**“Living Beneath Our Privileges” The Signs of the Times, 9, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

“I am sorry that I live so far beneath my privileges.” How often we hear a testimony similar to this. The phrase has become a stereotyped one, and like all stereotyped phrases, is used without thought as to its meaning. In the first place what are these “privileges”? It is the Christians privilege to “be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.” We may “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” We may cast all our care upon God, knowing that he cares for us. 1 Peter 5:7. We may “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” All who are weary and heavy laden and have the privilege of coming to Christ, and the promise of rest if they do so. It is our privilege to “taste and see that the Lord is good.” These and a multitude of similar things are not only privileges, but they are the duties. {SITI January 11, 1883, p. 15.1}

Now if we do not enjoy these privileges whose fault is it? These blessings are offered to us; we are invited, yes, urged, to accept of them. If we say we are sorry that we do not possess them, do we tell the truth? If we really wanted them, would we not have them? If we should go out on the street and offer a boy a handful of coin, and he should stand and bewail his poverty, and tell how sorry he was that he had no money, while he made no offer to accept the gold in our outstretched hand, would we believe his sincerity? How long would it be before we would turn away from him, and put the money in our pocket? We would not stand long begging him to accept a gift at our hands. {SITI January 11, 1883, p. 15.2}

Well, this is just the way it is between us and Christ. He offers us pardon and rest, and help for every trial, and pleads with us to accept it; and we stand and tell how weak we are, and how sorry we are that we are living so far beneath our privileges. Are we sorry? If we were, would we not make use of those privileges without any delay? {SITI January 11, 1883, p. 15.3}

Is it not wonderful that the Lord does not turn away from us, and leave us alone? It is well for us that God is more longsuffering that man is. His patience and forbearance are beyond all measure. And yet these offers will not always last. Hear what he says: “Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.” That will be a terrible time; but what else ought we to expect, if we do not, “live up to our privileges.” {SITI January 11, 1883, p. 15.4}

Let us not be unreasonable. It is not a question of whether we can overcome, but whether we will overcome. There is no merit in being continually in the Slough of Despond, or of languishing in Doubting Castle, and much of our so-called confessions of our shortcomings and weaknesses, are not manifestations of humility, but of culpable negligence. Christ says, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,” and “my grace is sufficient for thee.” Let us not say by our actions that we do not believe him. E. J. W. {SITI January 11, 1883, p. 15.5}

**“The Sabbath-School” The Signs of the Times, 9, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Notes on Sabbath-school Lesson for January 27.**

As the lesson for this week is a review of the whole book of Genesis, it is evident that only a few points can be touched upon. The great point to be kept in mind is the plan that runs through the whole history. This will be spoken of more fully hereafter. One thing that is worthy of mention in passing is {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.1}

**THE DAYS OF CREATION WEEK**

Several years ago it was thought to be nothing less than rank heresy to deny that these days or any other than literal twenty-four-hour days. Now, however, he who ventures to intimate that they were literal days is looked upon as an ignoramus. Very recently we saw the statement in one of the leading religious journals, that no one whose opinion is worth anything believes the old theory. But for all this, we hold unflinchingly to the fact that the days were literal days. We believe that this is really a vital point, and not a mere matter of opinion. Once admit that these days were long periods, and the way is open for a disbelief in the entire Bible; for if this part of the Bible does not mean what it seems to mean, what warrant have we for thinking that any of the Bible means what it says? {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.2}

Suppose the days to have been equal to one thousand of our years. Now it is evident that the seventh day of the creation week was of the same nature as the other six. If not, then the case is worse than ever, for there is nothing said by which we can infer that there was any difference. But on the seventh day God rested, and afterwards, because of his rest, he blessed it, and set it apart for man’s observance. See Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 20:8-11. How absurd to command man to keep holy a day a thousand years long. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.3}

