

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL CONVEN-
TION TO SECURE THE RELIGIOUS
AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITU-
TION OF THE UNITED STATES.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

NATIONAL CONVENTION

TO SECURE THE

RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT

OF THE

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

HELD IN

CINCINNATI, JAN. 31, AND FEB. 1, 1872.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE MOVEMENT.

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1872.

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* The name of Governor WASHBURN, of Massachusetts, was included by the Convention in the list of Vice President's, as appears in the Proceedings. In view of the statement which is published on pages 70-71 of this report, it is thought proper to omit it in this connection.

PROCEEDINGS
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[HELD IN CINCINNATI JAN. 31 & FEB. 1, 1872.]

With an account of the Origin and Progress of the Movement.

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AUG 22 1927

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE MOVEMENT

TO SECURE THE RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT OF THE CON-
STITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY T. P. STEVENSON,
Corresponding Secretary of the National Association.

THAT there is no acknowledgment of God or of the Christian religion in the Constitution of the United States, has been deplored by many devout and thoughtful men ever since that otherwise admirable political instrument was framed. In the early part of the present century the eminent Dr. John M. MASON, of New York, employed these words: "One would imagine that no occasion of making a pointed and public acknowledgment of the divine benig- nity could have presented itself so obviously as the framing an instrument of government which, in the nature of things, must be closely allied to our hap- piness or our ruin; and yet that very Constitution which the singular goodness of God enabled us to establish, does not so much as recognize his being."

In the admirable treatise on "The Oath," by the Rev. D. X. JUNKIN, D. D., published in 1845, the writer says: "The oath of the President of the United States could as well be taken by a pagan or a Mohammedan as by the Chief Magistrate of a Christian people: it excludes the name of the Supreme Being. Indeed it is negatively *atheistical*, for no God is appealed to at all. In framing many of our public formularies, greater care seems to have been taken to adapt them to the prejudices of the infidel few than to the consciences of the Christian millions. In these things the minority in our country, has hitherto managed to govern the majority. * * We look on the designed omission of [the name of God in the oath] as an attempt to exclude from civil affairs him who is the Governor among the nations." These views have been intelligently and publicly maintained by a portion of the American people at all times since the adoption of the Constitution. The contrast, in this respect, between the Constitution of the nation and the Constitutions of nearly all the States did not escape observation, and it was remembered that, before the national Constitution, no similar instrument of government had been framed by any portion of the American people without an explicit acknowledgment of Almighty God and the Christian religion.

No public or united effort however was made to secure an amendment which should suitably express the religious sentiment of the nation until the year 1863. The civil war in which the nation was then engaged was almost universally felt to be an expression of the Divine displeasure against the nation. The public conscience was prepared to welcome any measure which proposed in a suitable and becoming way to give honor to the God whom we had offended

and express our feelings of repentance and purpose of reformation. A Convention for prayer and Christian conference, with special reference to the state of the country, had been called to meet in Xenia, Ohio, on the third day of February, 1863. When it assembled, it was found to include representatives from eleven different denominations of Christians, and from seven of the States of the Union. An unusual degree of patriotic and religious fervor pervaded all its exercises. It was therefore an auspicious hour for the consideration of the subject when on the second day of its sessions, Mr. JOHN ALEXANDER, then of Xenia, now of Philadelphia, quietly laid on the table of the Convention a paper of which the following are the principal portions:

In this, the day of our national calamity, it becomes us to inquire what the Lord would have us to do. In considering the way by which God has led our nation and the poor returns we have made to him for his distinguishing blessings, we are constrained to confess that we have been an ungrateful and backsliding people; and if the deserved judgments now upon us for our sins do not produce repentance and reformation, national division and prostration, if not destruction, are inevitable.

In the earlier struggles of the people for national independence, the frequent acknowledgment of God and his authority, the notable declaration of reliance on the aid of Divine Providence and the sentiment that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with an inalienable right to liberty, which were uttered in the Declaration of Independence, gave evidence of a religious public sentiment in the nation. Might it not, then, have been reasonably expected that after our national independence had, by the help of God, been secured, and our national troubles had passed away, and when, after the enjoyment of years of peace and prosperity, the national Constitution was adopted, such a nation, with such a history of divine deliverance fresh in their memory, would, by common consent, stamp indelibly on their Constitution that sentiment of "Glory to God and good-will to men," which they had so often professed in adversity and which they had so conspicuously proclaimed to the world in the Declaration of Independence?

But alas for human frailty and ingratitude! Instead of going on to promote more and more the glory of God and the rights of man, a terrible, and, if God's mercy prevent not, a fatal backward step was taken in adopting that otherwise noble instrument without any direct recognition of God or his authority and with a toleration of human slavery, thus contradicting two of the noblest principles of the Declaration of Independence, viz.: Reliance upon Divine Providence, and acknowledgment of the equal rights of man.

From that day the nation has been demoralized by the promulgation of an instrument as the paramount law of the land, which is far beneath the Christian sentiment of the nation. These two defects in our otherwise inimitable Constitution, so dishonoring to God and unjust to man, we believe to be the plague-spots in the heart of our nation, corrupting its vital fountains and threatening its dissolution.

These facts have long been understood and deplored by patriots and Christians. But pecuniary interest and corrupting prosperity on the one hand and avarice and wicked ambition on the other, have conspired to allow these defects to remain, and step after step to be taken in their support, until we have well-nigh legislated God out of the government, while we hold man, made in his image, as a chattel. And now God has arisen in his anger and is vindicating his own glory and the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Therefore his just judgments are upon us as a nation, and we must repent and forsake our national sins, or be destroyed.

We regard the Emancipation Proclamation of the President and his recommendation to purge the Constitution of Slavery as among the most hopeful signs of the times. But we regard the neglect of God and his law, by omitting all acknowledgment of them in our Constitution, as the crowning, original sin of the nation, and slavery as one of

its natural outgrowths. Therefore the most important step remains yet to be taken,—to amend the Constitution so as to acknowledge God and the authority of his law; and the object of this paper is to suggest to this Convention the propriety of considering this subject and of preparing such an amendment to the Constitution as they may think proper to propose in accordance with its provisions.

In order to bring the subject more definitely before the Convention, we suggest the following as an outline of what seems to us to be needed in the preamble of that instrument making it read as follows:—(proposed amendment in brackets)—

WE, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES, [recognizing the being and attributes of Almighty God, the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures, the law of God as the paramount rule, and Jesus, the Messiah, the Saviour and Lord of all] in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare [and in order to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity,] do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

These words expressed the life-long convictions of the writer. For many years he had urged these views as he had opportunity, and had employed his influence to secure similar acknowledgments in the Constitutions of some or the States of the Union. The paper was endorsed simply, "FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONVENTION," and without either argument or personal influence in its favor, was presented for consideration on its own merits. Its reception was opposed by the Committee in charge of the order of business, who feared that it would draw the Convention away from the programme of exercises already agreed upon, but it was earnestly and zealously argued in reply that the paper was entirely germane to the subject then before the Convention, viz., "Religion in the Nation," one of a series: "Religion in the heart," "the family," "the church," &c. At length with great unanimity the paper was received and referred to a Committee representing all the denominations of Christians gathered in the Convention, and the Report of this Committee, approving the spirit and design of the paper, and endorsing the action which it proposed, was adopted. Objections which have since grown stale from repetition, were not wanting during the discussion, and some did not so much oppose the design of the paper, as its introduction into that Convention, but an earnest and decided majority argued, in the words of one who took part in the debate, that it was the real question of the hour, and of the weightiest importance; God was forcing it upon them, and there was danger in delay; they must begin the work, and begin it then. The friends of this measure in that Convention remember gratefully the timely and effective help rendered in this discussion by the Rev. H. H. GEORGE, now of Cincinnati, and the Rev. SAMUEL COLLINS, now of Pittsburgh.

From the foregoing facts it will be seen that this movement is the fruit of intelligent and mature convictions, confirmed by long reflection and careful study of the spirit and history of our institutions, and quickened into active effort in an hour of deep religious and patriotic feeling. The eleven denominations of christians represented in this Convention, are witnesses to the unsectarian character of the movement. It is interesting, too, to observe that though the language of the proposed amendment was afterwards modified, yet all the principles which it seeks to acknowledge, and the suggestion of the preamble to the Constitution as the appropriate place for its insertion, were contained in this paper, which originated the movement.

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Steps were next taken to secure the meeting in Pittsburgh on the fourth day of July ensuing, of a Council, composed of delegates appointed by the various ecclesiastical bodies whose spring meetings were soon to be held. To this call, there was no general response; the few delegates, however, who were appointed, with other friends of the cause, met at the designated time, and issued an address to the people of the country. From this paper, written by the venerable and lamented Dr. JOHN T. PRESSLY, we extract the following paragraphs:

While there are doubtless various causes which may have conspired to provoke the Lord to withdraw his protecting care from the nation, and leave us to experience our own helplessness and entire dependence upon him, there is one to which we desire at this time particularly to call the attention of all who feel an interest in the perpetuity and prosperity of our government; and that is, our neglect to give to God the glory which is due to His name in our National Constitution. This remark may possibly excite the surprise of some whose attention may never have been called particularly to the subject. Our National Constitution is the production of statesmen distinguished for their profound wisdom; men who had a clear perception of human rights, and the great principles of civil liberty; and viewed in its political aspect it is worthy of all commendation. But it is when viewed as the fundamental law of a Christian nation, that we are constrained to acknowledge a defect, over which the Christian patriot must mourn. The name of God is not found in our National Constitution, nor does it contain a distinct recognition of his authority or existence. And this omission to make an unequivocal acknowledgment of God is the more to be lamented when we consider the signal interposition of Divine Providence in behalf of the nation which had just been experienced. Though, as a people we were comparatively feeble; few in number and limited in resources, we had been brought successfully through a war with a powerful nation, and our independence had been secured. What a loud call was now addressed to us, when framing our National Constitution, to make a distinct acknowledgment of Him to whose providential disposition in our favor we were indebted for our national existence. And yet in this important instrument there is no unequivocal declaration which would prove to a people unacquainted with us that we, as a nation, believe in the existence of God, or acknowledge our dependence upon his providential care.

"The kingdom is the Lord's and he is the Governor among the nations." Men, in their national as well as their individual capacity, are subject to the divine government, and are under obligations to acknowledge the authority of the Most High, who ruleth in the kingdom of men. Rulers who are called in the providence of God to preside over the interests of their fellow-men, are expressly required to yield to Him the homage of their obedience. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little." "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee, saith God, shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." What, then, can a nation, favored with the light of divine revelation, which practically ignores God's authority, expect but that sooner or later divine vengeance shall overtake her, and that an end shall be put to her national existence, unless she is brought to repentance?

True, it may be said that under our present excellent Constitution we have enjoyed great prosperity, and therefore have no reason to suppose that God is displeased with us on account of anything defective in it. But do we not know that God is long-suffering and slow to wrath, and that he often bears long with sinful nations as well as individuals? But there is a limit to the exercise of divine forbearance. And what is the aspect of God's providence toward us as a nation at the present time? Does not every one see that God is displeased with us as a nation, and has been provoked to bring upon us a terrible calamity? "We, the people," without acknowledging God's authority

and the need of his help, framed a Constitution, "but we are this day a divided, dis-membered nation. "We, the people," prepared a Constitution, "in order to insure domestic tranquillity;" but to-day we are suffering under all the dreadful evils of a civil war. Have we not reason to fear that "we, the people," have presumed too much upon our own wisdom and strength, and without acknowledging our dependence upon God, have undertaken a work to which our unaided powers are not adequate? And have we not cause to apprehend that God is now chastising us for neglecting to acknowledge our dependence upon him, and for withholding from him the honor which is due his name? "Them that honor me," saith God, "I will honor; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." This declaration involves a great principle in God's moral government, which will hold good in application to nations as well as individuals.

As the disciples of Him whose kingdom is not of this world, we do not consider that it is within our province to interfere with anything in our Constitution which is strictly of a political character. But what we desire is to see that God who has done so much for us as a nation, and on the enjoyment of whose favor our national existence depends, is duly honored by a distinct acknowledgment of his authority in the fundamental law of the land. And we cordially invite our fellow-Christians and Statesmen to co-operate with us in our efforts to secure, in a constitutional way, this desirable object.

JOHN T. PRESSLY, CHAIRMAN.

A little reflection had clearly shown that the church courts were not the proper machinery for carrying forward such a movement, and, at this meeting, steps were taken to call a National Convention, of all citizens favorable to the measure. This Convention assembled in Allegheny on the 27th day of January, 1864. It was an earnest, prayerful, and most encouraging meeting. Its action was as follows:

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, 1. That we deem it a matter of paramount interest to the life, and prosperity, and permanency of our nation, that its Constitution be so amended as fully to express the Christian national character.

2. That we are encouraged by the success attending the labors of the friends of this movement to persevere, in the hope that, with the blessing of God, this effort will speedily result in the consummation of this great object.

3. That in the late proclamations of His Excellency, the President of the United States, recommending the observance of days of national fasting, humiliation and prayer, (as suggested by the Senate of the United States,) for the purpose of confessing our national sins, which have provoked the Divine displeasure, and of imploring forgiveness through Jesus Christ—and also days of national thanksgiving for the purpose of making grateful acknowledgment of God's mercies—we have pleasing evidence that God is graciously inclining the hearts of those who are in authority over us to recognize his hand in the affairs of the nation, and to cherish a sense of our dependence on him.

4. That the following Memorial and petition to Congress be circulated throughout the United States for signatures:

MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives, in Congress assembled:

We, citizens of the United States, respectfully ask your honorable bodies to adopt measures for amending the Constitution of the United States, so as to read, in substance, as follows:

"We, the people of the United States, [humbly acknowledging Almighty God as the source of all authority and power in civil government, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Ruler among the nations, his revealed will as the supreme law of the land, in order to constitute a Christian government,] and in order to form a more perfect union, establish

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justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and [secure the inalienable rights and the blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to ourselves, our posterity, and all the people,*] do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

"And further: that such changes with respect to the oath of office, slavery, 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."

Resolved, That a special committee be appointed to carry the Memorial to Washington, lay it before the President, and endeavor to get a special message to Congress on the subject, and to lay said Memorial before Congress.

The National Association to secure the Religious Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, was organized at this Convention, with JOHN ALEXANDER, Esq., as President; Zadok Street, Salem, Ohio, of the Society of Friends) Vice-President; a full list of other officers, and an Executive Committee.

A large delegation was appointed to visit Washington, and urge the proposed Amendment on the attention of President LINCOLN. This Committee, embracing Professor J. H. McILVAINE, D. D., Princeton, N. J.; Professor J. T. PRESSLY, D. D., Penna.; Rev. JOHN DOUGLASS, D. D., Penna.; Rev. D. C. PAGE, D. D., Pa.; Rev. H. H. GEORGE, Ohio; Dr. STERRITT, Pa.; JOHN ALEXANDER, Esq., Ohio; Rev. J. S. T. MILLIGAN, Mich.; Rev. R. A. BROWNE, Pa.; and Rev. A. M. MILLIGAN, Pa., met in Willard's Hotel, Washington, on Tuesday evening, February 9. The Rev. Dr. GURLEY, Rev. Dr. CHANNING, Chaplain of the U. S. Senate, J. J. MARKS, D. D., Rev. B. F. MORRIS, Rev. R. D. JOHNSON, and Rev. N. R. CROW, of the District of Columbia met with the delegation, heard the address prepared by Dr. McILVAINE, the chairman of the committee, and gave it their hearty sanction; most of them signed the address and waited on the President with the delegation. Revs. S. O. WYLIE and J. R. W. SLOANE, with Wm. BROWN, Esq., delegates from the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church to the President, also, by invitation signed the address and acted with the delegation. Through the aid of Senator Sherman, of Ohio, an arrangement was made with the President for an interview on Wednesday, 3½ P. M., when the delegation was introduced to the President by Dr. GURLEY, and the chairman made the following address:

ADDRESS TO THE PRESIDENT:

MR. PRESIDENT:—The object for which we have taken the liberty of trespassing a moment upon your precious time, can be explained in very few words. We are the representatives of a mass convention of christian people, without distinction of sect or denomination, which was held in Allegheny city, on the 27th and 28th of January last; and we are instructed to lay before your Excellency the action of that convention.

After reading the resolutions of the convention, and the Memorial to Congress, embodying the proposed Amendment, the address continued as follows:

We are encouraged, Mr. President, to hope that you will give the great object for which we pray, your cordial and powerful support, because you have already shown by many significant acts of your administration that the principle on which it rests is dear to

* This clause was dropped after the amendment prohibiting slavery was adopted.

your heart. This principle is our national responsibility to God, which you have expressly and repeatedly recognized. We remember that when, under one of your predecessors, an anti-christian power had refused to treat with the United States on the ground that we were a christian nation, the objection was removed by the authoritative statement that we, as a nation, had no religion; also that several of your predecessors refused, when earnestly importuned, to appoint days of national fasting and thanksgiving for the same reason, whilst you, sir, within the space of a single year, have thrice, by solemn proclamation, called us either to national fasting, humiliation and prayer, for our many and grievous sins, especially our sin of forgetting God, or to national thanksgiving for His unspeakable mercies.

You, moreover, as no other of our Chief Magistrates ever did, have solemnly reminded us of the redeeming grace of our blessed Saviour, and of the authority of the Holy Scriptures over us as a people. By such acts as these you have awakened a hope in the Christian people of this land that you represent them in feeling the want of a distinct and plain recognition of the divine authority in the Constitution of the United States. For we hold it most certain truth, that nations, as such, and not individuals alone, are the subjects of God's moral government, are responsible to Him, and by Him are graciously rewarded for their obedience, or justly punished for their disobedience of His divine laws.

We believe also that our civil and religious liberties, our free institutions, and all our national prosperity, power and glory, are mercies and blessings derived from God to us through the channel of the christian religion. Notwithstanding, either from inadvertency, or following some Godless theory of civil government, we have omitted even the mention of His blessed name in the most significant and highest act of the nation.

We believe that in thus leaving God out of our political system, we have grievously sinned against Him, have brought upon ourselves and children His just displeasure, opened the flood-gates of that political corruption which is the mediate, and given occasion to that prodigious development of the spirit of oppression and injury to the negro race, which is the immediate source of our present calamities and sorrows. We believe, therefore, that it is our first duty to repent of this and all our national sins, and to return to our obligations as a christian people, by acknowledging the true God as our God in our fundamental and organic law, in order that we may consistently implore His merciful interposition in our behalf, to give victory to our national arms, and success to the national cause; to establish the unity of the nation and the authority of the Government, now assaulted and shattered by a horrible rebellion. We ask for no union of Church and State—that is a thing which we utterly repudiate; we ask for nothing inconsistent with the largest religious liberty, or the rights of conscience in any man. We represent no sectarian or denominational object, but one in which all who bear the christian name, and all who have any regard for the christian religion, can cordially agree; and one to secure which we are persuaded that any lawful and wise movement would call forth an overwhelming public sentiment in its support.

We, therefore, do earnestly hope that you, our beloved Chief Magistrate, will not be indifferent to our prayer. For, by what you have already done in this cause, and by your integrity, firmness, and excellent wisdom, (divinely guided as we believe it has been, and pray that it may ever continue to be,) under the terrible responsibilities laid upon you in this the darkest hour of our country's peril and rebuke, you have won the confidence and affection of the christian people of this land, beyond all your predecessors, save only the Father of his Country. Knowing, then, the respect and deference with which your sage counsels are listened to by the whole people, and deeming the present time and occasion most opportune, we are persuaded that if you will give this movement your favor and support, it will be successful, and thus you will place yourself in the hearts of the present, and of all future generations, as one of the greatest benefactors of your country. For, having inaugurated those measures which aim to right, so far as that is possible, our great national wrong committed against man, you will have wielded that vast influence with which you have been clothed by Divine Providence and by the voice

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of the people, to right, so far as that can be done, that great wrong which we as a nation have committed against God, in leaving Him out of our political system.

The President replied as follows:

GENTLEMEN: The general aspect of your movement I cordially approve. In regard to particulars I must ask time to deliberate, as the work of amending the Constitution should not be done hastily. I will carefully examine your paper in order more fully to comprehend its contents than is possible from merely hearing it read, and will take such action upon it as my responsibility to our Maker and our country demands.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, (O. S.) in session at Newark, in May, 1864, in answer to an overture on the subject from the Synod of the Pacific, adopted the following preamble and resolutions, offered by Dr. MUSGRAVE:

Whereas, Almighty God, the God of nations, is the head and source of all authority and power in civil government and nations as such are the subjects of his moral laws, and his revealed will is the supreme law of national life;

Whereas, The Christian and loyal people of our country are everywhere beseeching God to interpose for our deliverance as a nation from the assaults of a most groundless and wicked rebellion, and to establish and maintain the national unity and authority; and—

Whereas, Resolutions have already passed the Senate of the United States, and are pending in the House of Representatives, recommending the amendment of the National Constitution in several other particulars: Therefore,

Resolved, That it is our solemn national duty so to amend our fundamental and organic law, that the preamble of the National Constitution shall read in substance as follows: "We, the people of the United States," &c., (in the words of the proposed amendment.)

Resolved, That this General Assembly recommend to all the people in the congregations under its care to memorialize Congress upon this subject.

As the Allegheny Convention was an intermediate meeting to effect a permanent organization it was determined to call the first annual meeting of the Association in Philadelphia in July following. It was held accordingly in the Eighth St. Methodist Episcopal Church, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 7th and 8th days of that month. Though the meeting was not large the character and position of those present, and the interest manifested in the cause were exceedingly encouraging. Addresses were made by the Rev. D. C. EDDY, D. D., of the Tabernacle Baptist Church, and the Rev. J. H. A. BOMBERGER, D. D., of the German Reformed Church. Dr. EDDY was elected President of the Association for the ensuing year. The Revs. T. P. STEVENSON and W. W. SPEAR, D. D. and Wm. GETTY, Esq., were appointed a Committee on Correspondence, and were directed to prepare an address to the public in behalf of the cause. From this address, the first issued after the organization of the Association, we extract the following passages:

Many Christians are convinced that we have failed to give our civil institutions that definite and practical religious character which is worthy of a Christian people and essential to national permanence and prosperity. We are not aware, that in the formation of our government, by any act or any declaration we recognized the divine origin of the institution then set up. While we have distinctly asserted, and jealously maintained, the right of the people to set up forms of government for themselves, we have not acknowledged—it would seem we have not felt—that the constitution of government

is an act of obedience to God, and that all legitimate civil authority is ultimately derived from him. Neither have we recognized the moral responsibility of the nation in its organic character, nor its obligation to accept and obey the will of God revealed in his word. And this defect is made painfully conspicuous by the omission of the name of God even from the form of oath prescribed in the Constitution, which simply reads, "I do solemnly swear or affirm."

THESE AMENDMENTS RIGHT AND NECESSARY.

