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by  
Samuel Tyler

see article  
on Hamilton  
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ART. I.—*Lectures on Metaphysics.* By Sir WILLIAM HAMILTON, Bart. Edited by the Rev. H. L. Mansel, D. D., Oxford, and John Veitch, M. A., Edinburgh. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. MDCCCLIX. 2 vols, 8vo.

It seems to us, that no other man in the history of letters lived so exclusively in the pursuit of truth for its own sake, and strove with such untiring energy, and such vast designs, to elevate the intellectual dignity of his country, as Sir William Hamilton. His whole life, from his earliest years, was governed by intellectual ambition. It will afford us an instructive lesson, to review the life of a man of such lofty aims.

Sir William was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on the 8th of March, in the year 1788. He was of aristocratic lineage; being the twenty-fourth male representative of the second son of Sir Gilbert, the founder of the noble house of Hamilton in Scotland. The ancestor, from whom he inherited his baronetcy, received his title in the year 1763, for the services of his father at the battles of Dunbar and Worcester. There is still to be seen, at Prestonpans, a noble ruin of the feudal residence of the family, which, by its massive towers and projecting battlements, serves to show, that the Hamiltons of Preston took their part in the fierce struggles, political and religious, that, for a

place, within the period above defined, would seem to have been chiefly caused by physical and social rather than religious sufferings; such as hard winters, failure of the crops, unreasonable rents, and taxes, and oppressive landlords. These were often actuated, no doubt, by intolerant and party zeal; but this is something very different from the treatment which depleted Scotland in the reign of Charles the Second, and would probably have drawn its best blood from its veins, if the oppressors had not crowned their other arbitrary acts by finally and forcibly arresting emigration. We have no room to exemplify or verify this statement by detailed proofs, or even to indulge in any speculation as to the effects of the difference in question on the character and spirit of our own communion; but we hope that even these remarks may draw a still more general attention to the work by which they were suggested, and in which the most inquisitive curiosity will find abundant satisfaction.

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ART. V.—*History of the Institution of the Sabbath Day, its Uses and Abuses*; with notices of the Puritans, Quakers, &c. By WILLIAM LOGAN FISHER. Second edition, revised and enlarged. Philadelphia: T. B. Pugh, No. 615 Chestnut Street. 1859. pp. 248.

IN a population embracing so many elements as go to make up the American people, it is to be expected that there should be great diversity of opinion on all religious subjects, and more or less opposition to laws which recognize the obligation of any form of religious truth. This opposition is directed specially against the laws for the proper observance of the Sabbath. It is in our cities that the most conspicuous demonstrations have been made, which, in some cases, threaten to give rise to serious difficulties. In some instances our magistrates, influenced by public sentiment, or rather by popular clamour, have allowed the public desecration of the Lord's day to pass with impunity. But in other instances, both magistrates and courts, recogniz-

ing their obligation to act, not according to their private judgment or outside demands, but according to the laws of the land, have interfered to suppress such desecration. The consequence has been that the public papers teem with remonstrances and denunciations; conventions have been held; exciting addresses delivered, and strings of formidable resolutions passed. It is important to notice the sources whence this opposition to our Sunday laws proceeds. It is admitted that there are men among these opponents highly respectable, both for intelligence and character. Some of our own church, and even ministers of high-standing, who not only believe in the Divine authority of the Scriptures, but in the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, are so infected with the radical and infidel theory of civil government, as to throw all their weight against the laws for the proper observance of the Lord's day. There are others, who, in their own minds, have no objections to such laws, and who would be glad to see the community quietly submit to them; who, nevertheless, join in the opposition because they think that such laws are out of keeping with the spirit of the age. Others again are men of the world, whose convictions and conduct are not governed by religious principle, and whose interests are more or less enlisted in the abrogation of all restrictions placed on Sunday travelling and amusements. But with all these concessions it remains true that the opposition is, as a whole, an anti-Christian and irreligious movement. It is an outbreak of hostility to Christianity, and to all its institutions. We have just said that we do not pronounce every opponent of the Sunday laws, simply on the ground of that opposition, to be an infidel or an irreligious man. We cannot, however, resist the conviction that the movement itself is anti-Christian in its character and purpose. This is made manifest by the reasons commonly assigned for opposition to the Sunday laws—reasons which avowedly apply to all the institutions of Christianity; by the character of those who have rendered themselves most prominent in this movement, among whom the German emigrants are the most vociferous and violent; and by the character of the addresses made in anti-Sabbath conventions, and of the resolutions adopted in those assemblies.

In the *New York Spectator*, for September 13th, we find a

partial report of such a meeting, at which one of the speakers declared, that the purpose of himself and of his associates was, that "the free thoughts which they had brought with them from Germany should be established here." That is, that the laws and usages of this Christian and Protestant country, the convictions and principles of the great mass of its inhabitants, are to be disregarded and revolutionized, to make way for the "free thoughts" of Germany. A Dr. Gillot is represented as exclaiming: "Free Germans and citizens of America, let us join hand in hand with all other free citizens around us, to oppose a law which is unjust, and an infringement on our sacred liberty. The Sunday laws are only the tools used by cliques of politicians to further their own ambitious ends, in opposition to the interests of mankind. They are upheld in the sacred name of religion. We all have our own views about religion, and we mean to keep them without infringement, or being forced to adopt those of other men. We honour all days, and consider what is right to be done on one day is right to be done on another. Men should be left to the exercise of their own judgment in regard to the way they spend their time. If they wish pleasure, let them have it; if they wish social enjoyment and enlivening music, let them have it. This is freedom." At this meeting it was "*Resolved*, That the liberty to worship what we please, implies the liberty to worship nothing we please; and that those professing what are called infidel and atheistic sentiments, have a right to the same recognition and protection from the civil powers, as those professing Jewish, Christian, or any other doctrine; and that any attempt, direct or indirect, to exact a virtual confession of faith in the inspiration of the Old or New Testament writings as a qualification for a legal oath, or the keeping of some holy day enjoined, or supposed to be enjoined, by the Jewish or Christian Scriptures as the first or seventh day of the week, is alike defiant of natural right and constitutional law." Another resolution declares, that the attempt to enforce the observance of the first day of the week as a Sabbath, is "actuated by the same sectarian and proselyting spirit which has at the same time inspired the effort to enforce the reading of the Protestant Scriptures in our public schools." "This

effort to proselyte the youth of our public schools to Protestant Christianity," is looked upon "as no less flagrant a violation of natural right and constitutional law, than if, instead of King James's, the Douay or Roman Catholic version were required to be used; or instead of the Christian Bible the Mormon Bible, the Koran of Mahomet, or the Vedas and Shastas of the Hindoos." We make these quotations not for the purpose of exposing the shallowness and confusion of thought by which they are characterized, but simply to exhibit the *animus* of the opposition to our Sunday laws. For the same purpose we translate a few sentences from the *New Yorker Demokrat*, vom 30, mai d. j. Under the caption "The Day of the Lord," the editor of that representative journal says:

"As frogs in the swamp from time to time raise their heads, and fill the air with their melodious croaking, and then sink back into their slimy element, so the Sunday-saints raise their heads up and down out of the swamp of their church-creeds, and croak, 'Sanctify the Sabbath! Desecrate not the day of the Lord!' Such a frog-concert was held on Friday afternoon before the Commissioners of Police, to whom a delegation of frog-heads presented a memorandum, in which an earnest protest was made against the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday, and the faithful execution of the Sunday laws was demanded."

