

THE AMERICAN SENTINEL.

"Corrupted freemen are the worst of slaves."

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THE National Reform Party proposes to make Christ King of the United States, and yet they maintain that the Government must still remain a republic! Will the *Christian Statesman*, or some other one of the advocates of this "reform," tell us how this thing can be?

How Will They Do It?

WHEN the National Reform Association shall have accomplished its task; when it shall have obtained its proposed amendments to the Constitution, and the consequent legislation; when, by the application of its religious tests it shall have secured the conformity of all Christians, and, by the application of the Rev. E. B. Graham's mild-mannered measures, and the Rev. Jonathan Edwards's mode of Christian endeavor, shall have cleared the country of all dissenters; when thus they shall have created their Christian nation, we should like very much to know how they are going to keep it Christian. There will be, constantly, and by thousands, those who will be coming of age, and who will assume the responsibilities of citizenship.

Now if while the young were growing up any of them may have by any means imbibed sentiments of dissent from the Christian faith of the State; or if any of them should arrogantly assume the privilege of thinking for themselves, and should thereby have been led to question the right of the State to regulate the religious opinions of its citizens; what is the State going to do? If it allows these "infidels" and "atheists" to become citizens, it will be no more a Christian nation than it is now. What, then, will their "reformed" nation do to preserve its Christian life and character? We can see nothing else than that it must do one of two things: Either apply the religious test to each individual as he comes of age, or else *have all the children born Christians*. Now which scheme will be employed, we confess we are utterly at a loss to tell. Of course the latter would at one stroke obviate every difficulty; but how in the world they can accomplish it, is what puzzles us. Our desire is that some of those most interested in this "reform" will enlighten us on this point.

The Republic of Israel!

THIS expression must sound strange to the ears of every reader of the Bible; but we adopt it from the National Reformers, who, in their wondrous zeal for a religious Government in the United States, and in their equally wondrous determination to bend the facts of the Bible to suit their purpose, actually assert that the Government of Israel, instituted at Sinai, was a republic!

It was promised in the SENTINEL to show that these self-styled Reformers are in error in their theory of the kingdom of Christ, both in respect to the history and the prophecies of the Bible. In this number we will briefly examine the subject of history, to show that they greatly err in affirming that what they seek in the United States is in conformity with the Government of Israel as it existed under the immediate direction of Jehovah. A writer in the *Christian Statesman* used the following language:—

"The nation of Israel was organized at Mt. Sinai, as 'the custodians of the law, liberty, and religion of mankind.' A republican form of Government was given them. The three departments of Government, the legislative, executive, and judicial, were substantially represented in it. Moses, as the Judge or President, was the chief executive officer. The seventy elders formed the Congress of General Government. The court of the gate or civil Sanhedrim was the arbiter of justice. The heads of the tribes and princes thereof constituted the tribal or State Governments. It was a representative Government. The people were sovereign. They elected their rulers to represent them in office."

We are now dealing with *facts*—facts of history; facts important in their relation to the question in issue, and it is, therefore, our duty to characterize statements in correct terms. The above extract is worse than a mere "fancy sketch;" it is a shameful perversion of the history given in the Bible. We have seldom seen so much assumption in so little space as the above paragraph contains.

1. When Israel was called out of Egypt, the Government under which they were led was a *theocracy*, pure and simple. And every one knows that a theocracy is the very opposite of a republic.

2. There was no legislative department in the Government. A republic was well described by President Lincoln as a Government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." But no such Government was instituted at Sinai, or at any other place or time, for Israel. Even Moses, the highest among them, was not a legislator; *Moses never made any laws.*

He enforced that, and that only, which he received directly from the Lord.

3. The seventy elders were not legislators; they never made any laws. They did not constitute a "Congress" in any sense in which that word is used in a republic or in any representative Government. The *Statesman* and its correspondents can only make these assertions good by pointing to the act by which they were constituted a legislative body, or pointing to some law which they enacted. This they cannot do. But by their failure to do this they will stand convicted of misrepresenting the Bible to serve the purpose of their worldly ambition. There is not a Sunday-school scholar in the land, of intelligence and study, who does not know that God alone gave laws to Israel, which Moses and the seventy elders were to enforce and administer, with the explicit direction to add nothing to them, or take anything from them.

4. The patriarchal system existed to the time of the exode. "Elders" were aged men, heads of families or tribes. The father of the family was priest and ruler, no matter how old his sons might be, nor how numerous their families. And his prerogative descended to the first-born. This order continued until the Lord chose one family to serve as priests for the nation. At first elders were such in this sense only.

5. The Lord directed that seventy "from the elders" be selected by Moses—not making or to make them elders, but—because they were elders. The word of the Lord was as follows:—

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there; and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him; and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders; and it came to pass, that when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease." Num. 11 : 16, 17, 25.

6. The assertion that "the people were sovereign" is false even to an absurdity. They possessed no sovereignty in the Government in any respect whatever. Neither the people, nor Moses, nor the seventy, were consulted in regard to the laws they were to obey, or to the penalties to be enforced. They entered into

covenant with God to be his people and to obey him, but God conferred no legislative power upon any of them.

7. Although the Government was a theocracy, under the immediate and sole direction of God, the religious and civil elements were kept distinct, the priests having no inheritance with the tribes, and all but those designated by the Lord as priests being ineligible to the priesthood. All religious rites being ordered by the Lord, the civil rulers had no authority to control them, or interfere in their performance. The prophets through whom the Lord directed the affairs of the Government, might or might not be priests. Sometimes this office was given to women. All was ordered of the Lord, and the people had no voice in any of these matters.

8. The people finally demanded a king, not to better their Government, but to be as the nations around them. Though the Lord listened to their request, the thing displeased him. He said it was equivalent to rejecting him as their ruler. He gave them a king, but he reserved to himself the right to choose the king for them. Even in this they were not consulted. Saul was chosen of the Lord and anointed before the people knew anything about him. He was rejected—not by the people, but by the Lord—and David was chosen and anointed in like manner, without the knowledge of the people. And the powers of the king were so limited by the rules and laws which were given to them, that Israel was once sorely afflicted because King David presumed to take a census of the people without consulting the Lord!

9. The religious rites of Israel were mostly types, not models to be followed by future Governments. And no Government could adopt them as models without denying the priesthood of Christ, the antitype.