We respectfully submit to your consideration, whether these amendments are not simply an appropriate recognition of the relations which all just human authority sustains to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. Is not anything less than this wholly inconsistent with these relations? We propose the recognition of God, not only because he is the supreme ruler of all men and all organizations, but because it is he who has given the institution of civil government to man, and the just authority of the magistrate is derived from him. "There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God." It is surely fitting that a Constitution framed by a Christian people should recognize a higher source of civil authority than the mere will or consent of the citizen. And in presenting civil government thus, as a divine institution, we enforce, by the highest possible sanctions, its claims upon the respect and obedience of the citizen. The true strength of a government lies in the conscientious regard felt for it as the ordinance of God. Thus only is the magistrate clothed with his true authority, and the majesty of the law suitably preserved. "The sanctions of religion," says De Witt Clinton, "compose the foundations of good government."

The moral character of a government has a powerful reflex influence on the moral character of the people. Especially is this felt in a popular government, where the people are brought into constant contact with it, study its history, admire its provisions, and drink deeply of its spirit. An irreligious government begets an irreligious people. It must be deplored that in a Constitution so universally and so justly admired and loved and studied by the American people, there is nothing to turn the mind of the nation to God, to inculcate reverence for the authority of his Son or respect for his word.

JUSTIFIED BY OUR OWN HISTORY.

The principles which we here present are not new in American politics. We are able to plead many precedents, which must have the weight of authority with the American people. Our country was originally settled by men of high religious character, whose only motive in seeking a home in the wilderness was the freedom and safety of religion and the glory of God. They left the impress of their character on the civil institutions which they set up. In the cabin of the May flower, and before landing on Plymouth rock, the Pilgrims agreed upon a constitution of civil government, in which they declared the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith "to be among the ends of their organization. This Constitution, beginning: "In the name of God, Amen," invokes, says Webster, "a religious sanction and the authority of God on their civil obligations."

The Constitution of the first government established in the limits of the present State of Connecticut, declares that "where a people are gathered together, the word of God requires that there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God."

The first form of government that existed in Pennsylvania asserted "the origination and descent of all human power from God," and the first legislative act of the Colony, passed at Chester in 1662, recognized the Christian religion, while it established liberty of conscience, and declared that the glory of God and the good of mankind are the reason and end of government, which is, therefore, a venerable ordinance of God. And the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in 1824, on a trial for blasphemy, referring to this early statute, says: "Christianity—general Christianity—is and always has been a part of the

xii THE RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION.

common law of Pennsylvania: not Christianity founded on particular tenets, nor an established Church with tithes and spiritual courts, but Christianity with liberty of conscience to all men."

The State Constitutions of the era of the Revolution present the same characteristics. In 1780, the Constitution of Massachusetts declared "that the happiness of a people, and the good order and preservation of civil government, essentially depend on piety, religion and morality." And in the Convention of that State, met in 1820 to revise the Constitution, Mr. Webster said: "I am clearly of opinion that we should not strike out all recognition of the Christian religion. I am desirous that in so solemn a transaction as the establishment of a Constitution we should express our attachment to Christianity—not indeed to any of its peculiar forms, but to its general principles." But it is needless to multiply examples; for of the thirteen States existing originally, not one had failed in its Constitution to make recognition, more or less explicit, of the authority of God and the claims of his law. And it is a matter of deep regret, that when we were enabled, after the triumphant assertion of our independence, to set up a stately governmental structure, we left out that which constituted the chief strength and glory of those earlier commonwealths.

Whatever explanation we put upon this unfortunate omission, it cannot be considered presumptuous, after the experience of nearly three-quarters of a century, to propose amendments to any constitution, however admirable and beneficent. It has already been amended in some particulars. The present rebellion has led to a general conviction, that additional amendments are necessary to secure universal liberty, and prevent even the possible recurrence of the evils which we now suffer. We propose, that the Constitution be made unmistakably *christian*, as well as *free*.

IN ACCORD WITH OUR NATIONAL ACTS.

There are well established features in our government, which are consistent only with such principles as we seek to introduce into the National Constitution. Through our whole history Chaplains have been appointed by Congress, prayer is offered daily during its sessions, and the nation is called at intervals, by both Congress and the Executive, to thanksgiving, or fasting and prayer. A recent resolution of the Senate on such an occasion, recognized the mediation of Jesus Christ, and the President called us to give thanks "for preserving and redeeming grace." We have gone to the Christian religion for the only bond we have for the integrity of the ruler, or the fidelity of the citizen—the divine ordinance of the oath. Such acts can have no meaning, unless as a nation we acknowledge God. If such implied recognition of God be proper and becoming, no objection can be urged against the express recognition which we propose. Its necessity will be felt when we remember, that one chief magistrate once refused to appoint a day of fasting and prayer in an hour of public calamity, because the nation in its constitution recognized no God, and another, in contracting a treaty with a Mohammedan power, hesitated not to declare that "The Government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the christian religion. It has in itself no character of enmity against the laws and religion of Mussulmans."* Surely our christian character should be so well defined, that the chief magistrate of the nation could not doubt or ignore it, so clear that all the world should know us as a nation whose God is Jehovah.

In this movement, prompted by pure christian patriotism, participated in by various christian denominations, all of whom are opposed to any sectarian establishment of religion, we invite the co-operation of every lover of his country, and every follower of Jesus Christ. We invite all ministers of the gospel to proclaim to the nation the claims of Him whose ambassadors they are. We invite the co-operation of all ecclesiastical bodies in this effort to return to our fathers' God, to honor our common Redeemer, and to secure the best interests of our land.

* Treaty with Tripoli. Art. xi. Laws of the United States, vol. 4.

The next Convention was held in the West Arch Street Presbyterian Church, on the 29th of November, 1864. Ex-Governor POLLOCK presided, and addresses of unusual interest and power were made by JUDGE STRONG, Dr. EDWARDS, Dr. McILVAINE, Dr. GEORGE JUNKIN, Dr. JOEL SWARTZ, (Lutheran,) of Baltimore and the Rev. Dr. GODDARD, (Episcopal,) of Philadelphia. Delegates were present from different parts of the country, and altogether it was a very encouraging meeting. The following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That a national recognition of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Scriptures, as proposed in the memorial of this Association to Congress, is clearly a scriptural duty, which it is national peril to disregard.

Resolved, That, in consideration of the general diffusion of religious intelligence, principles and institutions throughout our country—in view of the many express recognitions of Christianity by the Constitutions and the legislative enactments of the several States—and in view also, of the religious history of the founders of this Government, it is a striking and solemn fact that our present National Constitution is so devoid of any distinctive Christian feature, that one of our Chief Magistrates once refused to appoint a day of fasting and prayer in an hour of public calamity, because the nation, in its Constitution, recognized no God; and another, in contracting a treaty with a Mohammedan power, hesitated not to declare that “The Government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion. It has in itself no character of enmity against the laws and religion of Mussulmans.”

Resolved, That the measures proposed by this Association are not sectional, nor sectarian, nor partisan, but the general voice of Christian patriotism, asking that which is right and wholesome, which is in keeping with our antecedents, and which will not operate oppressively upon the conscience of any citizen.

Resolved, That the state of the times, recent and present, and the state of public sentiment, warrants and encourages the attempt to secure the amendment to the Constitution which is proposed by this Association.

During the year 1864, petitions were actively circulated and very numerous signed, and being duly forwarded to Congress, were referred to the Judiciary Committees of either House. Before the adjournment, Mr. Trumbull, of the Senate, asked to be discharged from the further consideration of the petition for the Recognition of God in the Constitution of the United States. In the language of the report: “The Committee deem it unnecessary to make the asked for amendment, as the Supreme Being is already recognized in the Constitution, in the requirement of oaths, and the prohibition of interference with the full exercise of religious opinions.”

Amendments to the Constitution of Indiana being under discussion in the Legislature of that State, through the exertions of the Rev. John Crozier a convention was assembled in Indianapolis, on the 15th of February, 1865, to secure a similar acknowledgment in that instrument. A petition prepared by this Convention, and bearing four hundred and fifty-two signatures, was laid before the Legislature and referred to a Committee, which afterward reported favorably, recommending the adoption of the amendment, 1. Because it contained nothing sectarian; 2. “It is in harmony with our republican form of government;” 3. It places our government in harmony with the “government of God, from whom all power is

derived;" 4. "By adopting this amendment, we will propitiate the favor of Him who chastises nations for national sins." There was a minority report adverse to the petition, and the Legislature adjourned without acting.

The first Auxiliary Society was formed in the southern part of the State of Illinois, and its influence, by means of public meetings, delegations to representative bodies, the active circulation of tracts and petitions, and by the earnest labors of the Rev. James Wallace, has been felt throughout all north-western states.

The next meeting of the National Association was in the City of New York, May 16th and 17th, 1866. Addresses were made by Dr. CRAVEN, of Newark and Dr. McILVAINE, of Princeton, and Dr. McILVAINE was appointed to lay resolutions before the approaching Constitutional Convention of the State of New York, and urge a similar expression in the Constitution of that State.

The admirable "Appeal to the voting citizens of the United States," prepared by DR. JONATHAN EDWARDS, was issued during this year, and widely distributed. As it is still actively circulated by the friends of the cause, we make no extracts from it.

The next convention assembled in Philadelphia, March 5th, 1867. Addresses were made by Prof. McIlvaine, of Princeton, the Rev. J. R. W. Sloane, of New York, and the Rev. R. Audley Browne, D. D., then a member of the Pennsylvania Senate. The Hon. Wm. Strong, now of the Supreme Court of the United States, presided at this meeting, and was elected President of the National Association.

On the ninth of April ensuing, a convention of the friends of the cause in western Pennsylvania assembled in Pittsburg, and organized a local association with R. AUDLEY BROWNE, D. D., as President. The spirit and convictions of this meeting may be judged from its first resolution, viz.:

That it is the mind of this Convention that these amendments ought to be made: First, because they state facts which are as incontrovertible as they are solemn; second, because they truly express what, if properly understood, is the firm conviction of the overwhelming majority of this people; third, because God commands it, and it is perilous to disregard a Divine command.

Meanwhile many articles in magazines and papers, the influence of the pulpit, addresses and resolutions in deliberative bodies and public meetings, were employed to further the cause. In particular, the pens of DRs. PRESSLY, SPROULL, and WILLSON, of Allegheny did constant and invaluable service; DR. BENJAMIN KURTZ, of Baltimore wrote earnestly in the *Lutheran Observer*, and DR. GEORGE DUFFIELD, of Detroit, from a special committee to whom an overture on the subject was referred by the Presbyterian Synod of Michigan, reported and advocated a paper which was adopted, resolving that "devoutly recognizing in our present calamities and distresses, as we do, His avenging hand, who is 'Governor among the nations,' we bow at His Sovereign feet in humble submission to His righteous will; and while we cordially sustain our civil authorities, in the

maintenance and prosecution of a war of defence, rendered necessary for the preservation of our Union and Government, and do honor to them for having so frequently, of late, convoked the people for purposes of humiliation, fasting, prayer and giving thanks to God, we do earnestly desire and urge that the name of Jesus, 'to whom God has sworn that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess,' be distinctly recognized and honored by our rulers, and especially that the Omnipotent and righteous providence of the Lord Jesus Christ be looked to and confided in for the solution of the great questions of philosophy and morality, involved in the public affairs of our beloved country."

In September, 1867, was issued the first number of the **CHRISTIAN STATESMAN**, a semi-monthly journal. established by the writer of this sketch and the Rev. D. McALLISTER, for the advocacy of the cause. The progress of the movement from that date has been faithfully chronicled in its pages, which have presented full reports of the National Convention at Pittsburgh in 1869, at Philadelphia in 1870, that lately held at Cincinnati, together with the Ohio State Convention at Columbus in February, 1869, and the Northwest Convention at Monmouth, Illinois, in April, 1871. The Pittsburgh Convention gave a marked impulse to the cause. It assembled upon the following call, which was signed by a large number of the most distinguished citizens:

CALL FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The Constitution of the United States makes no acknowledgment of Almighty God, the Author of national existence; nor of Jesus Christ, who is the Ruler of Nations: nor of the Bible, which is the Fountain of law and good morals, as well as of religion. This has, from the beginning, been a matter of deep regret. It may have been an oversight, but it was, and it is, both an error and an evil. It does not reflect the views of the great majority of the people upon these matters. It dishonors God. It is inconsistent with the character of nearly all our State Constitutions, and with all the precedents of our early history. It has introduced, or furthered, views and measures which are now struggling for a baneful ascendancy in State and national politics: such as, That civil government is only a social compact; That it exists only for secular and material, not for moral ends; That Sabbath Laws are unconstitutional, and that the Bible must be excluded from our Public Schools.

The National Association which has been formed for the purpose of securing such an amendment to the National Constitution as will remedy this great defect, indicate that this is a Christian nation, and place all Christian Laws, Institutions and Usages in our government on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the nation, invites, &c.

The Convention was large, earnest, and harmonious, embracing more than four hundred members, nearly two hundred of whom, were delegates appointed by local associations, or in public meetings, to represent their fellow-citizens in the Convention. FELIX R. BRUNOT, ESQ., now of the Board of Indian Commissioners, presided at this meeting. The resolutions were as follows:

Resolved, That civil government is grounded, like the family, in the principles of the nature of man as a social creature; that it has its powers and functions thus determined by the Creator, and is, therefore, like the family, an ordinance of God.

Resolved, That nations, as sovereignties, wielding moral as well as physical power, and having moral as well as material objects, are morally accountable to God.

XVI THE RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION.

Resolved, That the moral laws under which nations are held accountable, include not only the law written on the heart of man, but also the fuller revelation of the Divine character and will, given in the Bible.

Resolved, That it is the right of nations as such, no less than of the individuals composing them, to worship God according to the religion of Jesus Christ.

Resolved, That in order to maintain and give permanency to the Christian features which have marked this nation from its origin, it is necessary to give them authoritative sanction in our organic law.

Resolved, That the proposed amendment of our National Constitution, so far from infringing any individual's rights of conscience, or tending in the least degree to a union of Church and State, will afford the fullest security against a corrupt and corrupting church establishment, and form the strongest safeguard of both the civil and religious liberties of all citizens.

Resolved, That the present movement is not sectarian, nor even ecclesiastical, but that it is the assertion of the right, and acknowledgment of the duty of a people who believe in the Christian religion to govern themselves in a Christian manner.

I have quoted thus fully from the resolutions and published documents of the National Association, in order to show at one view the breadth, thoroughness and consistency of the principles which from the first, have actuated the promoters of this Amendment. With the same view the Call for the Philadelphia Convention, January 18th and 19th, 1871, is here appended:

There is no political document so all-important to the American Statesman and the American Citizen as the Constitution of the United States. All laws, all customs, all forms of administration are shaped by it. Every thing in any state, corporation or business that affects a citizen in the remotest degree as to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is tested by it, and stands and works only as it agrees with it. Year by year its molding power is felt. The President, the Congress and the Courts, are coming more and more into evident agreement with what is there written. Our Statesmen and our whole people are learning their Americanism, as to its letter and spirit, from that great Instrument. This is as it should be. This was intended from the beginning.

But at the same time, it is a serious matter if that Constitution should be found wanting in any principle or any matter of fact. The deficiency will in due time work mischief. Error in the Constitution will work as powerfully as truth, and what is left of it, may one day be formally declared un-American. And one such serious matter there is; one unnecessary and most unfortunate omission. God and Christianity are not once alluded to: although the Constitution is itself the product of a Christian civilization, and although it purports to represent the mind of a Christian people, who, in all their State Constitutions, had made explicit reference to both God and Religion. Hence it is that all the laws of this country in favor of a Christian morality, are enacted and enforced outside the Constitution. They rest only upon the basis of what is called Common Law. We have, strictly, no Oath, no law against Blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, or Polygamy, that has any better foundation. And, as matters seem to be going, it will soon be discovered and decreed that Common Law is only another name for Custom, which has no binding force. And then where are we? In atheism, corruption and anarchy.

This sketch, with the following proceedings of the National Convention, at Cincinnati, shows the result of nine years of labor in this cause. Its friends commit its future, in prayer and faith, and with hope of its early and complete triumph, to the providence of the RULER OF NATIONS.

Philadelphia, March 15th, 1872.

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
NATIONAL CONVENTION,
TO SECURE THE RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT OF THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

HELD IN CINCINNATI, JANUARY 31 AND FEBRUARY 1, 1872.

The Eighth General Convention of the friends of this measure assembled in Thom's Hall, Cincinnati, on Wednesday, January 31, at 2 o'clock, P. M. The hall was filled with a large and attentive body of delegates and spectators.

In the absence of Justice Strong, of Washington, President of the National Association, the Convention was called to order by one of the Vice-Presidents, Prof. O. N. Stoddard, LL. D., of Wooster University. Prayer was offered by the Rev. B. P. Aydelott, D. D., of Cincinnati.

The Chairman then read the call for the Convention as follows :

CALL FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION.

GOVERNMENT is instituted for man as an intellectual, social, and moral and religious being. It corresponds to his whole nature. It is intended to protect and advance the higher as well as the lower interests of humanity. It acts for its legitimate purposes when it watches over domestic life, and asserts and enforces the sanctity of the marriage bond; when it watches over intellect and education, and furnishes means for developing all the faculties of the mind; when it frowns on profaneness, lewdness, the desecration of the Sabbath, and other crimes which injure society chiefly by weakening moral and religious sentiment, and degrading the character of a people.

Acting for such purposes, government should be established on moral principles. Moral principles of conduct are determined by moral relations. The relations of a nation to God and his moral laws are clear and definite:

1. A nation is the creature of God.
2. It is clothed with authority derived from God.
3. It owes allegiance to Jesus Christ, the appointed Ruler of nations.
4. It is subject to the authority of the Bible, the special revelation of moral law.

In constituting and administering its government, then, a nation is under obligations to acknowledge God as the author of its existence and the source of its authority, Jesus Christ as its ruler, and the Bible as the fountain of its laws and the supreme rule of its conduct.

Up to the time of the adoption of the National Constitution, acknowledgments of this kind were made by all the States. They are yet made by many of the States. And in the actual administration of the national government the principle is admitted. But the fundamental law of the nation, the Constitution of the United States, on which our government rests and according to which it is to be administered, fails to make, fully and explicitly, any such acknowledgment. This failure has fostered among us mischievous ideas like the following: The nation, as such, has no relations to God; its authority has no higher source than the will of the people; government is instituted only for the lower wants of man; the State goes beyond its sphere when it educates religiously, or legislates against profanity or Sabbath desecration.

The National Association, which has been formed for the purpose of securing such an amendment to the Constitution as will remedy this great defect, and indicate that this is a Christian nation, and place all Christian laws, institutions, and usages in our government on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the nation, invites all American citizens who favor such an amendment, without distinction of party or creed, to meet in Thoms' Hall, Cincinnati, on Wednesday, January 31, 1872, at 2 o'clock, P. M. All such citizens, to whose notice this call may be brought, are requested to hold meetings and appoint delegates to the Convention.

WILLIAM STRONG, U. S. Supreme Court,

President of the National Association.

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

His Excellency, JOHN W. GEARY, *Governor of Pennsylvania,*
 His Excellency, JOHN W. STEWART, *Governor of Vermont,*
 His Excellency, JAMES M. HARVEY, *Governor of Kansas,*
 The Hon. JAMES POLLOCK, *Ex-Governor of Pennsylvania,*
 The Hon. MARSHALL JEWELL, ** Ex-Governor of Connecticut,*
 The Hon. WM. MURRAY, *Supreme Court of New York,*
 FELIX R. BRUNOT, Esq., *Board of Indian Commissioners, Pittsburgh, Pa.,*
 GEORGE H. STUART, Esq., *Philadelphia, Pa.,*
 JOHN ALEXANDER, Esq., *Philadelphia, Pa.,*
 CHARLES G. NAZRO, Esq., *Boston, Mass.,*
 THOS. W. BICKNELL, Esq., *Commissioner of Public Schools, Rhode Island,*
 JAMES W. TAYLOR, Esq., *Newburgh, N. Y.,*
 Prof. TAYLER LEWIS, LL. D., *Union College, New York,*
 Prof. JULIUS H. SEELYE, D. D., *Amherst College, Mass.,*
 The Right Rev. CHARLES P. MCILVAINE, D. D. LL. D., D. C. L., *Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio,*
 The Rev. A. A. MINER, D. D., *President of Tuft's College, Mass.,*
 The Rev. JONATHAN EDWARDS, D. D., *Peoria, Ill.,*
 The Rev. J. H. MCILVAINE, D. D., *Newark, N. J.,*
 Prof. O. N. STODDARD, LL. D., *Wooster University, Ohio,*
 The Rev. M. SIMPSON, D. D., *Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church,*
 The Rev. J. BLANCHARD, D. D., *President of Wheaton College, Ill.,*
 JOHN S. HART, LL. D., *Principal of State Normal School, N. J.,*
 The Right Rev. JOHN B. KERFOOT, D. D., *Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh,*
 The Right Rev. F. D. HUNTINGTON, D. D., *Bishop of the Diocese of Central New York,*
 The Rev. T. L. CUYLER, D. D., *Brooklyn,*
 The Rev. LEVI SCOTT, D. D., *Bishop of the M. E. Church, Delaware,*

General Secretary:

The Rev. D. McALLISTER, 410 W. 43d St. New York.

Corresponding Secretary:

The Rev. T. P. STEVENSON, 1405 N. 18th St. Philadelphia.

Recording Secretary:

The Rev. W. W. BARR, Philadelphia.

Treasurer:

SAMUEL AGNEW, Esq., 1126 Arch St. Philadelphia.

* See page 70.