It is well for people to understand each other. It is well, on the one hand, that those Christians and Christian ministers, and other respectable men, who lend their influence to this anti-Sabbath movement, should know their associates, and understand the real spirit and design of the enterprise in which they cooperate. It is well, on the other hand, that the friends of the Sabbath, and of the laws of the land enacted for its due observance, and that magistrates and judges charged with the exposition and execution of those laws, should understand the origin and aim of the opposition which they have to encounter. We pass no judgment on individuals, but we are fully convinced that if the anti-Christian, irreligious, and foreign element were abstracted from this anti-Sabbath crusade, it would lose all its significance and power. It is but another outbreak of the

spirit of evil; and one may almost hear Lucifer, as in Longfellow's Golden Legend, crying out to these assailants,

“Aim your lightnings  
At the oaken  
Massive, iron studded portals!  
Sack the house of God, and scatter  
Wide the ashes of the dead!”

Quite as distinctly, however, comes back the answer,

“O we cannot!  
The apostles  
And the martyrs, wrapped in mantles,  
Stand as warders at the entrance,  
Stand as sentinels o'erhead!”

We do not want such a leader, or such associates. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, when the religious men of a community are on one side, and the irreligious, as a class, upon the other, the contest between them is a contest between light and darkness, between God and Satan, and, therefore, the stake at issue is the best interests of man. Good men, indeed, neither individually nor collectively, are infallible; and, therefore, we do not set up their judgment in any given case, as the ultimate standard of decision. But it is nevertheless true as a matter of history, that the intelligence and religion of a country go for what is true and good, ignorance and irreligion for what is false and evil. We know that there are cases in which the mariner cannot trust the needle, but must look for guidance to the unchanging star in the heavens; and there are cases in which even the mass of religious men swerve from the right course, and we have to look away from earth to heaven for direction. Nevertheless, the sailor who throws his compass overboard is sure to be shipwrecked; and the man, whether minister or magistrate, who sets himself against the religious convictions of the mass of good men, is sure to be ruined. This reference to the irreligious character of this movement against the Sunday laws is not made *ad invidiam*. It is intended as an appeal to a rational and well established principle of action. It is wise and right (except in extraordinary cases,) for public men to follow the enlightened religious senti-

ment of the community; it is unwise, disastrous, and wrong for them to go counter to that sentiment, or to take side with the irreligious and the vicious. All history is filled with illustrations and proofs of this truth. It is, therefore, a presumptive argument against this anti-Sabbath movement, that the religious sentiment of the country is against it, and the irreligious in its favour. No right-minded man can hesitate which side to take in such a controversy, unless his own convictions are singularly clear and strong, so that his allegiance to God forces him to array himself against God's people.

We propose briefly to examine the leading arguments of the anti-Sabbatarians, and see whether they are of such cogency as to constrain a conscientious man to take part with the anti-Christian and irreligious portion of the community against the great body of enlightened and religious men. It is plain that this is a very serious question. There is far more at stake than simply the laws for the due observance of the Lord's day. The principle on which those laws are assailed, would, as its advocates avow, exclude the Bible from our public schools, banish chaplains from all our legislative halls, and from the army and navy, from hospitals and almshouses, from our penitentiaries and state institutions of every kind. It would, as we shall see, do far more than this. It would forbid the exaction of an oath of office, or for confirmation of testimony. It would obliterate from our statute-books all laws for preserving the sanctity of marriage, for punishment of polygamy or adultery; and, in short, of all enactments which assume that we are a Christian people, bound by the revealed will of God. We should, therefore, approach this subject with a due impression of the magnitude of the interests at stake, and of the radical character of the revolution which it is now sought to introduce into our laws and customs.

The first argument urged, by many at least, in opposition to Sunday laws, is that the Bible is not the word of God; it is not a revelation of his truth and will, to which we owe faith and obedience. This is substantially the ground taken by the author of the work at the head of this article. On page 18, he says, "In this account of creation nature speaks one language, the Bible another; shall we put aside those unchangeable marks

of a creation long anterior to that recorded, in order to be guided by records written when, or by whom, no one knows. The account in the book of Genesis can only be considered an allegory calculated to please children and ignorant men." We happen to have heard one of the first scientific men of the age, the friend and peer of Agassiz, lecture on the Mosaic account of the creation, and saw him overawed by the stupendous exhibition of Divine wisdom therein contained. To his mind and to his auditors, as unfolded by a true philosopher, it was shown to be a summation of all the results to which modern science had arrived. We can imagine how such a man would regard the flippant ignorance displayed in the sentence just quoted. Speaking of the Bible, the author asks on page 176, "Can any believe that this book, ambiguous in its language, uncertain in its conjectures, is designed by the Almighty to be the rule of life for man?" On page 180, after stating what he calls certain philosophical truths, he adds, "They put an end to the popular delusion that the Scriptures are the rule of life, and establish in its place that sublime idea of the constant omnipresence of God, comforting us in our affliction, and guiding us according to his own purposes through all the intricate scenes of our existence." It is the special design of one of his chapters, and apparently of the whole work, to overthrow the idea of a "book religion," and to show that the doctrine of "the authority of the Scriptures," "is of incalculable evil to the morals and welfare of society." His substitute for the Scriptures is, "every man's own perceptions of truth and justice," which, in accordance with the language, but not with the doctrine, of Friends, he calls "the inner light." The only use we propose to make of Mr. Fisher's book, is to select the heads of the common objections against the Sabbath, and the laws enacted in regard to its observance. The first in the order of importance is the one above stated, viz., that the Bible is not authoritative; is not derived from God, and ought not to be regarded as the rule of our faith or practice. This objection is not peculiar to Mr. Fisher, nor to the very inconsiderable class to which he belongs. It is the objection either openly avowed or tacitly admitted by a very large portion of those most active in their opposition to the Sunday laws. These men are not atheists,



but deists. They admit the existence of a personal God, but deny that he has made a supernatural revelation recorded in the Christian Scriptures. They say that the only guide for the individual or for governments, is reason, the light of nature, as some express it; or, as Mr. Fisher would say, "a divine principle in the mind of man;" which he tells us is sufficient for "the governing principle of the individual man," and "for the governing principle of nations."

The first remark it occurs to us to make on this objection is, that it proves too much. If we must not make laws in obedience to the commands of God recorded in the Bible, because some men say the Bible is not true; neither can we make laws in obedience to the Divine principle or voice of God within us, because some men say there is no God. Mr. Fisher says to the Christian, "Your Scriptures are not divine as to their origin or authority. The assumption that they are a rule of life is the source of incalculable evils. Any laws founded on their commands are both unjust and injurious." The atheist says to Mr. Fisher, "Your doctrine of a God has been and is the greatest of all curses to the human race. It is the fountain-head of all superstition, and of the countless crimes perpetrated in the name of religion. It degrades man from his true position, converts him from a freeman into a slave; brings his inward life under the lash of a perverted conscience, and makes his soul a nest of scorpions." Let Mr. Fisher call an anti-Sabbath convention, and although the atheists may not outnumber the combined elements on the other side, we answer for it, they will be immensely superior in knowledge and power. Should our author fall into the hands of some of these "Free Germans," he would soon find himself crumpled into very small dimensions, and trodden under foot. If, then, he will not admit Christianity as the governing principle for the nation, he will have to submit to atheism, and then we shall soon have a strumpet for a goddess, and the guillotine for the chief source of public amusement. Mr. Fisher admits that we must have some "governing principle" not only for the "individual man," but for nations. He says the Scriptures must not be that principle, because they are not the word of God. We must, he says, substitute for them natural religion, "the inner

light," "the omnipresence of God," every man's "perceptions of truth and justice." But with the same right that he tells us to put out the sun, and follow the farthing candle of his "inner light," the atheist says to him, "Put out your smoking taper, it has ever led man into swamps and quicksands." If, therefore, we must give up our Christianity, he must give up his Theism.

