**“The Latest Sunday-law Petition” American Sentinel 4, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is now being circulated quite extensively a petition to the California Legislature, asking that body to enact a Sunday law. From some things, which it is not necessary to name here, we feel as though it is not being circulated as extensively as it might be, and we believe that there is an effort on the part of those who are behind it, to keep its contents a secret from all except those whom they are quite sure will favor it. Be that as it may, we propose to give the matter a little more publicity than it has yet had, and to that end shall give the substance of what is on the petition, with some comments. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 17.1}

The fact that the petition is the work of the California Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, is no secret. It is so stated in bold letters on the face of it. Underneath this statement are the words, “Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work.” Exodus 20:8, 9. And by the side of this is the following text of Scripture: Hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.” Ezekiel 20:20. What logical connection these texts can have with a petition for a Sunday law, is more than we can imagine. They both refer to the seventh day of the week, and not to the first, and this fact is well known by every member of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. Even if they could by any possibility apply to Sunday, they would be out of place on a petition a “civil Sabbath,” as it is called, if that is what they are after; and this also they very well know. We are therefore forced to the conclusion that what they want is a law that will enable them to have Sunday treated as though it were the Sabbath which God gave to his people, and commands men to observe. In short, they want the State to enforce an act of religion on purely religious grounds. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 17.2}

Next follows the petition itself, which reads as follows:— {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 17.3}

“*To the Honorable, the Senate and Assembly of the State of California*:— {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 17.4}

“Greeting: We, the undersigned, residents of—, in the county of—, State of California, in view of the dissipation and demoralizing influences arising from the desecration of Sunday in the State, earnestly and respectfully petition your honorable body for the enactment of a Sunday law that shall give laboring men a day of rest; prohibit the carrying on of all unnecessary business; prohibit barbarous, unseemly, and noisy amusements, such as theaters, processions, concerts, games; and also the opening upon Sunday of all places where intoxicating beverages are sold; also providing, by proper legislation, for the enforcement thereof.” {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 17.5}

Following this is the blank space for signatures. There are a few points in this to which we wish to call the attention of the people of California, and especially of the honorable members of the Legislature. The first is the statement concerning the “desecration of Sunday.” The word “desecration” is the exact opposite of “consecration.” Nothing can be *desecrated* unless it has first been *consecrated*. But you will search in vain for any record of the consecration of Sunday. In fact, but few people presume to argue for any express divine sanction for Sunday observance. Therefore “desecration” is not a proper word to apply to Sunday labor or amusement. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.1}

But pass by the question of Sunday sacredness. One thing is clearly shown by its use in this petition, and that is, that the petitioners propose to get such a law as will, enable them to prohibit anything that would be a desecration of the day if it were sacred. They, propose to have a law that will enable them to make people *act* as though they regarded Sunday as a holy day, whether they really think so or not. They want the State to make people who are not religious act as though they were, and to force *their* forms of religion on those who do not believe them. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.2}

The required law must “prohibit the carrying on of all unnecessary business.” Who is to decide what business is necessary, and what is not? The man who carries on the business is the best judge of whether or not it is necessary, but it is obvious that the law would be a dead letter if he were allowed that privilege. “Unnecessary business” indefinite. Suppose a man is a mechanic. He has a job on hand which he cannot finish according to contract unless he works on Sunday. He may think that such work is necessary but our observation of the administration of Sunday laws convinces us that it would not be so regarded by those in power. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.3}

We wish especial notice to be taken of the fact that such a law as is petitioned for would naturally lead to religious persecution. We shall prove this on two counts. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.4}

First, take the man who conscientiously observes the seventh day of the week. If he is a laboring man, he is obliged to work six in order to support his family. His conscience will not allow him to work on the seventh day, and therefore, since he must work on Sunday in order to make a week’s work, it follows that his conscience obliges him to work on Sunday. His conscientious convictions of duty, first to God, and then to his family, will not allow him to do otherwise. Now if that man shall be punished for his Sunday labor, his punishment will be nothing but persecution for conscience sake. His punishment is solely on the ground that his religion differs from that of his neighbor. This charge cannot by any possibility be refuted. We say that work under such circumstances is necessary, no matter what the nature of the work is. Of course we except the disturbance of any congregation; that is not allowable on any day in the week. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.5}

Second, take the man who has not rested on the seventh day. He may make a profession of religion, or he may not. It matters not whether he violates his conscience by working seven days in the week or not. If he sins against God by working on Sunday, then he is answerable to God. Now if he be prosecuted for not keeping Sunday,—that is, for not conforming in that respect to the form of religion held by the majority,—his prosecution will be religious persecution just as much as in the case of a man who in a heathen country should be punished for ignoring the gods of that country. Put them in the best light you can, it is a fact that Sunday laws do logically lead to religious persecution. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.6}

A few years ago there was a rigid Sunday law in Arkansas. When it was enacted, it was ostensibly for the sole purpose of closing up the liquor saloons. Did it stop with that? No; it did not even begin with that. Not a saloon was closed; but quite a number of peaceable farmers were persecuted almost to the death. You may say that that persecution was only the work of bigoted persons. Granted; but are you sure that there are no bigoted persons in California? And are you ready to pass a law that will give bigots the power to persecute inoffensive citizens? {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.7}

Another indictment: The petition calls for the prohibiting of all barbarous amusements on Sunday. Under this head would be classed prize fighting, cock fighting, and bull fighting. But in this petition the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union shows itself to be far behind the times, and behind public sentiment, for there is a law prohibiting such things every day in the week. We have very distinct recollection of reading of several instances in which the police made a raid upon parties engaged in such barbarous sports. The framers of this petition may say that they know this. Then their petition is an insult to the law, in that it asks for its enforcement only on Sunday. In any case, they virtually declare by their petition that barbarous sports are not objectionable, provided they are not indulged in on Sunday. We cannot agree with them; and we believe that in this respect our legislators, even though they be non-professors; will show themselves to be ahead of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. We do not believe that they will enact a law that will virtually legalize barbarous sports six days in the week. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.8}