THE FOLLOWING GENTLEMEN CONCUR IN THE FOREGOING CALL:

- The Hon. JOHN POOL, *United States Senate*,
 The Hon. W. B. WASHBURN, *U. S. House of Representatives*,
 His Excellency, SETH PADELFORD, *Governor of Rhode Island*,
 The Hon. J. W. McCLURG, *Ex-Governor of Missouri*,
 The Hon. W. H. CUMBACK, *Lieut. Gov. of Indiana*,
 The Hon. DANIEL MACAULEY, *Mayor of Indianapolis, Ind.*,
 The Hon. M. B. HAGANS, *Judge of the Superior Court of Cincinnati*,
 The Hon. D. K. ESTE, *Ex-Judge of the Superior Court of Cincinnati*,
 The Hon. W. VAN HAMM, *Formerly Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, Cincinnati*,
 EDWARD S. TOBEY, Esq., *Boston*,
 RUSSELL STURGIS, JR., Esq., *Boston*,
 The Right Rev. MANTON EASTBURN, D.D., *Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts*,
 The Right Rev. G. T. BEDELL, D. D., *Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio*,
 The Right Rev. GEO. D. CUMMINS, D.D., *Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Ky.*,
 The Rev. C. S. FINNEY, D. D., *Formerly President of Oberlin College, Oberlin, O.*,
 The Rev. F. MERRICK, D. D., LL. D., *President of the Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, O.*,
 The Rev. JOSEPH CUMMINGS, D. D., LL. D., *President of the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Ct.*,
 The Rev. GEO. P. HAYS, D. D., *President of Washington and Jefferson College, Washington, Pa.*,
 The Rev. DAVID A. WALLACE, D. D., *President of Monmouth College, Monmouth, Ill.*,
 The Rev. WM. R. NICHOLSON, D. D., *Boston*,
 The Rev. E. B. WEBB, D. D., *Boston*,
 The Rev. SAMUEL WILSON, D.D., *Professor in the U. P. Theo. Seminary, Xenia, O.*,
 The Rev. E. D. MORRIS, D.D., *Professor in Lane Theo. Seminary, Cincinnati, O.*,
 The Rev. ELISHA BALLANTINE, D.D., *Prof. in Indiana University. Bloomington, Ind.*,
 The Rev. A. D. MAYO, D. D., *Pastor of the Church of the Redeemer, (Unitarian), Cincinnati, O.*,
 The Rev. ROBT. PATTERSON, D. D., *Chicago*,
 R. W. STEVENSON, Esq., *Superintendent of Public Schools, Columbus, O.*,
 The Rev. E. R. ATWATER, D.D., *Editor of the "Christian Intelligencer," New York*,
 R. G. McNIECE, Esq., *Editor of the Fort Wayne "Gazette," Fort Wayne, Ind.*,
 The Rev. A. CROOKS, D.D., *Editor of the "American Wesleyan," Syracuse, N. Y.*,
 The Rev. L. N. STRATTON, *Office Editor of the "American Wesleyan,"* "
 The Rev. C. E. BABE, D.D., *Editor of the "Herald and Presbyter," Cincinnati, O.*,
 The Rev. A. RITCHIE, *Editor of the "Christian Press," Cincinnati, O.*,
 The Rev. P. J. LAIDLAW, *Columbus, O.*,
 The Rev. J. H. COOPER, *Morning Sun, O.*,
 The Rev. W. J. SHURY, *Publisher of the "Religious Telescope," Dayton, O.*,
 The Rev. A. A. E. TAYLOR, *Cincinnati*,
 The Rev. B. P. AYDELOTT, D. D., "
 The Rev. JOSEPH CHESTER, "
 SAMUEL S. FISHER, Esq., "
 A. H. MCGUFFEY, Esq., "
 H. A. MORRILL, Esq., "
 WM. STRUNK, Esq., "
 The Rev. C. H. TAYLOR, D. D., "
 The Rev. O. A. HILLS, "
 The Rev. REUBEN JEFFERY, D. D., "
 JOHN SHILLITO, Esq., "
 PETER GIBSON, Esq., "
 The Rev. THOMAS S. YOCOM, "
 The Rev. GEO. F. BUGBEE, "
 J. H. FELDWISCH, Esq., "
 The Rev. C. SAURE, "
 The Rev. CHAS. L. THOMPSON, "
 HENRY MARTIN, Esq., "
 The Rev. W. H. FRENCH, "
 The Rev. H. H. GEORGE, "
 The Rev. J. HELWIG, "
 The Rev. J. W. BOICE, "

The following Committees were then appointed by the Convention :

On Enrollment of Delegates.—The Rev. J. McCracken, of St. Louis; the Rev. William Harris, of Columbus; the Rev. H. P. McClurkin.

On the Permanent Organization of the Convention.—The Rev. W. H. French, of Cincinnati; William R. Hamilton, M. D., of Pittsburgh; the Rev. Dr. Davidson, of Hamilton; J. Chambers, Esq., of Bellefontaine, Ohio.

In pursuance of the arrangements of the Executive Committee, the Convention was then addressed by the Rev. D. McAllister, General Secretary of the National Association, on

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF THE MOVEMENT

TO SECURE THE RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

Every movement is liable to suffer from the misapprehension or mis-statement of its aims. It is not to be wondered at that the movement on behalf of which we are assembled to-day is no exception to the rule. Indeed, it is rather an exception the other way. It may well claim to be the "best abused" movement of the century. Very rarely has there been, in the history of any movement, such manifold and self-contradictory, yet persistent, misrepresentation of the purposes of its friends.

If the inherent strength and importance of a cause are to be judged by the measure of misrepresentation which it provokes, we have abundant reason to-day to congratulate each other. The opponents of a cause inherently weak have no need to resort to misrepresentations. It is only when a movement rests on a solid basis; when the avowed purposes of its friends are unassailable; when the clear and simple statement of its ground commands ready assent, that the call is sounded for misrepresentation to come in and do its distorting work.

In order, as far as possible, to counteract and guard against all misapprehensions and mis-statements, it has been thought best to have the discussions of this Convention open with a statement of the Aims and Methods of the friends of this movement. And while the speaker himself should of course be held personally responsible for the statement made, it shall be his endeavor to represent, as faithfully as he can, the Association for which he acts and speaks.

The name of the organization at whose call this Convention has met, places in clear view the objective point at which this movement aims. The organization is called, "the National Association to secure the Religious Amendment of the Constitution of the United States." The amendment proposed is such an addition, in substance, to the Preamble of the United States Constitution, as will suitably express our national acknowledgment of Almighty God as the author of the nation's existence and the source of its authority; of Jesus Christ as its ruler; and of the Bible as the fountain of its laws and the supreme rule of its conduct.

This is the great purpose of the National Association, based on the fundamental truth that a nation, as such, stands in clear and definite relations to God and his moral laws, and that in the Constitution, as well as the administration of its government, it is under obligations to acknowledge these relations. But while this duty has been long proclaimed in our country, and the dangers of the neglect

of this duty have been foreseen and pointed out, by a few of our citizens, it was not until the question became an eminently practical one that the National Association arose and began to put forth its efforts. It was the attack of enemies of our common Christianity upon the Christian features of our national life that struck the alarm, and sounded the rallying cry which has drawn together many of the best citizens of our land, and banded them in this Association. Laying down, in opposition to the principle that the nation, as such, sustains relations to God and his moral laws, the theory that it has nothing to do with religion—that is, that it must never refer to God or the Bible, or do or have, in its whole life and character, anything Christian or religious, or in other words, that it must be anti-Christian and irreligious, these combined foes of the religion of the American people struck at institutions interwoven in the very fabric of our existence as a nation from the first. This very city where we are met was the scene, not very long ago, of the most determined efforts to expel the Bible from our common schools, and more recently, to break down every legal safeguard of the sacredness of the Sabbath. We are here, then, mainly on the defensive. It is our aim, in our associated labors, to counteract the efforts made here in Cincinnati, and similar efforts made elsewhere, to obliterate those features which we believe to be the noblest of all in the heritage bequeathed to us by our fathers.

No thoughtful citizen can be ignorant of the assault made upon every religious act and observance in our national life. Avowed atheists and infidels, communists and papists, uniting like Herod and Pilate, have been plotting and working for years to expel religion from our schools, and turn our Sabbath into a holiday for revelry and parade. Shrewd, far-sighted men, who well know that state neutrality in religion is an utter impossibility, and who are determined to throw the influence of the nation squarely in favor of irreligion, have long and ever more loudly been demanding their "rights of conscience," as they are pleased to term them;—their "right" not to be insulted with religious ideas and usages in civil matters, their "right" not to have a Book which they hate read where their children go to be taught: their "right" not to have the government, with which they stand connected, in any way recognize a sacred day, a solemn oath, an exercise of prayer or anything of the kind, of which they do not approve. These attacks, begun long ago, have been assuming a more bitter and formidable character within the last few years. The demands made have been so readily complied with by time-serving politicians, that the aggressors have been encouraged to expect the speedy accomplishment of all they desire. Confident of success, they are redoubling their exertions, and waging relentless war upon every vestige of national religion yet left us.

In order successfully to repel these assaults, the assailants must be met on their own ground. They claim their so-called "rights" under the aegis of the National Constitution. The potent weapon with which they strive to smite down the religious observances and institutions of the country, is the United States Constitution. When communists would defy all local Sabbath laws, and disturb Christian worshippers by noisy processions on the sacred day of rest, they claim their right to do so under the Constitution. To this instrument the Mormon, the free-lover, *et id omne genus*, betake themselves, as at once a refuge from laws based on Christianity, and a weapon with which to let the life out of all such enactments, and lay them as dead letters upon dusty legal shelves. They must be deprived of their refuge. Their weapon must be wrenched from their grasp. The National Constitution which is made for the nation, and which

ought to conserve and uphold everything that is best in our Christian civilization, must be made to speak out, and to speak so unequivocally that it can never again be made the shield and sword of irreligion, communism, atheism, and infidelity. The fruit of Christian civilization as the Constitution itself, in its many most admirable features is, implying though it may, as many claim it does, the very Christian features against which it is employed—the time has now come when it must distinctly declare itself to be Christian, or else the claim of our opponents must be conceded. Grant that what this association aims to have clearly expressed has always been impliedly in the Constitution. Any such implication is now most emphatically denied. Effectually to meet those who firmly plant themselves on this denial, we aim to have the nation avow itself, in its fundamental law, to be a Christian nation, and there register its purpose to govern itself accordingly.

Not only does the duty of the nation, as a being in relation to God and his moral laws, require such an avowal; not only does a course of honesty and candor to all citizens and subjects now living under existing institutions demand such an avowal; but the acknowledged principles of constitutional law enforce the demand. It is a principle clearly stated by the best writers on political science, that in a nation where there is a written Constitution, that instrument should take its character from the nation for which it is framed. A written Constitution is simply a translation into legal language, as Judge Jameson has well said, of the facts actually evolved by the social forces of the nation. Now, the greatest social force of this nation is Christianity; and hence the most important and most essential facts evolved in the progress of this nation are the distinctively Christian features of its penal and reformatory institutions, its social usages, and especially its system of public education. The written Constitution of the United States does not translate these Christian facts into legal language. It does not authenticate them. As we have already seen, it is persistently and every year more powerfully employed against them. There is a manifest want of harmony here. Something must be done. The high authority already quoted declares that in any such instance of inconsistency or want of harmony the written Constitution must be amended to conform to the facts as they have actually been evolved. If this be not done, the Constitution will in time conform everything to itself. The facts, the usages, the legislative and judicial actions, everything, in a word, that is out of harmony with the written instrument, will give way before its moulding and controlling influence, and disappear.

What shall be done in the case before us? This is the momentous question now up before the American people for settlement. It will not down. It must be met. We may desire to defer its settlement to some far off future time. But the enemy will not permit that. One of two things must be done, and that very soon. Which, fellow citizens, let me appeal to you, which shall it be? Shall we abolish chaplaincies in the army and navy, and hush the voice of prayer in legislative halls, and overthrow every legal restraint against the desecration of the Sabbath, and silence all appeals to God as Witness and Judge in courts of justice, and cast out the Bible from our schools, and thus make all our national life conform to our written Constitution, in which there is no acknowledgment of God or of Christianity? Or, shall we insert an acknowledgment of God and Christianity in the written instrument, and make it conform to what is best and dearest in the nation itself? Which is true statesmanship? We have no difficulty in deciding. Our course, as patriotic citizens, is clear. Others may be

ready to sacrifice the nation, rather than lay what they believe to be a sacrilegious hand upon the Constitution. Let it be known that it is our aim, with a genuine conservatism, to hold fast the integrity of the nation itself, under the development of its form in the Religious Amendment of its Constitution.

This is the simple, definite, and frankly avowed aim of this movement. The statement is itself a sufficient answer to those who either ignorantly or designedly misrepresent our purpose. From what has been said, it is manifest that we are here, not as members of any denomination, but as loyal citizens, some of us members of no church, uniting harmoniously in a common aim, which, from the very nature of the case, cannot be sectarian, nor even ecclesiastical. We are here, not to seek the patronage of the State in behalf of Christianity. The religion of Jesus Christ will move steadily onward to its final triumph, let States oppose it or disregard it as they may. Whatever sets itself against the stone cut out of the mountain without hands will eventually be ground to powder. Our nation must be for or against the kingdom represented by this stone. For the nation's own sake we would have it avow itself to be for Christianity, and thus secure what is essential to its own welfare. We would have our nation to be wise, and to be instructed, and not allow itself to be utterly removed from the old foundations on which the Christian fathers first placed it, but to take its stand, in this day of conflict, openly for Christ, lest He be angry, and it "perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." We have no purpose to tack on to the Constitution visionary theories or irrelevant truths, but to incorporate into that ever operative and educating instrument those clear and definite fundamental principles of national conduct which are determined by a nation's relations to God, and which have always been acknowledged in much of the actual administration of our national affairs. Our movement has no tendency toward setting up a religious despotism, under which all who entertain dissenting opinions shall be deprived of their rights; but, on the other hand, its aim is to establish those very principles, and save from being swept away those very features of our civilization, which have made this nation conspicuous for its civil and religious liberty, and which have given to the men that seek to strike them down, the very rights and privileges which they now enjoy, and of which in their blindness they would rob both themselves and us.

Such is the aim of our opponents, and such the aims of this counteracting movement. In the very nature of things the conflict had to come, unless the American people hold themselves ready to concede every demand of the aggressive irreligious party, and wipe out everything of a Christian or even moral character, 'until our whole political page should become a pure, unbelieving, irreligious, Christless, Godless blank.' It is too late to deprecate the agitation of the controversy. The demand has been made, and most emphatically repeated. It is resisted. And the question is now raised. The issue is joined. The crisis is fast approaching. The advance guards of the opposing forces have met. There is no attempt to conceal or deny the fact that it is irreligion on the one side, and Christianity on the other. These are the respective rallying points. And the conflict thus begun must soon become general. There can be no indifference or neutrality here. A large portion of the American people yet look on with but little concern, it is true, but the logic of events will soon compel them to choose and take their stand on the one side or the other. Nor is it to be wondered at, if, in the bustle of preparation, and the confusion and misapprehension of the first encounters, some good Christians should be found on the wrong side. As the conflict progresses such will infallibly learn their mistake. They cannot

stand out long against a movement which those with whom they stand candidly declare to have the logic of Christianity behind it. They cannot continue to oppose a cause which their fellow opponents frankly admit to be but the practical application of the principles of Christianity to civil government, and which, if they were Christians, they acknowledge they could not help supporting.

The method, then, for the accomplishment of our aims cannot be mistaken. The truth in the case must be made known. Just in proportion as the Christian people of the country clearly perceive and understand the issue joined, and comprehend the aim of this movement, will the number of its friends increase. During the last two years much was done. Petitions to Congress, seeking the proposed amendment, were widely circulated, numerous signed, and duly presented. Large numbers of tracts, and copies of the *Christian Statesman*, a journal devoted especially to the furtherance of the movement, were scattered over the country. Many local meetings, and two large national conventions, similar to this, were held. And in no cause has effort ever been more amply repaid. But amazing as the progress of the movement has been, rapidly as it has grown in volume and power, the work has only fairly begun. It is a difficult matter, and properly so, to secure any amendment to the Constitution. Particularly will this hold true in regard to the proposed Religious Amendment. That can never, from this time on, whatever might have been in our earlier history, become a part of our National Constitution, until the pending question of the true nature and functions of civil government—the question of the relation of the State to religion, is thoroughly discussed among our entire people. Nor does any friend of this movement desire to see the written acknowledgment now, however desirable it might have been when the Constitution was framed, until the words of the written instrument shall be the vital embodiment of the conviction of the American people.

Our work to-day is to arouse our fellow-citizens to the realization of the crisis that is hastening on. From the pulpit, on the platform, through the press, in conversation, the subject must be discussed. Discussion must be promoted by the organization of the friends of the movement in every locality into auxiliary associations, and by constant and systematic work in holding meetings, circulating petitions for signatures, and distributing documents. We want no misrepresentation, no abuse, much less any resort to force and violence. We submit to the tribunal of Revelation, Reason, and Experience. If our cause cannot maintain itself in the arena of fair and full debate, let it go down forever. Believing, however, that it rests upon God's eternal truth, we ask simply to have it thoroughly presented before the intelligence and conscience of the nation, in the perfect confidence that the American people acting peaceably and orderly under their Constitution, unless wantonly attacked, but peaceably or otherwise, will finally settle the question of the relation of their government to Christianity by the Religious Amendment of their fundamental law.

Pending the reports of the Committees, the Rev. A. M. Milligan and the Rev. James Duncan were called out by the Convention and made brief speeches.

PERMANENT ORGANIZATION.

The Committee on Enrollment presented a partial report showing the presence of more than two hundred members in the Convention.

The Committee on Permanent Organization made the following report, which was unanimously approved :

For President of the Convention, the Hon. M. B. HAGANS, *Judge of the Superior Court of Cincinnati*.

Vice Presidents: The Rev. B. P. Aydelott, D.D., Prof. O. N. Stoddard, the Rev. R. Audley Browne, D. D., the Rev. A. D. Mayo, D. D., the Rev. J. R. W. Sloane, D. D., the Rev. E. Morris, D. D., David Boyd, Esq., the Rev. J. B. Helwig, the Rev. A. Ritchie.

Secretary: The Rev. H. H. George.

On taking the chair, Judge Hagans addressed the Convention as follows :

Gentlemen of the Convention :

To return you my sincere thanks for this mark of your confidence and favor feebly expresses my profound sense of the distinguished honor you have conferred in calling me to preside over the deliberations of this National Convention. In assuming this responsibility I am conscious of my want of experience. I am led, therefore, to ask your charitable judgment beforehand of any failure of parliamentary administration, as well to express the hope that you will lend your aid in the discharge of the important duties devolved upon me.

I congratulate you, fellow-citizens, that we are met together to consult peacefully upon questions of so much moment, with respect to no party, creed, nationality, or race, and at a time when no clamor of war or internal dissension will disturb the coolness of our deliberations. Our motives will not be assailed; they may be misjudged and misrepresented. I may declare that we do not yield to our opponents in our patriotism or our devotion to the best interests of the republic. I think I may therefore welcome you to the great State of Ohio, which bears on her escutcheon, with no invidious pride, the motto, "*Imperium in Imperio*." In the recognition of inter-State comity and her obligations in the sisterhood of Commonwealths, she greets every son of the republic who enters upon her broad domain. I congratulate you that we are here in the heart of our own great country, where we may feel its throbs, and where the influence of the movement in whose interest we are met may be sent thrilling along the currents of the national life to the farthest verge of our land.

The prominence which has been given to the objects of this convention by the agitation of the public mind upon the grave questions we are met together to consider and discuss has attracted the thoughtful attention of the whole country, as involving no less momentous interests than other political problems of the day. It is not exceptional in a country like ours, where every man has opinions and is entitled to express them, that these objects should be encountered by the studied indifference of many, the sneers even of a few good men, the vituperation of some, and the misrepresentation of others. These are the common strategies of political warfare, and we must expect them and meet them with superior logic. The peaceful agitation of these questions can not but result in the public good. Where the government is the manifestation of the aggregate sentiment of the people, we must needs have the better arguments, and commend our object to the considerate judgment of the nation by the preponderance of the reason. I firmly believe the vast majority of the people of the United States approve the scope and end of the purpose of this movement. The public

conscience perceives that it involves nothing less than the moral elevation of the body politic as well as its members, and the direction and moulding of the ends of the nation itself. An explicit acknowledgment of God in the fundamental law as the author of our national existence and the source of its authority, is but the recognition on the part of the State of an obligation as binding upon the national conscience as upon that of its individual members.

All nations and each nation is of God. The State is not only an organism, so to speak—even Hobbes arguing against its organic being, yet represented it as a colossal, living man—but it is a sovereign, conscious, moral personality—not evanescent or temporary, but formed for endurance through all time. It is responsible for its conduct not to itself, but to the universal conscience of mankind and to God. It is needless to speculate about the personality we call the nation, as defined in the conceptions of men, but we are to regard it as one of the most imposing facts belonging to our race. It does not accord with the logic of history or the philosophy of our being, or the facts of experience, to say that the State is a social or economic compact, or that it is founded on the will of the people, and has therefore no relation to God. The nation does not live in itself or for itself. It has its foundations in man's nature, and existed before constitutions and prior to laws. It is not, therefore, a compact nor does it exist by the will of the people. These rather express the manifestations of its being. Its history is not merely a succession of separate actions and events, as an apparent sequence of its organism, but it is the continuity of a moral order in the world, and the development of a progress toward the universal triumph of what is good. Its life does not consist of a body of enactments, but in the limitation of its being in a moral personality. This is the condition of the freedom of the whole and all its parts. It is the true foundation of its movement toward "the better time a coming," which all the philosophers wait for and expect. It strives for a growth into the perfect humanity of its members; and only as it so strives does it compass that which is enduring in politics, or which gives it a triumphant advocacy at the bar of the universal conscience, and the approving verdict of history. It never was instituted for the lower wants of its individual members. It is rather a partner in all ennobling art, every science, all literature, every virtue, and all perfection. It needs, therefore, to regulate the relations of its members as moral personalities, and to assert justice, which is only the recognition of the relations among the moral personalities of its members, and between them and its own moral personality. And in doing this, it derives all its sanctions of administration from morality and religion. When these exercise their legitimate sway, it needs no police, and no standing armies. It recognizes the fact that the nation is not only the mart of trade and commerce, but the theater of its internal life, as well as of the moral actions, thoughts and endeavors of its constituents to be regulated by the laws of its being. It thus becomes the acceptable minister of God in history. There is, therefore, the necessity of education in the growth and formation of a true character in each of its members; for the complexion of its outward manifestation, as well as the texture of its inner life, depend upon the character of the people as a whole.

And, therefore, also, the necessity for a careful discouragement or prohibition of all that tends to corrupt the public or private morals, or to interrupt the healthy current of the national life to its meanest and most exposed member. There is no such thing as the isolation of a single member of the State. There is necessarily the existence of moral relation between the members themselves, and between them and the State. For the faithful performance toward each other of

their respective duties, and the recognition of their respective obligations, they are each responsible to God. For, without a moral personality, there can be no accountability. The State can sin; and it can reap the harvest of its violation of conscience in the corruption of its citizens, the decadence of its strength, and the final overthrow of its power.

The State is not a historical accident, nor a necessary evil, but rather an external circumstance of its being, and a consequence of evil, in so far as it is necessary to impose restraints upon the inculcation to wrong-doing. Its substance is good; and its manifestations in the perceptions of right and the enforcements of justice argue the divinity of its origin. It has a distinct rational and moral end, because God constituted men rational and moral beings. The inherent nature of each corresponds to the inherent nature of the other. We can not now help treating politics in an ethical view. This is confirmed by universal experience. No declaration of war, at least in modern times, has been made without founding it on an appearance of justice. Charles IX. added to the horrors of St. Bartholomew the transparent falsehood that he had in view his own safety from a conspiracy of the Huguenots. The great Frederic apologized for his part in the partition of Poland. Philip II. prosecuted his wars against the heroic Netherlands, as well as his perfidious designs against England, in the name and for the glory of God. England, in her turn, sought a justification in the eyes of the world, for thrusting the monstrous opium traffic on the Chinese. The rebellion entrenched itself behind an appeal to mankind for the justice of its cause. It is not needful to illustrate the argument by other modern instances.

In passing, I may not say more, especially now, on the subject of education in the public schools at the common expense, than that the effort to make these schools unsectarian, by banishing the Bible and all religious instruction from them, is nothing more than by express legal enactment or judicial construction to put them into the hands of sectarians which, in the prohibitory clauses on this subject in the Constitutions of most of the States, are denominated "other sects." You cannot make the schools unsectarian by banishing religious instruction from them. The very objection to them on the ground that they are now sectarian, is itself sectarian, because it is in consonance with the views of one class and opposed to those of another. Inasmuch as "religion, morality, and knowledge are essential to good government," it is not perceived how the State can divest itself of its obligation to see to the formation and growth of a true character in its citizens. The political value of religion to the State is the enduring element of its structure, the corner-stone of its prosperity, and the guarantee of reaching the ultimate goal of history.