Our second remark is, that this objection is unreasonable, not only because it is unfounded, but also because it is entertained only by an insignificant minority of the people. The objection that the Scriptures are not an authoritative rule of life is an unreasonable objection, because their Divine origin is a well authenticated fact. It is unreasonable to deny what by sufficient, and even superabundant evidence is proved to be true.

The Christian Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, have been subjected to the scrutiny of men for thousands of years. They have been exposed to all kinds of assault. The greatest and the worst of men have united to overthrow their authority. Philosophy, science, and history, have been marshalled against them; yet at this day the conviction of their Divine authority, is more deeply rooted in the minds of men than at any former period. At this moment a larger portion of the enlightened and virtuous of the human race believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, than ever before bowed to their authority. They are luminous with Divine knowledge; knowledge of the past and of the future, of the visible and of the invisible, of God and of man; knowledge such as God only could reveal. They are resplendent with holiness. They are instinct with power over the heart, the reason, and the conscience. They meet our necessities, explain the mystery of our origin, of our nature, and of our destiny. We believe in them for the same reason that we believe in the sun, or in the moral law, or that the Madonna of Raphael is a miracle of beauty. We believe in the Bible for the same reason that Mr. Fisher believes in God. And if he would know how his denial of its authority affects us, he has only to ask himself how the denial of the being of God affects him. Such denial would not, in the least degree, weaken his own convictions. He would only feel indignant that a truth so evident, which addresses itself with such con-

trolling power to his higher nature, should be called in question on grounds which to him must appear trivial. He would regard the demand that he should not make his Theism a rule of life, an outrage on his humanity. He could not fail to answer that it was impossible for him not to regulate his conduct, whether as a citizen or magistrate, by his "own perceptions of truth and justice;" that to throw away his sense of moral obligation and responsibility to God, would be to brutalize himself. The assertion of the atheist that truth and justice are bugbears to frighten "children and ignorant men;" that moral distinctions are merely subjective; that there is no sin and no virtue; that might makes right; that the actual is the only possible; that all who succeed, whether robber or murderer, ought to succeed, would doubtless appear to him very absurd and very shocking. Well, Mr. Fisher, if you cannot give up God, we cannot give up Christ, who is God in his clearest manifestation. If the will of God, as revealed in your own soul, takes such hold of your conscience, that you cannot disregard the demands of truth and justice, we must tell you that the will of God, as revealed in his word, takes such hold of our inward nature, that we cannot disregard its authority. Nay, as God is greater than man, if your own "perceptions of truth and justice" have such authority and power over you, you may believe that what God declares to be truth and justice, has a proportionately greater power over us. If you must follow your farthing candle, we must follow the blazing sun, let owls and bats do what they may. If, then, you would regard the demand of the atheist, that you should give up your sense of truth and justice, as the rule of individual and national life as unreasonable, you must permit Christians to regard as still more unreasonable, your demand that they should give up the more distinct revelation of the Divine will in his word, as the rule of their conduct, whether as individuals or as a nation.

The unreasonableness of this demand is the more glaring, because it is made by a very small minority of the community. It is conceded, for the present, at least as between us and Mr. Fisher, that nations as well as individuals must have some rule or principle to regulate their conduct. Christians say, that

principle should be the will of God as revealed in the Bible. Deists, such as our author, say, it should be the will of God as revealed in the soul; or, in other words, the inward sense of truth and justice. The atheist says, as there is no God, there is no right or wrong; there are only force and happiness. Therefore the only rule of action for the individual is power and a regard to his own happiness; and for the nation, the greatest happiness for the greatest number. If murdering all the Indians would promote the happiness of the nation, then let them be murdered. If poisoning the wells in Canada would promote the enjoyment of Americans, let the wells be poisoned. If taking the wealth of the rich and giving it to the poor would make the people happy, let the rich be despoiled. Leaving out of view the truth or falsehood of these different theories, and assuming for the moment, that questions of duty and of allegiance to God can be settled by the ballot-box, it is certainly preposterous for the atheists, who in this country number only a few thousands, to say to the deists, who probably amount to some millions, You must give up your principle and adopt ours; there is no such thing as truth and justice, and therefore you shall not act in a national capacity on the assumption that there is. Mr. Fisher could not stand this. With what face then can a million or two of deists say to twenty millions of Christians, You must give up your principle and follow ours. Let it be remembered we are speaking on the concession of Mr. Fisher, that there must be some principle to regulate a nation's acts. If this be so, then as the vast majority of the people of this country profess to be Christians, it follows that the Bible, which they believe to be the word of God, must be the rule of their conduct; and it must, even on the low principle of relative numbers, be unreasonable that the few should control the many.

There is still another remark to be made on this objection. To argue that Sunday laws should be abolished, because the Bible is not a rule of life, is altogether irrelevant. It matters not, as to this point, whether the Bible is the word of God or not. It is enough that the people believe it to be his word. It is perfectly competent to Mr. Fisher or any body else, to endeavour to convince them that they are labouring under a

delusion, and should emancipate themselves from an illegitimate authority. But it is preposterous to require them to abolish laws which the Bible enjoins, so long as their faith in the Bible is unchanged. Mr. Fisher must act according to his "inner light," so long as he believes it to be Divine. Our telling him that it is an *ignis fatuus*, may be a reason for his re-examining the matter, but it is no reason why he should alter his conduct before he alters his opinion. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land. Any man has the right to endeavour to persuade the people to alter its provisions; but so long as it is in force, it must be obeyed. If a Christian goes to a Mohammedan country, it would be very absurd for him to call for the abrogation of a particular law enjoined in the Koran, on the ground that Mohammed was an impostor, and his book a tissue of absurdities. So long as the people regard Mohammed as a prophet, and the Koran a revelation, it is most unreasonable to require them to disregard their authority. So in a Christian country it is absurd to require that the people should act as if the Bible was not the word of God. It is one thing to try and change their conviction of its Divine authority, but another thing to persuade those who believe it to be Divine, to disregard its injunctions.

The second great objection urged in the book before us, and often elsewhere, is, that admitting the Bible to be the word of God, and the fourth commandment of the Decalogue to be yet in force, the Bible itself does not require such an observance of the Sabbath as our Sunday laws assume. On this objection little need be said. We may repeat the remark just made. The real question is, not what the Bible as interpreted by the objectors means, but how do the mass of Christian people in this country understand it. Mr. Fisher says that the Sabbath, even as enjoined in the Old Testament, was a day of recreation. The people were commanded to rest from their ordinary labours, and to amuse themselves. The mass of Christians say that the Sabbath was a day separated from worldly avocations, and set apart for the service of God; a day to be devoted to learning his will, and worshipping in his presence. It matters not, so far as the question about our Sunday laws is concerned, which of these views of the design of the day is cor-

rect. If the law-making power is in the hands of Christians, and the responsibility for the laws enacted rests on them, they must act according to their convictions. If that power and responsibility rest on Mr. Fisher and those who agree with him, they must act according to their views. So long, therefore, as Christians believe that the Sabbath as instituted by God was to be a day of rest from ordinary labour, and of devotion to religious duty, anything inconsistent with that design they are bound, within the limits of their legitimate authority, to prohibit.