It is sometimes urged in favor of the popular view, that “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years.” Exactly so; God is not obliged to have just so much time in which to perform his acts. He could create the world in one day as well as in a thousand years. One would be no more wonderful than the other, for the simple act of creation itself is something that man cannot comprehend. The psalmist says, “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.” “For he spake and it was (done); he commanded and it stood fast.” This describes the work of creation. God did not speak and set forces in motion that after the lapse of ages would result in the formation of our world; but at his word everything came into existence perfect and good. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.4}

As has been said, the works of God are infinite. The mind of man can find ample scope in contemplating them. And it is proper, and pleasing to God, that we should think upon his works, for the psalmist says, “The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.” “He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered.” Psalm 111:2, 4. But if men were constantly engaged in their own affairs, their minds would not be out upon God and his work. In order, therefore, that man might have an uninterrupted period for meditation, God gave him {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.5}

**THE SABBATH**

This institution was not an arbitrary unfair, given simply for God’s pleasure, that he might be remembered, but was given because men needed it. God can exist without us, but we cannot exist without God. The Sabbath was a necessity of man’s nature, therefore God made it for him. See Mark 2:27. But it is not for men to use as he may see fit. It is his to use to the glory of God, and only by so doing we can he get the benefit from it. All the commandments are for man. It is absolutely necessary to his happiness that he should refrain from murder, theft, etc. It is in this sense that the Sabbath was made for man. Only by keeping all of God’s commandments can men attain to the highest possible state of enjoyment both here and hereafter. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.6}

It is not in the province of these brief notes to say anything about the perpetuity of the Sabbath. The natural conclusion of any unbiased person would be that the Sabbath is of perpetual obligation. If it was necessary for man six thousand years ago, it is necessary now. If there was danger of forgetting God then, there is a thousand-fold more danger now. And it is “The day of the Sabbath” that is to be kept. No other day but the seventh day can be the Sabbath, for upon no other day did God rest and pronounce a blessing, and no other day was sanctified. It is not true, then, that all days are alike, and that any day will do for a memorial. All days are not alike; for one day in the week has been blessed and sanctified, made holy and set apart from the rest. It is a poor excuse for anyone to say that he can see no difference. God expects us to make a difference between the holy and the profane. Read what he says about it, and the consequences of not doing so, in Ezekiel 22:26-31. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.7}

**THE RESURRECTION**

Not only is the resurrection taught in the New Testament, but it was understood centuries before that book was written. When Abraham was called upon to sacrifice his only son, the one in whose name, it had been said, his seed should be called, there was no natural probability that the promise could ever be fulfilled. But Abraham, like Paul, knew whom he had believed. The reason for his great faith is found in the fact that he knew that God possessed all power, and was able to raise Jesus from the dead. He had received his son by a miracle, and he knew that God was able to work another. The “friend of God” was not above believing in miracles. Perhaps if there were more nowadays who held that relation to God a belief in miracles would be more general. E. J. W. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 29.8}

**“The Resurrection” The Signs of the Times, 9, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

In a Spiritualist lecture recently delivered in Oakland, by a distinguished “Professor,” the following statement is reported to have been made: “The word resurrection is not found in the Greek Testament.” This statement would doubtless be received by some with pleasure, as it would seem to show that our Bible is unreliable, and by others with surprise. It will no doubt have the effect over those who heard or read it, which the lecturer intended it should have-to weaken their faith in the inspired record. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.1}

Now instead of denying this assertion, we are prepared to make another one still more astounding: The word “God” is nowhere found in the Greek Testament! Neither is any other English word found in the Greek Testament; if they were, it would be an English Testament instead of a Greek Testament. But the Greek word *theos*, meaning “God,” is found in the Greek Testament; and so also is the word *anastasis*, which means “a making to stand up,” “a restoration,” “awakening,” “resurrection;” and this “Professor” Phelps knew very well, providing he has any knowledge of the Greek, or of the New Testament, the latter of which, at least, we very much doubt. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.2}

Right in this connection it is proper to mention a somewhat similar statement recently made by the *Christian Union*. A correspondent of that paper quoted a benediction which is sometimes used: “The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life,” and asked, “If man’s body is mortal, from what is it preserved?” the reply was that this benediction “probably was connected with the old-time faith and the literal resurrection of the body; a faith which, in our judgment, is inconsistent with the teaching of the New Testament.” {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.3}