And now, reader, we leave it to you to judge in this matter. Was there any semblance to a republic in the Government of Israel, in any period of its history? Are not the Amendmentists guilty of deception in trying to palm off such statements as those we have quoted, as historical truths of the Bible? We have claimed, and we insist, that their movement contemplates an entire change in the structure of our Government. It is impossible to carry their plans into effect, and to retain the republican features of our Government. The rights of certain classes of citizens will be ruthlessly trampled under foot as surely as they succeed in changing the Constitution as they desire and intend to do.

But one other feature of their contemplated work will now be noticed. It is closely related to the subject herein considered. By them it is termed "Bible legislation." We quote again the words of a writer in the *Statesman*:—

"But the changes will come gradually, and probably only after the whole framework of Bible legislation has been thoroughly canvassed by Congress and State Legislatures, by the Supreme Courts of the United States and of the several States, and by lawyers and citizens generally."

What is meant by "Bible legislation"? Nothing else but legislation upon the Bible and its teachings. This writer says that "the chief

discussions and final decisions of most points will be developed" in the churches. But we deny the right of Congress, Legislatures, Courts, lawyers, and also of the churches to legislate concerning the doctrines and duties contained in the Bible. When they propose to do this, we ask them to show their credentials. Who gives them authority to enter upon any such a work? Was this the province of the "Congress" of Israel, to "legislate" concerning what God commanded them to do and to teach? Where is the evidence? Such power was never committed even to the apostles of Christ. They taught that which they received by revelation; and they taught that at the death of the testator the covenant was ratified, and nothing could thereafter be added to it. Their office was neither legislative nor executive, but ministerial. But certain ones are now dissatisfied with the heavenly calling of "ambassadors for Christ;" they choose rather to be self-appointed legislators and executives; they aspire to a position to which God never appointed mortal man.

For all that they seek to be and to do they have no warrant in the holy Scriptures. But they have a precedent; they are following in the footsteps of a most illustrious predecessor. He is described by Paul in 2 Thess. 2, as "that man of sin, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped." If they think this application is unjust, we ask them then to answer this question: How is it possible for one to exalt himself above the position of a legislator upon the word of God? No one can legislate upon a matter which is above his authority; and he who legislates upon the Bible, and declares *authoritatively* what man may and may not do in regard to the word of God, and how man must and must not receive its precepts, truly exalts himself above the word of the Most High. Jehovah has magnified his word above all his name (Ps. 138:2) and his righteous justice will not long suffer such an insult to his authority.

This was the crying crime of that man of sin; he usurped the place of God, by sitting in judgment upon the consciences and religious convictions of his fellow-creatures. This usurpation led him to "wear out the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:25); upon this usurpation the Inquisition was built. And this is exactly the authority which certain misguided religionists now ask the people of the United States to place in their hands! And that is what they call "National Reform." That, they affect to believe, is necessary to Christianize the nation, and exalt the name of Christ in the earth. We believe the whole movement has its spring in selfish ambition; and we think that their arrogant and overbearing manner of treating those who do not coincide with *their faith* fully justifies our belief. Their profession of sincerity does not at all change the aspect of the matter. The same sincere regard for the honor of God and for the success of his truth in the earth was professed by their predecessors in this work; but that profession did not mitigate the horrors of the dungeon, the rack, and the burning stake.

Thus much at present for the historical view.

They profess that their movement will also fulfill prophecy. While we cannot agree with their conclusions, we shall not altogether controvert their claim. But we invite them to study Rev. 13:11-18, with the connection. It may be that this is the very prophecy that their movement would fulfill. And after carefully examining the several points, then they might profitably compare with it chap. 14:9-12. If they consider such an application fanciful, we reply, that we shall hereafter endeavor to show that their interpretations of prophecy are only fanciful, and contradictory of the plainest declarations of the sacred word.

Our readers may rest assured that we shall not lose sight of *the principles of Government* which we have tried to expound and vindicate in the preceding numbers of the SENTINEL. But the "National Reformers" profess that theirs is a "Christian" work, in harmony with the teachings of the holy Scriptures. It is our purpose to meet them on every point, and to expose their fallacies in every direction; for theirs is a work of fallacy and error in whatever light it may be viewed. J. H. W.

"What Think Ye of Christ?"

As we have read the arguments of the so-called National Reformers, in which they claim for Christ a political sovereignty, we have involuntarily asked the above question. We have wondered whether they really regarded Christ as the divine Son of God, or as a scheming politician. Two quotations will suffice to show that our query is well grounded. In the *Christian Statesman* of April 22, in reply to the statement that "The apostles and primitive Christians never tried to get an amendment inserted in the statutes and laws of the Roman Empire," M. A. Gault says:—

"Christ and his apostles did not work to amend the Roman laws and constitution, because it [Rome] was not a republic. Its power did not come through the people. Its laws were not a reflection of the sentiments of the people, and it could not be made a Christian nation in the sense in which ours can."

That is as much as to say that if Christ had come in the days when Rome was a republic, he would have set about amending its laws. Instead of going about Judea and Galilee doing good, preaching the gospel to the poor, healing the broken-hearted, and those that were oppressed of the devil, he would have gone to Rome, got himself elected to the Senate, or as consul, and would at once have set about making Rome a Christian nation, by legal enactment! This is the way the "National Reformers" are doing, and they profess to be followers of Christ. The Lord, through the psalmist, said to the wicked, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself," and that statement seems to be applicable in this case. Because they bring religion down to the level of party politics, they imagine that Christ would do the same.

Before commenting any further on the above, we will quote the illustration which a "National Reformer" gave to show why Christ did not accept the office of king when he was on earth. The illustration is quoted by Rev. Wm. Ballentine, in his reply to Dr. W. Wishart. Said the lecturer:—

"Had General Grant, after taking Richmond, been offered the office of township constable in any locality, he would have repelled the office with disdain. So Christ, being offered the small principality or kingdom of the Jews, refused acceptance; but if he had been offered the kingdoms of the whole world, as Grant the presidency of the United States, like him, Christ would have accepted."