One word more, concerning the matter of closing saloons. When, we urge that such a law as is desired virtually sanctions the keeping open of saloons on six days of the week, we are told that the law is demanded in a special manner on Sunday, because people are idle then, and there is more opportunity for them to be decoyed into the saloon. The fallacy of this plea may be seen by the fact that people are no more idle on Sunday than they are at night during the week, and especially on Saturday night after six o’clock. Many a laboring man spends all his wages on Saturday night, yet the petition makes no note of this. The simple fact is this, and it cannot be denied, that they want to have Sunday strictly observed as a day of rest and worship; and all the plea that the law is desired in behalf of temperance, is nothing but a blind. It has not the first principle of temperance in it. We believe that the law-makers of this State are too intelligent to be deceived by any such pretensions. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.9}

We have made this article long enough, and have only considered the *face* of the petition, and that is not half of the document. We shall consider the remainder of it elsewhere, under the head of, “The Back of that Petition.” {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 18.10}

E. J. W.

**“Why the California Sunday Law Was Repealed” American Sentinel 4, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Oakland *Tribune* of January 19, in announcing a call for a meeting to be held on Tuesday evening, January 22, in the interest of a State Sunday law, used the following language:— {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 20.1}

“Ever since the repeal of the California Sunday law, the Christian people of the State have been dissatisfied. This is the only State in the Union wholly without law in reference to the Christian Sabbath. It is believed that if the voice of the people could have been taken at the time of the act of the Legislature repealing the law, a very large majority of the best citizens in the State would have opposed the repeal, and they would now favor the enactment of a similar law. It is known that in the Legislature now in session, a new bill, not unlike the former, will be introduced, and its enactment is not very improbable. If the people could vote, it no doubt would become law. In view of such facts, the call of a public meeting in our city is timely.” {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 20.2}

From the above, a stranger would get the idea that the repeal of the California Sunday law six years ago was an underhanded proceeding,—that it was sprung on the people when they were not thinking, and carried through before they had a chance to protest. As a matter of fact, the case was exactly the reverse of this. The matter was before the people for nearly a year. Following is a brief history of the case:— {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 20.3}

Some of the church people sought to rigidly enforce the Sunday law. They entered into it with enthusiam, and thought they saw success just ahead. Some of them made boasts of what they would do to those who had the presumption to work on their Sabbath. Arrests were made by the wholesale. A few convictions were obtained in different parts of the State, for the movement was general. One or two cases were appealed to the Supreme Court. Thus the matter attracted the attention of everybody, and the eyes of many in distant States were turned toward California. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 21.1}

Of course there was opposition. It was the year of a State election, and the Republican party of California espoused the Sunday cause. At the State Convention a plank in favor of the Sunday law was adopted with the greatest enthusiasm. No other plank in the platform received one-fourth the attention or applause that that one did. When the Democratic Convention was held, that party declared for the repeal of the law. This was the sole issue between the two parties in California that year, and the campaign was a most exciting one. For months the principal topic of conversation was the Sunday law. The papers were full of it, and there was not a political speech made in which it was not discussed. The ministers all preached on it. Everywhere it was the one thing before the people. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 21.2}

Of course every voter turned out on election day. The result was that a Democratic Governor and a Democratic Legislature was elected. The State Government, which had previously been strongly Republican, became by that election just as strongly Democratic. Everybody knew that it was because of the Sunday law. The Republican party well knew that its defeat was due to its espousal of the Sunday law. The first thing that the Democratic Legislature did when it convened, was to fulfill its pledge to repeal that law. The members could not in conscience do otherwise, because their promise to do so was that which accured their election. That is the whole history. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 21.3}

And now for the *Tribune* to say that “it is believed that if the voice of the people could have been taken at the time of the act of the Legislature repealing the law, a very large majority of the best citizens in the State would have opposed the repeal,” is arrant nonsense. The one who believes that, will believe anything. If the voice of the people is not heard at the polls, especially when the main issue has been the subject of discussion for months, then we should like to know how that voice could be heard. Everybody who has lived in California for the last seven years, or who was here during the campaign of 1882, knows that we have related the simple facts. The California Sunday law was repealed because the majority of the people said that they wanted it repealed. Whether or not the sentiment of the majority has changed materially since then, remains to be seen. Let the matter have a fair trial before the people, and if the majority want a Sunday law, it will appear. But let no one seek to appeal to sympathy by pleading that a fair trial was not had six years ago. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 21.4}

We are well aware of the fact that an effort is being made to push the matter of a Sunday law through this Legislature as quickly and quietly as possible; but we shall do our part towards securing a full and free discussion of it. Of the meeting to influence legislation in behalf of the Sunday law, we shall have something to say next week. {AMS February 6, 1889, p. 21.5}

E. J. W.

**“Sunday Law Meeting in Oakland” American Sentinel 4, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

The meeting held in Hamilton Hall, Tuesday evening, January 22, in the interest of a Sunday law in California, was a very tame affair. The speakers read or recited their pieces in a perfunctory manner, having the appearance of men somewhat discouraged. Although they have little or no hope of getting any satisfaction at this session of the Legislature, they showed very clearly the spirit that underlies their movement, and the nature of the law that they want, and that is all that we are concerned about. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.1}

Dr. M. C. Briggs, of Santa Clara, and Dr. Dwinelle, of the Pacific Theological Seminary, were the speakers of the evening. In his opening prayer, Dr. Dwinelle prayed that the State might be awakened to the necessity of making Sunday not only a day of rest, but of moral quickening as well. In his remarks, he said: “The whole business of the community must cease practically, in order that all may have the benefit of the rest day.” That is to say, that the Doctor does not and cannot rest on Sunday, unless everybody else stops work. The untruthfulness of such a statement should be apparent to all. Thousands of people in the United States and in Europe, who rest on the seventh day, and who enjoy their rest and worship, and get all the benefit from it that there is in a rest day, show clearly enough that it is not necessary to have a law compelling everybody to rest, in order to accommodate a few. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.2}