In another point of view, however, the question as to the design of the institution of the Sabbath is a matter of vital importance. Its hold on the religious feelings will of course be destroyed, if it could be shown that it was intended by God himself, to be a day of recreation. It is impossible, in an article like this, that we should enter on all these disputed points. Mr. Fisher denies the Divine origin and authority of the Bible. Must we write a new book on the evidences of revealed religion? So he denies that the Jewish Sabbath had a religious design; he denies that the institution, such as it was, was designed to be perpetual, that the early Christian church recognized the Divine authority of the institution, &c. These are points which have been discussed and settled to the satisfaction of the church, generations before Mr. Fisher or ourselves were born. It would require more space than his work occupies, and more time than its composition cost him, for us to go over the ground which has already been so often traversed. This cannot be expected, and is altogether unnecessary, as works in abundance can be had discussing all these subjects. Our object in this review is simply to point out the inconclusiveness of the arguments presented in this work, and so often repeated elsewhere, in favour of the abrogation of our Sunday laws. We might therefore properly content ourselves with the remark, that so long as the Christian people of this Christian country believe that the Sabbath as instituted by God, was a day, not for amusement, but for religious service, the Sunday laws cannot be dispensed with, without a violation of the public conscience. That Christians are right in their view of this subject might indeed be easily demonstrated to the satisfaction

of all who believe the Scriptures. The avowed and often repeated purpose of its original institution was to keep in mind the creation of the world. If the world was created, then there is a personal God, to whom, as to the author of their being, all rational creatures owe allegiance and worship. If the world was not created, then there is no God; and men are left to choose between Atheism and Pantheism—a distinction without a difference. So far, therefore, from the Sabbath being designed primarily as a day of relaxation from the ordinary labours of life, this was a very subordinate object of its institution. It was designed to be a periodical and often recurring arrest of the course of worldly life; to make men aware that there is a God to whom they are responsible, and on whom they are dependent, from whom come all their mercies, and to whom they must answer for all their sins. It was designed to prevent men sinking into the material and present, by keeping God in remembrance, and letting in upon the darkness of this outward and fleeting state the light of the spiritual and eternal world. The Sabbath was, therefore, the corner-stone of religion. Its neglect was sure to lead to forgetfulness of the true God, and then to idolatry, and the dominion of all evil. True religion, that is, what even a deist would call true religion, the knowledge and worship of the true God, has never, since the apostasy of man, been preserved where the Sabbath was unknown, or its religious character denied or neglected. It is to reduce the Old Testament from the sublimity of a revelation of God, and of the mode by which he is to be worshipped, and of the means by which the knowledge of Him is to be preserved and promoted, to make its most characteristic institution a mere day for worldly amusement. If the Old Testament be viewed as simply a collection of historical records and human compositions, having no higher reference than the temporal affairs of the Jews, then the Sabbath, in keeping with such view, may be regarded as a day of recreation. But if the Bible be a religious book, if its design be to reveal God, his works and will, and to prepare man for a higher state of being, then the Sabbath is a religious institution, having for its object to wean man from the seen and temporal, and prepare him for the unseen and eternal. It is therefore called a holy day; that is, a day set apart to

the service of God, just as the temple and its appurtenances, the priests and the people were holy as consecrated to God. The command to sanctify or hallow the Sabbath is a command to devote it to a religious use. The word to *sanctify* always means, in such connections, to separate from a common to a sacred use. In Lev. xxiii. 3, it is said, "Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, a holy convocation: ye shall do no work therein; it is the Sabbath of the Lord (or, the Sabbath to Jehovah, i. e., devoted to his service) in all your dwellings." It was the day on which the people were to be convoked for holy purposes. The sacrifices in the temple were multiplied—the people resorted thither to worship, they rejoiced, as the Psalmist said, in the courts of the Lord. He preferred to be a door-keeper in the house of God, rather than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. He was glad when they said to him, "Let us go unto the house of the Lord." The book of Psalms is a collection of devotional exercises for the worship of God, specially on the Sabbath. That day was, therefore, a day set apart for religious services, according to the command, "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am Jehovah." Lev. xix. 30. And the prophet said, "The people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord in the Sabbaths." Ezek. xlvi. 3. Isaiah said, "From one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." lxvi. 23. In chapter lviii. 13, he says, the blessing of God shall rest on those who shall abstain from doing their pleasure, or seeking mere amusement on God's holy day; and shall call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, (or the day holy to the Lord,) honourable; and shall honour him, not doing their own pleasure, nor speaking their own words. The Jews ever understood the Sabbath to be a day consecrated to religious worship. Philo, as quoted by Eusebius, says, Moses commanded the people "on the seventh day to assemble together, and to listen to the recital of the law." Josephus says, (*Contra Apion*. Lib. i. § 22,) the Jews were accustomed on every seventh day not only to abstain from the ordinary affairs of life, "but spread out their hands in their holy places, and pray till the evening." We have, however, higher authority than this. It



is said in Acts xv. 21, "Moses of old times [literally *from ancient generations,*] hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." Such was the usage of the Jews in the time of Christ, as we learn from many passages in the New Testament. Mark vi. 2, "When the Sabbath was come, he [Christ] began to teach in the synagogue." Luke iv. 16, "He came to Nazareth—and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read;" xiii. 10, "He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath." The apostles everywhere went into the synagogues on the Sabbath to preach; see Acts xiii. 14, xvii. 2. In this latter passage it is said, "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures;" and xviii. 4, Paul "reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." It is plain, therefore, that the Hebrew Sabbath was not a day for worldly amusement, but a day set apart for religious duties. The people, indeed, were commanded to rejoice on that day. And well they might, for it was the constant memorial of the being and goodness of God, not only as their Creator and benefactor, but as their deliverer from bondage. There is nothing ascetic or gloomy in the religion of the Bible. Men are commanded to rejoice always, to praise God with a cheerful voice. There is no doubt that the Pharisees perverted this sacred day, and burdened its observance with many uncommanded austerities; and there is no doubt that some Christians have erred in the same direction. But this is not to be laid to the charge of the Bible; and it is not the tendency of our age. All that God requires is, that the day should be set apart from worldly avocations, and consecrated to religion. The more cheerfully it is observed, the more, that is, of joyful gratitude for the blessings which it commemorates attends its celebration, the better.

The third objection to our Sunday Laws is, that admitting the Divine origin of the Old Testament, and conceding that the observance of one day in seven as a holy Sabbath to God is therein enjoined, it was a purely Jewish institution, and is not binding upon Christians.

It is on all hands admitted that the Mosaic laws include two

elements, the one designed especially for the Jews, the other designed for all men. Some of the laws of Moses bound the Jews as Jews, and therefore only Jews; others bound them as men, and therefore all men. The abrogation of the Old Testament economy, with all that was ceremonial, typical, and national, left what was moral and universal untouched. The commands, Thou shalt have no other gods before me; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not covet, are not swept away because the law of Moses is abolished. The only question is, what part of the Mosaic institutions was temporary and national, and what part is permanent and universal? In some cases, as in those just cited, the answer to this question is easy. In others it is more or less difficult. And it is to be admitted that very great evils have arisen from transferring temporary rules and principles from the national economy of the Old Testament, to the catholic economy of the New. Christianity has thus, in different forms, been corrupted by a Judaizing spirit. Whether the Sabbath belongs to the class of temporary Jewish institutions, or was designed to be permanent and universal, is therefore the question. We must here, however, repeat the remark already twice made. It is not so much the truth in this matter, as the faith of the general body of Christians we are to inquire after. Even if Mr. Fisher were right in his confident assertion that the Sabbath was a purely Jewish ordinance, still if the Christians of this country are of a contrary conviction, it is unreasonable to expect them to violate their sense of duty because some men think them mistaken. That the Christian world does consider the Sabbatical law of perpetual obligation is obvious from two notorious facts. The whole Christian world observe that law. All classes of Christians (with exceptions too inconsiderable to be taken into account) do observe every seventh day, as a day for religious worship. This is done, indeed, by different churches and persons with different degrees of strictness. But the same may be said with regard to everything else which belongs to Christians as such. It is undeniably true that the whole Christian world, whether Greek, Latin, or Protestant, comprising ninety-nine hundredths of all who bear the Christian name, do observe one day in seven for Divine worship, and have done so

from the beginning. This has not been done by accident, or from motives of convenience or expediency. That precisely one day in seven, and not one in six, eight, or ten, has been thus universally observed, is proof positive of its being regarded as a Divine institution. If in any case the rule, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, can be applied with certainty, it is to this. But there is another proof of this point. The Decalogue is incorporated into the liturgical or catechetical formulas of all the great divisions of the Christian church. The Greeks, the Latins, and all Protestants, who have a liturgy, repeat the ten commandments from Sabbath to Sabbath. In their worship the minister says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" and the people answer, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law;" and at the end of the repetition of the Decalogue, they say, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and write these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee." Here then is the testimony, uttered in the ears of God, and before all men, of the whole Christian world to their faith in the continued obligation of the fourth commandment. This being so, what Mr. Fisher or those who agree with him, have to say to the contrary, is of very little account. If Christians are to be allowed to act according to their faith, they must be allowed to keep the Sabbath, which with one voice they pray God to incline their hearts to do. And if, as even Mr. Fisher admits, there must be a principle to determine national as well as individual conduct, then Christian states must obey the law which Christian men believe binds them with the authority of God.