We cannot conceive how a man calling himself a Christian could use such blasphemous language, except on the ground that he was drunk with the idea of a union of Church and State. The question, "What think ye of Christ?" is indeed a pertinent one to put to the self-styled National Reformers. And the answer to the question, as drawn from their own statements, would be, "A selfish man of the world; a politician seeking the highest office." In this we do not wish to be understood as implying that General Grant was such a man. There is no point of comparison between General Grant and Jesus Christ. General Grant was a man; Jesus Christ is the Son of God. General Grant, as a man, acted with manly dignity; but if Christ had done the same thing he would have been man and not God. The party of which the *Christian Statesman* is the organ, is wont to brand every one who opposes it as an atheist; but the above quotations show that the effect of imbibing National Reform principles is to give one low views of Christ and his work. We never heard an infidel express sentiments more derogatory to the character of Christ. Being Christians ourselves and adoring Christ as the divine Mediator between God and man, we oppose the work of the National Reform Party because it is unchristian in its tendency.

To go back to Mr. Gault's assumption that Christ would have attempted to amend the laws of Rome if it had been a republic. Says he, "Its laws were not a reflection of the sentiments of the people; and it could not be made a Christian nation in the sense in which ours can." No, of course not; there would have been just the difference between an empire and a republic. The laws of Rome reflected the sentiments of the emperor, and the people acquiesced in them just the same as the people in a republic do in laws made by their representatives. The emperor was to them a divine being, an object of adoration, and therefore his laws did reflect the sentiments of the people. Therefore if Christ had been such a one as he is described by the Religious Amendmentists, he would have gone to Rome and converted the emperor. The emperor, being converted, would at once have placed "all Christian usages, institutions, and laws" on an undeniable legal basis, and, *presto*, Rome would have been a "Christian nation." And since "the empire of Rome filled the world," by that act the whole world would have been "Christianized."

But, hold; that very thing was done. Not by Christ, however, but a little less than three hundred years after he declared, "My kingdom is not of this world." Constantine the Great is generally known as "the first Christian emperor." He made laws in favor of Christians, and although he was not baptized till near his

death, he fully identified himself with the professed Christian party. In his day the whole Roman Empire became "Christianized." At that time there existed just the state of things which the Religious Amendment Party is now striving to bring about. As an evidence of this, and to show how thoroughly "National Reform" principles were carried out, the church historian, Socrates, tells us that no one was allowed to possess any Arian document, under pain of being burned at the stake, together with the prescribed document. And so strictly was this edict of that "Christian" emperor carried out, that not a line of the writings of Arius is in existence.

Like causes produce like effects. As the result of the "Christianization" of the State by legal enactments in Constantine's time, bishoprics were bought and sold just the same as secular offices were then and are now. The richest and most influential men secured the office of bishop, and used that office to increase their wealth and influence. Since religion was regulated by the civil law, the emperor was the natural head of the church; and since he also was the dispenser of patronage, men professed Christianity in order to secure office. The emperor continued to be head of the church until he transferred that dignity to the powerful bishop of Rome, whose assistance he needed in civil matters. Religion was then a matter of policy. And that is just what would happen in this country if religion were upheld by legal enactment. We care not how pure the motives of some of the advocates of the Religious Amendment may be; when the proposed Amendment is adopted, the results briefly indicated above will follow just as surely as the night follows the day. And that is the state of things which these men in their blindness imagine that Christ would sanction!

And this naturally brings us to another thought that was suggested by the second quotation, which says that if Jesus had been offered the kingdoms of the whole world he would have accepted. We call to mind the fact, recorded in two of the Gospels, that Jesus *was* once offered "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." Did he accept? Not even in thought. Why not? Because the condition was that he should fall down and worship Satan. That same offer is still held out to the church. Many are becoming dazzled by the sight, and many, led by a selfish zeal which they suppose is zeal for Christ, are eager to accept. But the conditions have never changed, and if at any time before the nations are given to Christ to be dashed in pieces, his professed followers accept, professedly in his name, and for him, the sovereignty of any or all of the kingdoms of this world, it may be set down as a fact that it is because they have accepted the conditions which Christ rejected with holy scorn.

If those who are so loudly clamoring for Christ to be recognized as the head of this Government, would study his life and get proper ideas of his exalted character and of the nature of his kingdom, they might truly honor him. As it is, their work tends only to degrade Christianity and to dishonor Christ. Christ not

only did not seek, but he resolutely shunned political alliance, and "he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

E. J. W.

The Natural Right of Mankind.

THE following is a copy of an Act "for establishing religious freedom," which was adopted by the Legislature of Virginia in 1785. It is a masterly presentation of the truth on this subject, and of "the natural right of mankind." It will bear close study just now and onward, for the National Reform Party is set for the infringement of "the rights hereby asserted." The Act was drawn up by Thomas Jefferson, whom the National Reformers entitle, "a Unitarian of the liberal school."

"Whereas Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy Author of our religion, who, being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercion on either, as was in his almighty power to do; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established or maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that preacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporal rewards which, proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labors for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than on our opinions in physic and geometry; that therefore the proscribing any citizen as unworthy of the public confidence, by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which, in common with his fellow-citizens, he has a natural right; that it tends only to corrupt the principles of that religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing with a monopoly of worldly honors and emoluments those who will externally profess or conform to it; that though, indeed those are criminal who do not withstand such temptation, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion, and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on suspicion of their

ill-tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty; because, he being, of course, judge of that tendency, will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough, for the rightful purposes of Civil Government, for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and, finally, that Truth is great, and will prevail if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons—free argument and debate—errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them:

“Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever; nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in nowise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

“And though we well know that this Assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding Assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this act irrevocable would be of no effect in law; yet we are free to declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural right of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present, or narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural right.”

Personality of the State.

THE fundamental proposition upon which the whole National Reform structure is built, is that “the nation is a moral person.” If this proposition will not hold good in the sense in which they use it, their whole scheme is a fallacy. That it will not hold good is certain.