But it is said, we admit all of this, and perhaps much more, but still we cannot see the necessity of a politico-religious amendment to the Constitution of the United States such as you propose. No longer ago than last Sabbath, a minister of one of our orthodox churches, in this city, whom I not only highly esteem, but cherish with all brotherly love, in announcing to his congregation the sessions of this Convention, and extending an invitation to all to attend them, stated, I understand, that the gentlemen composing this convention were a very amiable set, and if they did no good they would, at least, do no harm. It would have been in better taste, in my judgment, to have omitted the announcement altogether.

Yet some of these gentlemen are horrified at the effort to exclude the Bible from the public schools; and others declaim long and loud against the prevail-

ing vices of the day, especially intemperance and the desecration of the Sabbath. They clamor for legislation on these subjects, or that the legislation already existing shall be more strictly enforced. And they are not without reason. They base their demands not alone on religious grounds, but mostly on political and moral considerations. They seem to forget that back of these laws there is not a robust moral sentiment that demands their enforcement in tones loud enough for the Executive ear: and, therefore, the laws are ignored with impunity. They talk about educating the popular conscience up to their standard, which is all well enough. But they overlook or belittle the omission in the basal law, of one of the highest arguments and a bit of the most powerful logic. They are promptly met by one of the arguments we use for the necessity of this movement. They are told that the State is a compact, an inherent sovereign, or the will of the people concentrated in a focus which we call government, so that the will of the people, or the sovereignty, or the compact may say with Louis XIV., "I am the State," and if they can be outvoted their opponents hold that the matter ends there; and their almost perfect chain of political and moral considerations, forged from the nature and functions of the State, lacks but a single link in its golden completeness. We have no higher obligations, say their antagonists, and recognize no greater responsibility. The State has no relations to God, for the Constitution we have made omits even the mention of any supream sovereignty than itself, and we can see none. I am not now passing upon the soundness of the argument. It is a difficult task, in the presence of such a conflict, and in the absence of explicit declaration, to oppose to the "perilous edge" of these statements, the practices and opinions of our fathers, and to cite them in legislation; for the scope and effect of the one is disputed, and the constitutionality of the other questioned and denied. Thus the State, recognizing no other or higher sovereignty than itself in its fundamental law, falls short, in this instance, of one of its greatest purposes—the education of the citizens in the formation and growth of moral character. It does not explicitly set God before all eyes, and above all governments, and over all sovereignties as the absolute and only Ruler and Lord. Hence the caviling and debate. It is not at all illogical that here are found those who are ready to strike in blindness at the pillars of the temple of the nation, and bedraggle the nation's garments in the slough of our fallen nature. Nor is it surprisingly illogical that vice and dishonesty stalk abroad in the open day, rearing their heads, asserting their dominion and intrenching themselves in the high places of the nation and flaunt their hateful liveries in the faces of the people. It is not to be wondered at that their influence should trickle down, down, to the very foundations of the national fabric, and that their example should be defended with weapons drawn from the sacred armory of the Constitution itself. The temple which the nation has built for itself does not blaze with the glory of the Ineffable Presence; the garments with which it has clothed itself, made with its own fingers, shimmer not with the halo of its divine origin as it goes in and out before the people. And so the process may thus go on in an unbroken circle, casting and reflecting the influence of the State upon the people, and of the people back again upon the State, each successive step in the progress of decadence distinctly marked, until the moral relations between the whole and its parts, and between the parts themselves, become dissevered; and while we gaze at the spectacle of our own helplessness, the nation and its temple may be involved in a common ruin.

It is not needful that I should speak of the method by which we hope to attain

our end or draw attention to other arguments and considerations. They, as well as those I have crudely and imperfectly stated, will be more ably presented by others during the sessions of the convention. I may say, however, that the agitation of these questions, from their very nature, will never be ended until they are rightly settled. The people may be misled temporarily. Even some good men may be deceived by the cries of "the violation of conscience," and "the union of church and state." But these are so manifestly foreign to our purpose that they can alarm no one except the "amiable gentlemen" who seriously give ear to them. We can safely trust the conscience of the masses of men to pronounce an ultimately just judgment upon the value and necessity of any political question involving, as it does, the moral well being of the State. For we have learned from our own history that in the long run the people are right.

The following letters were read from officers of the National Association and other gentlemen who were unable to be present.

FROM THE HON. WM. STRONG, U. S. SUPREME COURT, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11, 1871.

REV. D. McALLISTER—*Dear Sir* :—I have delayed replying to your note with a view of ascertaining definitely, what arrangements our court might make respecting its winter recess. It has now been settled that our recess will be only two weeks, and will terminate on the 6th of January. It will, therefore, be impossible for me to attend the coming Cincinnati Convention.

This I regret for many reasons. I should greatly enjoy the associations of the convention, and derive benefit from its influences. Manifestly the movement to secure the recognition of God as over all in our fundamental law is making more and more an impression upon the public mind. Even the misrepresentations of the purposes of its friends, and the violence of the opposition it encounters, attest its progress.

I rejoice at the prospect there is of a good and effective meeting, and I trust your anticipations will not be disappointed.

Very truly and respectfully,

W. STRONG.

FROM THE REV. A. A. MINER, D. D., PRESIDENT OF TUFT'S COLLEGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

BOSTON, Nov. 27, 1871.

REV. D. McALLISTER—*Dear Sir* :—The state of my health and the number of my labors and cares at home, will not permit me to attend the approaching convention at Cincinnati. I regret this the more as I feel that the faith of the nation needs anchorage, and I should be glad to do anything in my power to help it find it.

Yours, truly, A. A. MINER.

FROM HIS EXCELLENCY, SETH PADEFORD, GOVERNOR OF RHODE ISLAND.

PROVIDENCE, Jan. 27, 1872.

REV. D. McALLISTER—*My Dear Sir* :—Yours of the 17th is on hand. It would afford me great pleasure to attend your meeting to be held on the 31st inst., if my engagement permitted. The Legislature of the State is now in session, which calls for my presence here.

Yours, truly, SETH PADEFORD.

FROM PROFESSOR JULIUS H. SEELYE.

AMHERST COLLEGE, Nov. 21, 1871.

REV. D. McALLISTER—*Dear Sir* :—Yours of the 14th inst. is received, and I regret that it is impossible for me to agree to be present at the convention of which you speak, owing to my other engagements for that time.

Notwithstanding the indifference of many and the hostility of some, from whom better things might have been expected, it seems to me that the movement towards the religious amendment to our Constitution grows in volume and strength. May God bless it with His guidance and inspiration!

Very truly yours,

J. H. SEELYE.

FROM JOHN ALEXANDER, ESQ., PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 29th, 1872.

REV. D. McALLISTER,

Secretary of the National Association to meet in Cincinnati, Jan. 31st, 1872.

MY DEAR SIR:—Your favor of the 23d inst. urging my attendance upon the Cincinnati Convention finds me in such a state of health as to render personal presence impracticable; but I shall be with you in spirit, for I have enlisted *for the war*.

If your coming convention be favored with such a genial atmosphere as pervaded the convention in which the movement was born, it will indeed be good to be there. That memorable convention, which must remain fresh in the memory of all who attended it, was held in Xenia, Ohio, in 1863.

The marked feature of that Pentecostal season, which we desire to present for your encouragement, was the remarkable devotional spirit which characterized all its meetings. The numerous tongues from eleven denominations of Christians were blended in earnest wrestlings at the common Throne of divine grace, and there appeared to be great freedom of access and immediate answers granted to the prayers offered—and the soul-inspiring songs of praise and thanksgiving, which mingled so largely in the services, produced an effect so sublime and elevating as never to be forgotten by those who were engaged in them. That you may have such a meeting, and that you may enjoy such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the greatest blessing we can ask for you; and to this end we trust no denominational preferences may be allowed to hinder such freedom and forbearance in all the exercises, as the spirit of brotherly love should cordially extend in an assembly of Christians met upon an equal platform, for a common object. That you may have the prospect of such a blessed season we earnestly recommend that you set apart abundant time to the important exercise of prayer and praise.

We are now entering upon a period in the question when infidel and atheistical assaults are, and will be made, and must be met. We trust the coming conflict will arouse from apathy the Christianity and patriotism of the land, and bring to our aid that increased co-operation and activity which we so much need, and which our antecedents as a Christian nation warrant us to expect.

For the furtherance of this cause I will contribute on demand, for the current year two hundred dollars—and if there shall be four or more individual subscriptions of three, four or five hundred dollars paid into your treasury within the year, I will increase my subscription to the largest sum *thus paid*. One fourth of my subscription to be appropriated to the support of the CHRISTIAN STATESMAN when issued weekly.

Let us be encouraged in our efforts by the declaration of Him who is King of Kings, who hath said, "Them that honor me, I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." And let us be admonished by His threatening which saith, "The nation and kingdom that will not serve him shall perish. Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

That our beloved land may become the inheritor of these promises, and delivered from these threatenings is the prayer of

Yours truly in the Cause,
JOHN ALEXANDER, 1935 Arch St.

PEORIA, ILL., Jan. 26, 1872.

REV. D. McALLISTER—*Dear Brother*:—I write to advise you that a sudden and severe illness, from which I have not yet recovered so as to leave my house, will probably prevent my being present in convention next week. This, of course, is matter of great regret to me, as I fear it may disappoint some expectations and derange some plans. But "man's goings are of the Lord." He knows what is best for men and for measures.

Fraternally, yours,
J. EDWARDS.

No. 71 N. CURTIS ST., CHICAGO, 26th Dec. 1871.

REV. D. McALLISTER—*Rev. and Dear Sir*:—I am compelled to leave for Europe in bad health, and shall not be permitted to speak for God and his kingdom at the Cincinnati meeting. But the Lord reigneth; His will shall one day be done on earth as it is in heaven, and our eyes shall see it and our hearts rejoice.

Yours, in Christ,
ROBERT PATTERSON.

BRECKSVILLE, Jan. 29, 1872.

The Congregational Church in Brecksville, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, to the Convention on the Religious Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, assembled in Cincinnati, January 31, 1872—

Fellow Citizens:—We greet you in the name of the Lord, and our prayer is for you, that the Divine blessing may be upon you in the work for which you are convened. We appointed a delegate to meet with you in convention, but he is unable to attend. We deem the call for this convention highly honorable to the nation, and for the glory of God on earth.

Fraternally, G. C. REED, Pastor.

PITTSBURGH Jan. 30, 1872.

REV. D. McALLISTER, *General Secretary National Association*—Dear Sir:—Until today I expected to be in attendance at the convention, but regret now to state that circumstances over which I have no control prevent me from being present.

I enclose my check to order of the Treasurer of the National Association for one hundred dollars, which with my prayer for the guidance of the convention in all their deliberations and actions, and for the early adoption of the proposed religious amendment and triumphant success of the cause of the reform, is all the help at this time I am able to render you in the cause.

Yours, &c.,
D. CHEBUT.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

The General Secretary of the National Association, the Rev. D. McAllister, presented the following report:

The work of your Secretary began on the 1st of October, 1871. This report, therefore, covers only the brief period of four months. Short as the time has been, however, a review of it presents matters of deep interest and great encouragement to all friends of the religious amendment of our national Constitution.

In beginning the work of Secretary it seemed important to ascertain the condition of the friends of this movement as respects organization. From the results of a wide correspondence it appears that until within the past year, or a little over, hardly any effort had been made in this direction. The National Convention, which held its sessions in Pittsburg less than two years ago, gave a marked impulse to the work. During the succeeding fall and winter, organizations sprang into existence throughout the country. Just how many there are at present has not yet been ascertained. Information has been received of thirty, with a membership ranging from twenty to three hundred. But while the work of organization is just beginning, the public discussion of the subject has been vigorously carried on in many places. Within about one year nearly two hundred public meetings have been held, at each of which one or more addresses have been delivered, and, in most of instances, to large and enthusiastic audiences.

In order to bring the friends of the movement together, and to awaken the attention of the country at large to the rapid progress which it is making, a national convention was proposed for this winter. Cincinnati, the scene of agitation on the subject of religion and the State, in the form of the question of the Bible in the schools, and that of Sabbath laws, was chosen as the place of meeting. In arranging for the convention, meetings have been held in many cities and towns in Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania and other States. These meetings have been addressed by Messrs. George, French, Milligan, Duncan, Robb, Thompson, Wylie, Campbell, McFarland, and others. Particular mention should be made of the long-continued, earnest and self-sacrificing labors of the two first-mentioned gentlemen.

The experience of the past few months of labor confirms the belief long entertained by many, viz.: that the progress of the movement to secure the Religious Amendment of the United States' Constitution will be measured by the thoroughness of its presentation before the minds of intelligent citizens. It is pre-eminently a movement based on important truth. It is a question the settlement of which involves the most fundamental principles of political science. To all the well established truths of political philosophy, and of constitutional law, as well as of Christianity, it makes its confident appeal. As its frankest opponents admit, it is but the logical carrying out in practice of the almost universally accepted truths of Christianity in regard to government. Hundreds of the most intelligent men, without any predisposition to favor the movement, have candidly acknowledged the argument for the religious amendment of our national Constitution to be perfectly conclusive. At nearly every meeting held, testimony of this kind is given. An able professor of science, at the close of a discussion of the subject in one of our cities, said: "I regarded the arguments against slavery as conclusive: but the arguments in this movement are even more cogent and irresistible." At

another meeting a clergyman thus expressed himself: "Up to this time I have been opposed to this movement. But I frankly state that this evening I have been convinced and converted." But it is unnecessary to multiply instances.

To help forward this good work, arrangements have been made for the most thorough and comprehensive discussion at this convention of the whole subject of religion and the state which has yet been given to the public. The following schedule of topics, with the names of the authors, it is believed will make good the foregoing statement:

The Relation of Education to Religion. By Dr. A. D. Mayo.

The Moral Character and Accountability of the Nation. By Prof. J. R. W. Sloane, D. D.

Neutrality of the State in Morals and Religion, a Thing Impossible. By Prof. Tayler Lewis, LL.D.

The Relation of the Written Constitution to the True Character and Welfare of the Nation. By Prof. O. N. Stoddard, LL.D.

The Proposed Amendment no Step toward Uniting Church and State, nor any Infringement of Rights of Conscience. By Dr. J. Edwards.*

The Practical Value and Effect of the Proposed Amendment. By the Rev. T. P. Stevenson.

Other valuable addresses, of a more general character, will also be delivered.

To give the convention its due influence, the report of its proceedings should be published in convenient form, and widely circulated; and to profit by the impression it will leave upon the public mind, lecturers should occupy the open and inviting field in as large numbers as possible. It is to be hoped that this convention will take definite and thorough measures for the energetic prosecution of the work. The growth of this movement for the past two years has been something truly remarkable. By the spontaneous action of American citizens, without any organization or superintendence it has assumed its present importance. Let its friends give themselves to their work in combined and wise efforts worthy of the cause, and it is safe to predict that it will grow in volume and strength with a rapidity unequalled in the history of any other movement. As one of the leading Judges of this State, with whose presence and truly philosophical and eloquent address we are encouraged to-day, recently remarked: "Christian sentiment as to government in this country is crystalizing; and this amendment is the form it must take." Let it be ours to labor for the accomplishment of this aim, confident that, as another eminent Judge of this State declared, "As surely as God reigns in Heaven, and the Bible is His Word of eternal truth, this movement must succeed."

The report was approved.

The Chair then appointed the following Committee on Resolutions and Business:

The Rev. R. Audley Browne, D.D.; the Rev. T. P. Stevenson, the Rev. A. Ritchie, the Rev. A. M. Milligan, and the Rev. D. McAllister.

Mr. Francis E. Abbot, of Toledo, Ohio, editor of the *Index*, asked permission to present a remonstrance against the object of the Convention. After a brief discussion he was requested to reduce it to writing, and present it to the Committee on Business.

The Convention then adjourned until 7½ P. M.

* Dr. Edwards was prevented by sudden sickness from attending the Convention: See letters, page 14. For an abstract of his intended address, see pages 67-70.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention reassembled at 7½ P. M., Judge Hagans in the chair. The attendance was even larger than during the afternoon, and the proceedings were listened to with profound attention.

The exercises were opened with prayer by the Rev. Milton Wright, of Dayton.

The Rev. N. R. Johnston was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Convention.

The report of the Executive Committee of the National Association for the year 1871, was presented by the Chairman, the Rev. T. P. Stevenson, of Philadelphia. It was laid on the table for the present.

The Rev. A. D. Mayo, D. D., pastor of the Church of the Redeemer, (Unitarian), Cincinnati, was then introduced to the Convention, and spoke as follows :

I was glad to sign the call for this convention, and am glad to attend its meetings. It seems to me that no subject of political interest now demands a thorough discussion so much as the relation of our Republican government to unsectarian Christian religion. I suppose, with the exception of a few statesmen of French philosophical notions, the great mass of the American people who formed our government agree substantially with the idea set forth in your call. The government of the nation and the States has always been administered in formal respect to these principles, whatever may have been the moral tendencies of legislation. The vast majority of the Christian people of the United States to-day suppose that all you speak of is really in the government, though not expressed in the Constitution. The American people certainly believe that God is the author and Providence of our nation, and confess dependence on Him, and the obligation of the government to conform to His holy law. The people understand that this is a Christian country. The mass of the people are Christian in belief. Our whole order of society and government is such as could only have grown up in a land where the people had reached a very advanced and practical form of Christian faith. The standard of public morality, as far as theory is concerned, is the standard of Jesus Christ. The New Testament is regarded as the final authority concerning the highest life of man. The mass of Christian people are surprised and confused when they are told that our government and order of American Society have nothing to do with religion—are purely "secular."

If the mass of religious people are not interested now in your proposed amendment to the Constitution, it is because they think the substance of these ideas is there already, and it is not worth the while to agitate the country to change the phraseology of that instrument. But I believe the people will be compelled to do what you ask before many years, in order to defend both religion and liberty in this country from public disgrace. The Catholic priesthood is fully resolved to force an acknowledgment of their infallible ecclesiasticism on the State, and thus to destroy religious liberty in America. The "secular" party is as thoroughly determined to sever American society from all religious

influence, and make our government neutral or Atheistic in religion. Both these parties are already in the field of politics. Though containing many noble men, both these parties are intensely selfish and mercenary; ready to act apart or act together to accomplish their ends. Both have repeatedly broken the peace, and both threaten to fight to carry their points. Catholicism and Communism have already inaugurated a revolutionary movement that will finally drive the American people to place in the Constitution of the United States such a guaranty for the preservation of our Christian liberties as you suggest. I believe it is well that this and similar conventions should be held to prepare the country for a conflict of opinion that may be nearer than we suppose.

I have been chiefly interested in this great subject as it has come before the people in relation to public education; and, at your request, I offer some remarks on

RELIGION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Every philosophical system of education that has been found competent to the practical training of youth has held that the fundamental ideas of religion underlie, and are implicated with, all the culture of the mind and character in the young. Every nation that has seriously attempted to educate its children at public expense, has held some training in religion and morals essential to the public good. The religious faith indorsed by these systems, or held by these nations, has varied in numberless ways; but the obligation to instruct the young in religious morality as an essential to good citizenship, has never been disputed by any great people. It is disputed now chiefly by a class of speculative political philosophers, who, having conceived of such a social chimera as a State with no recognition of God and a political society in no way referring to religion, absurdly declare that this republic is such a State and should forbid all recognition or cultivation of the religious nature of the child in the common school. There are Christian people who think the reading of the Bible in schools is not the best way to advance that religious instruction they confess to be imperative. But the party of "secularism" in education would sweep away all attempts at religious, and moral as far as dependent on religious, training from the school-room, as an infringement of religious liberty. I repeat, this is the first time in the world when such a theory of public education has been seriously entertained or proposed as a public policy in any established State.

I hold that just to the extent this nation, or any State in it, is bound to acknowledge and uphold religion in its political policy and legislation, is it bound to combine religious and moral with mental, æsthetic, and physical training in its people's schools. The existence, sovereignty, and providence of God, and the duty of all men and nations to obey His laws; the spiritual nature, moral obligation, natural rights, and immortal life of man; the binding obligation of the morality of Jesus Christ as the only universal moral law, the acceptance of the New Testament morality as the moral constitution of every civilized State; the obligation of government to secure the religious liberty of all men in order that true religion and morality may not be crushed out by despotism and persecution—all these religious ideas will be found interwoven in the warp and woof of our national existence. The highest American citizenship is found where these ideas are most fully comprehended and practiced. The State is bound to educate the child into this circle of ideas, as an absolute necessity to its own security. Along with such knowledge of physical health, and such mental discipline and culture of good taste as it is able to impart, the State should see that the religious morality essential to good citizenship is also taught. And, as

in our form of government theological and ecclesiastical affairs are strictly left to private opinion and sectarian zeal, and the State only takes cognizance of religion as it helps to form the character of the good citizen, so, in the public school, religion should be taught solely with a view to create in the young that moral and religious character which shall fit them to be good citizens of the republic.

Regarded from a truly philosophical point of view, the notion that there can be a purely intellectual or "secular" education of a child, is one of the crudest of unscientific conceits. The very idea of education implies a spiritual being as a scholar; and faith in the spiritual nature of man is the corner-stone of religion. There can be no such thing as education without a desire for the truth. But the eternal difference between truth and error is a postulate of religious faith, and the love for truth is the foundation of Christian duty. Every science is predicated upon the fundamental ideas of religion; the existence of God; the spirituality of the soul; the eternal distinction between truth and falsehood, right and wrong; the moral ability and obligation of man to follow the true and the right; the eternal providence of God in the eternal life of man. Every human language is built up around these primary faiths of man, and the least object lesson, or the teaching of the alphabet, implies them all. Every axiom of pure mathematics implies a religious faith in the existence of absolute truth, and the duty to pursue it. Every law of scientific investigation implies and pledges the votary of science to the highest reverence for truth. Without religion there never was a literature, and it would be useless to learn to read. Without religion, history is a stupid riddle, that only a fool would attempt to teach. Every step in mental and moral philosophy, political economy, industrial science, and the fine arts, implies a step toward the confession of fundamental religious faith.

There is no possibility of training the mind without at every point, involving the moral and religious faculty, and moulding the character. There is no possibility of extracting the intellectual power, like the brain from a manikin, and educating that alone. We can take the soul and the character into account when we educate the child,—and that is our duty; or we can ignore the soul and the character, and pretend to be neutral concerning them. But there is no neutrality in the realm of spiritual things. The teacher that systematically leaves out moral and religious considerations from his instruction, or repudiates responsibility for the character of his pupil, by that act becomes a disorganizer of the life of the child, and an enemy of human society. The "secular" school-master is compelled by the repudiation of all save the intellectual power in his training, to follow a logic that leads to the atheism which denies the possibility of human knowledge. And it will be found that, as a class, the educational theorists who now clamor for what they call "positive" secular education, in public or private, are pledged to a philosophy which drives mankind upon the shoal of materialism and atheism, where there can be no reliable knowledge of anything. "Secular" or "positive" education, by its logical disciples, is education committing hari-kari—a man without a soul sacrificing himself to a god that does not exist.

