

THE

Canadian Union Messenger

"As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger."

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SUNDAY LAWS

UNQUESTIONABLY the first Sunday law, either ecclesiastical or civil, was ordained by Constantine, a pagan emperor, in the year A. D. 321.

Constantine was a sun-worshiper, and in his law he called Sunday "the venerable day of the sun." Worldly bishops united with the pagan emperor to lead the people to honor the heathen Sunday, and trample under foot the Lord's day.

In A. D. 364, at the council of Laodicea, the fallen church anathematized all who should keep the Sabbath, and commanded everyone to keep the Sunday. The Dark Ages followed, during which Sabbath-keepers were killed and banished. This was the result of the first Sunday law—persecution in its worst form; and persecution will be the result of the last Sunday law that will ever be enacted in this world. For proof of the latter I cite Revelation, thirteenth chapter.

Sunday observance originated in religion; hence all Sunday laws are, in their original intent and purpose, religious. In the fourth and fifth centuries Church and State were united through Sunday legislation. And Sunday legislation in the twentieth century will result in the same evil.

Benjamin Franklin once said: "When religion is good it will take care of itself; when it is not able to take care of itself, and God does not see fit to take care of it, so that it has to appeal to civil power for support, it is evident in my opinion that its cause is a bad one."

Paul tells us in the third chapter of sec-

ond Timothy that there will be perilous times in the last days, and that men will have a *form* of Godliness but will deny the power. And in Romans 1: 16 Paul says that the power of God is the Gospel of Christ. Appealing to the civil power to enforce religion, or the observance of a religious day, is certainly against the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

John Wesley said: "Let every one enjoy the full and free liberty of thinking for himself. If you can not reason or persuade a man into the truth, never attempt to force a man into it."

All will concede that Lord's day observance is due to God, but the government has nothing to do with what we owe to God, or whether we owe anything or not, or whether we pay it or not. God alone has to do with what we owe to him, and we will be held accountable to him for it.

Spurgeon once said: "I am ashamed of some Christians because they have so much dependence on Parliament and the law of the land. Much good may Parliament ever do to religion, except by mistake! As to getting the law of the land to touch our religion, we earnestly cry, "Hands off! leave us alone!" Your Sunday bills and all the other forms of act-of-Parliament religion seems to me to be all wrong. Give us a fair field and no favor, and our faith has no cause to fear. Christ wants no help from Cæsar."

Every true Christian ought to be able to say AMEN to these noble words of Mr. Spurgeon, for they are in perfect keeping with the principles laid down by Christ himself.

In a letter to the Jews, of Nov. 15, 1905,

President Roosevelt said: "I feel very strongly that if any people are oppressed anywhere, the wrong inevitably reacts in the end on those who oppress them; for it is an immutable law in the spiritual world that no one can wrong others and yet in the end himself escape unhurt."

Sunday laws bring oppression and persecution; they always have, and they always will. Any government which attempts to legislate on religious questions and enact Sunday laws, sets itself against the words of Christ, (Matt. 22 : 21) and is therefore anti-Christian. If the government should enact a Sabbath law, that would be anti-Christian also. Jesus, the author of Christianity, said: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." The Sabbath belongs to God, and therefore is not to be rendered to Cæsar. In religion let there be no compulsion, no persecution.

W. H. THURSTON.

SUNDAY LAWS AND THE LABORING MAN

A LETTER just received in reply to the letter which we recently sent out to the clergy of the Dominion of Canada purports to be an answer to some of the arguments which we made in the literature enclosed in the letter. The letter is without date, without address, and without signature, thus preventing us from replying to the author personally, however much we might desire to do so.

The author says: "You are not logical in your arguments. The government has no right to interfere with religious liberty; but it has a right to protect the masses against capitalists." By way of illustrating this point he says, "The government grants two holidays, Saturday and Sunday, to all teachers in schools. Why? Because the mental strain is considered too great for pupils and teachers to continue six days a

week. On the same principle the government has the right to protect all laborers by law, to prevent capitalists from employing laborers on Sunday. It is for the good of the body and mind of man."

This is no new argument. We have heard it many times, and have refuted it as often. But still the people do not seem to comprehend the difference between sacred and secular things. Sabbath-keeping is a sacred duty, a religious duty, which each individual, as an individual, owes to his Creator. Teaching school is a secular duty. It pertains entirely to this world so far as the right of the government to regulate it is concerned; and when one compares the right of the government to enact laws for the Sabbath day with the right of the government to dictate in regard to the periods when schools shall be kept in session, he shows by this very comparison that he does not understand the difference between religion and common civility, between sacred things and secular things, between the duty which he owes to God and the duty which he owes to his fellowmen.

It is indeed true that all laborers should be protected against the encroachments of capital, but we would like to ask how much protection is afforded the laboring man against such greed by prohibiting him from such ordinary and civil occupations as common labor or amusement. How much protection was afforded to the poor Jew by the Sunday law of the city of Ottawa, which fined him, not so much because he sold a loaf of bread to a needy customer on Sunday as because he baked the bread on Saturday, thus showing that he had no religious scruples, and also showing that the fine was imposed upon him by the judge from a religious motive.

This particular case should not be let pass without further notice. In the name of all reason what right has any judge who has been appointed to his office for admin-

istering the law impartially, to take upon himself the responsibility of a religious judge, and fine a man because of his failure to conform to an act of religious worship, as was done in this case.

