for conscience’ sake. {AMS August 1888, p. 64.18}