Turning our attention for a short time to the New Testament itself, we shall seek not only that the judgment of the *Christian Union* is at fault, but that the Greek Testament teaches the doctrine of the literal resurrection of the dead even more strongly than does the English version. A few texts will suffice to show this. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.4}

In Luke 20:27-38 we have the record of the question which the Sadducees put to Christ, and his answer. Disbelieving the resurrection, and wishing to entangle Christ with their sophistry, they stated to him the hypothetical case of a woman who had married in succession seven brothers, each of whom had died, the death of the last one being followed by the death of the woman herself. The question was, “In the resurrection whose wife of them is she?” Now notice; the question had to do with people who were dead; but not those who were living under different conditions. The Sadducees believe that when men died they absolutely ceased to exist for ever. But the further clause of Christ’s answer recognized the fact that these dead ones shall live again. “But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead,” etc.; literally, “The awakening of the dead ones.” {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.5}

Again, when Peter and John were preaching in the temple, “the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” Acts 4:1, 2; literally, ‘the raising up or wakening of the dead.” Those priest and Sadduces have their counterparts among the religious teachers of to-day. They do not like to hear of a resurrection through Christ; that the eternal life can be obtained only through Christ. Professing great love and reverence for Christ, even to observing the day of his resurrection, they refuse to allow that he alone has the power which he gained by that resurrection. They are very zealous in honoring him in a way which he has not asked them to, but deny that which constitutes his badge of authority,-the ability to give to those who are dead. See John 5:25-29. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.6}

Paul warned Timothy against profane and vain babblings, and cited as a specimen the words of Hymenaeus and Philetus, whose words, said he, “will eat as doth a canker.” The particular profane and vain babbling in their case was that they had erred concerning the truth, “saying that the resurrection is passed already.” If he used such language in reference to those who claimed that the resurrection was in the past, what would he have said of those who should claim that the doctrine of the resurrection is a myth, with no foundation in fact? And Paul, be it remembered, did not believe in the spiritual resurrection which should consist in taking something already alive, and pass it along to a higher sphere. He believed in a literal resurrection of the body; for he says: “For our conversation [citizenship] is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” Philippians 3:20, 21. Even David, who lived so long before the ninteenth century that his ideas are commonly supposed to have been very crude, seems to have had the same idea of the resurrection that Paul had, for he said, “I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.” {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.7}

At a future time we will consider other texts that teach a resurrection, and will note more particularly how in every instance they convey the idea that the dead are asleep and unconscious, by saying that they shall awake; and that they are in the earth beneath and not in the heaven above, by the use of the term “raising from the dead.” We know, however, that these plain texts will not have any weight with a large majority, for the lecturer truly said, “The literal of the Bible is not in harmony with the spirit of the present age.” This is about the only real truth which the lecture contained; and this was anticipated centuries ago by Paul, who said, “The natural man not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” E. J. W. {SITI January 18, 1883, p. 31.8}

**“The Sabbath-School. God’s Purpose in Dealing with Pharaoh” The Signs of the Times, 9, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Thoughts on Review Lesson for Feb. 3.**

**GOD’S PURPOSE IN DEALING WITH PHARAOH**

Those who are disposed to cavil, and make a great deal of capital out of Exodus 9:15, 16: “For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.” One who is not predisposed to find fault with the Bible, will have little difficulty with this passage as it stands; but the best critics, among whom is Dr. Clarke, tell us that our translation does not convey the idea of the original. As Dr. Clarke says, God did not bring a pestilence upon Egypt, although the first-born were slain; nor was Pharaoh cut off from the earth at that time. The true meaning is said to be expressed by these words: “For now indeed had I stretched forth my hand and smitten thee and thy people with the pestilence, then hadst thou been cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I made thee to stand [allowed thee to live until the present time], for to show in thee my power,” etc. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.1}