But it is important to inquire into the grounds on which Christians proceed in separating the permanent from the temporary in the Jewish institutions. If we observe the Sabbath, why do we not observe other festivals and rites enjoined in the Old Testament? There are three principles or criteria of discrimination. First: when any command was given before the time of Moses, and not addressed to the chosen people as such, but to all mankind, then it is certain that such command forms no part of the peculiar institutions of the Jews. Whether it was intended to be of permanent as well as universal obligation, is to be otherwise determined. The offering of sacrifices was

anterior to the Mosaic period, and was no doubt a Divine institution designed for all men; but being typical, it ceased to be obligatory when the great antitypical Sacrifice had been presented on the cross. Second: when the reason assigned for any command is permanent and universal, then the command itself is permanently and universally obligatory. The ground of the commands, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, is nothing in the relation of one Jew to another, but the permanent relations of men. Those commands, therefore, do not bind Jews as Jews, but men as men. The command to worship God and not to worship idols, was not founded on any peculiar relation which the Hebrews bore to God, but on the relation which all rational creatures bear to their Creator. Therefore those laws can never be abrogated. Thirdly: when any command in the Old Testament is recognized by Christ and his apostles as obligatory on their disciples, it becomes a part of the law which binds all Christians. Thus the original law of marriage was adopted by our Lord, and is permanently obligatory upon all who recognize his authority.

It is the application of these criteria which has convinced the Christian world that the command to consecrate every seventh day to the worship of God and the duties of religion, is of permanent and universal obligation. From the beginning of the world, long before the time of Moses, and therefore for all mankind, God sanctified the seventh day, that is, separated it from an ordinary to a sacred use. This is the plain meaning of the sacred text. "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work." Gen. ii. 3. This occurs in the account of the creation. It asserts the fact that God blessed or sanctified the seventh day from the beginning. To make this passage mean that the fact that God rested on the seventh day was the reason why, thousands of years afterwards, it was set apart as a day of rest, is to do obvious violence to the text. The language used in Exod. xx. 11, plainly teaches that the Sabbath was instituted from the beginning. "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." The reason assigned for blessing the day was a

reason which existed from the creation. This view of these passages is confirmed by the consideration that the necessity for the Sabbath was a common necessity. Whether considered as a day of rest from labour, or as a day set apart for the worship of God, it was as important before, as after the time of Moses. Besides this, we have the clearest evidence, in the history of the deluge, that time was then divided into periods of seven days. For this, no satisfactory reason can be given other than the original institution of the Sabbath. Seven is not an equal part either of the period of one revolution of the moon around the earth, or of the earth round the sun. There is nothing in nature to indicate this division of time, or to account for its early introduction. This, too, accounts for the wide prevalence of septenary observances, and for the sacredness so widely attached to the number seven. To account for these facts from the worship of the seven planets, is not only arbitrary, but unsatisfactory. There is no evidence that the knowledge of the seven planets existed at that early period, much less that the worship of them prevailed before the deluge. The hypothesis of the institution of the Sabbath at the beginning, which is demanded by the simple meaning of the sacred text, and confirmed by the considerations just stated, is consistent with all the facts of the case. It is indeed objected that we find no mention of the institution in the subsequent chapters of the book of Genesis. This, however, is not surprising, considering the brevity and the object of that sketch of the early history of the world. There is no mention of the Sabbath in Joshua, Judges, First or Second Samuel, although so solemnly enjoined by Moses. No special instance of the practice of circumcision is recorded as having occurred from the settlement of the Hebrews in Canaan to the time of Christ. The mere silence of the brief scriptural narratives therefore proves nothing. Neither is the fact that the Sabbath is said to have been commemorative of the deliverance of the people from Egypt, and a sign of the covenant between them and Jehovah, inconsistent with its institution in paradise. It was designed to answer many purposes; to keep in mind the creation of the world; to commemorate the deliverance from Egypt; and to typify the rest which remains for the people of God.

An institution originally of Divine appointment, which the nations had neglected, and therefore sunk into idolatry, was, as Nehemiah says, ix. 14, "made known" by the hand of Moses; and being thus reinstated and enforced by additional considerations, became a distinguishing mark between the Jews and the other nations of the earth. Although thus communicated anew to the people, it would appear from Exod. xvi. 23, that it was not unknown to the chosen people. Other nations had neglected it, but the knowledge of such a day, although they have been remiss in its observance, lingered among the Hebrews. This appears from the fact that Moses, in giving directions in regard to gathering the manna, before any new command on the subject, enjoined on the people to collect a double quantity on the sixth day, for "the seventh, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none."

Of all classes of Protestant Christians, those who stand at the greatest remove from Brownists or Puritans, to whom Mr. Fisher refers the doctrine of the perpetuity of the law of the Sabbath, are the High-church, or Anglican, party in England, and the Lutheran element of the united church of Prussia. The celebrated Dr. Hook, vicar of Leeds, a representative of the former, in his Church Dictionary, labours at length to show that "one day in seven was in the beginning dedicated to the service of the Almighty." He says that Gen. ii. 3, proves that one day in seven was sanctified, or "set apart for a religious purpose." He teaches that this rule was given to Adam, and was "binding not on a chosen few, but upon all his descendants." As a representative of the latter class, we refer to Huebner, Professor in Wittenberg. In his edition of Büchner's Exegetisch-homiletisches Lexicon, he maintains, that the Sabbath was instituted in paradise, and says the observance of such a day "is plainly no local or temporary command, but an original necessity of the spiritual nature of man; he must suppress all aspiration after the heavenly and invisible, and sink into the earthly, and even the brutal, without the Sabbath." These are men of our day, not of the age in which witches were hung, and Quakers persecuted. It will not do, therefore, to attribute to any such age or spirit, the doctrine of the primitive institution and permanent obligation of this holy day.

The second criterion leads to the same conclusion. The reason for the Sabbath is permanent, and therefore the institution is permanent. That reason as given in Genesis, in the Decalogue, and most frequently through the Bible, is nothing in the peculiar or national relation of the Hebrews to God, but the relation which men as rational creatures bear to their Creator. On the same ground, therefore, that the other precepts of the Decalogue, founded on the permanent relations of men, either to God or to each other, are of necessity regarded as binding all men in all times, the Sabbath which is placed on a similar foundation, must be considered as permanently and universally obligatory. Men are bound to worship God. They are bound to do this socially as well as privately. This worship is a necessity of their spiritual nature. It is essential to the healthful development of their powers, to the formation of character, to their well-being in this world, and their salvation in the next. Without the stated public worship of God, men lose the knowledge of his existence, and all sense of obligation. Enlightened piety gives place to superstition, fanaticism, or irreligion. Men become debased and society utterly demoralized. The institution of the Sabbath was designed to preserve the knowledge of God, and the power of religion among men.\* It is God's means to that end, and wherever it has been unknown or neglected, idolatry or false religion has always prevailed. The ground on which the Sabbath rests being, therefore, an abiding necessity of our nature, common to all men, the institution itself cannot be regarded as a temporary Jewish ordinance.