Dr. Briggs’s speech was mostly a labored theological argument. It would be utterly useless to report him in this, for two reasons. First, because theology has nothing to do with the matter. If the Doctor could read on every page of the Bible a plain declaration that Sunday ought to be kept as the Sabbath, it would not have a particle of bearing on the matter of a State Sunday law. The State has no business to legislate in matters pertaining only to God; and second, because the Doctor stumbled so much over Hebrew roots, that his efforts excited only pity. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.3}

He did treat us to one brilliant, original piece of Biblical exegesis. Speaking of the phrase, “the morrow after the Sabbath,” which occurs a few times in connection with the Passover, he said: “The morrow after the Sabbath, is mentioned all the way along as following the Sabbath.” His conclusion was, that Sunday is the Sabbath! When such arguments as that are hurled at us our only refuge is silence. This may be taken as a fair sample of the arguments by which the necessity for Sunday laws is shown; and since it is less than nothing, we are driven to the conclusion that force of numbers will be the all-prevailing argument in taking away the liberties of the people. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.4}

When he struck the New Testament, he didn’t venture any such original thoughts, but contented himself with retailing the stale argument on the Greek of Matthew 28:1, and similar passages, where the word “week” is rendered from *Sabbaton.* The Doctor asserted that that text should read “the first of the Sabbaths,” instead of “the first day of the week.” This assertion was made with as much boldness as though all the scholarship of the world were not against such a rendering. Any Greek scholar or lexicon will tell him that the word *Sabbaton* has the meaning of “week,” as well as of “Sabbath.” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.5}

While the Doctor was dwelling on this, we thought that we would like to quote to him Luke 18:12, where the Pharisee in the temple is represented as saying in his prayer, “I fast twice in the week.” Here the same word is rendered “week” as in Matthew 28:1; and according to Dr. Briggs’s theory of exposition, the text ought to read, “I fast twice in the Sabbath.” Just imagine that well-fed Pharisee clasping his hands aldermanic sides, while he sanctimonously raised his eyes, and said to the Lord: “I thank thee that I am not as other men are, for I abstain from eating twice every Sabbath-day”! This is absurd, but no more so than the renderings given by Dr. Briggs; so we may dismiss his Scripture argument. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.6}

When the Doctor came right down to the matter of a civil law compelling men to keep Sunday whether or no, he was more at home, and spoke with more freedom. Said he, “We don’t want to make men religious.” How often that is reiterated. One would think that there was nothing that these civil Sunday-law preachers dreaded so much as making men religious. He said that the Sunday law is designed only as a measure of protection to those who are dependent on others; a police regulation; a sanitary arrangement.” We can well believe that if it is ever enacted it will be a police regulation, and that is just what we oppose. We don’t want any police regulation of religious matters. As to sanitary arrangements, we would have more confidence in them if they originated with the medical fraternity, instead of the preachers. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.7}

Only one thing more need be noted, and that is, his reason why there must be a law compelling everybody to rest on the same day. Said he, “If every man is at liberty to choose his own day of rest, my neighbor who doesn’t keep my day will work on my day, while I want to rest. So there must be one day for the whole community.” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.8}

There you have an expression of the mean selfishness out of which all Sunday laws spring. “My neighbor will work on my day, unless there is a law compelling him to observe it.” Very likely; but how about Doctor Briggs? Will he not work on the day on which his neighbor wants to rest? Why, of course; but then, “what rights has my neighbor, that I am bound to respect? *I’m* in the majority.” We don’t wonder that men become infidels, when Doctors of Divinity, who profess to be living exponents of Christianity, show such an unrighteous disregard for the rights and feelings of others. The gospel which they teach is one which says, “Whatsoever ye would not that your neighbor should do to you, that do you to him if you feel like it and have the power.” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 26.9}

We are happy to inform our friends that Christianity has nothing in common with such teaching. Christianity leads men to be considerate of others; and if a man is weak and in the minority, that is the very one whom true Christianity would seek out and protect. As we left the meeting, musing on the heartlessness of the men who are clamoring for Sunday laws, we could think only of these words, “O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly; mine honor, be not thou united.” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 27.1}

E. J. W.

**“A Sign of the Times” American Sentinel 4, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Christian Statesman* of November 29 had an article copied from the *Christian Intelligencer*, about the amount of business done by photographers on Sunday. Following are a few paragraphs from it, which will serve to show the drift of sentiment in regard to such labor:— {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.1}

“It is hardly probable that the Christian people of this city are aware of the extent to which the Sabbath is violated by the photographers. Many of the principal galleries are filled with waiting patrons, and their largest business is done on the Sabbath. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.2}

“The famous galleries, although not exactly open to the public, are ready to make appointments, and prefer that day to execute the pictures of the popular actors, singers, etc. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.3}

“And most of the small places, after passing a dull week, erect to make up on the Sunday business enough to give them a profit over the week’s expenses. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.4}

“There is a wholesome law against this transact tug business on the holy day, but it is not enforced. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.5}

“A few years ago an attempt was made to close up the violators of the Sabbath, but it was not successful, and several of the prominent men in that effort, seeing no remedy, now keep open, and find their purses better filled, their bank account much larger, and their credit much better with the stock dealer. Now in view of this truthful statement, what is the duty of the Christian public in this matter?” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.6}

The article carries with it its own answer to the last question, that is, from the standpoint of the *Statesman* and the *Intelligencer*. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.7}

The plainly implied demand is that such business should be stopped by law. And this indicates to what lengths the instigators of the Sunday-law movement will go when they have secured the legislation which they want, and have the power in their hands. It shows that a system of *espionage* will be inaugurated, and that nobody’s privacy will be sacred from the prying intrusion of the minions of such an iniquitous law. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.8}