This relieves the subject of all difficulty, and makes the passage harmonize with the context. In verse 13, God tells Moses to command Pharaoh to lead his people go. If he refuses, he says that he will send all his plagues upon him and upon his servants upon his people. Verse 14. In order that he may not think lightly of the judgments of God, or that he has already exhausted his power, God tells Pharaoh that if he had so ordered it, he would have been cut off from the earth. And then he assures him that it is only an act of mercy that his life has been spared. God might have destroyed Pharaoh at the very outset, and delivered Israel at once; but that, to short-sighted man, would have appeared to be an act of unwarranted cruelty. Instead of this, he allowed Pharaoh to show out his real character, and so vindicated his course, and at the same time displayed his wonderful power. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.2}

**THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH’S HEART**

“And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh and he hearkened not unto them.” With what avidity skeptics seize upon this passage! “If the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, he was not to blame for what he did, and the Lord was arbitrary and cruel to punish him for what he could not help.” Thus they will talk, and having once satisfied themselves that God is a hard taskmaster, and a cruel tyrant, they feel justified in refusing to serve him. But before we jump at such a conclusion, let us see just hot it happen that Pharaoh’s heart was made hard. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.3}

Notice first the character of the king. He was ungrateful, as shown by the statement that he “knew not Joseph.” This does not mean that he was not familiar with Joseph’s history, and what he had done for Egypt; but that he cared nothing for him. The fact that Joseph had saved all Egypt from starvation, did not seem to the king to be any reason why he should befriend Joseph’s people. This was a nature upon which kindness had no softening effect. His treatment of the Israelites shows that he was selfish, cruel, and vindictive, and utterly regardless of human life. He had grown insolent and haughty, and when the demand was made upon him to let Israel go, he replied, “I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” Then plagues were sent upon him. When the frogs covered the land, and the magician’s could not remove them, he relented, and promised that if they were taken away, he would let the people go. He was taken at his word, but what was the result? “But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them.” Exodus 8:15. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.4}

Again another plague was sent, but he remained stubborn. Then swarms of flies filled their houses, so that everything was corrupted. This induced the king to say, “I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness.” So Moses entreated the Lord, and the flies were removed at the time appointed; but the result was the same as before. The record says: “And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from this his servants, and from his people; there remained not one. And *Pharaoh hardened his heart* at this time also, neither would he let the people go.” Chap. 8:31, 32. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.5}

Yet again, after the cattle had been killed by the murrian, and boils, and hail; when the terrible storm of thunder and hail and fire had devastated the land, Pharaoh was alarmed. Sending for Moses and Aaron, he said, “I have sinned this time; the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Intreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and he shall stay no longer.” Chap. 9:27, 28. As before Moses set a time for the removal of the plague and the result is stated in verses 34, 35 thus: “And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go.” {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.6}

Now we can see just how it was that the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart. He did it by his manifestations of mercy. The king was very humble in the face of death, but as soon as the cause of fear was removed, he became stubborn. Had he not been so willful, the mercy of the Lord would have moved him to repentance; but he was one of those persons who think that an exhibition of kindness is a manifestation of weakness. Having nothing like mercy or kindness in his own nature, he was unable to appreciate it in others. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.7}

Theodoret very aptly says: “The sun by the action of the heat makes wax moist, and mud dry, pardoning the one while it softens the other, by the same operations producing exactly opposite results; thus from the long-suffering of God some derive benefit, and others harmed, some are softened while others are hardened.” Numerous cases, besides that of Pharaoh, might be cited to further illustrate this. The same words and actions of Christ that bound his disciples closer to him and gave him many devoted followers, hardened the hearts of the wicked priests, and moved them to kill him. It will ever be found the case that when a man falls, he falls on the side of his natural inclination. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.8}