The third criterion by which to determine whether any institution of the Old Testament was intended to be permanent, is the manner in which it is treated in the New Testament. If it is there represented as belonging to the old economy, it is no longer in force, but, if it is recognized as still binding, it becomes a permanent law of the Christian church. On this principle all the precepts of the Old Testament founded in the

\* Mr. Fisher quotes, and afterwards refers to, with evident approbation, the suggestion that the Sabbath was instituted to relieve the sore feet of the Jews during their toilsome journey through the wilderness. So low as that may men get in this nineteenth century!

essential and necessary relations of man to God, or on the permanent relations of society, are in the New Testament either expressly enjoined, or clearly recognized as of permanent obligation. Thus, while the Mosaic law itself, with all its peculiar enactments and penalties, all its rites and its ceremonies, its temple-service and ritual, is declared to be abolished; the prohibition of the worship of false gods, and of all forms of idolatry, is reiterated; all precepts relating to the relative duties of men as fellow-creatures, as husbands and wives, as parents and children, as magistrates and citizens, are recognized as still in force. Now with regard to the Sabbath, we find, in the first place, not the slightest intimation that it was regarded as a temporary institution. The various festivals of the Jews, *their* Sabbaths, their new moons, their great days of convocation and atonement, are declared to have passed away, as shadows of good things which had already come. But the original command anterior to the law of Moses, to separate one day in the week from worldly avocations, and to set it apart to the worship of God, is never in any way set aside. In like manner the Jewish law of marriage, with its death penalty, its permission of polygamy and arbitrary divorce, is abrogated. But the original law of marriage is re-enacted and declared to be of perpetual obligation. The abrogation, therefore, of the Jewish Sabbath, with its death penalty, its peculiar services and regulations, leaves the original law of the Sabbath untouched.

In the second place, besides this negative argument, we have abundant evidence that the original law was regarded as permanently obligatory. Our Lord on various occasions, by word and act, taught that the view of the Sabbath entertained by the Jews of his day was erroneous, but he never taught that the Sabbath itself was to be set aside. He taught that it was right to do good, to supply the cravings of hunger, and the like, on the Sabbath; but he never taught that it was right to make the day one of labour or recreation. His doctrine was that the "Sabbath was made for man, (not for the Jews) and not man for the Sabbath." It was designed to promote the physical and spiritual interests of men, and was not to be observed in any way which would sacrifice the end to the



means. With regard to sacrifices, it was not merely the spirit and manner in which they were offered, but the sacrifices themselves which were set aside or condemned; whereas it was not the Sabbath itself, but the mode of its observance that our Lord objected to. He sanctioned the religious observance of the day by attending the synagogue services; just as he sanctioned marriage by his attendance on the wedding at Cana. Christ and his apostles also on various occasions gave their sanction to the Decalogue as a permanent rule of duty. They quote it as a whole, and command that it should be obeyed. That was the law which could not be broken. The decisive fact, however, is, that the whole Christian church, under the guidance of Christ and his apostles, have from the beginning acted on the assumption that the original law requiring one day in seven to be consecrated to God is permanently and universally binding. All Christians, as before remarked, have incorporated the Decalogue, including the fourth commandment, into their standards of faith and practice. The law of the Sabbath, therefore, is written as by the finger of God on the heart and conscience of the Christian world.

The change of the day is merely circumstantial. Any day may be the seventh, according to the mode of ordering the succession. There was a reason why the seventh in the Jewish mode of numbering the days, should be observed by them, because the creation was the thing to be specially commemorated. There is a reason why the first day of the week should be the sacred day of Christians, because the new creation, the work of restoring a ruined world, is the thing we are most interested in bearing in mind. This change of the day was not made arbitrarily, or by human authority. It was made by inspired men, as is proved by the designation of the first day of the week, in the New Testament itself, as the Lord's day, and by the observance of that day by the apostles and early Christians. This circumstantial change in no way interferes with the original command. All the permanent and salutary designs of the institution are answered by the observance of the first, as well as by the observance of the seventh day of the week. It is still one day in seven; and this is the substance of the original law.

The fourth, and by far the most effective objection, so far as the popular mind is concerned, against the Sunday laws, is, that they are, as the "Free Germans" express it, a violation of the constitutional rights and religious liberty of the people. It is assumed that the separation between the church and state which prevails universally in this country, and the provision, found in most of our State Constitutions, that no man shall be molested for his religious principles, and no religious profession shall be required as a qualification for office, forbid the enactment of such laws. Those who do not believe in the Sabbath, or even in Christianity, Jews, and infidels of every grade, say they have precisely the same rights under the Constitution as any Protestant Christian. If a man chooses to labour or to dance on the Lord's day, no one has the right to interfere with him. And if any set of men choose to run their cars, or steamboats on that day, it is declared to be an act of injustice for the government to prevent it.

In reference to this plausible objection we would say, 1. That this is a Christian and Protestant country. 2. That the people have not only the right, but are bound in conscience, to act on the principles of Protestant Christianity, not only in their capacity of individuals, but as a government, in all cases in which such Christianity affords a rule for individual or governmental action. 3. That in so acting, no violence is offered to any man's constitutional rights or natural liberty.

These are not new principles for this Journal to maintain. They have been repeatedly asserted in their application to the introduction of religious teaching into our public schools. They are developed in a masterly manner, (as we may be permitted to say,) in a communication to the pages of this number of our Review. With the principles contained in the article referred to, we heartily concur, although we may differ from our able contributor, as to the extent to which our national and state governments have in point of fact denuded themselves of their rights as Christian organizations. We propose to explain and vindicate, as briefly as possible, each of the principles just stated.

First: This is a Protestant and Christian country. This does not mean merely that the great majority of the people are

Protestant Christians. This is indeed a most important, as it is an undeniable fact. Take out of the country all who profess Protestant Christianity, and you take out of it its heart, soul, life, and essence. Still this is not a question of numbers. Turkey is a Mohammedan country, although the Christians may outnumber the Moslems. Nor does the proposition above stated mean simply that the controlling legislative and executive power in this country is in the hands of Protestant Christians. Ireland is a Celtic Roman Catholic country in spite of the domination of Saxon and Protestant England. But it means that the organic life of the country is that form of social, political, and religious life, which is peculiar to Protestant Christianity. As every tree or plant, every race of animals, so every nation has its own organic life. If you plant an acorn it develops into an oak; and as it grows it assimilates or eliminates all that comes within the sphere of its activity. So if you take a number of Chinese as a nucleus of a nation, as they multiply and form themselves into a self-governing community, not only their physical organization, but their whole individual, social, religious, municipal, and political life, is of necessity, or by a Divine law, conformed to that peculiar type. Of course the same would be true of any number of English or Frenchmen. The greater the distinction of races, the more marked the difference in the manifestations of the organic life of different communities. An African or Asiatic nation differs more from an European one, than one European nation from another. Every nation, however, has its peculiar character and usages, the product and manifestation of its organic life. This country is no exception to this law. It was originally constituted by Protestant Christians. They were not only the first settlers, but they constituted almost the only element of our population for the first hundred years of our history, which was the forming period of our national existence. These progenitors of our country being Protestant Christians, not only each for himself worshipped God, and his Son Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, and acknowledged the Scriptures to be the rule of his faith and practice; but he introduced his religion into his family. He associated with others for the public service of God. The people abstained