There is no business that is conducted with more quietness than the business of photography. Nothing is less calculated to disturb public worship or private devotion. Even a monk in his cloister could not be disturbed by the business of a photographer next door, if he were not informed of its proximity. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.9}

When the photographer may be arrested for quietly conducting his work in an upper room on Sunday, then no person will be exempt. Some zealous individual, anxious for political preferment, will find out that the merchant is in his private office on Sunday, looking over his ledger, and forthwith the merchant will be arrested. The lady who takes in sewing may be arrested for making button-holes or fitting a garment in her back parlor, on Sunday. The literary man who writes for hire may be arrested for quietly working at his desk on Sunday. In short, from such a wholesale stoppage of Sunday work as is desired by the *Statesman*, the *Intelligencer*, and all who may be classed as National Reformers, it will be but a step to the arresting of every citizen who is found away from church on Sunday, unless detained by sickness. That this is not an exaggerated conclusion is evident from the statement of Dr. Herrick Johnson, that he longed for the breath of the Puritan, for the Puritan Sabbath; and this is just what was done in the days of the Covenanters and Puritans. Robert Wodrow, a Scotch ecclesiastical historian, of whom it is said that his “veracity was above suspicion,” and of his writings, that “no historical facts are better ascertained than the accounts ... to be found in Wodrow,” makes the following statement concerning the methods used to secure attendance at church:— {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 28.10}

“It is thought expedient that ane baillie with tua of the session pas throw the towne everie Sabbath day; and nott aie as they find absent fra the sermones other afoir or efter none; and for that effect that they pas and *aerehe sic houss as they think moist melt.”—Selections from the Records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberdeen.* {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.1}

In modern English this is as follows:— {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.2}

“It is thought expedient that one bailiff with two of the session pass through the town every Sabbath day, and note such as they find absent from the sermons either before or after noon; and for that effect that they pass and search such houses as they think most meet.” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.3}

In his “Collections” he says: “The session allows the searchers to go into houses, and apprehend absents from the kirk.” Now when one of the great cries for a Sunday law is because people do not go to church, and when the only ground for stopping a photographer from working in the seclusion of his own room, could be that he was staving from church and at least inviting others to do so, the conclusion is inevitable that when the clamorers for a Sunday law get what they want, they will make no scruple of going into any house where they have reason to suspect that anybody is working on Sunday, and arresting the occupants. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.4}

Are we not warranted in saying that the liberties of the American people are in danger? Is it not high time that the people were awakening to the alarming growth of the religious legislation evil? Who will protest against the degeneracy of Protestantism? {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.5}

E. J. W.

**“Showing Its Parentage” American Sentinel 4, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the (Detroit) *Christian Herald’s* brief report of the National Sunday Convention at Washington, the President, Col. Elliott F. Shepard, is reported as having said that “Congress and the law-making powers in this country have virtually repealed the fourth commandment.” By this he of course referred to the failure to enforce Sunday observance. It is not our intention to make any argument on what is plain enough without, namely, that Sunday and the fourth commandment have nothing whatever to do with each other; that we pass for the present. But taking him on his supposition, that repealing the fourth commandment would affect Sunday, we wish to point out sharply the position which the National Sunday Union proposes to assume. Note well the following:— {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.6}

Allowing that the failure to enact laws compelling people to keep Sunday, or the repealing of those already in existence, is a virtual repeal of the fourth commandment, then it follows that in their efforts to secure the enactment and enforcement of such laws, they are working for the re-enactment of the fourth commandment. Is not that a logical conclusion? Certainly it is, and Colonel Shepard, as the representative of the Union, would admit it. Then mark this point:— {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.7}

It was the Lord Jehovah who spoke the fourth commandment, with the other nine, from Sinai. It was God who enacted that law. Therefore the National Sunday Union, consisting of the National Reform Association, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, and various religious organizations, in proposing to re-enact the fourth commandment, is proposing to put itself in the place of God. Not only so, but it is putting itself above God, by assuming that it is more competent to vindicate his law than he is himself. In this it is showing itself a true child of the Papacy, that “man of sin,” the “son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” Is not the likeness perfect? In other words, Is it not trying to make of this nation an *image* of the Papal beast? E. J. W. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 29.8}

**“Who Are Working for the Sunday Law?” American Sentinel 4, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

Our National Reform friends, and all who are laboring so zealously to secure a Sunday law, have a good deal to say about our opposition to such a law. They accuse us of joining with infidels, and with those who are not in harmony with law and order and good government. As a matter of fact, we have not joined with anybody in our opposition to Sunday laws. We are against such laws, because we know that the State has no right to legislate concerning matters of religion, and because we know that such laws are unjust, and oppressive, and contrary to the spirit of true Christianity. If anybody else sees the injustice of such laws, and opposes their passage, or works against them on any ground whatever, we have no objection to make. This is a free country yet, and will continue to be so until National Reformers secure the control of it. We do not oppose Sunday legislation by the State because somebody else does; if everybody else should favor such laws, we should oppose them just the same. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 30.1}

But we cannot see that National Reformers are in a position to denounce us very much because we oppose the same thing that men do who are not Christians. On the ground that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones, it becomes them to be cautious. In the *Lutheran Observer’s* enthusiastic report of the Sunday Convention held in Washington, we find this statement:— {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 30.2}

“The church in which the convention was held was festooned with petitions from probably ten millions of people, representing Protestant and Papal churches, labor unions, saints, and sinners.” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 30.3}

No truer statement was ever made than this last. We venture the assertion that if the facts could be known, it would appear that the sinners outnumbered the saints in the proportion of ten to one. Yet the saints (?) who are engineering the Sunday movement are perfectly willing and very anxious to receive the co-operation of those very sinners, while they endeavor to heap contempt on us because some who do not profess to be Christians happen to oppose their work. Truly, consistency is a jewel not found among National Reformers or their allies. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 30.4}