**A LESSON OF TRUST**

The Israelites were commanded to gather of the manna “an omer for every man.” This was sufficient for the wants of one day, and as they were to “go out and gather a certain rate every day,” it would have been useless to take any more, even if it would have kept. But the people were not content to follow the Lord’s direction; some gathered more than the required amount. They doubtless reasoned thus: “It is true that this manna is promised every day, but there may come a time when it will fail, and it is no more than prudent to prepare for such a time, while we have abundance.” By gathering more than the specified quantity, more than they could use during the day, they showed their lack of faith in God’s promise. They thought that they could provide for themselves better than God could. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.9}

But their planning prove to be useless, for “when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.” Thus there was an equality. During their sojourn in the wilderness, God wished to have his people learn to trust him. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.10}

As we look back on this incident, the course of the Israelites seems foolish; but we will not have to search far in order to find its counterpart. Paul makes their case the text for a lesson in giving. He desires that there should be an equality, that all should give in the same proportion. Then he quotes, “He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.” God has promised to care for each one of his children; to give them their bread day by day, if we gather millions, we can have no more than our daily sustenance, and if we are in the depths of poverty, God is able to provide for our daily wants. Are we not, then, even more culpable than were the Israelites, if we refuse to return to God his rightful portion of our means? God is testing us just as he did them, but how many of us prove to be dull scholars. We have more faith in ourselves than we have in God. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.11}

**THE MURMURINGS OF ISRAEL**

As we look at the wanderings of this people, the most prominent thing seems to be their murmuring disposition, and lack of faith. We can hardly realize how they could so easily forget God. Through all the fearful plagues that had been visited upon the Egyptians, they had been miraculously preserved; yet no sooner are they brought into a difficult place by the sea than they complain. They were taken through the Red Sea on dry ground while the pursuing Egyptians were drowned. This raised their spirits once more, and they joined with Moses in singing that wonderful song of deliverance, found in the 15th chapter of Exodus; yet within three days they were murmuring because the water was bitter. Why could they not remember that He who could divide the Red Sea, could provide water to drink? Water was miraculously provided, but in a few days their stock of provision ran low, and again they murmured. They even wished themselves back in their former bondage. Again there wants were supplied; bread was furnished, and a series of miracles was begun, that lasted for forty years, yet it seems to have made but little impression on them. In a short time they came to Rephidim, and here their complaints were renewed, the same as before. Because there was no water at hand, they were about to stone Moses. The former miraculous provision of water seems to have been utterly forgotten. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.12}

Now all this was extremely wicked. They were tempting God, and there can be no excuse for their course. But while we justly condemn their actions, let us see if we are not condemning ourselves. Human nature has not changed much since that time. We have received blessings innumerable from the hand of God. We can truly say with the psalmist that “goodness and mercy have followed this all the days of our life.” Israel had a standing manifestation of God’s power and goodness in the manna, which was furnished fresh every day. But it is just as true in our case that the mercies of the Lord are “new every morning.” And yet we murmur and become discouraged at everything that crosses us. If discouragements come we, like the Israelites, are tempted to turn back, and imagine that we cannot gain the promised land. It is doubtful if we possess any more faith than they did. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.13}

We can easily see how much better it would have been for the Israelites if they had been grateful to God for his favors, and had trusted him in times of need. It is well that we are able to do this, for the apostle says, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” 1 Corinthians 10:11. If we can see wherein they erred, let us see to it that we do not follow their course. “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.14}

**THE FLIGHT FROM EGYPT.—ITS MEMORIAL**

It is claimed by many that the Sabbath commemorates the flight from Egypt. They argue thus, because in Deuteronomy 5:15 their deliverance from Egypt is noted as a thing for which the Israelites should be grateful, and an additional reason why they should remember his commandments. But the fourth commandment itself shows what the Sabbath is intended to commemorate, and no hint of the flight from Egypt is given. That claim is so palpably absurd that it must disappear upon the slightest candid investigation. It may not, however, be amiss to notice Exodus 12:41, 42, in this connection. “And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. *It is a night to be much observed* unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.” The people fled in the night; and the Passover, which was the true memorial of their deliverance (See Exodus 12:26-28), was celebrated in the night. Exodus 12:6-10; Deuteronomy 16:6. God’s memorials are always fitting and appropriate; when man attempts to improve upon God’s plan, he always makes confusion. E. J. W. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 41.15}