But we are not driven to the purely scientific argument for the enforcement of unsectarian religious education, as far as concerns the moral duties of American citizenship, in the American common school. The American common school does not pretend to be a purely scientific agency. It is not even a universal educational agency. It is a politico-educational institution, devised to fit

the masses of American children for American citizenship. It proposes to do this by a peculiar style of training, in which the awakening of the mind, the imparting of knowledge, the discipline of the body, the training of the morals, the formation of character, and the imparting of republican views of government, each bears its part. To narrow down this complex politico-educational agency, the common school, to a mere mental gymnasium, is a most destructive misapprehension; a perversion which a materialistic philosopher would commit on principle; a blunder that many religious people might fall into from ignorance or want of reflection, but of which no common school teacher of character and good common sense would be in danger. So the question before the State is: The duty to impart in the common school that element of religious and moral knowledge and discipline, which will best combine with mental, physical, and æsthetic training, to educate the child into a good American citizen. More than this it would be vain to attempt. Less than this the State must not attempt, as she regards her own existence and prosperity.

It is easy to elaborate a "secular" theory of education in the closet, where an ideal boy can be placed in a spiritual vacuum, and developed according to an exclusive mental system. But install this philosopher as the principal of an army of 1,000 children and a score of sensitive teachers, in a great city district school-house, and the situation is bravely changed. He then comprehends the fact that to "keep school" is not to manipulate an ideal youth, or even to try nice intellectual experiments on a solitary child, but to face a restless community of children, and educate them together into intelligence and character. The American school is the child's rehearsal of American society. It is to him what the whole world of business, politics, and social life, rolled into one, is to his parents. In the little red country school-house every social and political class, every phase of human life is daily represented. The city school is a collection of 1,000 little Americans, of almost every possible ancestry, culture, tendency, temperament, and character. There is the "upper ten," the "middle class," and the "democracy;" the exquisite and the demagogue; the belle and the blue-stocking; the criminal class, as well defined as in your Police Court; the respectable class, as pronounced as at your East End. A thousand men and women, representing such varieties of character, are distributed in two hundred homes at arm's length; but this youthful community is shut up under one roof. We appoint a score of young people to keep this community in such an order as grown people would never submit to without a revolution, to develop the mind of each member of this little State, to turn out all as "lively stones," fit for the temple of our new republic.

Now, the effort to control and educate such a miniature republic on "secular" or purely intellectual principles is a job compared with which harnessing Niagara to turn the spindles of a cotton mill would be a cheerful enterprise. You have no place there to set up your fine mental machinery that shall isolate the intellectual power and handle it so delicately that the religious and moral susceptibilities may not be disturbed. You have no time there to demonstrate how much of a child is mind, how much is animal, and how little is soul. The clock strikes nine; and you are facing fifty full-blooded, uproarious, Western boys, seething down from a mob to a school, and what do you propose to do with this tremendous fact? An American argus, with its hundred eyes, glares right into your face; pierces through your shams; pokes fun at your fine theories, and cries out, "What do you want of me?" To say that the teacher does not need every resource of religious and moral power save the ecclesiastical and

theological, for which children care nothing, to govern and educate this community, is to mock at all educational experience and declare ourself utterly ignorant of human life.

How shall the teacher keep that little State in order; by what method of legislation govern it so that instruction can be given; by what motives secure its willing co-operation in the work on hand? Shall he stoop to the lowest methods of punitive despotism, and control it by the fear of bodily pain or the stimulant of reward, alternately buying obedience or crushing out opposition? Then he is training up a school of little Tweeds and Mansfields; teaching children that obedience to law always brings a "stealing," in the way of "patronage;" and this is not just the road to "civil service reform." Or he is teaching them the awful lesson of government by brute force, and nurses a rebellion in the soul of every generous subject of his hateful despotism. If he is to train these children for citizenship in a republican State, he must learn to govern them by appeal to all the higher elements of their nature, their reason, their love of order and beauty, especially their conscience and sense of obligation toward each other. And where shall he locate the last court of appeal in this array of motives to cheerful and obedient co-operation? Only in God, from whom alone the authority of teacher, parent, State is derived to shut that group of children up one hour, and demand from them years of irksome toil and confinement. If he can awaken in these little men and women a sense of grateful dependence on God, reverence for the eternal law of duty, love for each other; a feeling that this mystery of school life is in some way a beneficent arrangement for their own good, his work is well begun. And just in proportion as he can effectually work in this region of life, will he succeed in organizing a school. Unless he can awaken a religious and moral public opinion among that crowd which will co-operate with himself in all good things, he is only a cultivated gentleman reading the riot act to a mob. To go into such a place, and say to the teacher: "You shall give no religious instruction, you shall not read a religious book, nor sing a religious song, nor repeat the Lord's prayer, and the Bible, of all books on earth, shall not be seen here," is to betray an inability for the comprehension of childhood which is almost incomprehensible.

And when this little community is organized into a working school, how shall the young woman who, in nine rooms in ten, is set to guide them, begin to teach? The first thing is to arouse the love of knowledge. The "H grade" of six year olds has hardly soared to the philosophical altitude of the pursuit of wisdom for its own majestic self, and must somehow be won to a desire to know. The wisest educators everywhere now declare that the "object system" of teaching is the true method of nature. The children should be taught to observe simple and connected objects, converse upon them, learned to study nature, and be led from things up to words and science. The animal, vegetable, and mineral world, home life, trades and professions, society, the nation, all things that children live among, are introduced to them, and their young minds are trained to observe, reason, combine, classify. But an "object lesson," that does not, in some way, lead up to a Creator, and outward to the moral and spiritual life of man and the everlasting law of duty—in other words, to all the fundamentals of religion—is what a skeleton is to a living child, a grinning death in life. No intelligent teacher can talk five minutes with fifty quick-witted children about anything, without feeling the tide of interest rising toward the nobler aspects of the theme like the sea waves surging in upon the shore. Who made the grass, the tree, the lion, the eagle? Who fashioned the wonderful body we are talking

about? Where did parents come from, and where did my little sister go when she died? Why should I obey the laws? Why has Judge Hagans a right to sentence a thief to jail? What does all this mean, that we children must do all these things; and what does it mean to become men and women? and so on through the myriad-sided questioning of the eager little ones. Must the souls of these children be struck with a hammer every time they rise up out of the realm of natural things and look toward the infinite side of life? Must the teacher put the finger on the lip when God, or Christ, or duty, or immortality comes in? Must every book and every exercise that gratifies the highest curiosity be swept like litter from the school-room floor? Must 25,000 children in Cincinnati be forbidden to hear of their Father in heaven; to sing, "Be Thou, O God, exalted high;" to read the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, through the most precious hours of their most sensitive years, because Archbishop Purcell wants to teach them the infallibility of the Pope, or some Archbishop of "secularism" regards it an open question whether the primeval monkey has yet clambered through his "positive" being up to an immortal soul? Let the Archbishop teach in his churches all that his flock desire to hear. Let the patriarch of materialism keep at his inspiring work of growing a new kind of soul, and inventing a new God. But we, the people of the State of Ohio, regard some things as settled; and one of them is, that "religion and morality" as well as "education," are "necessary to good government." And as the common school is the training school of American citizenship, we propose still to develop our children therein by appeal to the higher faculties they share with the angels, and not by appeal to the lower nature they share with the brutes.

The teacher who does not make all his instruction of the more advanced pupil center on these fundamentals of life—the everlasting ideas and motives that hold society together, and alone make a nation possible—has thrown away his labor. The "secular" party in education perpetually calls upon us to be "practical" in our public schools. What is practical education? To pin upon the mental surfaces of the child a multitude of facts about a hundred subjects of human interest? To shoot a car load of useful knowledge, pell mell, into the empty mind? Who does not know that such knowledge, is only a dead burden upon the soul, and dances through the memory like the grain through the hopper? The only practical thing you can do in a public school is to arouse the minds of the multitude before you; teach them how to observe, to think, to work; awaken a desire for knowledge, and inspire a sense of duty in gaining and using it; and then lead the little band a few steps along each of the several paths of science far enough to show them that the things seen by the soul are eternal, and that the glory of life consists in living for spiritual, and not for sensual ends.

Send out a child thus trained and you have the material for a good citizen, and a noble man. Send out a child stuffed with disconnected facts, or stimulated into universal skepticism, and you have a mischief-maker in society, and a revolutionist in government. There is nothing so practical done in this country as to educate children into intelligent, thoughtful, moral and religious citizens of the republic; and when the common school leaves this solid ground, to drift through the educational dreams of secular pedants and politicians, it will be time to call it back to the homely ways of practical wisdom.

Turn which way you will, you can not escape the necessity for unsectarian religious and moral training in the common school. In the work of discipline, in

the imparting of knowledge, in the moulding of character, in the management of this children's world so that it shall open up to the world of a lofty American citizenship, the teacher must have this help. And all the questions involved in the management of this difficult subject center in the character of the teacher. If he is base and vulgar, undeveloped in the nobler regions of manhood and womanhood, he is the most dangerous of public enemies, poisoning citizenship at the head-springs of the State. If he is a cold-blooded, skeptical pedant, he is a spiritual electrical eel, shocking every child into stupidity, or nursing a set of heartless citizens. If he is violent and brutal, sensual, crafty, or untrue, he is sowing the seeds of civil disorder, undermining womanly virtue, or sprouting "rings" to swindle the State. An incapable teacher makes the noblest system of instruction ridiculous. A competent teacher guards every good system from exaggeration and abuse. Give us a body of trained, reasonable, religious men and women in the school-houses, and there is no danger that the opportunities of moral and religious instruction will be abused; and any other kind of teacher is a public nuisance that should be abated without benefit of clergy.

The people of the United States understand what they mean when they require these, their public servants, to use the Bible as the text book of moral and religious instruction. They do not mean any one of a hundred absurd and unconstitutional things imagined by "secular" critics, born and educated abroad, and ignorant of the first principles of American life. They mean that the child in school shall receive religious and moral instruction, in the practical way that shall make him a good citizen of this republic. His theology, his ecclesiasticism, his future life in heaven they leave to the family and church, under the providence of God. The Bible should be placed in every public school-room as the text book of American morality. Every American teacher, of ordinary common sense, understands how to use it for that purpose. You can use any text book, or teach any science, in a way to outrage the rights of the child and the parent. If the Bible is used to ply the work of sectarian indoctrination, put out the teacher and let the Bible stay: guard the use of it, if necessary; tie up your teachers to the simplest duty of drawing from it the great lessons of universal religion and morality, set forth in the simplest and most sublime language heard on earth; but to teach morals in America without reference to the Bible, is like teaching the English language without the dictionary.

There are three classes of people that want to put the Bible out of the school. First, that class of the Christian priesthood and their followers which desires to teach sectarian religion to youth at public expense. Second, that class of people which does not believe in religion, and claims the right to bring up American children in practical heathenism. Third, a considerable class of religious and patriotic people who think the State is bound to respect the motives of these two classes. As either of these two ideas would destroy republican institutions, we are not bound to respect them. We are bound to educate the child into a true American citizenship, which involves a character founded on intelligence, morality and religion.

But why not divide this work, and leave the moral and religious part of the education of the citizen to the parent and priest? Because you can not hold the parent or the priest to any public responsibility to educate the child into that practical form of religion and morality essential to good citizenship in a republican State. A lofty sense of public morality and religion is of far more importance than intelligence to the public good. This republic, this State, this city are threatened to-day, not so much from the ignorance of multitudes of people,

as from the brutal, sensual, selfish character of great masses, led by the most accomplished demagogues, swayed by men whose best gifts and acquirements are dedicated to Satan. Unless we can grow among the masses in this republic a type of public character intelligent, moral, religious—our years are numbered. All the experience of history shows that the family alone is incompetent to do this. An ignorant and selfish parent will sacrifice his children to the immediate benefit of his family, or give them to a priest to be enslaved in their souls.

The State, in its collective wisdom, must offer to its youth this training in public character, or the family itself will run down into barbarism. The priest and the church stand for a spiritual culture in man that fits him for the citizenship of eternity. Even if the church did its work in the highest way, it would fail to emphasize sufficiently this particular phase of public religion and morality. But in America the church is not a unit; it is outwardly a score of contending ecclesiastical corporations, each with its own theory of life, its peculiar priesthood, and its own polity. It can not be safely left to educate our youth for citizenship. Its priests can unite, as priests, to teach or do scarcely anything great or good. But its ministers and members can unite, as citizens, to elaborate a style of simple, practical, religious and moral training in school that shall secure the State against imperialism and anarchy. It is the glorious office of Christianity more and more to overflow our sectarian churches, and penetrate society with its blessed principles of justice, liberty and love. Until the church can harmonize her bitter feuds and become one in purpose and policy, let the sovereign American people, in the popular university, teach and apply those eternal facts of religious and moral life without which no nation can endure.

It is not strange that the infallible priesthood of America want to destroy the public school and seize the educational citadel of the republic, for thus alone can they hold the people in their sects, and pave the way for a future union of Church and State. It is not strange that the party of communism and secularism desires to sweep religion altogether from the school. It does not believe in God, or the spiritual nature of man, or the eternal obligation of the moral law, and it desires a State where individual rights shall run riot, and every man be a little king and an incipient deity. But it is passing strange that so many good citizens, religious, and patriotic men of American birth and education, should be misled by the shallow sophistry, that under the plea of "conscience," would plant the machinery for a return to medieval despotism, or a collapse into a social pandemonium. The people of the United States have the right to do all things necessary to secure to themselves and their posterity a republican form of government, founded on the morality of Christ's golden rule of perfect justice and universal good will; and all sophisms—political, social, religious—that stand in the way of that mighty purpose will be rent asunder and drifted down stream. As the Mississippi bursts its icy fetters in the spring and sweeps onward to the gulf, dissolving or spurning as it flows every hindrance that would stay the march of its lordly torrent to the sea, so will the people deal with every foe that bars its progress to that ideal American republic, where all men shall be free because all men shall be wise, and just, and good.

The Committee on Business reported a series of resolutions which were laid on the table for the present. (See the resolutions, as subsequently amended, on page 50).

Prof. J. R. W. Sloane, D. D., was then introduced, and delivered the following address :

THE MORAL CHARACTER AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE NATION.

The principle involved in the very statement of the theme which has been assigned me is one of vital importance to the existence and prosperity of the State.

That a nation 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. When I say not theory, but fact; not hypothesis, but science, I do not mean that the truth is so demonstrated as to be beyond the reach of ingenious objection and cavil. It is conceded, I presume, that the Copernican system of astronomy is demonstrated, and yet it is not many months since I heard a man in the cars declare that the question as to whether the earth revolved around the sun was one upon which a great deal could be said on both sides, and for his part he did not believe that it did. Harvey testified that there was not a physician in Europe, over forty years of age, who accepted his doctrine of the circulation of the blood, and yet it is generally conceded, we believe, that it is a demonstrated fact. That all men do not admit that a nation is a moral being, and accountable to God, does not prove that it is not an established principle of moral and political science.

The denial of the moral character and accountability of the State is of the nature of Atheism; it is practically a denial of God's providential government—leads to the subversion of morals, the annihilation of all rights, the overthrow of rational freedom, and the destruction of the State itself.

A nation is a creature of God. In the language of Franklin, "If a sparrow can not fall to the ground without His notice, much less can an empire rise without His aid." It is not of man, nor of the will of man, but of God; created not by physical, but by moral forces; not in the sphere of His material, but of His moral government. We have the highest authority for comparing a nation to a mountain; but other forces than those which have upheaved the "Everlasting Hills," Alps, Andes, or Himalayas, are employed in the creation and perpetuation of great nations.

Since the times of the old Hebrew prophets a tree has been the standing emblem of a political power, yet it requires influences other than those which nourish the pine and the palm, the cypress and the cedar, to produce an enlightened and free Commonwealth. There is no greater fallacy than that which imposes upon the mind with ingenious analogies between that ethical organism called a nation and the perishable physical organisms of the animal or vegetable kingdom. These are aggregations of material particles united by physical laws. They must perish eventually by the very law of their existence, but a nation is composed of moral entities, united by moral laws, has all the elements of a perpetual life, and may continue as long as the sun and the moon shall endure. It is possible, not in the individual, but in the nation, to realize the dream of perpetual youth. "The State has no soul" is the dictum of an atheistic political theory. On the contrary, we say, with the famous French priest, Pere Hyacinthe, "What I admire most in the State is its soul." 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. Eradicate or weaken these, and the elements of decay at once seize upon it, and the vultures of ruin hasten to batten upon the carcass.

Truth, justice, honesty, virtue, patriotism, love of man and fear of God,

are the forces that constitute and preserve a great nation ; these are the pillars of the republic. These are the towers and the bulwarks of the State. While these remain no weapon formed against her shall prosper, and she will condemn any tongue that rises in judgment against her. In these is the hiding of her power ; by the possession or lack of these is a nation characterized and its work determined.

That physical causes operate to a greater or less degree in moulding national character few would care to dispute. All the great epochs of history, however, testify that while they may affect they cannot determine either the character or the course of nations. How often have nations, by the operation of some moral or spiritual power, been born as in a day ; the whole current of their national life been changed ; breathed upon, as in the vision of Ezekiel, by the Spirit of the Almighty and started with the speed of the racer on a new career toward a new goal. Notably is this illustrated in that great birth-epoch, the Reformation of the 16th century. Europe was in darkness. "God said, Let Luther be, and there was light." The changes were so stupendous, and yet so sudden, that the historian can find no simile so appropriate as that by which Christ describes his second advent : "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." The physical conditions remained the same, but new moral and spiritual influences were working with a wider sweep, with a more intense activity, and with a grander power.

Wherever the new life came there was the same sudden awakening, the same marvelous transformations, the same display of resistless energies and unconquerable heroism. Holland witnessed on her fertile dyke-defended plains as splendid examples of self-sacrifice, as stern a struggle for civil and religious liberty, as Switzerland, in her Alpine fastnesses, or Scotland, on her wild moorland wastes, or amid the deep recesses of her heath-clad hills. Infidel communism—and communism is the logical consequent of all theories of government which do not hold the State to be of divine origin—can create a mob frantic as the victim of delirium in its struggles against lawful authority ; but Christian morality alone can create and preserve a great, free, and enlightened nation. Could any madness be greater than that of the men who shriek like howling Dervishes against any national acknowledgment of God, ere yet the glow of burning Paris has passed from yonder heavens ? Americans, look across the sea and behold in France the results of theories that exclude God from the government of nations and refuse obedience to His law. We quote the words of a great master of language : "We must needs have the brush that painted the Apocalypse to portray those scenes which recall the destruction of Nineveh and Babylon. Reason is staggered before them. They are in history what those primeval convulsions of the earth were in nature. We now know what socialism may give birth to. In its train may be seen the giants of modern chaos heaping one upon another burning ruins. At one moment Paris, under the burning canopy which covered it, threatened with new crimes and new terrors, the screeching shells tearing through its roofs, seemed like a city under a curse. After these fearful nights came days still more terrible, when, in our streets, strewn with the dead, and traversed by thousands of prisoners, another fire was lighted in the hearts of men—that of fear, kindled with fury ; when the dregs of the human heart were stirred up ; when cowardice, united to cruelty, and not satisfied with implacable justice, called for summary vengeance. This was an hour when all the birds of evil omen cursed the very name of liberty ; but it was also that solemn, decisive hour when a nation, face to face

with the evils that are devouring it, should question itself, examine its own conscience, and fix the responsibility of a catastrophe which involves not alone its direct abettors. The ancient sibyl, to whom Rome shut her ears, comes to us in the form of this great calamity. She gives us warning; it is, perhaps, the last page in the volume of wisdom, but it is the page that I would read to my country in order that modern Democracy may learn therefrom the lesson which the events of these days should cultivate."

So writes Edmund de Pressense, a true friend of enlightened liberty, of scenes of horror which passed before his own eyes, who could say of them, if not *quorum pars magna fui*, at least *quæ ipse miserrima vidi*. Let us remember that a brilliant devotee of the Commune in our own country has said of Henry Delacruze, one of the high priests who prepared this terrible holocaust, that he was a man after his own heart, and that that branch of the Internationals that followed Woodhull through the streets of New York a few Sabbaths ago, recalling the ancient myth of Circe and her swine, was organized by one of the chief actors in these scenes of blood, who, not satisfied with banishing God from the earth, said if he were to go to heaven and find Him there, he would immediately throw up barricades.

The oriental nations are often pointed to as examples of stable government. The facts do not accord to the theory; but their repose, such as it is, is the repose of death, the calm of the Dead Sea, the quietness of the extinct volcano. There are no States, in the true sense of the term, in oriental countries. They have no progress, and consequently no real national life. They do not advance, and play no part in the world's history. India, China, Japan—what are they? Hordes, multitudes, masses, but not nations; nor can they be in their present moral degradation. Persia is a country peopled by a few millions, more or less, of human beings; all the physical conditions favorable for a great nation are there, but the moral are all wanting. There are Persian *people*, but no Persian *nation*—none possible, because, as one who knows them well recently said: "There is not a single man in Persia that is not an arrant liar, nor a single woman that has any correct idea of true virtue." A few European adventurers conquered India, two hundred British soldiers quelled a rising war of ten millions, and in the great rebellion of a few years since thirty-six thousand Europeans, all told, soldiers and civilians, men and women, crushed in an incredibly short period the rising revolt of more than one hundred and fifty millions!

Why is France to-day like a ship driven of the wind and tossed? Or, to come nearer home, what is the character of the masses on whose shoulders the Tammany robbers were borne to power? Who does not see that our country would go down at once in a sea of fire, mingled with blood, if the moral character of the New York voters was spread all over the land? But what is the State? Not a mass of men, nor an organization of men, but an organization composed of moral beings, subsisting in moral relations, a tree, but a tree whose particles are moral entities, and which must partake of the life and character of the substance of which it is composed; a tree like the fabled Igdrasil of the North, "every leaf a biography, every fibre an act or a word. The rustle of it the noise of human existence onward from of old. It grows there, the breath of human passion rustling through it. 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." "A nation," says Milton, "ought to be but as one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth or stature of an honest man, as big and compact in virtue as in body."

What is government but a system of laws? But what is law? To be binding, law must be founded in justice, but what is justice? An attribute of God and having relation in this sense only to moral beings. "Law hath its seat in the bosom of God, and its voice is the harmony of the world," a saying too sublime ever to become trite. Freedom regulated by law is the path along which the nation moves, and the goal which it seeks to attain; freedom removed from the lawless licentiousness that is the worst of despotisms, on the one hand, and from that despotic authority which results, ultimately, in anarchy upon the other. But, although law comes from God, it gets its practical expression and exerts its real power only through the will of the political organism of the State. And in this sense it is well described:

"Sovereign law, the State's collected will,
O'er thrones and globes elate,
Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill."

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. The refusal to acknowledge this fact is as much a piece of foolish impiety as that of the man who persists in refusing to acknowledge that God is the author of his existence. When good and wholesome laws become inoperative, or evil ones are enacted, a blow is struck at the very life of the State, its vital constitution is attacked in the very citadel of life, and its strength weakened. A strong government is one in which the moral power among the citizens is strong: that is, where there is a conviction of the majesty and moral obligations of just and wholesome laws—such laws as immoral legislators will never enact, and as an immoral people will not obey. The State is the law-enacting power; but can any conception be more preposterous than that of a power enacting laws, which must themselves rest on moral principles, or rather be the form or expression of moral principles, while the power is itself destitute of all moral character? It is singular that any man who has once arrived at the true conception of law as an expression not of human will but of the Divine Justice, should hesitate for a moment to endorse the fundamental principle of this reform. I believe it is one of the fundamental principles laid down by Blackstone, that no law which controverts the law of God is binding.