Their idea of the State as a moral person will not allow that it is the whole people, but that it is a mysterious, imaginary something which stands separate and distinct from the people which compose it. Their concept of a State is that it is formed of all the people, yet that it is not all the people, but a distinct entity, having a personality all its own; and this personality that springs in some way from the whole people, is a person in the eyes of men just as distinct as is General Sherman or Mr. Blaine. As therefore General Sherman, or Mr. Blaine, or any and every other person, is a moral person, is responsible to God, and must acknowledge that responsibility, so this other individual, which springs in part from each individual, being a person as real, as distinct, in the eyes of men as is any one of the people, is a moral person, is responsible to God, and must acknowledge that responsibility. As it is the duty of General Sherman, or Mr. Blaine, or any other person, to have a religion, and to exercise him-

self about religious affairs, so this person called the State or the nation must have a religion, and must exercise itself about religious affairs. With this very important difference, however, that, whereas General Sherman, Mr. Blaine, John Smith, James Robinson, Thomas Brown, John Doe, and Richard Roe, having each his own religion, must exercise himself in that religion without interfering with the exercise of anybody else's religion; this other individual must not only have a religion of its own, and exercise itself with that religion, but it must exercise itself about everybody else's religion, and must see to it especially that the religion of everybody else is the same as its own.

A State, as pictured by Prof. J. R. W. Sloane, D. D., in the Cincinnati Convention, is as follows:—

“What is the State? . . . Its true figure is that of a colossal man, his consciousness the resultant of the consciousness of the millions that compose this gigantic entity, this body corporate, his power their power, his will their will, his purpose their purpose, his goal the end to which they are moving; a being created in the sphere of moral law, and therefore both moral and accountable.”

But that is not all; they even go so far as to give it a soul! In this same speech Professor Sloane said:—

“‘The State has no soul’ is the dictum of an atheistic political theory. On the contrary we say, with the famous French priest, Pere Hyacinth, ‘What I admire most in the State is its soul.’”

Well, if the State be, as he also said, “a personality as distinct in the eyes of men as General Grant or Mr. Colfax,” then we cannot wonder that it should have a soul. But what is the soul of the State? He tells us:—

“Moral principles are the soul of a nation; these are the informing spirit that mould its various elements into a compact unity, and that bind them together with bands stronger than steel.”

Does Professor Sloane mean to say that “moral principles” composed the soul, and were the *kind* of a soul that “General Grant or Mr. Colfax” had? Are moral principles the soul of each of the millions of people that compose this “gigantic entity”? If, as he says, the consciousness of this colossal man is “the resultant of the consciousness of the millions that compose him, his power their power, his will their will, his purpose their purpose, his goal their goal,” then why is not his soul their soul? If moral principles are his soul, and he is but the resultant of all the others, then what can their souls be but moral principles? Truly this is a new conception of the soul, which we commend to the consideration of psychologists and theologians. We confine ourselves to the political aspect of the question.

The Doctor proceeds:—

“A still more practical view of the subject is taken when we consider the moral obligations of a nation as such; like an individual, it is held bound in the judgment of mankind to the fulfillment of its obligations. Great Britain, France, and Italy owe enormous debts. The same is true of our own country. Shall the obligations of these debts be met? May the nation repudiate? If not, why not? . . . Or does the law, ‘Thou shalt not steal,’ bind a nation as well as an individual? . . . Do we not apply to nations the same adjectives

expressing moral qualities, which we apply to men? Has not Great Britain a national character as well defined in the minds of men as her queen or Prime Minister—a character into which her physical character and resources scarcely enter, but which is determined by moral qualities? Is not the United States a personality as distinct in the eyes of men as General Grant or Mr. Colfax?”

Having thus established, as they suppose, their proposition that the State is a moral person, the fundamental principle of the whole National Reform movement is, as stated by themselves:—

“The nation being a moral person, must have a religion of its own, and exercise itself about religious affairs.”—*Christian Statesman*, Feb. 28, 1884, p. 5.

It is too often the case with a person who is eager to prove a particular proposition that he first resolves upon his conclusion, and then makes “a *major* of most comprehensive dimensions, and, having satisfied himself that it contains his conclusion, never troubles himself about what else it may contain;” and as soon as it is examined it is found to contain an infinite number of conclusions, every one being a palpable absurdity. This is exactly the logical position occupied by the advocates of this so-called National Reform. Take the statements which we have here quoted, and who cannot see that they apply with equal force to any conceivable association of human beings for a common purpose? Let us here apply their argument in a single case, and anybody can extend it to any number of similar cases.

What is a railroad company? Its true figure is that of a colossal man, his consciousness the resultant of the consciousness of the stockholders of this gigantic entity, this body corporate; his power their power, his will their will, his purpose their purpose, his goal the end to which they are moving; a being created in the sphere of moral law, and therefore both moral and accountable. It is composed of moral beings subject to moral law, and is therefore morally accountable.

A still more practical view of this subject is taken when we consider the moral obligations of a railroad company as such; like an individual it is held bound in the judgment of mankind to the fulfillment of its obligations. May the railroad company repudiate? If not, why not? Or does the law, “Thou shalt not steal,” bind a railroad company as well as an individual? Do we not apply to railroad companies the same adjectives expressing moral qualities which we apply to men? Has not the Erie Railroad Company a character as well defined in the minds of men as its president or its cashier—a character into which its physical character and resources scarcely enter, but which is determined by moral qualities? Is not the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company a personality as distinct in the eyes of men as is General Sheridan or Mr. Edmunds?

“The railroad company has no soul” is the dictum of an atheistic political theory. On the contrary, we say, with the famous financial priest, James Fisk, Jr., what I admire most in the railroad company is its soul. Moral principles are the soul of a railroad company. The denial of the moral character and accountability of the railroad company is of the nature of atheism; it is practically a denial of God's

providential government—leads to the subversion of morals, and the destruction of the railroad itself. That a railroad company is possessed of moral character, that it is therefore a subject of moral law, and consequently accountable to God, is not theory but fact; not hypothesis, but science. That all men do not admit that a railroad company is a moral being, and accountable to God, does not prove that it is not an established principle of moral and political National Reform science. Therefore *the railroad company, being a moral person, must have a religion of its own, and must exercise itself about religious affairs.*

There, that is a genuine National Reform argument. And we submit to any candid mind that it is just as good in proof of the personality and moral obligation of the railroad company as it is for that of the State. And not only for the railroad company and the State, but likewise, and equally, good for the personality and moral obligation of banks, insurance companies, steamship companies, gas companies, water companies, publishing companies, lodges, benefit societies, clubs, corporations, and associations of all kinds; and the logic of the whole situation is that each and every one of these must in its corporate capacity "have a religion of its own, and must exercise itself about religious affairs." If the premises of the National Reform Association be true, this conclusion and a number of other equally absurd inevitably follow, or else there is no truth in syllogisms. But if the logic of the thing be so absurd, it only demonstrates the absurdity of the principle.