from all ordinary business on the Lord's day, and devoted it to religion. They built churches, erected schools, taught the children to read and obey the Bible as the word of God. They formed themselves as Christians into municipal and state organizations. They acknowledged God in their legislative assemblies; they prescribed oaths in his name; they closed their courts, their places of business, their legislatures, and all places under public control on the Lord's day. They declared the common law of England, of which Christianity is the basis, to be the law of the land. In this way we grew to be a Protestant Christian nation, by the same general law that an acorn becomes an oak. When emigrants who were neither Protestants nor Christians come to the country, they were either perfectly assimilated and absorbed, as the rivulets which flow into the Mississippi are lost in its mighty waters; or, from want of congeniality, they mingle with us, but are not completely of us; as a branch of one kind of tree may be engrafted upon a tree of a different kind, without altering the nature of the sustaining stem. Sometimes the difference is so great as to forbid even this partial assimilation; and these uncongenial elements become warts and excrescences on the body politic. This is the case with the Indians, the Mormons, and the Chinese in California. It is with our religions as it is with our ethnical development. The great majority of the settlers in this country were from Great Britain. They brought with them the English language, English literature, laws, ideas, feelings, and domestic and social usages. They grew up, therefore, essentially an English people, and they so remain to this day. The accession to our population from other sources, does not change our ethnical character. Our language, laws, and institutions are as much English as they were a hundred years ago. Germans, French, Irish, Norwegians, and Danes, in the course of a generation or two, are merged indistinguishably into the mass of the English speaking and English feeling population. Not less palpable is the Protestant Christian character of our nation. It is what it is because it is the development of a germ of Protestant Christianity. This is an outstanding historical fact. It cannot be changed by denying it, by pooh-poohing it, or by cursing it. There stands an oak, because an acorn was

planted. And we stand a Protestant Christian nation, because God planted Protestant Christians as the national germ on this western continent. The sense, therefore, in which we understand this to be a Protestant Christian country is, that its organic life, that which gives it being and character, and determines its acts and destiny, is Protestant Christianity. By Protestant Christianity is meant that form of religion which acknowledges Jesus Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, to be the absolute, sovereign and only Saviour of men, and which takes the Bible, as his word, to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and protests against all human authority in matters of religion.

The second proposition stated above, is, that the people of this country have the right, and are in conscience bound to act on the principles of Protestant Christianity, not only in their capacity as individuals, but as a government, in all cases in which Christianity affords a rule for individual or governmental action.

This seems almost a self-evident truth. Christianity is a law of life; a law of Divine authority; it binds the conscience, it must therefore be obeyed by those who profess to be Christians. They must obey it as men, as heads of families, as magistrates, as citizens, as legislators and executive officers. They cannot deliberately violate any of its injunctions without doing violence to their own conscience, and forfeiting their allegiance to God. If they believe that Christianity forbids war, they cannot, as a government, declare war, or permit it to be prosecuted by those under their control. A nation of Quakers could not maintain a navy, or organize an army. By so doing, they would forfeit their character as Quakers, and all the benefits and blessings therewith connected. If a set of men believe in God and the moral law, it is self-evident that they must obey that law, not only as individuals, but in all the associations into which they may enter. If they form themselves into a manufacturing, or banking, or railroad company, they cannot, in that capacity, do what they believe the moral law forbids. If they cannot deceive or defraud as individuals, neither can they do it as a society. If they are bound to keep the Sabbath in their families, they are bound to keep it in their

workshops and banking-houses. It would help them very little at the bar of conscience, or at the bar of God, to say that a railroad company was organized for secular purposes, and had nothing to do with questions of morals; that those are matters to be left to every man's own conscience and to God. The man who was at once a prince and a bishop, could not get drunk as a prince, and be sober as a bishop. The principle here asserted is so clear that men who occupy the low platform presented in Mr. Fisher's book cannot deny it. Even he admits, as we have seen, that there must be a principle not only for the control of individual, but also governmental action. He and many others say, "the inner light," or every man's sense of truth and justice, is such a principle. This is giving up the whole controversy, for it admits that men must act in matters of government in obedience to what they believe to be the will of God; and therefore as the people of this country believe the Bible to be a revelation of the will of God, they must, in their governmental capacity act in obedience to the Bible. If the Bible forbids polygamy, they cannot sanction it. If the Bible prohibits arbitrary divorce, they cannot allow a man to put away his wife whenever he pleases. If the Scriptures enjoin the religious observance of one day in seven, they cannot, as a government, profane that day and be guiltless.

No one denies that men are bound to recognize the authority of the moral law in their governmental acts, that for a nation to authorize or to permit, within its jurisdiction, theft, rapine, or murder, is as atrocious as for an individual man to be guilty of these crimes. No one would dare to rise in a legislative body, and propose that such offences should be sanctioned or overlooked. No one, therefore, can reasonably deny that Christians are bound to recognize the authority of Christianity in their governmental acts. They must do it. It may be said that these cases are not parallel, because the precepts of the moral law are obeyed by governments, not as moral duties, but out of regard to the public good. This is not true. It is impossible that men with a moral nature, should not act under a sense of moral obligation. All public men are loud in their declarations that they favour or oppose certain measures because they are right or wrong, just or unjust. But even if it

were possible for men to deny their moral nature, and to act always and only from selfish motives of expediency, this would not alter the case. It is expedient to obey God. If he has enjoined the observance of the Sabbath, all who recognize his authority, will feel that it is expedient, best for the interests of society, that the day should be observed. What, however, we now desire to insist upon, is the absolute impossibility of Christians ignoring their Christianity in their governmental acts. They can no more do it than they can ignore their reason or their moral nature.

But suppose they could do it, what would be the consequence? What would be the effect of carrying out the principle that religion has nothing to do with human governments, that it has no right to control their acts? Or, to state the question in a different form, what would be the consequence of adopting the principle that human governments have nothing to do with religion, and need not concern themselves whether their enactments violate the principles of Christianity or not? The first consequence of adopting this principle would be that all the Christians of the country would be disfranchised. Suppose our governments, municipal, state, and national, were to act as though there were no such thing as Christianity, or as if it had no right to determine their action. Then, as in Mohammedan or Pagan countries, all public business would go on on Sundays as on other days; all courts would continue in session, all public offices would be open; all town-councils, state legislatures, and both houses of Congress would sit without interruption on the Lord's day. It is plain, therefore, that no Christian could be a lawyer or judge, nor an office-holder of any kind, nor a member of town-council, or of a state legislature, or of Congress. The whole legislative, executive and judicial power in city, state, and nation, would be thrown into the hands of Jews, infidels, and atheists. We should have a test act of a novel character. Not religion, but irreligion would be demanded as a necessary qualification for every post of trust or power. This is the kind of liberty and equality which our "Free Germans" and Fisherites would establish in the land. This is inevitable. He that will not bow to God, must bow to Satan. There is no help for it. If we banish

religion as a controlling power, we thereby establish atheism. If we extinguish light, we introduce darkness. And for a man to profess that his object is simply to banish the light, and not at all to bring in darkness, will deceive nobody who has sense enough to understand the meaning of words.