But, still further, the moral character of a nation is seen in the legitimate functions of government. "Government is for the protection of property," is a favorite expression of a certain school. Certainly true, although in their mouths the greatest of falsehoods, because put forward as the whole truth; for, as Tennyson says, "a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies." I remember that I was startled with this declaration of an eminent publicist: "Man holds communion with God in property." Yet it is a great truth. The earth is the Lord's, for He made it. The gold and the silver are His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. The right of property is, therefore, divine, and only a State recognizing its own divine character and origin can lawfully regulate its acquisition and tenure. Even on the lowest view which can be taken of government, moral character is essential to its administration. Where the rights of property are most carefully guarded, and each individual

secured in the fruits of his own industry, there wealth flows as the rivers to the sea. Hence the utter folly, to say nothing of the wickedness, of all communistic theories which propose the annihilation of the rights of property. Let this nation begin seriously to entertain such theories and her wealth will vanish as surely, and little less rapidly, than those of our sister city in the melting fires of her awful conflagration. These theorists connect with the protection of property also that of the person. What a field demanding careful study and application of moral principles opens before us in this function of government! What a range of punishments, from the petty fine to the awful death penalty upon the gallows! Each day, I pass the frowning walls of a gloomy prison in which some hundreds of human beings are confined, some of them for the term of their natural life, on behalf of the safety of society, that they may not endanger the rights of property or the life or limb of their fellow-men, and yet we are told that the power which thus isolates these persons, cuts them off from all that makes life desirable, even endurable, and consigns them to separation and solitude, no more to bless or be blessed by the influences of society, derives its power from the people, is accountable only to them, has no soul, has no moral character, and is responsible to no higher tribunal than the majority of citizens! If the theory claimed to be thus embodied in the present preamble of our Constitution in the words "We, the people of the United States do ordain this Constitution" is true, then has society no right to put the murderer to death, no right to punish crime as such, and, indeed, is ultimately without right to protect itself against ignorance, intemperance or any other evil which threatens its destruction.

Again, let us consider the subject of education—what a field for the exercise of moral influence! Why must the State educate? Not alone that men may be wiser, but that they may be better, that the feelings of moral obligation may be widened and deepened, and thereby the citizens be fitted to render that conscientious obedience to the State without which all laws are inoperative. No system of education divested of a moral character is conceivable. If we teach our children simply to read, we must teach them in the writings either of the good or the bad, of the moral or the immoral—indeed, you can not teach them even the meaning of the words moral and immoral without adopting some system of morality. Here is a mighty question on which we cannot enter, but which, started in this city, must be discussed until a final settlement is reached. God grant that its final settlement may be such as to increase the moral power of the nation, and not so tend to weaken those elements which are even already all too feeble in our national life. Permit me here to say that in this question of the Bible in the schools it is not the infatuated men whom we call infidels and Romanists, that are the most dangerous, but the enemies within the camp, the men who profess to believe the Scripture, and who yet unite with their foes in the attempt to displace them from our system of national education. For the former I feel a measure of pity, for the latter contempt for their folly and all the loathing of which I am capable for their sycophancy, cowardice, and inconsistency. The lawyer who stands forth the legal champion of the robberies of a Fisk or a Tammany ring is angel white in my estimation compared with him who, professing the faith of Christ, lends himself to an attempt to drive the Scriptures from the schools. The one strikes a blow which may be parried and weakened by a thousand influences; the other aims at the heart.

A still more practical view of this 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? If a nation has no moral character, and is accountable to no higher tribunal, if law is the determination of a mass of men, what is to prevent it from taking the shortest road to a release from these obligations? Or does the law, "Thou shalt not steal" bind a nation as well as an individual? Are there not such things as noble nations, magnanimous nations, mean nations, and arrogant nations? 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 Gen. Grant or Mr. Colfax?

The Conference of Geneva is to decide a question of difficulty between Great Britain and the United States, not between the people of the two countries as such, but between them as moral persons. It is Mr. John Bull against Mr. Brother Jonathan, the American eagle and the British lion who are at variance, two moral persons who are seeking the moral decision of a moral question. What law is to rule in this arbitrament, and whence come the principles by which the tribunal which is to make the decision is to be guided? This opens up the great question of international law, which, like all laws, can bind only moral entities, and must itself rest on moral grounds. Wheaton says: "Every State has certain sovereign rights to which it is entitled as a moral being, in other words, because it is a State."

When two States, two colossal men, who strike with the force of a million armed soldiers, meet face to face in the bloody duel of war, is there no law to control them but that of brute force, the will of the stronger? Is there no question of right or justice between these two giants? Are right and justice necessarily on the side of the strongest battalions, and when one falls beneath the superior strength of his antagonist, is there no further account? Is there no ultimate tribunal? Is there no possibility of a wrong which the avenging Nemesis may requite, on a nation as on an individual? Then is human nature a lie, then history was never written, then morality is a dream, and the throne of divine justice is the baseless fabric of a vision that melts away more suddenly than the morning clouds that gather about the rising of the sun.

With that oldest of divine institutions, the family, the parent both of Church and nation, the State must, does interfere, that lawless lust may not return from the bestial herds to bring back the reign of barbarism. Prior in origin, it is yet subordinate in order, and must be regulated by the supreme authority. The State establishes monogamy, the marriage of one man and one woman, as the form of the institution essential to its own existence and welfare, determines the age at which it may be entered, and requires its consent and seal to the contract before admitting its validity. Laws inflicting penalties for violations of the marriage covenant are enacted by all Christian States; failure to execute such laws indicates the decay of moral sentiments in the community, and is the certain sign of the approaching decadence of the nation. The State determines what shall be the education of the children of the family, at what period its claims on the members of the family begin, when the child may assert its freedom from the family restraints, and acknowledge no authority but that of the State itself. It regulates the inheritance, assumes the guardianship of minors, on the death of one or both of the parents—becomes itself the parent in the absence or failure

of parents to fulfill their obligations. It is, not only as violations of the purity of the human heart, as destructive of all the happiness of which the family is the source, but as direct attacks upon the State as dependent upon the family, that we are bound to oppose all theories that interfere with the sanctity of the family, and to restrain by the severest penalties of the law any attempt to carry them out into overt act, either by the advocates of polygamy, or the still baser advocates of free love. I say baser. Polygamy is heathenish; free love is simply brutal.

But does the State touch upon the sphere of religion? This also falls to be discussed by another during the sittings of this convention. Shall we have the Bible in the schools? The Supreme Court of the State of Ohio must now decide, and perhaps the Supreme Court of the United States ultimately. Shall we have a quiet Sabbath in which to worship God, free from the rush, tumult, and confusion of business? This has been decided in the negative. Sabbath business and Sabbath processions have carried the day thus far over the Christian sentiment of the community—over the rights of worship. Step by step the enemy gains, and the Christian sentiment is overbalanced by a contemptible minority of the people, because, in an unfortunate hour, they accepted a Constitution which has no clause recognizing the great moral power which has made and preserves the nation. The State composed of Christian men, the State in which Christianity is the controlling power, the State which would crumble to atoms in a moment if this influence were withdrawn, must urge its claims in a thousand points, and might as well attempt to escape from the blue canopy above us as from the questions which its presence necessarily requires.

This is but an imperfect outline of the character and some of the functions of the power which we call a nation, but sufficient to show that it is a moral personality, created in the moral sphere of God's government, and controlling by its continual presence and power the destiny of the millions of which it is composed, and whose interests are committed to its guardianship. If this being has no moral character, then the word has no significance; man walks in a vain show, his loftiest aspirations are the dream of a vagrant imagination, his spirit is that of the brute that goeth downward, and he may as well conclude that his moral convictions are, perhaps, deeper, but as vain as the religion of Mr. Darwin's dog barking on a summer day at a parasol shaken by the wind on the lawn. Our appeal, however, is not to the devotees of a degrading philosophy, but to the Christian people of the United States, who believe in God, in Christianity, and in the Bible. By all such, if they are consistent with themselves, the fundamental principles of this reform must be accepted; the arrangements of details and expressions may be safely left to the wisdom of the future.

But to whom is the nation accountable? To its own citizens? But they are the State. To other nations? Only in its relations to them, and just as each individual person has the right to pursue the end of his own being, without giving account to his fellow-men individually or collectively, so the nation has a right to pursue its own independent path, accountable not to one nor to all the nations of the earth for its conduct, unless it so endanger the common welfare of mankind as to require its suppression. The nation is accountable to God alone. Before His bar it ever stands, is continually undergoing its judgments, and receiving its sentence, and lives or dies according to its deeds. A great scholar of our age asserts that no nation has ever existed in one form for a thousand years. Neither Assyria, Babylon, or Rome, could boast of a millenium. Why have they perished? Not because of any law that de-

termines the rise, progress, decline, and extinction of nations; nor because the world's history moves in irresistible cycles, to which all greatness must submit; nor because society is an abyss throwing up from its depths endless transformations to be again engulfed, a monster, Saturn-like, devouring her own children. They have fallen under the just judgment of Heaven because of the violation of Heaven's laws, they have fallen because they have refused to learn Nebuchadnezzar's lesson; that "the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he giveth it to whomsoever he will." Many a Sarmatia has fallen unwept, but no one without a crime. We have but to give loose rein to the powers of evil that do already work in our own country with fiendish energy and Satanic aspect, and the result is soon accomplished. "All national greatness," says Neander, "depends on the tone of public feeling, and this again on the power of religion in the life of the people." And again, "The times in which unbelief has prevailed are, as history teaches, uniformly times of earthly calamity; for the moral depravation which accompanies unbelief necessarily destroys also the foundation of all earthly prosperity."

The nation is of God, is a creature of moral law and a subject of the divine government; change the names, and the burden of Tyre, of Edom, and of Ammon may be written of any nation that follows in the same path of wickedness; phenomena are transient but principles are eternal. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." "For three transgressions and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." "Fire, famine, and slaughter" are the avenging fires that follow in the pathway of national atheism, political corruption, and crime. The curse does not come causeless. Who are punished, being innocent; and where were the righteous cut off?

We have crushed out the head of the hydra that once threatened our national existence. There is the same irrepressible conflict between the theory of government which we advocate and that of the various foes that now threaten the nation's life.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan. We do not forget, however, that Christ has said that he came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. A nation, like an individual, reaches its goal through conflict, through agonies of war and strife. If she is to come forth triumphant, her garments will be red as are those treading in the wine press.

We follow the Master. The banner of the Captain of our salvation is before us. The leader of this army hath upon his vesture and upon his thigh a name written: "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," and we know that the final issue can not be doubtful. He is called, and faithful, and true, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. Though His vesture be dipped in blood, He goeth forth conquering and to conquer. The armies that are in heaven follow Him. He will overturn, overturn, and overturn until His power is established, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.

MR. CHAIRMAN—I believe we have held no convention on this subject without hearing the roaring of some wild beast, threatening blood. Well, sir, we are the followers of the Prince of Peace. We propose to carry forward this discussion in the arena of fair argument. But, sir, we have heard such threats before, and we have seen them put in execution, and the result is before the world.

We follow peace, but those who make these threats may as well know that they cannot intimidate or drive us from our firm purpose. If they attempt to carry

them into execution, they will be met by a resolution as determined as their own, and by a heroism that no system of unbelief ever inspired.

We are the sons of sires who in the face of a great moral conflict could sing:

Father in heaven, we turn not back,
 Though briars and thorns choke up our path,
 Better the torture and the rack
 Than meet the whirlwind of Thy wrath.
 Let tempests rage, let torrents pour,
 Let whirlwinds churn the raging sea,
 What is the turmoil of an hour,
 To an eternal calm with Thee?

At the close of Prof. Sloane's address, the Convention adjourned to meet the next morning at nine o'clock.

SECOND DAY—MORNING SESSION.

The Convention met at nine o'clock, and was opened with prayer by the Rev. Chauncy Barnes, of Athens, Ohio.

In the absence of Judge Hagans, the chair was occupied by the Rev. R. A. Browne, D D., one of the Vice Presidents of the Convention.

The resolutions reported by the Business Committee at the previous session were taken up *seriatim*. We much regret that want of space compels us to omit all report of the spirited and able discussion which followed. The principal speakers were the Rev. D. McAllister, the Rev. A. M. Milligan, Prof. W. Wright, Prof. Stoddard, the Rev. A. Ritchie, the Rev. H. H. George, the Rev. J. W. Bain, and the Rev. J. L. M'Cartney.

During the progress of this discussion, the Business Committee reported to the Convention the written protest of Mr. Francis E. Abbot against the movement, with a recommendation that Mr. Abbot be allowed to present it orally, and a motion that the pending business be suspended for this purpose. The motion was adopted, and Mr. Abbot spoke as follows:

I thank the convention for the courteous manner in which you have consented to listen to this remonstrance. I respect this movement very sincerely. It seems to me to have the logic of Christianity behind it, and if I were a Christian, if I believed in Christianity, I do not see how I could help taking my stand at your side. [Applause.] I stand here not as a Christian, but as a fellow-citizen of yours, a man who has as much interest in the government as you have, and at the same time, a man who does not share your Christian belief.

Without casting any reflections upon the motives which have led to this attempt to Christianize the United States Constitution, I wish to enter a most earnest protest against the attempt itself. I will not inflict a long document on your attention, but confine myself to a single point of vast practical importance.

If the proposed changes are ever made in the Constitution, their necessary result will be to prevent all persons except Christian believers from holding any office, civil or military, under the American government. No honest disbeliever in the newly incorporated doctrines will be able to take the Oath of allegiance required from all United States officials and soldiers. Only Christian believers and dishonest unbelievers will be able to take it; consequently the entire power of the government, both political and military, will be constitutionally concentrated in the hands of those who believe, or profess to believe, the doctrines thus incorporated.

The very large portion of the American people who do not believe in these doctrines will thus be rendered incapable of holding office, deprived of all representation in Congress and the other branches of the national government, and robbed of rights which have been hitherto recognized as theirs from the very adoption of the Constitution. They will be degraded to a subject class, ruled by an aristocracy of Christian believers.

This state of things once established the "appropriate legislation" by which the new policy must be sustained will necessarily involve the proscription and suppression of free thought, free speech, and free press. Whether intended now or not, oppressive persecution must be the consequence of the adoption of the proposed amendment. All your disclaimers of the intent or wish to persecute are utterly idle. The matter will not be in your hands. Persecution will grow like a cancer in the body politic just as soon as the coveted inequality of religious rights once poisons its blood.

Now, I urge you to consider well the temerity of your proposed usurpation of political power. I warn you against the peril of instigating the Christian part of our population to attempt this usurpation. I caution you against the folly of supposing that the majority of the people will finally consent to this subversion of their common liberties. I beg you to count the cost of this agitation before you carry it further. It is a wild and insane delusion to expect that the great body of freedom lovers will ever submit voluntarily, or can be made to submit by force, to any such outrageous oppression, whether in the name of God or man. I make no threat whatever, but I state a truth fixed as the hills when I say that before you can carry this measure and trample on the freedom of the people, you will have to wade through seas of blood. Every man who favors it votes to precipitate the most frightful war of modern times; and it is simply preposterous for any of your number to speak of the liberals as "threatening war." You threaten war when you avow a purpose to destroy the equality of religious rights now guaranteed by the Constitution to all American citizens. On the assailant in this struggle be all responsibility of its results!

In the name of freedom, and humanity, and peace, I appeal to you to recognize the real tendencies of your enterprise, and to abandon it as not only hopeless, but also most dangerous to the tranquillity of the land. If you are thoughtlessly favoring a scheme whose success would be the establishment of a Christian oligarchy on the ruins of this free republic, you will turn from it in horror when reflection has shown you its sure issue. But if you deliberately aim to compass this usurpation of power and this disfranchisement of all but Christian believers, notwithstanding the inevitable calamities involved, you will, if as honest and earnest as I believe you to be, point out to the people, the abyss that yawns before their feet. Of this be sure—there are millions of men in America who will never submit to be ruled by an oligarchy, whether Christian or anti-Christian. If I wished to destroy Christianity in this country by unscrupulous

means, I should encourage your attempt in every way; for the reaction you will create will open the eyes of millions to the fact that Christianity and freedom are incompatible. But because you are not only Christians, but also fellow-citizens, fellow-men, and brothers, I appeal to you most earnestly **TO BE CONTENT WITH THE EQUAL RIGHTS YOU NOW ENJOY BEFORE THE LAW**, without asking to destroy the rights of those who are not Christians in belief. I appeal to you to make no further efforts to fan into a flame the dangerous fires of religious bigotry; for the conflagration, once kindled, you will be powerless to control. Rise above the temptation to seek the triumph of your creed by political strife, and trust your cause, as I trust mine, to the power of truth over the human soul.

The Rev. A. D. Mayo took the platform and replied to Mr. Abbot's argument as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT—The gentleman who has just spoken has given you, in his written protest and his speech, the gist of the popular objection to the movement in which you are engaged. It is, that if in the Constitution of the United States we place a declaration that the nation is dependent on Almighty God, and bound to obey His holy law; that the nation is living under the rule of Jesus Christ, considered as the ruler of nations; that the nation is bound to conform its character and legislation to the law of Christian morality, the nation will be logically bound to deny all political rights to those who do not believe in Christianity; will be forced into persecution of all unbelievers in religion; will compel persons of his own way of thinking to fly to arms and inaugurate a bloody war.

Now what, in a word, do we ask shall be done in the Constitution of the United States? We ask, in substance, that the same declaration that now stands in almost every State Constitution shall be placed there. One would think the gentleman had come all the way from Toledo to Cincinnati to utter a prophet's warning against some future danger threatened by us. Why, he is now living as a citizen of Ohio, under a Constitution that substantially includes every idea we propose to place in the national charter. The Constitution of Ohio begins with a confession of dependence on Almighty God as the author of the liberties it is made to preserve. It declares that "religion is essential to good government." And by "religion" it means just what this proposed amendment means—that in order that a State shall endure, its citizens should be religious men; should live according to the highest idea of morality, which, in this State, is the moral system of Jesus Christ; and that the State itself should conform to that idea of morality in its legislation and character as it hopes for life. That's all there is in this thing. The gentleman need not have come across the State of Ohio to find this bugbear. It is in Toledo. As a citizen of Ohio he is exposed to all the danger of disfranchisement and persecution to which he would be exposed if this amendment was made. Has he ever suffered such disfranchisement or persecution in Ohio? Has his vote ever been challenged, or his political rights been curtailed, or his right to print the *Index* or to preach against the Christian religion, been forbidden because the people of this State have solemnly declared they owe allegiance to God, and that religion and morality are essential to good government?

The trouble with him and this class of thinkers is that they do not understand the practical character of the American people, or that a government is not a logic machine that takes out one abstract proposition from the Constitution, and with no regard to the genius, character, history of a people, rides

that out to chaos. Government represents the whole of a man. An American government is a practical affair. Like a good man, it believes itself dependent on God, and bound to obey the great laws of Christian morality. It does this with the most scrupulous regard to the rights of thought of every citizen. It 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 risen. And so far from being an instrument of oppression, no government on earth ever acknowledged the complete spiritual and political rights of man until Christianity, with its law of universal love and liberty, had inspired the souls of the people of the United States to make a government under which Mr. Abbot can denounce Christianity, and even threaten a new rebellion, with no one to molest him or make him afraid.

The glory of the great Anglo-Saxon peoples is that they are not ridden by this petty, logical mania for pushing an abstraction out to anarchy that curses the Red Republican party of Europe and America. The Anglo-Saxon mind constructs government according to the logic of human nature as a whole. It mixes liberty and order, worship and service, just as they are mixed in the soul of man. Man is the most contradictory creature in existence to a philosopher who don't believe in a soul. The governments of Great Britain and the United States are the only really progressive constitutional governments on earth, because they are constructed to fit man as he is in reality, not as a one-sided philosopher who thinks through a pair of blinders imagines he must be.

Now, the people of the United States, in the exercise of that large roundabout, practical, political wisdom in which they excel all people, have hit the head of this religious question. They say, Leave religion as far as concerns theological creeds to the churches. Leave religion as far as concerns ecclesiastical polity to the churches. But there is one phase of religion infinitely more important than sectarian theologies or church discipline on which men disagree: that everlasting obligation of man to obey God, and live up to the highest morality acknowledged by every people since the world began. That is the great universal religion of man. Christianity has lifted up and cleared up that religion of mankind so that the Christian morality is now the ideal of every civilized State. That universal, absolute Christian religion of obedience to God and love to man the people have declared the practical side of religion with which the State has to do. The obligation to obey that religion is directly or indirectly declared in every American Constitution. Nobody expects any American State will fully live up to that declaration. But the people have taken religion out of the hands of the priests and the secular philosophers, and placed it, in its practical shape as a law of Christian morality, in their governments, and stand around it to defend it as the source of all their liberties and the end of all their hopes.

It is easy to predict what things will come to pass in certain emergencies. Let us see what has actually been done by an American State within the last fifteen years. After the Rebellion closed, the people of the State of Missouri met to form a new Constitution. They were the loyal people of the State, more than half German; many of them of radical German tendencies in religion. They were just out of a dreadful war, and knew better than any philosopher could tell them the dangers besetting a State. What did they say on this subject of religion? They did two things. First, they put into the preamble of their Constitution a more full acknowledgment of dependence on God than any State; even thanked God for saving them from the rebellion: and surely only God

could have saved the State in that awful crisis of its life. In the solemnity of that hour, coming up out of a sea of blood, even infidelity was awed to silence, and the people cast themselves on Almighty God. Now did they go on, as the gentleman thinks they ought, and disfranchise every man who didn't believe in God? Why they enfranchised the very rebels they thanked God for delivering them from! Did they begin to persecute men who were not Christians? Did the Catholic Church come to the front as our friend predicts it will under a government that indorses religion and God? Why, that very Constitution of Missouri contains the most tremendous guaranty of religious liberty that can be found in any State. It even forbids a religious corporation from investing in or holding landed estate beyond a lot for a church, a school, a parsonage, and a cemetery, and specifies the amount of land to be so held in a city. Evidently the people of Missouri didn't see the bugbear that frightens our prophetic friend from Toledo.

Just what the people of the State of Missouri did will the people of the United States finally do. They will plant in their great charter of liberties an acknowledgment of the nation's dependence on Almighty God, and its duty to conform to the laws of religious or Christian morality. They will protect the rights of every citizen, and persecute no man for his religion until that religion drives him to disobey the law which expresses the will of the majority concerning the moral duty of the citizen; and that will is always open to revision by constitutional means. If a Catholic Bishop says the government owes allegiance to the Pope, the people will tell him that when the Pope becomes again a prince it will hold diplomatic relations with him as with any government; until that he must protect and manage his church without their help. If a secular philosopher tells them government is only a policeman to keep people from breaking each others' heads, they will tell him they will have nothing to do with his theories till he begins to disobey the law, and then he will learn that government deals with the whole of a man. Just this practical thing our people will do, because it is an Anglo-Saxon people, and believers in constitutional liberty, founded on reverence for God and the morality of the Christian religion. This position the people will take and will maintain. They will persecute no man save him who tries by force to destroy that sacred inheritance of American freedom, bequeathed by the fathers, and sealed by their own blood, and who ever tries to destroy this will himself be destroyed.