**“What They Propose to Do” The Signs of the Times, 9, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

The effect which is the proposed religious amendment to the Constitution of the United States is intended to produce is very clearly shown in the last number of the *Christian Statesman*. A clergyman who is engaged in the work of the National Reform Association, visited Watrousville, Michigan. At the close of the lecture opportunity was given for questions, when a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of that place, asked how the proposed religious amendment would affect Seventh-day Adventists.The reply was: “Just as existing Sabbath [Sunday] laws affect them in States where the first day of the week alone is recognized as the civil Sabbath.” {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 43.1}

Now we do not exactly believe this, and for this reason: Sunday laws are very rarely enforced in those States where they already exist, as in California, for instance; consequently Seventh-day Adventists are not at present materially affected by them. But the friends of National Reform (as it is called) do not contemplate such a state of things when they secure the amendment for which they are working. They are not children, and will not be satisfied with the pretense of a law. What they contemplate is such an amendment to the Constitution of the United States as will give them authority to close all places of business on Sunday, stop the running of railroad trains, the carrying of mails, printing and delivery of newspapers, etc., on that day. In short, they desire to make of the Sunday a sabbath in the full sense of the word-a day of rest for all. This is what they claim to be working for. But no such a state of things exist now, consequently those who believe in resting on the Sabbath and laboring on Sunday, would be differently affected by the passage of the amendment. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 43.2}

It is worth while to remember, however that existing State Sunday laws would affect Seventh-day Adventists, and other observers of the Sabbath, very seriously, if the friends of these laws were able to enforce them as they wish to. Those who are familiar with the persecutions in Pennsylvania, under the Sunday Law of 1794, and with what was attempted last year in California, will have no difficulty in understanding just how “existing Sabbath laws affect them in States where the first day of the week alone is recognized as the civil Sabbath.” {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.1}

But the animus of the movement is shown by the next question and answer. We quote:- {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.2}

“Another said that if [the religious amendment] would lead to interference with liberty to worship according to the dictates of conscience. To this it was answered: ‘No. But unless a small minority were to enjoy exceptional privileges, it would interfere with work on the Lord’s day.’” {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.3}

Just so. And since they do not propose to grant “exceptional privileges,” the “small minority” who keep the seventh day, must refrain from laboring on Sunday. Still religious liberty will not be interfered with! They virtually say, “We have no particular objections to your observance of the seventh day; indeed, if you do so desire, and can make a living, you may rest on Monday and Tuesday and Thursday and Friday as well, *but you must rest on Sunday*.” Everybody is at liberty to do just as he pleases, provided he does not wish to do anything contrary to the practice of the majority. This is religious liberty with a vengeance. The pope of Rome would grant that much. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.4}

Let us take a similar case as an illustration. Suppose Christianity were entirely unknown in China, as it was only a few years ago. A little colony of Englishmen and Americans, attracted by the climate and by the superior facilities offered for their business, locate there. China has been represented to them as a land of religious liberty, or every man is free to worship as his conscience may dictate. After they have been there a few weeks they are brought before the officers of justice and accused of violating the laws of the empire. They ask wherein they have erred, and are told that they have neglected the worship of Joss; that they have never been seen in any temple; and that they have been known to speak irreverently of the gods of wood. The strangers reply that they worship the God that made the heavens and the earth-the one whose name is Joe. But they are told that that God is not recognized in China. “The majority of our people,” say the officers, “worship these gods which you see. We have therefore made a law that all people in this country must worship them also. You can readily see that no exception can be made in your case, since you are so small a minority that you cannot help yourselves. But our laws do not interfere with the religious liberty of anybody. You are not prohibited from worshiping your God, but you *must* worship ours or else your heads will be the forfeit.” Just this state of things has existed in many countries, and does exist even yet; but those countries have been called despotisms, and places where there was no freedom of conscience. And this is no exaggerated picture of what will happen in this country when the National Reform Association accomplishes its object. All unprejudiced lovers of true liberty will agree that such a movement is not only opposed to the principles of our government but to the spirit of true Christianity. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.5}