A second consequence of divorcing Christianity from government, no less inevitable than the one just mentioned, would be that all laws which have their foundation in the Christian religion must be abrogated. Take, for illustration, the laws relating to marriage. The doctrine that marriage is a contract for life between one man and one woman, is peculiarly a Christian doctrine. It is not a Jewish, a Mohammedan, or Pagan doctrine. It cannot be said to have its foundation in natural religion, nor in the nature of man, nor in expediency. It is, indeed, the original law given before the introduction of Christianity. It is, no doubt, consonant to the higher nature of man, and necessary to the best interests of society. But these are not the foundations on which it rests. It is founded on the authority of Christ. It is received and obeyed because he has enacted it. It is the doctrine of the Christian church; and is observed and held sacred only by those who recognize Christ's authority. In other words, it is peculiar to Christian lands, and is purely a Christian institution. If, then, the government has nothing to do with religion; if Christians in their governmental capacity are not to be controlled by Christianity, then they have no right to enforce the Christian law of marriage. Any man who may choose to have more than one wife, or to put away one, and take another, may plead his natural right, and put in the plea, that government has no religion, and cannot enact laws to favour any one religious doctrine to the disadvantage of another. To this plea no answer can be made, according to the doctrine against which we are contending. If one man's religion justifies polygamy, and another condemns it, the government, according to that doctrine, has no right to interfere. If it cannot enforce the Christian law concerning the Sabbath, it cannot enforce the Christian law concerning marriage. The advocates of "free-love," have, therefore, the anti-Sabbatarians on their side, so far as the principle is concerned.

A third consequence of the theory in question would be that



government can make no law to punish vice. We have before remarked that if deists may drive Christians to the wall, and insist that the Bible shall not be taken as a rule of life to control the action of the government, the atheists may turn their own weapons against the deists, and say that the government must not recognize the authority of natural religion, or of the moral law. It must not exact an oath, because an oath implies not only the existence, but the providential government of God, and a future state of retribution. Thus this great safeguard of life, reputation, and property, must be swept away. What right has a government divorced from religion to exact an oath, which is an act of worship, as a condition of holding office, or receiving testimony? This principle, however, would carry us much further; not only must oaths be abolished, but the moral law must be set aside. If it is unconstitutional to act in obedience to the Bible, it is unconstitutional to act in obedience to the moral law. If one man has a right to say, I am an infidel, and you cannot require me to regard the Sabbath; another may say, I am an atheist, and you have no right to make me obey the decalogue. You say that the interests of society require that the moral law should be obeyed; I say, replies the atheist, that what you call the moral law is a bugbear, set up by priests to answer their own ends. So far from promoting the interests of society, it is the prolific source of all the evils under which society has groaned for ages. Necessity is the plea of tyrants. The church in the darkest ages never ceased to say she burned heretics for the good of society. No man, or set of men, has the right to set up their "inner light," or sense of "truth and justice," as a rule of life for others. This is only carrying out to its legitimate conclusions the principle on which the Sunday laws are now so vigorously assailed. So far, therefore, from admitting that Christianity must be divorced from the government, we maintain that such divorce is impossible. If Christianity is a rule of life, it must go with us into our families, into our schools, our prisons and hospitals; into our workshops and banking houses, into railroad and canal companies, into our municipal councils, and state and national legislatures. We maintain that if this principle be denied, all Christians must be disfran-

chised; infidelity or atheism must be a condition of office and power; not only our Sunday laws must be given up, but all religion must be banished from our public institutions of every kind. No man can enter the navy or army but on the condition that he renounces all claim to the public worship of God. We must send forth our ships and troops without chaplains, and let our fellow-citizens live and die as heathen. In short, the demand that the government shall not be administered on Christian principles, is a demand that it shall be administered on atheistic principles. The absolute negation of religion is atheism.

The third proposition laid down above, is, that there is no violation of any man's constitutional rights, or of his civil and religious liberty involved, in making the Bible the rule of individual and governmental action in this country.

Our readers will not overlook the limitation attached to our second proposition. We said that Christians have the right, and are bound in conscience to act on the principles of Protestant Christianity in administering the affairs of government, so far as Christianity affords a rule of governmental action. Christianity enjoins on us certain truths to be believed, and certain laws to be obeyed, as men. It does not prescribe any particular form of civil government, nor any definite principles of political economy. It does not invest civil government with authority over the faith of its subjects, nor over the performance of their religious duties. It simply requires that Christians, in all their relations and associations, should have reference to the law of God as revealed in his word, as their rule of action. Carrying out this principle is perfectly consistent with the widest liberty consistent with the existence of human society.

If a number of Christians should associate to carry on any mercantile or manufacturing business, requiring the outlay of large capital, and the employment of many assistants and subordinates, they would, of course, conduct their business on Christian principles. That is, they would feel bound not only to be just, and faithful in all their transactions, but they would suspend all their operations on the Lord's day, afford their employees the opportunity to attend public worship, provide

for the education of minors and dependents, and act towards them in all respects as Christ would require at their hands. If a man not a Christian, whether Jew or deist, or an utter sceptic, should propose to join their company, they might receive him into partnership on terms of perfect equality; give him a full share in the profits of the business, and equal right in its management. If this new partner should become infected with the modern ideas of liberty, and say to his associates, I have as much right to control the business of the company as you have, the property is as much mine as yours, you have no right to bring your religion into a business concern. I insist upon it, that our operations shall not be suspended on the first day of the week, that no part of the property shall be used for religious purposes; let the parents of the children whom we employ, see to their religious training. I maintain that we must conduct our business without regard to the Bible, or anything which it enjoins. His associates would doubtless say to him, Then we must dissolve partnership. You knew we were Christians when you joined us. You knew that we could neither work ourselves on the Sabbath, nor allow our mills to run, or our workshops to be open. If you choose to work on that day, that is your own concern. But you have no right to require that our property shall be employed on the Lord's day; that our clerks, porters, or mechanics, should labour for your accommodation. You have no right to demand that a man must be willing to disregard the Sabbath as the condition of being taken into our employ. God moreover holds us responsible, not only for the physical comfort, but for the proper Christian education of the children dependent upon us. If you cannot remain with us, unless we conduct our business on infidel principles, you must transfer your capital and talents elsewhere. On the same ground that you require that we should disregard our Christianity, another man may come in and require you to disregard the moral law.

The same answer the Christians of this country give all classes of men, who demand that Christianity should be divorced from our governments, municipal, state, and national. This country was settled by Protestant Christians. They possessed the land. They established its institutions. They formed

themselves into towns, states, and nation. From the nature of the case, regarding the Bible as the word of God binding the conscience of every man with Divine authority, they were governed by it in all their organizations, whether for business or civil polity. Others have since come into the country by thousands; some Papists, some Jews, some infidels, some atheists. All were welcomed; all are admitted to equal rights and privileges. All are allowed to acquire property, to vote in all elections, made eligible to all offices, and invested with an equal influence in all public concerns. All are allowed to worship as they please, or not at all if they please. No man is molested for his religion or for his want of religion. No man is required to profess any particular form of faith, or to join any religious association. Is not this liberty enough? It seems not. Our "Free Germans" and other anti-Sabbatarians insist upon it, that we must turn infidels, give up our God, our Saviour, and our Bibles, so far as all public or governmental action is concerned. They require that the joint stock into which they have been received as partners, and in which they constitute even numerically a very small minority, should be conducted according to their principles and not according to ours. They demand, not merely that they may be allowed to disregard the Sabbath, but that the public business must go on on that day; that all public servants must be employed; all public property, highways, and railroads, should be used. They say we must not pray in our legislative bodies, or have chaplains in our hospitals, prisons, navy, or army; that we must not introduce the Bible into our public schools, or do anything in a public capacity which implies that we are Protestant Christians. Those men do not know what Protestant Christians are. It is their characteristic, as they humbly hope and believe, to respect the rights of other men, and stand up for their own. And, therefore, they say to all—infidels and atheists—to all who demand that the Bible shall not be the rule of action for us as individuals, and as a government, You ask what it is impossible can be granted. We must obey God. We must carry our religion into our families, our workshops, our banking-houses, our municipal and other governments; and if you cannot live with Christians, you must go elsewhere.