But our correspondent says that people do not have religion forced upon them. If the above case is not an illustration of having religion forced upon a man by civil law, we would like to have our correspondent cite an example of what would be. He says further, "Our Sunday law is not like the rules in a jail that compel all to attend church." It is true that all are not forced to attend church on Sunday by these laws, but it is also true that they are prohibited from engaging in other things which would be agreeable to them, and which would not injure or interfere with the worship of those who desired to engage in worship on the Sabbath day.

In view of this fact what becomes of the statement that people are not forced to go to church on Sunday. And what assurance have we that if these people are successful in securing the present legislation, that they will not go further and ask that people be compelled to attend divine worship on Sunday. The idea that this law is enacted for the benefit of the working men is absurd. The Sunday law is enacted and brought into existence for the benefit of the religious observance of the day, and for no other purpose whatever.

PETITION WORK

A PETITION full of names protesting against religious legislation has just been received from Hammond, B. C., with the following letter written on the back of the petition:—

"I am informed by a great many people that they have signed, at church, the other petition. They said that when church was out they had petitions at the door, and everybody was requested to sign these petitions,

and they said that they could not very well refuse, though they did not believe in any Sunday compulsion act.

This is why the Sunday, or the Lord's Day Alliance, has such monstrous petitions.

The above I am ready to state under oath. As to my responsibility, will say that I am one of the largest land owners in British Columbia, and I am not a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

I fight the Lord's Day Alliance bill because I do not believe in any such religious principles. Christ wants willing servants, and not servants that are compelled by civil law to serve him.

(Signed) S. H. Ford."

Up to the day of opening Parliament, March 8, we had 13,401 signatures to the petition against religious legislation. Many thousands more would sign had they the opportunity. These names have been secured from all parts of the Dominion, and represent all classes of people. About half of these names were secured in the province of Ontario.

W. H. THURSTON.

"Liberty"

A MAGAZINE to be published quarterly has just been launched by the Religious Liberty Bureau of Seventh-day Adventists, entitled *Liberty*, and we would call the attention of all to the importance of this journal. All should understand the true principles of religious liberty, and there is no journal published equal to *Liberty* for the study of this question. This magazine will be about the size and style of *Life and Health*, and costs only twenty-five cents a year. *Life and Health* costs only fifty cents a year and is published monthly. If you are not a subscriber to it, you will do well to send along your subscription when you subscribe for *Liberty*.

Fifty per cent. discount on *Liberty* for twenty-five or more copies to one address, and forty per cent. discount on five or more copies to different addresses or ten or more copies to one address.

This is an excellent journal for your neighbors to read, as well as for yourself.

Single copies sell for five cents the same as *Life and Health*. The writer has subscribed for ten

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W. H. THURSTON.

OFFICE NOTES

The price of the *Life Boat* hereafter will be 50 cents a year, 2½ cents a single copy, \$2 per hundred.

Elder Thurston reports that he has already received more than 15000 signatures to the petition.

Mrs. J. H. Cooley of the Lynden, Ont., church, writes very encouragingly of the work there, and reports two new Sabbath-keepers.

In the report of tithe and offerings in the MESSENGER of February 15 the amount of annual offer-

ing reported for the Brantford church is 50 cents. It should be \$5.33.

We have just received, freight paid, a fine large refrigerator, the gift of Brethren F. G. Hill and Leonard Payne of St. Thomas, Ont. This meets a long felt want at the Academy, and will be appreciated by the school. We extend our sincere thanks to these brethren for their very generous gift.

On account of a slight misunderstanding the last number of the MESSENGER has been delayed; but we have the promise of the postal authorities that the matter will be promptly adjusted, and we can safely assure our readers that the paper will be delivered on time hereafter.

A report of the Spring Council of the Ontario Conference Committee came to the office just as we were going to press. It will appear in next week's MESSENGER.

Report of Tithe and Offerings Received
During February (Ontario)

	Tithe	Missions
GUELPH	\$ 5.83	\$1.84
TORONTO	28.28	4.25
BRANTFORD	25.20	
INGERSOLL	1.25	
PETROLIA	18.80	
OTTAWA	24.26	1.90
GALT	32.49	1.95
ST. THOMAS	60.	
LONDON	121.	
ALBUNA	43.67	1.55
WOODSTOCK	12.	.36
	<u>\$372.58</u>	<u>\$11.85</u>

SABBATH-SCHOOL OFFERINGS, OTTAWA \$1.59
OSWEKEN 7.50
ANNUAL OFFERING, BRANTFORD \$5.

Report of the Canvassing Work for Week Ending Ma. 2, 1906

Name	Place	Book	Orders	Value	Value Miscellaneous	Orders	Delivered
G. W. Sowler,	Toronto, Ont.	B. R.	4	8.		1.25	22.25
A. M. Taylor,	Galt, Ont.	P. P.	6	16.50		7.50	
Grant Priddy,	Markham, Ont.	D. R.	5	5.			9.
Earl Spencer,	Toronto, Ont.	B. R.	8	18.50			
J. Feugelly,	Shelburne, Ont.	C. K.	16	16.50		21.50	4.75
H. D. Carr,	Lorne Park, Ont.	H. H. B.	3	15.50		1.25	
John McEachern,	Lorne Park, Ont.	C. K.	2	2.50			
Howard Patchett	Lorne Park, Ont.	C. K.	1	1.25			
Totals.	6 Agents,		45	\$83.75		\$31.50	\$36.