This idea that the majority must rule is a most pernicious one, if carried out to its fullest extent. It is opposed to the spirit of the gospel. The Bible gives no warrant for it. It is true that Peter exhorts the younger to be subject to the elder, but he also says, “Yea, all to be subject to one another.” This is far different from the majority ruling the minority. The idea that might makes right, which is only another way of saying that the majority must rule, has not the least foundation in the Bible. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.6}

According to our friends of the National Reform Association, Elijah was simply a headstrong fanatic, and Paul was indeed a “pestilent fellow.” Both advocated ideas that were held by but a small minority, and were opposed to the established religion. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.7}

According to the theory that the majority ought to rule, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego richly deserved the punishment that was threatened them for standing out against all law of the land, and should have been left to their fate. Their answer, “We are not careful to answer thee in this matter,” and “Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up,” was simply a manifestation of impudent stubbornness. But we have not been accustomed to regarded it so. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.8}

When Peter and John “preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead,” they were acting contrary to the will of the majority. The State religion was utterly opposed to the doctrine which they taught, yet they persisted in their course even after being threatened and warned not to do so. Their reply to the rulers was this: “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” This noble reply has been admired by Christians of every generation, and even those who to-day plead for a State religion and the rule of the majority, will contend that the apostles were justified in their action. And we, although far inferior to them, may yet follow their example. We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard, and practice that which God has commanded; and though “the rulers take counsel together against the Lord,” and against his holy law, we pray that we may have strength to humbly answer, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” E. J. W. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.9}

**“A Specimen of Religious Intolerance” The Signs of the Times, 9, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

Father O’Connor, the ex-priest who is delivering anti-catholic lectures in different portions of the United States, attempted to lecture in Zanesville, O., last week, but was not allowed to do so. Here is the newspaper account of the affair:- {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.10}

“Before the lecturer arrived, fully 1,500 were present. The assemblage seemed orderly enough, but the instant O’Connor appeared on the stage he was greeted with a shower of stones, rotten eggs, etc. confusion reigned. O’Connor hastily jumped into an ante-room and locked the door. When men screamed, and it was at first thought a general riot would ensue, when the Protestants in the house would have suffered fearfully, as the opposition was greatly in the majority. O’Connor’s assailants were about to leave the hall, when somebody suggested a coat of tar and feathers, and were about to carry out their threat, when a detachment of police arrived on the scene and arrested O’Connor, there is great excitement over the affair. No arrests were made, the three daily papers, two morning and one evening, are afraid to publish the names or give particulars of the affair, as the Catholic element is largely in the ascendancy.” {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.11}

When such a scene as this can take place in America, it is unnecessary to go back to the Dark Ages as examples of Catholic bigotry and persecution. It is an illustration of the saying that “The church never changes.” The statement that the lecturer, after having been a target for stones, rotten eggs, etc., was the only person arrested, sounds almost like sarcasm. Let no one boast too loudly that this is a land of freedom, when of three newspapers not one dares comment on the outrage. The truth is that liberty can never exist where the Catholic Church is dominant, no matter where the place may be. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.12}

We anxiously look to see the *Christian Statesman’s* unqualified indorsement of this suppression of free speech. Of course it may be expected to deprecate the violence, but the action was in harmony with the principles which it represents. In Zanesville, it is stated, “the Catholic element is largely in the ascendancy.” Then, of course, they ought to have everything their own way. Nobody has any right to follow the dictates of his own conscience unless he has backing enough, and the spirit, to enforce his claims. Such is, in reality, the spirit, not only of Catholicism, but of that party which is seeking to enforce the observance of Sunday, the distinguishing mark of Catholicism. Of the truth of this statement we had ample proof in the Sunday excitement that pervaded this State last year. The *Statesman* may, however, condemn the affair noted above, as it makes a great deal of difference whose ox is gored. E. J. W. {SITI January 25, 1883, p. 44.13}