A resolution was adopted recommending the CHRISTIAN STATESMAN (Philadelphia, \$1.00 per annum) to the support of the friends of the cause.

After prayer by the Rev. W. D. Rossiter of Cincinnati, the Convention adjourned to two o'clock, P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The convention on reassembling was led in prayer by the Rev. James Murch of New Concord, Ohio.

FINAL REPORT ON ENROLLMENT.

The Committee on Enrollment presented the following report :

"The committee respectfully reports that the names of more than 250 persons from ten different States, have been enrolled as delegates to this convention. The States represented are Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Kentucky, and West Virginia."

The report of the Executive Committee was taken from the table and adopted. It is as follows :

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Your committee would respectfully report :

1. That ten thousand copies of the proceedings of the National Convention in Philadelphia, as reported in the *CHRISTIAN STATESMAN*, were published and distributed gratuitously.

2. The instructions given by your committee at that meeting to secure a General Secretary for the association who would give his whole time to the work, were fulfilled in the appointment of the Rev. D. McAllister, who entered on his duties on the 1st of October, 1871. His salary was fixed at \$2,500 per annum.

3. The preparation of a paper which your committee was instructed to secure on the relation of the State to religion, was undertaken by Professor Tayler Lewis, of Union College, New York. In his able hands it has grown into a treatise of considerable length and of very great value. It consists of four chapters, the first of which treats of the nature of the State ; the second of the impossibility of State neutrality in matters of religion ; the third, a careful definition of State theology or religious doctrines as recognized by the State, and the fourth a discussion of legislation on morals. Selections from the first two chapters will be read as part of the discussions of this Convention, and the whole paper will soon be ready for the press.

4. Your committee recommend that the number of its members be increased to twenty-five, and that the necessary change in the Constitution of the National Association be, and hereby is, adopted ; and that the presidents of auxiliary societies, or other persons designated by them, be entitled to seats as ex-officio members of the committee.

5. The report of the Treasurer, herewith submitted, shows a total of receipts, from February, 1871, to Jan. 29, 1872, of \$2,177, all of which, except the receipts for January, have been acknowledged in the *CHRISTIAN STATESMAN*. The expenditures have been \$2,086 30, leaving a balance on hand at this date of \$90 70.

Your committee recommends that a subscription for the treasury of the association be taken up during the sessions of this convention.

T. P. STEVENSON, *Chairman*.

WM. S. OWENS, *Secretary*.

In accordance with the last item of the foregoing report, the Convention entered into a subscription for the furtherance of the cause. The whole amount thus secured, including a few subscriptions received too late to be reported to the Convention, was, in cash, \$543.00 ; subscriptions payable within the year, \$1,317.00 ; total, \$1,860.00.

While the subscription was in progress, the Rev. Chauncy Barnes, of Athens, Ohio, endeavored to secure the attention of the Convention for an exposition of what he called the "practical government of Christ on the earth." During the recess he had hung on the wall an

enigmatical chart, representing his ideas, and he wished opportunity to explain it. The President decided that his remarks could not be entertained, but the gentleman persisted in speaking.

Prof. Sloane :—Mr. Chairman, we cannot be responsible for the wild schemes of enthusiasts, and cannot take either the odium or the credit that attaches to them. The picture on the wall is a self-evident absurdity. I do not know what it is or what he wishes to say, but the time of the Convention cannot be taken up with matters that have no bearing on our work.

Mr. Barnes at last yielded the floor.

The Business Committee presented the following supplementary report, which was adopted :

1. That the delegates in this Convention be recommended to hold meetings in their respective localities to hear reports of its proceedings, and ratify the resolutions which it shall have adopted.

2. That the Executive Committee be instructed to publish in pamphlet form 20,000 copies of the proceedings of this Convention.

3. That the friends of the the movement be urged to form auxiliary associations, placing them in communication with the National Association, as the most effective method of furthering the cause.

The Rev. D. McAllister then read the following paper from the pen of Prof. Tayler Lewis. It consists of extracts from the first and second chapters of the treatise on "Religion and the State," referred to in the foregoing report of the Executive Committee. The argument is not presented in its completeness, important portions being necessarily omitted for want of space. To be properly appreciated it must be read in its full, closely connected form in the treatise itself:

NEUTRALITY OF THE STATE IN MORALS AND RELIGION A THING IMPOSSIBLE.

The question, what is the State, may be answered theoretically, or practically. The latter mode is preferred, because it brings us most directly in contact with certain other questions intimately connected with it, and which are becoming, every day, more urgent. Instead, therefore, of attempting to give its abstract idea by any *a priori* reasoning, let us endeavor to ascertain what it is as a *fact*—as a real power in the world. Its most practical definition may thus be found in what it actually *does*, or claims to do, and which nothing can prevent it from doing, whether any theory, true or false, would concede or deny such action as belonging to its essential nature.

In thus defining it, it may be said, in the first place, that the State is a power claiming and exercising supreme jurisdiction over a certain portion of the earth. Here it acknowledges no superior unless it be God. It is the sovereign arbiter of life and death. It fixes the civil status; it regulates the social action; it determines either directly or permissively, wholly or partially, according to its sovereign pleasure, the rights, duties, and relations of all human beings within its territorial sway.

The State assumes to determine the public good for which it exists, and for this

end, true or false, claims the highest prerogatives of sovereignty, whether directly exercised, or for any reasons held in abeyance. It is all there, either as an active or latent force. The State takes charge of the person and of the personal conduct. It defines crime. It makes its prohibitions and commands the measure of the lawful and the right. Hence, it raises or lowers, makes consistent or inconsistent, the standard of public morals, whether it disclaim any such intention or not. It employs force to an unlimited degree. It punishes by the infliction of pain to any amount it may deem necessary. It banishes, it imprisons, it puts to death.

It is, however, enough for us here simply to present the picture of an omnipotent earthly power—a power of life and death, claiming unlimited and illimitable control over millions of human beings now existing, over generations yet unborn—determining, in fact, *how* they should be born, or under what conditions, with or without their consent, they should commence their individual earthly existence—above all, an *educating power*, educating by its laws and its political action, educating directly and positively by assuming to prescribe what shall be taught, and what shall not be taught in the schools—a power that must, to a great extent, determine the social character, and fix the moral standard of an age, or of ages yet to come.

Can such a power be neutral; can it be in a state of indifference in regard to a human interest so vital, so pervasive, so ineradicable, as that of religion? To every serious and intelligent mind the question would seem to answer itself from the very force of the terms in which it is stated. There are, however, arguments drawn from both reason and experience, which put beyond all controversy the proof of such impossibility. Whatever difficulties, therefore, may be in the way of adjustment, we must prepare ourselves for the one side or the other of this dire alternative.

FOR OR AGAINST.

The State must be for or against religion, for or against Christianity. That which may be called the mind or the disposition of the State, as exhibited in its legislation, its jurisprudence, its general political action, and, above all, in its claim to be an educating power, must have an attitude of friendship or hostility. It can not avoid contact with this vital, all pervading influence, and that contact must be one of amity or repulsion.

But what Religion? The objector who starts this query doubtless thinks that it disposes of the whole matter. Under it he raises all sorts of *ad captandum* difficulties, very easily suggested, but only showing his incompetency to deal with the great subject in either its theological or its political bearings. His question can be answered. The essential difference between the relation of theology to the State, or a State theology, as it may be called, and that which it bears to the individual creed, or the individual salvation, can be clearly stated, and in a way consistent with the largest civil and religious liberty. It is from confounding these two relations that all the difficulty arises. That, however, may be shown in another place.* We are concerned here with the general proposition: *The State cannot be neutral*; and we would boldly lay it down under the sanction of the three greatest authorities, Revelation, Reason, and Experience. Its truth could be shown by direct *a priori* argument, from the very nature of man and society; and on such argument would we now insist, were it not that a rapidly developing experience is furnishing an easier method, and one better adapted to the mass of readers, especially in its preparatory aspect.

* One chapter of the treatise is especially devoted to the treatment of this point.

IRRELIGION WILL NOT ALLOW NEUTRALITY.

There was a time when with some degree of plausibility, the general question of a national acknowledgment of religion might have been regarded as purely theoretical. It is now becoming an eminently practical one. The decision will in some way force itself. It is becoming manifest, as it always will become manifest, whether in the experience of individuals or of communities, that sound theory cannot long be neglected or contemned without the risk of most serious practical evil. The impossibility of this asserted neutrality has been shown by the action of the irreligious party, or the party of indifference as they would style themselves, even when religionists were disposed—as large numbers of them are still disposed—to let the question entirely alone. It is becoming more and more manifest that professed non-religion is irreligion—not a mere negation, as its name would seem to imply, but a most positive, hostile and implacable principle of action, stronger than political party spirit, intolerant as that sometimes is—stronger even than the most bigoted religious sectarianism. It is itself a sect—the worst of all sects, the most fierce and aggressive. One must be blind indeed, or most ignorant, who does not see the evidence of this as furnished by the past century of European history, especially that of France and Germany, and as lately manifested in our own country. Unbelief, negative as it assumes to be, will not live in harmony with belief, even of the most liberal kind. It contends for supremacy; it demands that its own side be taken in all cases of collision, even when such collision is the result of its own positive and aggressive action. Atheism is “a troubled sea that cannot rest.” It is an unquiet spirit that will not let Christianity alone, or cease from crying out against it, as did the ejected demons of old. It will not suffer the State to be neutral. It now demands—and its large success is encouraging it more and more to demand—that from our statute books, our common laws, our judicial proceedings, our rules of evidence, our forms of indictment, our statistical records, our long settled legal maxims, our national observances, our educational methods, there shall be utterly cast out every thing that seems to recognize any religious sentiment, fact, or idea. This positive, aggressive character of irreligion, is the peculiar feature of our age. Such, indeed, was always its nature, but time is bringing out its open development in a way which the most worldly stolidity will soon find itself incapable of denying.

THE CHANGED ASPECT OF THE QUESTION.

Thirty years ago there might have been some apparent plea for avoiding the direct agitation of the measure now proposed, namely the acknowledgment, in the national Constitution, of God as the source of all law, the recognition of some transcending divine government, or, to adopt a more current phraseology, some “higher law” regarded as beyond the reach of change or popular amendment—something that should be to the Constitution what the Constitution is to the lower legislation of the land supposed to be enacted in accordance with it. It might then have been said—and the writer was once disposed to take that ground—we have such acknowledgment impliedly; we have it substantially, as something recognized, to a good degree, in legislation and jurisprudence, though not as clearly expressed as might be desired in our fundamental law. The State is already Christian; our laws are Christian; our courts recognize the fundamental ideas of Christian ethics; our greatest jurists, such as Kent and Story, have decided that our Common Law code rests on Christianity; the Scriptures are taught in our schools; the nation, in its public action, pays

respect to religious observances; every time an oath is administered there is an appeal to the ever-living God, a recognition of a divine justice as a necessary help to the human in securing a sacredness to testimony that cannot be dispensed with, and yet cannot be derived from any mere human sources. We have all this, it might have been said; we have the substance, why then seek the shadow, which, instead of strengthening, might only cast suspicion upon the reality? Would not a mere verbal recognition have the look of a vain patronizing formality, less honoring to God—if honoring him at all—than the silent diffusion of religion and morality in our land? This was certainly plausible; but time has shown, or we might rather say, God has shown, in permitting the natural development of irreligion as a positive power, how false and inconclusive such reasoning is.

— THE LOGIC OF EVENTS.

Whatever seeming weight it may once have had, that apologetic reasoning can now no longer be employed. The perilous experiment of ignoring a divine ruler has been tried and its failure is rapidly developing itself. God will allow no such silence, much less any such profession of indifference. We cannot escape here under the plea of collective action. The word of Christ shall show itself true: "He that is not for me is against me, he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." No reason can be given why this is not applicable to communities as well as to individuals—to everything, in short, capable of intelligent and moral action. It includes all human agencies having an influence for good or evil. Our literature must be for or against Christ. Our political economy must be grounded on His laws, or it is directly and positively anti-christian. *A fortiori atque a fortissimo*, must this be true of that greatest of all earthly institutions which we call the State—that mighty agent claiming to exercise a sovereign power, a power of life and death, a penal power, a right defining and a right creating power, a relation determining power, above all, an educating power, over successive generations embracing millions and millions of immortal human beings. If there is any truth that may be said to be practically as well as theoretically self-evident, then is it certain that what we call politics must be religious or irreligious, christian or anti-christian. "Every plant which my Father in Heaven hath not planted shall be rooted up." If we trust that we are of God's planting, that trust should be avowed. The position of indifference, even if it could be kept from becoming hostility, must be the most odious, as it is the most insulting, to one who claims supreme homage from all lower powers assuming to exercise his prerogative of "establishing justice" upon the earth.

THE STATE MUST DECLARE ITSELF.

Some stand must be taken somewhere. Some position must be assumed, be it ever so general, and that position must be one of friendship or of hostility. There are things, and some of them justly deemed as of high social value, towards which the state may maintain an attitude of indifference. But it cannot be indifferent to Christianity. To put it on a par with atheism, or any form of heathenism, is such a denial of its uncompromising claims as amounts to direct antagonism. Christianity is a power in respect to which every other power—every social power at least—must declare itself. We venture to incur the charge of repetition here, because it is the central point in this discussion: The state cannot be neutral, it must be religious or irreligious. So it was held by the most eminent of the ancient legislators before the birth of Christ. An irre-

ligious community, one that did not acknowledge the gods, or something divine as the ground of civil obligation, was a most unnatural, as well as impossible monster. The old Testament everywhere speaks the same language. Since the coming of the Saviour, the ground has been still farther narrowed. Every modern state must be Christian or anti-Christian.

Neutrality is impossible. Let this be once seen—as it must be seen by every one who reads human nature in the light of the Scriptures, and for all serious men the argument is at an end. It is the point which Dr. Spear, and Mr. Beecher, and other professedly religious advocates of State indifference never meet. Evangelical and orthodox as they claim to be, they seem to have far less comprehension of its importance, or of the demands of Christianity as a social power, than others who have been regarded as belonging to a more liberal or free-thinking school. They are fertile in stating all manner of popular objections, some of them clothed in the language of the old scoffing infidelity, and others of their own invention. They abound in *ad captandum* questions accommodated to the most unreasoning popular prejudices. What Christianity? they ask. Shall it be Mormon Christianity? Shall it be General Grant's Christianity? Shall it be the Christianity of the Congress, or of the Common Council of New York? And then what will the Jews say, or what becomes of the veto power of those among us who believe in no God? This is very easy work; but the deep question we have stated? This they never grapple with. They evade it in every possible way, whilst the whole tendency of this mere surface treatment is to blind men to its incalculable importance. Settle this first, and it may be seen that there is some rational, liberal, and yet Christian mode of dealing with these minor difficulties, or that there is a theology, a Christianity, that may be predicated of the state, defining its relations to God and Christ, without interfering with any dogmas, that may be regarded as belonging to denominational creeds. Let it be understood that the state must be religious or irreligious, theistical or atheistical, Christian or anti-Christian, and it may be found, practically, that questions and objections so confidently pressed as unanswerable are far less formidable than they appear to be when seen through the magnifying and distorting medium of a flippant popular declamation. If there is no avoiding this issue, if the tendency must be in the one direction or the other, then for all religious men, for all thinking men, the main question is put at rest. All that remains is the most rational adjustment that can be devised for preserving the great truth in harmony with the largest measure of individual religious liberty.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ON OTHER MATTERS NOT REGARDED AS A BAR TO STATE ACTION.

The common mode of reasoning on this subject presents a strange anomaly. It must either adopt a rule in respect to religion, which it applies to nothing else—making a distinction for which no reason can be given—or it must base itself upon the utterly untenable and impracticable position that nothing is to be favored, or disfavored, in the general action of the state, in respect to which there is the least difference of opinion. How then can the state educate at all, even though its education be ever so secular, as it is called? It is impossible to keep down this question. The exclusion of religion from our common schools, the casting out of the Bible, will go but a very little way towards putting it at rest. It will rather have the effect of bringing it up in still more rancorous and unmanageable forms. Carry out the absurd principle, and the state can have no distinguishing character whatever. There can be nothing predominant, no such thing as a *mind*

of the state, exhibited in its constitution, legislation and jurisprudence. What right has any man, claiming to think at all, to confine these questions to the provinces of Religion and Morality? Surely it cannot be on the ground that they have nothing to do with the social well being. Men differ on other questions of general interest, many of which as it could be shown, are inseparable from the higher matters thus irrationally tabooed. They differ as to the very foundation of government: they are not universally agreed in respect to the origin, ground and nature of human right. Why not ask with just as much pertinency, What Republicanism? For here, too, there are vast differences of opinion, as well as on the general and minor questions of religion. Politics must be taught in our schools, so say all; our children must be early imbued with American ideas; they must be made familiar with the peculiar principles of our peculiar political system. But here the questions come again, and they are just as pertinent as Dr. Spear's famous inquiry, What religion? Why may it not be asked by any one who chuses to exercise a veto power; what doctrine of nationality shall our children learn, what theory of state right, what system of political economy, what ethics of marriage and the domestic relations, what ideas of property, what notions in respect to that most important matter of the public credit and responsibility? What religion? says Dr. Spear in contending for education without religion. But may it not be asked with equal justice; What education? Are there not also different opinions here, and shall any man or any set of men, however few their number, and however worthless their opinion, have a veto power in respect to any course of instruction that may not be in harmony with their crude ideas, however it may be demanded by the predominant thinking of the Community? There is no end of such questions; and yet we must have some general social character, in other words, some *national mind* in respect to all these matters. Whatever difference of opinion may exist, still in respect to all of them may it be said, that the state must be for or against. Neutrality is impossible. If this be so in regard to the lesser responsibilities, how fearfully important does the alternative become when stated in regard to that higher concern, which while transcending all mere earthly interests, is ever inseparable from them. Is neutrality possible? It is the pivotal question, we say again; every thing turns upon it, and yet it is one which the writers chiefly referred to, and who gain credit by appearing in the character of religious men, will never look in the face. They have never bestowed a paragraph upon it, although the right solution of it is of such primal moment. The true answer scatters to the winds all their popular appeals, all their *ad captandum* sophistry about religious liberty, and equal rights. Universal toleration, the allowing every opinion, however much it may be out of harmony with the predominant social mind, to gain such weight and credence to itself, as it may intrinsically deserve, or as the talents of its advocates may secure—this is religious liberty in its widest and most elastic definition. But this, it seems, is not enough. It claims a right beyond this. The state shall favor me, it says, or it shall favor nothing. The negative character it may sometimes assume does not alter the case in the least. It only makes it the more positive, the more bitter and intolerant in its assertion. Stated in the plainest and most undeniable terms, this vaunted "religious liberty" is nothing more nor less than an absolute claim of right on the part of any set of men, however few their numbers, however low their intelligence, however false their principles, however debased and sensual their lives, to veto any thing and every thing which the moral heart of the nation demands as conservative of its highest well being. All should come to

their level, nothing should rise above it: We defy any man to show why this is not applicable to education in all its departments, as well as to morality and religion. This veto power may demand the expulsion of the classics, or of any system of moral philosophy, so far as they are taught in any school patronized by the state, on the same ground that it clamors for the exclusion of the Gospels or of any literature that has ever been deemed sacred. Its course is ever downward, and there is no consistent stopping-place, except at that lowest point which sets itself up as the limiting measure for all. Blind indeed must he be who fancies that religion alone will suffer in this process. It foretakens the doom of every thing that is highest and noblest in human culture.

We have fairly stated this veto doctrine. It is a fearful position for men to take, especially religious men, theological men, who are supposed to know something by experience as well as study, of the depths to which these questions descend in the very roots of our humanity, so fearfully compounded of the animal and the divine. If indifference here, or the assumption of indifference, be in truth a most positive and even deadly hostility; if this law of our being must show itself in the social as well as in the individual character; if the State must favor religion or irreligion; if this conclusion is involved in one of the most emphatic declarations of the Saviour; if it results inevitably from the nature of man as a rational, moral and immortal agent, then where are they? On which side of this unavoidable conflict are they ultimately to be counted? If they maintain that we are in some way to be regarded as an exception to this law, or that the woes denounced upon nations that refuse to acknowledge God have no application to democratic or republican governments, on them lies the burden of proof. All history, as well as all revelation, is certainly against them. Constitutions, written or unwritten, cannot change the nature of man. Heaven and earth may pass away, but the word of Christ shall stand. "That which is not for me is against me;" every human agent that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad—tends inevitably to evil and ruin. No assumed collective character can modify or merge the awful responsibility.

ARGUMENT FROM EXPERIENCE—NEW DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN UNBELIEF.

This central question cannot much longer be evaded. The argument is rapidly passing from the region of theory to that of sharp experience. An *atheistical* party is rising in this country. Religious dogmas, it is said, are changing their character. Whether that be so or not, it is certainly true that the assaults of unbelief are assuming strange and monstrous forms. We call it the *atheistical* party because it goes very far beyond any thing that has heretofore been called infidel or deistical. It has passed beyond questions of orthodoxy, once so called, beyond difficulties in relation to the Bible and its inspiration, it assails the very being of a God, in any sense that possesses the least moral or religious value.

It used to be a question we have sometimes heard debated, whether there ever really was, or could be such a thing as an atheist. Lord Cherburg denied it; the old English infidels all denied it; even Voltaire held such a belief to be a rational impossibility. But it is a question no longer. There is an increasing number of men in England, Germany, France, and America who fearlessly avow the name.

There is a still greater number, fast treading in their steps, who evasively deify nature, but to the utter exclusion of prayer, of providence, of worship, of every thing, in short, that associates with itself the ideas of reverence and responsibility. It can no longer be disguised that atheism, blank atheism, with

all its desolating horrors, is becoming the characteristic of modern unbelief. It is fast sweeping all the more timid forms of doubt into its bottomless abyss of darkness. In one sense we have reason to rejoice in this law of "development." It clears up debatable ground; it presents us with sharp and decisive issues; it is fast dispelling the fog that hangs over this question of neutrality; it is compelling men to take sides whilst carrying many along with it into perdition; it is driving back to serious religion other souls who see the middle grounds swept away, and who cannot bear to take the awful leap. Hence, we say God be thanked for this ordination of moral causes, as sure as any law of the physical world, that error *must develop itself*; it cannot stand still; it must reveal its hideousness. The old Christian belief once abandoned, it cannot stop short of atheism; and to this all ungodliness is now fast hastening. Natural theology, as it was once called, is left far behind. Nature, instead of being a lower subordinate to a higher sphere of being, and finding its only meaning in such relation, is *all that is*. Force and motion are the only realities. Thought, idea, soul, so far as there are any phenomena corresponding to those old words, are only modifications of matter. All things high and holy, all things that would inspire reverence, are gone. Human dignity is gone, human *rights*, so called, are merged in the universal sea of force. Every idea of absolute right disappears with the ideas of God and spirit. All Christian denominations, all shades of religious belief, all who would maintain that there is any thing in man above the physical, are called upon to unite against the soul-denying, God-denying monster—to hold it for what it truly is, *hostis Dei atque humani generis*, "the enemy of God and of the human race." It has changed its position. It no longer asks for tolerance simply. It no longer says, "Let us alone, Jesus of Nazareth, what have we to do with thee?" It has become a perturbed and uneasy spirit, a most fierce and aggressive spirit. It would seem that the Infinite Wisdom has left it to itself—to the most full development of its evil nature—in order to prove beyond all question a truth most important for man to know, that non-religion is irreligion, and that this, instead of being the placid negation it once claimed to be, is a most positive and implacable power. In a word, it has exchanged the bland philosophic indifference, assumed as a characteristic of former enemies of Christianity, for a bigoted intolerance, that will brook nothing which reminds them of God, and judgment, and immortality, or any thing, in short, that would prove man to have something essentially higher than the beasts from whom they say he has been developed. Whatever religionists may be disposed to do, these men will not suffer the State to be neutral. They know, too, that it is impossible. In this respect they are better theologians than Dr. Spear; they are sharper reasoners; or rather their intuitive perception of consequences, their keen Satanic instinct, is a more unerring thing than all his syllogistic logic.