Now the National Reformers, being wedded to the principle, and wishing to be divorced from the inevitable conclusions, resort to the fallacy that railroad, bridge, steamboat, etc., companies are "but creatures of the State," and so are not moral persons. Dr. McAllister in the Cleveland convention, in trying to meet this point said:—

"The nation is a moral person, created by God, and creation implies the authority of the creator; but a company of the kind described, receives its charter from the State, is subject to the laws of the State."

With that, place the following from Rev. T. C. Sproull in the same convention, speaking to the same resolution as was Dr. McAllister:—

"If the nation is not a moral being, it cannot be subject to the law of God."

Accordingly, between the State and the company, we have the following

CONTRAST.

<p>The nation is created by God; therefore the nation is a moral person, and hence is subject to the law of God.</p>	<p>The company is created by the State; therefore the company is not a moral person, and hence is not subject to the law of God.</p>
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Now if, as they say, the railroad and other companies are *not*-moral persons; and if, as they also say, and which is manifestly true, these *not*-moral persons (or companies) "cannot be subject to the law of God," then why is there so much ado made about these "*Sabbath-breaking* railroads," these "*Sabbath-breaking* steamboats," and so on through the list? Then why are the railroad companies told, as they are in the address of the International Sabbath Association, printed in the *Statesman* of Feb. 7, 1884, pp. 2, 3:—

"Your action in thus multiplying trains to desecrate the day of rest is in direct violation of divine law"? "In view of your responsibilities to God, . . . you cannot afford to do this."

We would respectfully submit to the consideration of the National Reform Party the following: From your own premises there is *not*, and there cannot be, any such thing as a Sabbath-breaking railroad company, nor any other kind of a Sabbath-breaking company. For you say, first (truly), the Sabbath is a part of the law of God; secondly, you say that a *not*-moral person "cannot be subject to the law of God;" thirdly, you say that the company, as distinguished from the Government, is "not a moral person"; and then, you inconsistently accuse the railroad companies of "direct violation of divine law"!

Now how is it possible for a person, being, or thing which "cannot be subject to the law of God," to violate that law? It is plainly impossible for a *not*-moral being to violate moral law. It is equally impossible for such a being to have any "responsibilities to God;" because where there can be no *subjection* to law, there can be no *violation* of law; and where there can be no *violation* of law, there can be no *obedience* to law; and where there can be no *obedience* to law; and where there can be no *obedience* to the law of God, there is no *responsibility* to God. Therefore it just as absolutely follows from your premises that a railroad or other company cannot break the Sabbath, as that two and two make four. And it is just as absolutely true that your resort to a fallacy to escape an absurdity, has involved you in a glaring inconsistency; for it is plainly inconsistent for you to hold a being subject to that to which you say it "cannot be subject."

But if you persist in holding the companies responsible to the law of God, you must admit that they are moral beings, and hence equally with the Government must profess a religion, and have a test, and with that, logically admit an infinite number of other absurd conclusions; in short, admit that every combination of human beings for a common purpose, must, as such combination, profess a religion and have a test.

Here, then, is the dilemma of the National Reform Party,—either an *inconsistency* or an *absurdity*. But we have no ground for hope that they will abandon either the fallacy or the absurdity. For as the fallacy was adopted for the express purpose of escaping the absurdity, for them to abandon either would be to abandon their cause. Therefore we have only to expect that they will act in harmony with the ways of error always, and hold to both the absurdity and the inconsistency, and when questioned about either, do as is suggested by Rev. R. C. Wylie in the *Statesman*, of Feb. 14, 1884; that is, "adopt a plan that will prevent a repetition" of any such questions. A. T. J.

"STATE churches commonly die of moral pyæmia. History has not yet proved that, without reformatory awakenings from outside, and disciplinary dislodgements within, a church of Christ welded to the State can be saved from sinking into a Sybaritic civilization in which the crumpled roseleaf takes all spirit out of evangelistic enterprise."—Prof Austin Phelps, D. D., in *Congregationalist*.

Religion and the Church.

WHEN so much is said *pro* and *con* about a union of Church and State, it is fitting that we know exactly what is meant by "the church." Many people erroneously suppose that the term refers to some particular denomination, as the Methodist, Baptist, or Presbyterian. But this is not the case. To use the term in that sense would be manifestly unfair. If in speaking of "the church" we should refer to some special denomination, we would thereby imply that no other denomination could be a part of "the church." With the exception of the Catholic, nobody uses the term "the church" with reference to any particular sect.

In the Bible "the church" is declared to be the body of Christ. In one place Paul says of Christ that "he is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18); and again he says that God "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body." Eph. 1:22, 23. Baptism is universally recognized as the entrance to the church, as Paul says, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," and that this body is Christ is shown by the words, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

"The church," then, in the strict sense of the word, is composed of those who are "in Christ," who have been converted, "born again," and are consequently "new creatures." From this it is very evident that, strictly speaking, no one religious sect, nor all of them together, can be called "the church." Everybody is willing to admit that in every denomination there are those who are really members of "the church," because they are united to Christ; but nobody will claim that all of any denomination are truly Christian.

Since we cannot always distinguish the true professor from the false one, it is evident that the extent of the church is known only to Him who can read the heart; but it is not convenient always to make this fine distinction in our conversation, neither is it possible; and therefore we speak of all who profess the religion of Jesus as members of his church. Thus we assume, since we cannot decide, that each individual's profession is an honest one.

Now mark this fact: the religion of Jesus, or the profession of that religion, is the distinguishing characteristic of the church. It is that which makes the church, and without that there is no church.