The *Congregationalist*, also, in its issue of December 20, 1888, said of this effort to secure Sunday legislation:— {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 30.5}

“A thing to be noted specially is that the movement affords ground for, and already has secured of a large degree, the support of many who work for purely secular ends.” {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 30.6}

They claim to be doing gospel work, and yet they bid for the support of those who have no interest in the gospel, but who from professedly selfish motives. Polluk describes one who stole the livery of the court of Heaven to serve the devil in. This looks to us very much like stealing the devil’s tools to serve the Lord with. Anything to win! seems to be their motto. It is a common saying, that politics makes strange bed-fellows, and National Reform politics differ in no respect from the rule. {AMS February 13, 1889, p. 30.7}

E. J. W.

**“A Tangible Object” American Sentinel 4, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following letter was received from a gentleman in the State of New York. We print it entire, in order that all who have similar ideas may receive the benefit of our reply:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 33.1}

EDITOR OF SENTINEL:—Dear Sir: Someone is kind enough to send your paper to me. In it I find much to admire, but some things which to my mind militate against your general object-the correction of existing evils in society. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 33.2}

I believe there is such a thing as the true church of Christ; but that it is not the Roman Catholic, nor the Greek, nor the Protestant Episcopal, nor the Methodist Episcopal, nor the Presbyterian, nor the Baptist, nor the Congregational, nor any other humanly constituted organization; but that it has in its membership all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as their present Saviour from sin, and who, by virtue of his faith, are saved, regenerated, made new creatures in him, and who, consequently, are living out his life among men. This body of people, for they are “one body,” I believe to be the “little stone cut out of the mountain without hands,” which, increasing in magnitude with an ever-accelerated momentum, is to subdue all opposed to it, until it fills and rules the whole earth. Of the rule of such a church, there must be no fear. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 33.3}

Human laws and institutions must, therefore, more and more conform to the divine, as this divinely constituted church goes forward in its mission of subduing and assimilating all things to its own likeness. Already as the divine law prohibits theft, and adultery, and murder, etc., so also do our human laws. And quite recently we have conformed our human Constitution to the divine in making it repeat the command, “Let the oppressed go free.” And now again the nation is rising up to prohibit that which, legalized as it now is, virtually legalizes theft, and adultery, and murder, and every other abomination which only men under the influence of strong drink are capable of, thus giving a new and most striking evidence of the purpose and power of the “little stone” to subdue all things to itself. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 33.4}

This result achieved, and the final conquest will be near at hand; for the little demons, seeing their great leader slain, will take to their heels and fly away, leaving the field in possession of its rightful Lord and Law-Giver, and the universal shout shall go up, “Allelujah, the Lord omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.” {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 33.5}

Our correspondent is mistaken in his supposition that the “general object” of the SENTINEL is “the correction of existing evils in society.” This is not its object; it has never contemplated so impossible a task. Its sole object is, as stated, in its prospectus, “the defense of American institutions, the preservation of the United States Constitution as it is, so far as regards religion or religious tests, and the maintenance of human rights, both civil and religious.” This is the sole work of the AMERICAN SENTINEL. There are plenty of papers devoted wholly to showing the evils of intemperance, and to working in other lilies of reform; but the SENTINEL is comparatively alone in calling attention to the evils of religious legislation, and to the imminent danger which this country is in because of it. That even in its special field it will be able to prevent bigoted and selfish, and well-meaning but deceived men from passing unjust and oppressive laws, its editors are not vain enough to imagine; their highest hope is, by warning people of impending danger, to arouse those who lov&real liberty to take a stand for it-to keep them from being taken by surprise. The work of a sentinel is to warn people of danger, so that they may be prepared to meet it. In this case, the danger to which we refer, is not so much that of being oppressed by unjust laws, as it is of being a party to the passing and the execution of such laws. The man who is persecuted for conscience sake, is in a far better state than the man who either directly or indirectly contributes to that end. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 33.6}

As to the existing evils in society, we have no idea that they will ever be corrected until the end of the world. Our correspondent has stated a view that is quite generally accepted, namely, that the church of Christ will advance and increase in strength and numbers until it will finally swallow up everything, and fill the whole earth, and that when the church has corrected all the evils of society, and the world has become morally perfect, then the Lord himself will come and reign over his people. This is essentially the National Reform view, for it has been declared that the triumph of National Reform would be the ushering in of the millennium. The National Reform view differs from the one that has been taught in the past, only in the way that the millennium shall be brought about. It was formerly taught that this would be done by the preaching of the gospel; but National Reformers find that way too slow; they find that the world of vice is gaining ground, and that morality is losing; and so they propose to convert the world by an act of Congress and of other law-making bodies, and so have it all done at once. This view is now superseding the old one. It comes, therefore, strictly within our province to show from the Scriptures that such a result as they look for is chimerical in the highest degree. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 33.7}

1. In the first place, it is contrary to all the history of the past, that all the world should ever be converted. It is true that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, but it is only so to those who believe; and there is no more reason to suppose that all the world will believe in this age, than that all should believe in some past age. The gospel was as much the power of God unto salvation in the days of Noah, and of Abraham, and of the apostles, as it is now, yet but very few of the inhabitants of the world believed in those days. This is not because the gospel was at fault, but because men would not believe. If all men would believe, the gospel would save them from sin; but it is not the work of the gospel to force men to believe. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,” is the gospel cry; but the mass of mankind have ever been the willing servants of sin, and so their minds have been blinded to the glorious light of the gospel. All men might have been healed, both in body and soul, when Jesus was on earth, if they had cared for the simple yet glorious truths which he spoke; but he was compelled mournfully to say, even to his own people, “Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.” The preaching of the apostles, fired as it was with the zeal of Pentecost, was able to turn but very few of the people of the world to righteousness. Are they not presumptuous, then, who imagine that they can accomplish what never has been accomplished? {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.1}