With this matter clearly in mind, we are prepared to decide for ourselves whether or not the Religious Amendment Party is in favor of a union of Church and State. And this decision shall be made from the published statements of that party. In the National Convention held in New York in 1873, Dr. Jonathan Edwards, of Peoria, Ill., said:—

"It is just possible that the outcry against Church and State may spring rather from hatred to revealed religion than from an intelligent patriotism. But where is the sign, the omen of such Church and State mischief coming upon us? Who will begin and who will finish this union of Church and State? If you think the Roman Catholic can do it in spite of the watchfulness of the Protestant; or that one Protestant sect can do it amid the jealousy of

all the other sects; or that all these sects would combine to effect a joint union with the State, you have a notion of human nature and of church nature different from what I have. Church and State in union, then, are forever impossible here, and, were it never so easy, we all repudiate it on principle. There are enduring and ever valid reasons against it. But religion and State is another thing. That is possible. That is a good thing—and that is what we aim to make a feature in our institutions."

Exactly, and right here do we see the omen of a union of Church and State. We do not expect that in this country the Catholic Church will be the State Church, nor that any one of the Protestant sects will be honored by an alliance with the State. Neither do we look for all the sects to combine and sink their individual names and thus form a union with the State. But we do look for a desperate effort to unite Church and State, and we claim that this effort will be made by the so-called National Reform Party. And further, we claim that Dr. Edwards has admitted, even while denying it, that such union is the avowed object of that party. We leave it to the candid reader if the short argument at the beginning of this article, defining "the church," taken in connection with Dr. Edwards's positive declaration, does not prove that a union of Church and State is the grand object sought by the Amendmentists.

"But," says one, "do you not teach that a man should carry his religion into his business? Why then should you object to religion in the State?" We do believe that if a man *has* religion he should manifest it in his business transactions as well as in church; but if he has it not, we would not have him simulate it. So likewise we believe in religion among individuals everywhere, for only individuals can be religious. No man can be religious for another, neither can one man or any number of men make any man religious. And therefore we are not in favor of upholding religion by the laws of the State.

Perhaps it may be made a little plainer that religion in the State is Church and State united. We say that the possession of true religion marks one as a real Christian—a member of the church of Christ. The association together of a body of people professing religion constitutes, outwardly at least, a branch of the church of Christ. And so likewise the profession of religion by the State, constitutes a State church. It is all the union of Church and State that has ever existed. And when such union shall have been effected, what will be the result? Just this: Religion and patriotism will be identical. No matter how pure some of the principles upheld by the laws may be, they can have no vitalizing, spiritual effect on the hearts of the people, because they will stand on the same level as the law defining who are eligible to office, and regulating the length of the presidential term. In short, the incorporation of religion into the laws of the State, marks the decline of religion in the hearts of the people. And this is what the Religious Amendment Party is pledged to bring about.

Ought not all lovers of pure Christianity to enter a hearty and continued protest against such a proceeding?

E. J. W.

The Higher Law.

THE following is from the pen of Rev. Wm. Ballantine, a Presbyterian minister who has from the first been a firm opposer of the Religious Amendment party, and an exposor of its fallacies. This extract is from a "Reply to Dr. W. Wishart," in a National Reform Convention. In future numbers we shall present more from the same source:—

Some persons are very anxious to have the Bible recognized as the supreme law of the land, thinking that if this were done, it would secure righteous enactments and their judicious enforcement. But a moment's reflection should convince them that the influence of God's word cannot be increased by human authority. If his authority as its Author, and the energy of his Holy Spirit, do not render it efficient, no civil enactment can. He is our Sovereign and the Bible is his law, and to him alone are we accountable for our belief in its doctrines, and the practice of its principles. Does human authority command contrary to its precepts? Then our duty is to obey God rather than man. It is to us, then, the higher law. But trammel it with human legislation, make it the law of the land, and it ceases to be the higher law. Then you are bound to receive as its teachings, in any matter of dispute, not your own honest convictions of its truth, but the interpretation of your civil judges. If this interpretation and your belief of its truth conflict, there is no remedy—no higher law to appeal to. No alternative is left you but either to submit or rebel against legitimate authority, for you have made it the law of the land and appointed civil authorities to interpret the law of your conscience. Such treatment would not only belittle, but destroy the influence of the Bible. How powerful and weighty were the appeals of Sumner, Seward, and Chase to the higher law, in their advocacy of the downfall of slavery? The inspiration of their principles, drawn from such a divine source, caused the autocrats of the South, as they sat in the Halls of Congress, to tremble like Belshazzar of old, when he saw the divine hand writing the epitaph of his kingdom—"MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." In this controversy, had it been the formal law of the land, it would have become secularized in the "irrepressible conflict" about its meaning, and the mighty logic of its sacred influence would have departed. Excellent on this subject are the following editorial remarks in the *Cincinnati Gazette* of February 7, 1872:—

"The movement to put into the Constitution a declaration of spiritual authority originates with a class of persons who think that religious liberty and the system of government which separates Church and State are failures. It is not strange that they should have this lack of faith, for the system is an experiment which our Government alone of all the Governments of the world is trying. It is not strange that many should think that religious liberty is licentiousness, and that a State without a State religion is a godless State, and is virtually an expression of contempt for religion; for in all ages of the world, States, whether pagan or Christian, have taken charge of the religion of their citizens. In stating this as the conviction of these movers, we give full consideration to

their disclaimers and explanations. In spite of all these, no plain reason can be given for inserting in the Constitution an acknowledgment of a spiritual authority in our Government that does not mean a declaration of religious duties on the part of the State which make the State a church, with the power and the duty to enforce religious observances, and to *disqualify* and *disfranchise* those who do not subscribe to what the State lays down in purely spiritual matters.

"These movers labor under the mistake of supposing that anything which they believe to be true is a proper thing to put into the Constitution. When they affirm this source of existence and authority, and this allegiance, and this authority of the Bible as a rule of conduct, they find very few to dispute. The proper application of all this is that all men should make Christian morality and Christian duty the rule of their conduct in public affairs, and thus should make religion the higher law of political action. But their conclusion is that because what they declare is truth, it should be put into the Constitution and thereby be made coercive law. Their religious zeal is greater than their knowledge of constitutional law. The Constitution is not a platform of abstract declarations, nor is it a creed which people are to assent to, but to make the law of their conduct according as they can hold. It is a body of fundamental law for the government of the country. It is made to be carried into effect by the Government, by legislative, judicial, and executive administration. This declaration of spiritual authority is to be a mere mooking of God, or it is to have the same force as all other parts of this fundamental law, and it is to be carried into effect by the same instrumentalities.

"God and religion are not abstractions. They have their written law, the Bible. These declarations mean—if they have any meaning—that the Bible shall be the law of the Government, by which all our laws are to be tested, and which our courts are bound to administer. Now to say that the Bible is sufficient rule of faith and practice, and to say that it shall be made the law of our Government, are two widely different things. The first is a declaration that all Christians subscribe to. The second is what very few of them will accept. Our laws are to be administered by the ordinary infirm human agencies. Do we desire to put the divine law into their hands to define and execute?

"Human nature will remain as it was before. No miraculous change will be wrought by this declaration. The Government will continue to be administered by men of ordinary passions, such as are elected by the average intelligence and virtue, and the average ignorance and corruption of the voting population. Viciousness, and ignorance, and corruption will continue to be powers in the body politic the same as before, and these will continue to elect legislators, executives, and judges of their own sort. The consummation will be that a spiritual authority will be created to be administered by a low order of political instrumentalities, and men will find that they have foolishly parted with their freedom of conscience, and instead of the law of God have set up a very *bare human contrivance* to rule over them.

"Do intelligent people think that what they have seen of the nature of popular government—a thing which cannot rise higher than the average intelligence and virtue of the voting masses—is such a thing as they would like to confer spiritual authority upon? Do they really think religious liberty so poor a thing that they would part with it so basely? Instead of elevating our politics by dragging religious administration into them, they will drag down religion to the level of our politics.

"Even in the individual affairs of religion, men do not treat it as an abstract element which is to execute itself. They associate themselves and form organizations to interpret its law and to carry it into life.

"So a State religion cannot be a mere abstraction. It must have form and expression and a corporeal existence. A State religion—that is, the declaration of spiritual authority and spiritual duties in the State—must have a State church to define it. In fact, the State must be the church. These agitators for an amendment to confer religious power and duties on the State are not conscious how cheaply they are proposing to barter away the priceless pearl of religious liberty. But they must see that they are laying down doctrines which will make it necessary to keep the political machine in their own hands in order to save their own religious liberty, and thus that they are periling the rights of conscience upon the chances of political control."

National Reform Opposed to True Protestantism.

THE principles of the National Reform Party are essentially papal. Opposition to that party is essentially Protestant. The success of that party will be the subversion of every principle of the Reformation, and the triumph of the principles of the papacy. The following extract is from the "Augsburg Confession," read before the Emperor Charles V., and the Imperial Diet June 25, 1530. It presents the true, Christian, and Protestant doctrine of the position that should be occupied by the Church and the State respectively. This is not the doctrine held by the National Reform Party; therefore that party is anti-Protestant. The people must awake to the fact that the conflict between the Reformation and Catholicism, between Protestantism and the Papacy, is not yet ended.

"Many have unskillfully confounded the episcopal and the temporal power; and from this confusion have resulted great wars, revolts, and seditions. It is for this reason, and to reassure men's consciences, that we find ourselves constrained to establish the difference which exists between the power of the church and the power of the sword.

"We, therefore, teach that the power of the keys or of the bishops is, conformably with the word of the Lord, a commandment emanating from God, to preach the gospel, to remit or retain sins, and to administer the sacraments. This power has reference only to eternal goods, is exercised only by the minister of the word, and does not trouble itself with political administration. The political administration, on the

other hand, is busied with everything else but the gospel. The magistrate protects, not souls, but bodies and temporal possessions. He defends them against all attacks from without, and by making use of the sword and of punishment, compels men to observe civil justice and peace.

"For this reason we must take particular care not to mingle the power of the church with the power of the State. The power of the church ought never to invade an office that is foreign to it; for Christ himself said: 'My kingdom is not of this world.' And again: 'Who made me a judge over you?' St. Paul said to the Philippians: 'Our citizenship is in Heaven.' And to the Corinthians: 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.'

"It is thus that we distinguish the two governments and the two powers, and that we honor both as the most excellent gifts that God has given us here on earth."

Liberty-Loving Presbyterians.

THE first body of ministers of any denomination, to openly recognize the act of Congress in issuing the Declaration of Independence, was the Presbytery of Hanover, Virginia. At its first meeting after the Declaration, they addressed a memorial on the subject of Church and State, to the Virginia Assembly. The following paragraph from that memorial by those liberty-loving Presbyterians, we commend to the consideration of the National Reform Party, whose active public workers so far have mostly been Presbyterians. We should like to see them meet these sturdy principles so well stated by the Hanover memorialists.

"In this enlightened age, and in a land where all of every denomination are united in the most strenuous efforts to be free, we hope and expect that our representatives will cheerfully concur in removing every species of religious as well as civil bondage. Certain it is, that every argument for civil liberty gains additional strength when applied to liberty in the concerns of religion; and there is no argument in favor of establishing the Christian religion but may be pleaded, with equal propriety, for establishing the tenets of Mohammed by those who believe the Alcoran; or, if this be not true, it is at least impossible for the magistrate to adjudge the right of preference among the various sects that profess the Christian faith, without erecting a claim to infallibility, which would lead us back to the Church of Rome. . .

"Neither can it be made to appear that the gospel needs any such civil aid. We rather conceive that when our blessed Saviour declares his kingdom is not of this world, he renounces all dependence upon State power; and as his weapons are spiritual, and were only designed to have influence on the judgment and heart of man, we are persuaded that if mankind were left in the quiet possession of their inalienable religious privileges, Christianity, as in the days of the apostles, would continue to prevail and flourish in the greatest purity by its own native excellence, and under the all-disposing providence of God.

"We would also humbly represent that the

only proper objects of Civil Government are the happiness and protection of men in the present state of existence; the security of the life, liberty, and property of the citizens, and to restrain the vicious and encourage the virtuous by wholesome laws, equally extending to every individual; but that the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can only be directed by reason and conviction, and is nowhere cognizable but at the tribunal of the universal Judge."

"To illustrate and confirm these assertions, we beg leave to observe, that to judge for ourselves, and to engage in the exercise of religion agreeably to the dictates of our own consciences, is an inalienable right, which, upon the principles on which the gospel was first propagated, and the reformation from popery carried on, can never be transferred to another."

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The American Sentinel.

OAKLAND, CAL., JUNE, 1886.