2. Jesus said to his disciples: “enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:13, 14. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.2}

The reason why so few will be saved, is because so few want to be, and not because of any lack on the part of God or his gospel. The tray to life is narrow; that is, there is only one way to do right; but the way to death is broad; for there are many ways of doing wrong. It is much easier, much more in accordance with natural inclination to do wrong, and God has foreseen that most people will follow their own inclination. It has ever been so, and the Scriptures declare that it will be so to the end of time. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.3}

3. Paul wrote to Timothy, and through him to us, as follows:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.4}

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” 2 Timothy 3:1-5. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.5}

Here is a list of sins almost identical with those ascribed to the ancient heathen (Romans 1:28-32), and all are to be prevalent in the last days. Surely this does not look as though the church is to be able, either by legal or moral suasion, to correct the existing evils of society {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.6}

4. We have a still stronger testimony than this. In Christ’s discourse upon the time of his second coming, he said:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.7}

“And so it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” Luke 17:26-30. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.8}

Since the world when the Lord comes is to be like it was in the days of Noah and Lot, it is going to grow worse instead of better, for “the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly” (Genesis 13:13), and before the flood “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Genesis 6:5. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.9}

If space allowed, we might add many like Scripture testimonies, but these are sufficient. The true church, as our correspondent says, is indeed composed of all those who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who by virtue of their faith in him are regenerated, and made new creatures; but it is not the province of the church to correct the evils of society. When the church gets that idea, it begins to pass laws to make men religious, or rather, to make men act as though they were religious, and then it ceases to be the church of Christ. The church is simply to be a light to the world, to exhibit the character of Jesus. But if the church begins to use the civil power to carry forward its work, it ceases to represent Christ, for he did not do so. The gospel is to be preached in all the world for a *witness* unto all nations, and with that its work ceases. A witness is not a prosecutor, nor a judge; and when the existing evils of society shall be corrected by the destruction of them that corrupt the earth, the gospel will have ceased its work. Sentence is never pronounced nor executed until after the witness has finished his testimony. And so those who think that to punish men for not serving God, is a part of the gospel, show that they do not know what the gospel is. They cease to be ambassadors for Christ, and usurp the place of Christ himself, as judge. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.10}

The few Scripture texts and arguments that have been given are sufficient to show the fallacy of the whole of our friend’s letter. It is Christ himself, and not the church, that is the rock that is to grind men to powder. It is not by the conversion of the whole world, against their will, that the earth is to be made the abode of peace, but by the utter destruction of those who will not obey God. The kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; but it is God the Father, and not the church, that gives them to the Son. And when they are given to him, it is not as converted nations, asking “What is the word that cometh forth from the Lord?” but it is as thorns fit only to be burnt; “reprobate silver,” because the Lord hath rejected them, to be “broken with a rod of iron, and dashed in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.11}

We would only add, in closing, that the Constitution of the United States is not conformed to the divine. If it were, we should not want it preserved as it is. Not because we are not in harmony with the divine constitution, but because we don’t think men are capable of administering a divine constitution. The amendment prohibiting slavery was in the line of simple justice between men, and for the good of society. We believe in a divine Government, highest aim to be loyal subjects of it; but we don’t want it administered by human deputies and we are glad to know that God does not rule by proxy, but executes his own decrees. The work of the SENTINEL is no less to keep people from laying profane hands on sacred things, then it is to preserve the American Constitution as it is; and so, while we are laboring in the interest of human rights, we are to the same extent laboring for the preservation of the purest Christianity. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 34.12}

E. J. W.

**“Provisions of the Sunday Rest Bill” American Sentinel 4, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

We are persuaded that there is a great deal of misunderstanding in regard to the Blair bills, not only among those who are opposed to religious legislation, but by those who are at least nominally favoring them. We have seen and heard the statement that the Sunday-Rest bill would, if it should become a law, shut down all business throughout the country. This is a mistake. The passage of the Sunday-Rest bill would have a direct effect upon only a comparatively small portion of the people of the United States, although it would very seriously affect them indirectly. The first section of that bill reads as fellows:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.1}

“*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That* on Sunday, no person or corporation, or the agent, servant, or employe, of any person or corporation; shall perform or authorize to be performed any secular work, labor, or business, works of necessity, mercy, and humanity excepted; nor shall any person engage in any play, game, show, exhibition, or amusement in public, in any Territory, District, vessel, or place subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States; nor shall it be lawful for any person or corporation to receive pay for labor or service performed or rendered in violation of this section” {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.2}

This section confines the working of the bill, if it should become a law, to those places that are “subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States.” These are the Territories and the District of Columbia. It is an absolute law for the Territories, making no exception, but obliging everybody to rest on Sunday. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.3}

Section 2 reads as follows:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.4}

“That no mails or mail matter shall hereafter be transported in times of peace over any land postal route, nor shall any mail matter be collected, assorted, handled, or delivered during any part of the first day of the week.” {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.5}

This is so plain as to need no comment. The third section reads as follows:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.6}

“That the prosecution of commerce between the States, and with the Indian tribes, by the transportation of persons by land or water on the first day of the week, is hereby prohibited, and any person or corporation, or the agent or employe of any person or corporation, who shall violate this section, shall be punished by a fine of not less than ten nor more than one thousand dollars; and no service performed in the prosecution of such prohibited commerce shall be lawful, nor shall any compensation be recoverable or be paid, for the same.” {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.7}

This shuts off inter-State commerce. By the first section, overland trains would be stopped in the Territories, but this section prohibits all Sunday traffic between States, whether on land or water. The reader can readily see what bearing such a law as this would have on State Sunday legislation. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.8}