SPECIAL attention is called to the article in this number of the SENTINEL under the head of "The Higher Law." It is full of sound wisdom. And we think every article will be found interesting and instructive. Our work is an important one, and it is our intention to make the SENTINEL worthy of the cause which it advocates.

THE Religious Amendmentists claim that Moses was president of the Jewish republic. Yet we remember that he was on several occasions impeached by the Jews, who went so far on one occasion as to think of stoning him. Now we would like to have some one of the new "Reformers" tell us why they let Moses continue in office, when they were so dissatisfied with him. Why did they not have another election, and get a man more to their liking? Religious Amendment history and logic are very difficult things to harmonize with truth and common sense.

To COERCE men into the outward exercise of religious acts, by penal laws is indeed possible; but to make them love either the religion which is thus enforced, or those who enforce it, is beyond the reach of human power. There is an inherent principle of resistance to oppression seated in the very constitution of most men, which disposes them to rebel against the arbitrary exercise of violence seeking to give direction to opinions; and it is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that one sanguinary law to compel men to live piously should beget the necessity for more.—*Dr. Hawks.*

A WRITER in the *Statesman* says: "We do not want a State religion. . . . What we want is a religious State." These "Reformers" can present more cavils, evasions, and deceptions than any other people. They say the State is a person. They want a person with religion, but no personal religion! All this will apply to any individual as well as to a State. But what can be the nature of that person's religion who has no personal religion, we cannot imagine. The truth is that religion is only a personal matter, and not at all a State matter. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it." No laws, nor Constitutional Amendments, nor coercive measures can add one whit to the religion of a State or of individuals.

"It [the civil power] forbids no man any right except the right to disobey laws that represent the Christian morality of the civilized world, or that phase of it to which the American people have arisen."—*National Reform Party.*

"The rulers of Massachusetts put the Quakers to death, and banished the 'Antinomians' and 'Anabaptists,' not because of their religious tenets, but because of their violations of the civil laws. This is the justification which

they pleaded, and it was the best they could make. Miserable excuse! But just so it is: wherever there is such a union of Church and State, heresy and heretical practices are apt to become violations of the civil code, and are punished no longer as errors in religion, but infractions of the laws of the land. So the defenders of the Inquisition have always spoken and written in justification of that awful and most iniquitous tribunal."—*Baird.*

"Clashing Voices."

THE *Christian Statesman* runs a department under the head of "Clashing Voices." It is conducted by Rev. M. A. Gault; that is, he makes his voice clash with voices of those who do not favor National Reform. It is our purpose to keep the *Statesman* company as far as is possible, and therefore we are minded to indulge a little in the line of "clashing voices."

In the Cincinnati National Reform Convention, 1872, Prof. Sloane, D. D., said:—

"Every Government, by equitable laws, is a Government of God; a republic thus governed is of him, through the people, and is as truly and really a Theocracy as the commonwealth of Israel."

This is the kind of a Government the National Reform Party proposes in this country. And yet in the Pittsburg Convention, 1874, among the things with which they think they are wrongly charged, President Brunot, named this:—

"We are charged with meaning to turn this republic into a Theocracy."

We should like to know wherein lies the falsity of the charge.

In the first National Convention ever held by the National Reform Party—Alleghany, Jan. 27, 28, 1864—a memorial and petition to Congress was adopted. In that memorial there was embodied in the preamble of the present Constitution the Amendment which the "Reformers" propose. And to that amended preamble was attached the following:—

"And further: that such changes with respect to the oath of office, and all other matters, should be introduced into the body of the Constitution as may be necessary to give effect to these amendments in the preamble. And we your humble petitioners will ever pray."

A special committee was then and there appointed to carry this memorial to Washington, lay it before the President, and before Congress. It, with a long address, was presented to President Lincoln, Feb. 10, 1864. And yet in the New York Convention, 1873, Dr. Jonathan Edwards said:—

"Our proposed Amendment is confined chiefly and almost exclusively to the Preamble of the Constitution."

Language of the same import was held by Dr. Mayo, in the Cincinnati Convention, 1872. He said:—

"The Constitution of Ohio begins with a confession of dependence on Almighty God as the author of the liberties it is made to preserve. That is all there is in this thing."

And in the Pittsburg Convention, in speaking of the Fourth Article, and the First Amendment, in the body of the Constitution, President Brunot said:—

"We have not proposed to change these."

Here are some "clashing voices" which we wish Mr. Gault would arise and explain.

Who Shall Decide?

At a National Reform Convention a little over a year ago, one speaker said, "There are but two religions in the world, the true religion of Christ, and the other, comprising all false religions." This is true; but each individual who professes religion at all, is sure that the religion which he possesses is the true and only religion and that the thousands who differ with him all hold false forms of religion. Of course all cannot be right, but reason would say that each one must be allowed to make his own choice, since each one must answer for himself before God. If A, B, and C disagree with one another on religious matters, and each one conscientiously believes that he alone has the true religion, it is manifestly as unjust to make A and B conform to the views of C, as it would be to compel B and C to agree with A, or A and C to accept the opinions of B. Besides being unjust, such coercion could not possibly result in any real good even though the decision were made in favor of the one having the true religion; for there would be no heart in the forced compliance of the other two, and their sense of injustice done them would more than ever prejudice them against the views which they before thought erroneous.

Now for the application. The Rev. Jonathan Edwards says: "Religion and State is another thing. That is possible. That is a good thing—and that we aim to make a feature in our institutions." And what kind of religion do they propose to incorporate into the State? Only the true religion, of course; or, rather, what they regard as the true religion. Well, suppose that a few thousand people hold different views and cannot conscientiously accept the State religion? Of course they will be regarded as heretics or heathen, and will be forced to conform to the State religion. This must necessarily happen, for if the State has laws it must execute them. But what if there are some of these "heretics" who will not hypocritically profess that which they cannot believe? Then of course they must be punished. This is the inevitable conclusion. A State religion can be nothing else than a persecuting power.

If we are asked what punishment we suppose will be inflicted on the aforesaid heretics, we cannot tell. But we know what punishments were inflicted on heretics in the Dark Ages when the State did have a form of religion, and it is not probable that those who are so anxious to fashion this Government according to that model, would hesitate to adopt the same methods.

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