Section 3 provides for cessation of labor on Sunday in the army and navy, prohibiting all drills, musters, and parades, except in time of active service or preparation therefore. Section 5 makes exception in case of labor or service performed or rendered on Sunday in consequence of accident or disaster or unavoidable delay in making the regular connections upon postal routes and routes of transportation, and allows for the transportation and delivery of milk before 5 A. M., and after 10 P. M. This is the whole of the bill, so far as its prohibition of labor is concerned. It will be seen that it is very strict as far as its jurisdiction extends, but it does not directly affect citizens of the States, except Government employes. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 35.9}

But its indirect effect in the States will be scarcely less than its direct effect in places subject to the exclusive control of the United States. It is well known that the great obstacle in the way of enforcing existing Sunday laws in the various States, has been the United States Government. In the hearing on the Sunday-Rest bill before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, December 13, Mrs. Bateham said that the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union based their claims and petitions on the following facts:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.1}

“1. Nearly every State has Sabbath laws, but the National Government has none, though greatly needed, since the question has become emphatically a national one, and the very perpetuity or loss of our national rest, the Christian Sabbath, seems to depend on its being protected by the Government from the encroachments of organized capital, and the reinforcements of State laws by National. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.2}

“2. It is in gross violation of nearly every State Sabbath law, that railroads run their Sunday trains, yet these States are powerless to prevent it, since only Congress can control inter-State commerce. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.3}

“3. By the State laws ordinary labor and traffic is forbidden on Sunday, but in defiance thereof the United States Government keeps its post-offices open and sells as on other days, and sends its mail to all parts of the country.”—*Report, p. 22*. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.4}

It will be seen that the plea for a National Sunday law is made on the ground that the State Sunday laws are powerless without it. In that same committee meeting, Senator Blair, the chairman, stated that the General Government takes advantage of what the States have given to it in the way of jurisdiction over the post-offices, inter-State commerce, and the army and navy, to introduce practices that nullify their attempt to enforce Sunday laws, and said:— {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.5}

“To prevent this, is the object of this legislation. That is all that is undertaken here. It is simply an act proposing to make efficient the Sunday-Rest laws of the States, and nothing else.”—*Report, p. 97*. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.6}

We shall hereafter take occasion to show how terribly “efficient” some of those Sunday laws will become when this Sunday-Rest bill becomes a law. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.7}

National Reformers have ever referred to the general Government as the great Sabbath-breaker, holding that running of mail trains, and the keeping open of post-offices practically nullified all their efforts to have Sunday strictly observed. With this objection removed, there would be speedy and strict enforcement of the Sunday-laws that already exist, and enactment of laws where there are none now. The passage of the bill, therefore, would practically result, as was said at the National Sunday Convention, in making Sunday the ideal Sabbath of the Puritans, to be occupied only by worship. It should be opposed by everybody; by those who do not care to observe Sunday, as a matter of course, and because it is unjust and un-American; and by those who do care to observe Sunday, both from the standpoint of the golden rule, and because they should protest against having their worship from choice made to appear as though it was a matter of compulsion. {AMS February 20, 1889, p. 36.8}

E. J. W.

**“Subjection to the Powers That Be” American Sentinel 4, 6.**

E. J. Waggoner

“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.” Romans 13:1, 2. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 41.1}

This text of Scripture has been the cause of a great deal of controversy concerning the scope of civil governments, and the relations which Christians should sustain to them. There are a great many people who take the extreme view that whatever civil governments enact should be scrupulously obeyed, no matter how much it may conflict with the will of God, as revealed in the Bible. They seem to imagine that God has delegated all power to men, and that he waives to the claims of men his right to govern in matters of morals. They virtually say that the inspired command to be subject to the higher powers, absolves people from direct allegiance to their Creator. The very statement of the case should be enough to show anybody the absurdity of such a view. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 41.2}

The thirteenth chapter of Romans affords in itself ample proof that the powers that be are ordained of God only in matters that pertain to the outward peace of society. But we wish to bring a few other Scriptures to bear, to show just how we are to be subject to earthly powers, and at the same time be subject to the highest power of all. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 41.3}

The seventh verse of the same chapter says: “Render therefore to all their due: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.” Render “honor to whom honor” is due, is a part of this command. Now it is beyond question that honor is due to God, for the Lord himself says that he will honor only those who honor him. 1 Samuel 2:30. And that this tribute and honor which are due to God are entirely different from those which are due to earthly governments, is evident from the words of Christ to the Pharisees, which are exactly parallel with those of Paul to the Romans: “Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.” Matthew 22:21. Thus we see that while we are to be subject to the earthly powers, that subjection must in nowise conflict with our subjection to God. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 41.4}

That inspiration does not teach that men are in duty bound to obey every edict of earthly powers, but that they are to disobey every enactment which conflicts with the law of God, is very plain. Take the case of the three Hebrew children at the court of Nebuchadnezzar. They were as truly bound to be subject to him as ever any men were to an earthly ruler, for Nebuchadnezzar was king by God’s own appointment (Jeremiah 27:4-7), and they had by the same power been placed under him. Yet when the king commanded them to worship an image which he had set up, they absolutely refused to do anything of the kind. For their stubbornness, as the king doubtless thought it, they were cast into a fiery furnace; yet God who commands us to be subject to the powers that be, showed his approval of their course in the most marked manner. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.1}

Take the case of Daniel in the court of Darius. That king made a decree that for thirty days no man should make a request of any god or man except himself, under penalty of being cast into a den of lions. But Daniel paid no manner of attention to the decrees. When he knew that the writing was signed, “he went into his house; and his windows being opened in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.” Daniel 6:10. Like his three fellows, he made no secret of his disobedience to the king’s order. Yet the same God who commands us to be subject to the powers that be, showed his approval of Daniel’s course by delivering him from the lions, and honoring him before the whole empire. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.2}

The apostles afford another case in point. An express injunction was laid upon them by the Jewish Sanhedrim “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.” Acts 4:17, 18. The apostles, however, refused to keep silence, saying, “We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (verse 20), and they went right on teaching as though the rulers had said nothing. When they were again brought before the council, and reminded of the injunction which had been laid upon them, they boldly replied, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29. All these cases, and especially this last, show that the command to be subject to the powers that be, does not mean that we should obey them when obedience to them involves disobedience to God. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.3}

Now the question arises, were these men subject to the Governments under which they lived? Can men be subject to the powers that be, and yet not obey them in every particular, no matter what they command? We answer that men can be subject to the powers that be, and still disobey them when their decrees conflict with the laws of God; and the record shows most clearly that Daniel and his fellows, and the apostles, were subject to the powers that existed in their time. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.4}

A passage from the writings of one of the men who refused to obey men, when to do so involved disloyalty to God, will make this matter clear. We quote from 1 Peter 2:17-20:— {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.5}

“Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the King. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.6}

The command to “honor the king” shows this to be a parallel passage to Romans 13:1, 2. Here, as there, we are exhorted to be subject to rulers, even though they be not good. But that this does not mean that we should in so doing disobey God, is evident from verse 19: “For this is thank-worthy if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.” The fact that he is called upon to suffer wrongfully, and that he is buffeted because he does well, shows that his doing right has been in direct opposition to the commands of his master. He suffers “for conscience towards God.” That is, his conscience will not allow him to disobey God’s commandment in obedience to the powers that be, and so he patiently suffers for it. And although he cannot obey the master’s command, his patient acceptance of the threatened punishment shows his subjection to the power. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.7}

So we see that being subject to the powers that be, means simply that we are to obey them when their commands are right; and to disobey them when they conflict with those of God, and meekly to take the consequences. This is just what Daniel and his fellows and the apostles did. They did not resist, but they did not obey an unrighteous commandment. Now turn again to Romans 13, verses 2 and 5, and you will see that this is just what is taught. We quote:— {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.8}

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” “Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience’ sake.” {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.9}

The Bible everywhere teaches respect for authority. Anarchists can find no warrant in the Bible for any of their contempt for authority. Rebellion against authority is not countenanced under any circumstances. Every soul must be subject to the powers that be, and that subjection consists in willing, prompt obedience to all their laws when they do not require disregard of God’s law, and as willing an acceptance of the penalty for disobeying laws that do contravene the laws of God. An example of this is found in the early Christians, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Hebrews 10:34. Where there cannot be obedience, there must not be resistance. David would not lift his hand against the king of Israel, even though that king was most unjustly seeking his life; Paul would not knowingly speak ill of the high priest, although that priest was a wicked hypocrite. He counseled the Christians to be subject to the powers that were, even while he was daily violating the laws of the most wicked ruler; and he showed his subjection to a power which was despicable because of its moral rottenness, by willingly yielding up his life as the price of his necessary disobedience. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.10}

E. J. W.

**“Proposed Persecution in Tennessee” American Sentinel 4, 6.**

E. J. Waggoner

We learn that the following is being circulated western part of Tennessee:— {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.11}

NOTICE,

“*To whom it may concern:*— {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.12}

That we, the undersigned citizens of the Texas neighborhood and vicinity, being desirous of the welfare of our community, and that peace may prevail, and that the morals of our children may not be insulted and trampled upon by willful violation of the Sunday laws of our land, do this day pledge our honor that we will individually and collectively prosecute each and every violation of our State law that may come under our observation.” {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.13}

That our readers may know just what will be the result of carrying out that pledge, we print the Tennessee Sunday law, which they propose to enforce. Here it is:— {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.14}

If any merchant, artificer, tradesman, farmer, or other person, shall be guilty of doing or exercising any of the common avocations of life, or of causing or permiting the same to be done by his children or servants, (acts of real necessity or charity excepted) on Sunday, he shall on due conviction on thereof before any justice of the peace of the county, forfeit and pay three dollars, one-half to the person who will sue for the same, the other half for the use of the county.” {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.15}

If the enforcement of that law would not be persecution, then we don’t know what would be. If any farmer shall be “guilty” of planting squashes behind his barn, or of hoeing corn in the back lot, down by the woods, on Sunday, he may be hauled up and fined. Yet we are gravely assured that Sunday laws are simply “sanitary arrangements,” and are not intended to make men religious. We do not need to be informed that they are not intended to make men religious. such a law is calculated only to make anarchists hypocrites. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.16}

Sanitary arrangements, forsooth! What is there about the Sunday that makes it so much more dangerous to a man’s health to dig potatoes or weed onions on it than on any other day? We propose to ring the changes on this matter until the people shall see the inconsistency, or the duplicity, whichever it is, of those who argue for Sunday laws. If they want sanitary regulations, let them try their hands at framing something that would indicate it. If they want what the laws they frame seem to indicate, then let them say so plainly, and we shall have far greater respect for them. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.17}

It may be said that the Tennessee law will never be enforced according to the strict letter of it, and that we have supposed an impossible case. But the fact is that less than three years ago, under the Tennessee Sunday law, men were arrested and fined and imprisoned for quietly digging potatoes on Sunday for dinner, and for pulling up weeds out of their garden. And this was not in town, where people might see the work while passing to or from church, but in remote country districts, where the informer had to go out of his way in order to see the Sunday work. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.18}

This fact, taken in connection with the last clause of the law, reminds us of another gross abuse that may be perpetrated. The law gives one-half the fine to the person who sues the Sunday worker. Vagabonds who have nothing to do but loaf around, may make a very fine thing for themselves by spying around the country, and peeping into shops to see who is working, and then lodging information against them. The Tennessee Sunday law is a disgrace to the State and to civilization, yet the reader will look in vain to see any denunciation of it by any National Reformer or advocate of a Sunday law “for sanitary purposes only.” W. {AMS February 27, 1889, p. 42.19}