The untiring spirit of hostility with which they assail every usage or observance, once held sacred, shows them to be fully aware that this pretence of state indifference is simply a favoring of their side and they are determined to make the most of it.

NO REAL RECIPROCITY, AND, THEREFORE, THE ALLEGED NEUTRALITY A DECEPTION.

Dr. Bellows contents himself, at last, with the ejection of the Bible from our common schools, though acknowledging how much he was shocked at the first mention of the proposition. We honor him for his candor. We have no doubt

of his hearty love for the Scriptures, or of the pain he must have experienced at the thought of this book of the ages being thus ignominiously cast out, whilst so much that is superficial, false, immoral, and irreligious, is still retained, and is likely to be retained, notwithstanding any objection on the part of those whose most cherished opinions are offended by such a course. He yields to this specious argument of neutrality, which has thus come in to cloud the question, and place it on a false basis. We cannot, however, help feeling that there was a better logic in that first revulsive shock, than in his subsequent reasoning. It was not mere sentiment; it had a strong ground of truth lying deep in the reason and the conscience. The ejection, in its first aspect, struck him as an aggressive act, and no sophistry can give it any other character. It was impossible to remove that book from the place it had so long held in education without fixing a stigma upon it as something, in some way, dangerous to liberty and the social good. Its effect must be to give an infidel bias to the mind of every child who witnessed, but could not explain, the strange phenomenon. Why should extracts from Shakespeare be found in all our reading books, whilst the words of Christ, and Paul, and Moses, were thus thrown out? The wound could not be healed by the plea of reciprocity. Experience is showing how utterly false this is. Irreligious books *do* come in; they will come in, more and more; whilst any objection the religionist may make will be at once set down to the score of a narrow-minded bigotry insensible to the progress of the age. We are not to seek far for the reason. Unbelief, clouding itself in negations, has an immense advantage given to it by this hollow assumption of neutrality. Religion's instruction is in its very nature positive—positive, we mean, in form as well as in essence. It is open and honest; it presents an unmistakable target to its enemies; but irreligion conceals itself under every disguise. A system wholly subversive of the idea and feeling of moral retribution is all hidden under an empty babble about physical law and obedience to nature. The conscience is never touched by it, whilst the undermining process goes on steadily. Neither the child nor his parent, perhaps, can explain how it is, but the instructions and reading books of the school-room are bringing into the soul something which is more and more felt to be at war with the positive teachings of the Scriptures. And so the poison is perseveringly given, whilst the antidote is studiously excluded. Innumerable are the ways in which this is done, and the names it assumes. With a careful avoidance of certain terms, there may be inculcated a system subversive of the first principles of gospel morality. It makes wealth or success in business "the chief end of man;" it lays down its conventional laws of trade, all having reference to this sole aim; it habitually excludes the idea of another life and of a higher responsibility; but this is all fair; it is neither religious, nor irreligious, it is said; it takes to itself the name of *science*, it is the history of civilization; it is political economy, and surely that is a legitimate branch of neutral or secular education. So Darwinism comes in, with its beastly doctrine of human development, soul as well as body, from the reptile, or even from the toadstool; it makes no direct attack upon Christianity; it contemptuously ignores its existence; but that, too, is *science*, and certainly *science* belongs to secular education. So Buckle and Lubbock may come in, with their negative views of man, their false assumptions, and their silent denial of all which is truly highest in humanity; but that is the Philosophy of History; it has nothing to do with any sectarian or religious tenet, and no one but a bigot would object to it.

That quackish book with its shallow animalism, Combe's Constitution of

Man, is everywhere in our schools and school libraries; it has been repeatedly commended by some who claim to be our highest educational authorities. We need not dwell upon its character; it is enough for our argument that it is utterly objectionable to many of our most thoughtful as well as most religious men. But what does that avail? To be sure, all irreligious as well as religious teaching should be excluded; the plea for neutrality and reciprocity demands such consistency; but then Combe's book falls under neither of these heads. It professes to be a system of mental philosophy, and who can deny that that belongs to secular education? It is an easy method of learning ourselves on the outside, of determining character by cranial protuberances; it is not hostile to Christianity; it only dispenses with the painful study of the conscience, and renders unnecessary the searching examinations to which men are led by the reading of the Scriptures. We might carry these parallels to any extent. Whilst religion has a positive front, atheism, or what is equivalent to it, comes in under every false name, and every conceivable disguise. There is no reciprocity; there can be no such neutrality as is pretended, and this exhibition of utter unfairness fully proves it. It was some feeling of this, perhaps, that caused the shock in the mind of Dr. Bellows. He should have trusted it as a surer guide than any logic, which, assuming "religious liberty" for its premise, has for its conclusion an absolute veto on all that deserves the name. And that, too, as exercised by the smallest and worst sect in the community.

**NOTHING LESS DEMANDED THAN THE UTTER DE-RELIGIONIZING OF THE
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE.**

We use this strange term because nothing else can so well express the ruthless and unrelenting spirit that may dwell under negative forms of opinion. Why will not all serious men, whatever may be their denominational differences, look this dire alternative directly in the face? The irreligious enemy knows better. It is this evil sagacity, to which we have alluded, that sees many things to which the religious consciousness had not been before aroused, because it was resting securely in the tacit feeling of our being a Christian State. The irreligious discernment, on the other hand, was quickened to discover the numerous points in which government unavoidably comes in contact with the morals, religion, and religious observances of the people. All these they are determined to make occasions of unrelenting hostility, and under these specious names of neutrality and equal rights. It is not the question of the Sabbath merely, or of sacred days as essential to the very idea of worship, even as that is inseparable from the faintest conception of religion. It is not the oath merely, as the conservative bond of individual obligation, or as the one common religious act that connects the visible justice on earth with the invisible Justice in the Heavens. It is not the question merely of prayers in Congress, or of chaplains in our armies and navies, or of religious teaching in hospitals and juvenile houses of refuge, or of public days of prayer in seasons of national calamity, or of thanksgiving for national deliverances. All these, indeed, are now ruthlessly assailed, and if the arguments of Drs. Spear and Beecher are to prevail, must be wholly swept out of our legislation, ignored in all proceedings called political, and denied all recognition in our courts. And here, we may say, is another thing which these writers will never look in the face. They wholly avoid telling us whether they are prepared to accept these far-reaching, yet inevitable consequences that must result from the direct carrying

out of their own reasoning. Not only must all laws of the kind referred to be repealed, but there must be made to cease all observance of any religious custom, or respect for any religious idea, by public bodies of any kind, or by any subordinate institutions receiving their establishment from the State. As it knows no God, it can do no act, make no proclamation, use no language, legislative or judicial, that expresses or implies the recognition of any idea connected with this prime and vital truth. The conclusion is one that results directly from this logic of total indifference. Only admit the premises, and the reasoning is most obvious. Legislatures, courts, conventions, are simply servants of the people—of all the people—and must respect the opinions, reasonable or unreasonable, true or false, of the smallest faction that may claim to be heard. Each has equally the veto power. For Congress, therefore, to adjourn over Sunday, for courts to do the same, for corporations of any kind, created as they are supposed to be for the public service of all, to cease doing business, or giving accommodations on that day, out of regard to any religious idea, would be a violation of irreligious rights. It would be paying respect to a religious tenet, and that would be church and State. Again, it is the people's time they are using for sectarian purposes. Time is money, and legislatures and judges paid by taxes on the people, have no right thus to waste it. It may be said that we might still have holidays, law-sanctioned festivals, sänger-fests, etc., on other grounds than the religious. They might be demanded for rest and recreation; but what gives the right to employ, even for this, a seventh portion of time, and in so doing to give something of a superstitious sanction to a dogma, which those who take nature alone for their teacher wholly reject? No one can say that we are fighting shadows. The movement is steadily onward; the demand has been made; and if Dr. Spear's argument be worth anything, there is no consistent stopping-place short of this result. There might be some poor attempt to keep the appearance of a Sabbath divested of every religious feature, but there could not be well conceived a greater moral nuisance than that would be in a country like this, where there is no æsthetic or historic reverence to come in as a poor substitute for the religious sentiment. What a hell upon earth would our great cities become, and in time our land become, with one day in seven given up to idleness, to the theatres, to dissipating shows, to unchecked intemperance, or to the driving on of that flood of worldliness, which, in spite of all religious restraint, is even now threatening destruction to all that is noblest and purest in our social life. And here, we cannot help remarking, is to be found one of the surest tests of a genuine as distinguished from a spurious philanthropy. We may well suspect the self-knowledge, at least, of any man who claims to be an advocate of temperance, a friend of moral reform, an enemy of gambling and prostitution, or even zealous for human rights and the moral elevation of the race, and who is, at the same time, for divesting the Sabbath of its religious idea, and turning it into a day of "harmless recreation," as it is styled. Hostility to this one reform is the Ithuriel's spear whose touch reveals the emptiness of every other. Far better that the Sabbath were utterly swept away, utterly forgotten in the land, or devoted to unintermitting labor, than that it should be retained without that feeling of sacredness which alone imparts to it its inestimable moral and social value.

The discussion of the resolutions was then resumed, and after slight amendments, they were unanimously adopted as follows:

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That the State, as a power claiming and exercising supreme jurisdiction over vast numbers of human beings, as the sovereign arbiter of life and death, and as an educating power, has necessarily a moral character and accountability of its own.

Resolved, That it is the right and duty of the United States, as a nation settled by Christians, a nation with Christian laws and usages, and with Christianity as its greatest social force, to acknowledge itself, in its written Constitution, to be a Christian nation.

Resolved, That as the disregard of sound theory always leads to mischievous practical results, so in this case the failure of our nation to acknowledge, in its organic law, its relation to God and His moral laws, as a Christian nation, has fostered the theory that government has nothing to do with religion, and that consequently laws in favor of the Sabbath, Christian marriage, and the use of the Bible in the schools are unconstitutional.

Resolved, That we recognize the necessity of complete harmony between our written constitution and the actual facts of the national life; and we maintain that the true way to effect this undoubted harmony is not to expel the Bible and all idea of God and religion from our schools, abrogate laws enforcing Christian morality, and abolish all devout observances in connection with government, but to insert an explicit acknowledgment of God and the Bible in our fundamental law.

Resolved, That the proposed religious amendment, so far from tending to a union of Church and State, is directly opposed to such union, inasmuch as it recognizes the nation's relations to God, and insists that the nation should acknowledge these relations for itself, and not through the medium of any Church establishment.

The Convention then adjourned to meet at 7 o'clock, P. M.

LAST SESSION.

The Convention reassembled, Judge Hagans in the chair.

The exercises were opened with prayer by the Rev. D. G. Bradford, of Knoxville, Ill.

The following committee was appointed to nominate officers for the ensuing year: The Revs. J. F. Morton and W. H. French, and H. Martin, Esq.

The following address was then delivered by Professor O. N. Stoddard, LL.D., of Wooster University.

THE RELATION OF THE WRITTEN CONSTITUTION TO THE TRUE CHARACTER AND WELFARE OF THE NATION.

It is a deeply important question, and fundamental to this whole movement, whether the State can have a moral character, and what constitutes it. I say whether, for, though few would deny to the State a moral character, yet the idea has a firm hold of but a few minds. If it has none, then its acts are neither right nor wrong; and it has no higher responsibilities, even if they admit the name, than a herd of brutes. If the State has a character, then it must also have some sort of personality. None will deny to it a legal personality, else there would be nothing which foreign States could recognize as amenable to the laws of nations, and with which they could make treaties. That person or personality which we call the State does indeed differ from that of the individual, in that it is composite or associated in its nature. But if the State is subject to international law, it must be equally so to moral law, and consequently must have a moral character. This is clearly established by the fact that its ends and aims are all moral. It appeals to moral principles in the enactment and execution of laws, protects the persons, character, and property of its subjects, and holds over them the dread power of life and death.

But moral character belongs only to rational beings either as individuals or in an associated capacity. They must be capable of knowing what is right, and

must conform their actions and affections to a standard which contemplates them as right or wrong. The perception of moral relation must be first in order in the construction of character; for these relations form the standard by which the person must regulate his being. But the standard can not form itself. It can come only from an agent who creates and adjusts the relations which make the standard. That agent also must be so wise, so good, so just, and so absolute in power that none can question his right or fitness to make the rules and require obedience to them. Indeed, the perfection of the standard in all parts and relations must be so complete that nothing can be added, nothing subtracted; and that the knowledge of no created being can overleap its boundaries. The authority to create and enforce it must be more than finite, else a lingering suspicion would arise that further knowledge would detect some defect and impair its obligations. Manifestly that agent must be above all that created beings can ever reach. He must be God; and as He can not appeal to any one higher than Himself, *He, Himself, in His character and perfections, must be the standard.* The conclusion is plain: *there can be no true morality without a recognition of God.* Any bonds less perfect and less strong than those forged from His perfections, are wisps of tow in the fire. Those who look to any inferior source than God's character for their principles of morality, whether for individuals or States, have a foundation hardly as stable as the shifting sands of the desert. States resting upon such an unstable basis will be overwhelmed by the first storm, without hope of a resurrection. The world is dotted with the graveyards of such States—not "God's acres," either.

But something more is needed to form a clear and just conception of the great moral standard than those general views of Deity, embraced in the terms infinite love, justice, and power. Man's poor, palsied heart can not grasp or properly feel the force of these terms. He needs to have the subject illustrated by a specific case, shall I say by the practical exhibition of moral character? True he has already many such in the world's history. But he has one which overshadows all the others, and girds them in its mighty embrace. The obedience, sufferings, and death of the Son of God to magnify the very laws which express the standard, to set forth their immaculate perfections and unyielding claims, and make a way for the escape of transgressors, all these blazon forth justice and love with a most searching light. This crowning exhibition of moral character is so plain that a child can see it, and yet so profound are its issues, that an angel can not fathom it. To this example, as an act of kingly authority, States as well as individuals would do well to take heed.

When such a standard has been proved to exist, so pure, so imbued with love, and so absolutely unchanging, it is not difficult in its light to solve all the perplexing problems in the fall of States. The philosophy of morals becomes the philosophy of history. The disease that wasted the dead nations may have seemed trifling, but it was a canker gnawing at the seat of life. Whether death comes to a State which ignores God suddenly or by slow decay, it comes, nevertheless, as surely as came the cross to the Son of God.

But it may be necessary to notice here an objection urged against the view first stated, viz: that the character of God, as revealed in the Bible, is the only infallible standard of moral rectitude. Such a standard as we need, may, it is said, be found elsewhere than in the Bible. To this we assent in part; for the material world does declare the glory of God. His works and His laws, manifested in the material universe, are indeed signally full of wisdom and goodness. How much I admire and love them the studies and pursuits of a life must

testify. Besides, man's intellectual and moral nature are not dumb witnesses. These grand powers, with their divine authorship stamped upon them, read the coming shadows of the future, and echo to the sounds of immortal footsteps. And there is a monitor within, explain it as you please, which beckons away from wrong, and entreats to holy living. And there are the busy workings of some great hand in human affairs. The most skeptical sometimes see it. The poised sword has now and then been observed impending for generations over rapacious and godless States, and has finally descended, red with vengeance, to vindicate outraged justice and despised goodness. All these manifestations of Divine character are of inestimable value, but cannot be a substitute for the clearer revelations of His word. I will join any one in gathering up the precious truths made known in the works and ways of the God of Nature.

I trust I have the assent of my hearers to the proposition I have endeavored briefly to establish, viz: *That the character of God, as made known to us in his Word and works, is the only infallible moral standard, and that neither States nor individuals can have a moral character except by assenting and conforming to the Divine Standard.*

But the principal question to which all that has been said is preliminary, now presses for an answer. *What are the elements which constitute the moral character of the State, and where are they to be found?*

All will admit that the State has personality in a legal sense, but that personality can not, it is evident, be the sum of all the persons in the nation. But whatever that personality may be, and I can not discuss that question here—in it the moral character of the State inheres.

It will also readily be admitted that the moral character of the State can not be found by adding together the moral characters of all the persons in it. It would puzzle one to affix a moral value to the character of a State which was obtained by adding together all that was good in the character of its subjects. Would the morality of the State be simply increased in quantity by the addition, so that we could properly term it a very large morality in the State, or would it become more perfect in kind? Besides, if the good qualities are to be added to make out the State's moral standing, should not the bad also be added to make out its immoral standing, and then the balance be struck between them? The moral capital of a State would be estimated by a sliding scale; bankrupt to-day while some epidemic of dishonesty was running riot; at par to-morrow while a paroxysm of good intentions ruled the public mind! One would be utterly at a loss to know how to proceed, if required to determine the character of a State by taking a moral census of all its persons! Even if gifted with a discernment that could read individual character under all disguises, even that would not enable him to fix a value to the character of the State. After all his journeyings, he would be compelled to say he had not seen the State. The State is not before you when you see all its subjects. You do see the agents who establish the State. You must also see that Constitution which organizes the State. You must see the great principles it asserts; what the higher authority from which it derives its own; what the obligations arising from that authority; what the laws and usages springing from this charter, and finally, what the sacredness and binding force of these principles and laws. Ah, that composite personage we call the State now begins to emerge from the darkness. We see its form and features and character clearly defined. Whatever, then, may be the opinion of any one as to what constitutes the character of a State, it is certain that it is not the character of any one of its subjects, neither is it the sum, or sum and differences, of all their characters.

It may aid us in understanding the character and responsibilities of the State, to glance for a moment at those of the individual. The responsibility of an individual is evidently a personal matter between himself and the being to whom he owes the obligations. It is inherent in himself, and is for himself, and he can not transfer it to or share it with another. For the performance of the duties those relations impose in the family, the community, the State, and inclusive of all, duties to God, he is held individually responsible. Every man must answer in a future life for the performance of his trusts; while the State renders an account here. What the individual is, not what he seems or is reputed to be, will be the ground of proceeding in his case. But if this statement of individual character and liabilities is true, then it follows that the character and liabilities of the State are distinct from those of its individual members; for, if not distinct, then the State is punished hereafter in the persons of its subjects. In this view the State as such has a very easy time. It has, indeed, a name, but no personality, no character, no responsibilities; or, if it has these in any degree, they are entirely overlooked in the final awards of justice. The hands of justice are very soft and slippery when dealing with the State, but hold the individual with the hard clutch of a vise.

The State is an official person, ordained by God, and holds a delegated authority from Him. The principles which shape and control its acts are from Him, but the forms with which its authority is clothed are determined by its subjects. But if its person be official, its character must be official also. We must then seek the character of the State in the official principles it adopts. And where shall we look for these principles unless in the Constitution which proclaims to the world the truths from which the State is to draw its life; which defines its rights and powers; which establishes its various departments, and organizes them into one symmetrical whole? The laws and usages which spring from this constitution, as their parent, are but the exponents of its character.

Men, associated under a constitution, and laws in keeping with it, form a composite person, or an associated personality, while the moral principles of that constitution form the moral character of that person, and impose upon it its obligations.

The principles which the State solemnly and deliberately announces as the standard by which it is to administer justice must be accepted as the State's authoritative declaration of its own character. If in it there is no recognition of God as the author of all government, no recognition of Him as the Being to whom the State is responsible for the exercise of such dread powers, no recognition that the end and aim of all its powers are to advance righteousness among its own subjects and throughout the world, then by what right can we claim that the State even accepts these as truths, and intends they shall be taken to represent its true character? Do not the principles of the Constitution measure everywhere the obligations and accountability of the State? and will it not refuse to be charged or credited with any practice or policy not legitimately embraced in its organic laws? To say that the State recognizes God sufficiently, when the very instrument, which declares the great truths that the State receives as the guide of its life, is utterly silent as to whether there even is a God; when the laws and usages that make such recognition could be blotted out, as for any support the Constitution could give; to say this is sufficient is building a mighty structure upon an exceedingly small foundation. Any usage not inferable from its great charter can continue only by sufferance, or because no great number care to oppose it. We admit that a usage may finally have the binding force of law, and, like all other laws, become an exponent of character. This is more likely to

happen in a nation whose history covers centuries, and which is governed largely by an unwritten code. But any mere usage in a nation like ours can hardly become anchored so firmly that the surging waves will not detach it and send it drifting among the broken fragments of other wrecks. Nothing can become old where wave after wave of a population, ever renewed, sweeps past. In fact, is not the respect for these usages diminishing daily, and is there not evidence that we need more and more in the State a recognition of God's authority among us, to stand like a wall of adamant against the deep and threatening corruptions? God's great and beautiful law of marriage is rudely assailed and totters to its fall. May we never live to see the day when the people of this nation shall be trained and nurtured under the laws of easy divorce and free love. So clamors loud and deep come up on every side against that best of all days, that no law shall recognize it and sanction its observance. Blessed Sabbath! Rest for the weary! It is full of tenderness and love to man. It has sunshine all over it. And the Bible, too; man's best friend; the revealer of the life to come; the only comforter of sorrow-stricken hearts; its kind voice must be hushed in our public schools. Still further; Our confidence in the power of the oath over the conscience is weakened. Even perjury—that dread crime—has its price. In a word, are not the very foundations of our national life shaken, and do we not need more even of God's official presence in every department of our State? Is not all this in some degree the result of neglect on the part of the State to acknowledge in her organic laws even the existence of the Being who gives to the oath its binding sanctions? Many have thought, and still think, that the laws and usages upon these moral questions are sufficient to characterize the State as reverential to Him. We once thought so; and had our present laws and usages proved sufficient, we would never have commenced this movement. But the opponents of Christianity have assaulted our Christian laws, because they saw there was nothing recognized in the fundamental law which would sustain them. We were startled by the shock, but found no guns and no ammunition within. Point after point had been surrendered, and it became evident the citadel must fall. Now, we propose to yield no further the defences of our national life.

May I not ask those who think this movement unnecessary to inquire whether these evidences of the Christian character of the State are not in danger of being overthrown, and mainly because there is no Great Being recognized who alone can give them authority and stability? The opposers of our Christian laws and customs point triumphantly to the Constitution, and lo, it is dumb! And so our tongues can but stammer till we are able to lift that grand charter from the dust and gild it with the sheen of God's glory. When this is done, the State will then have solemnly admitted that its existence and all its just powers are from God, and that to Him it is accountable for the exercise of its high prerogatives. *This official respect for the Divine Being, manifested in the laws, and in their administration, and in the obedience of all, especially of all in authority, will constitute the moral character of the State.*

That officer who admits that government is an ordinance of God, and that the State is responsible to Him, and who administers the laws with constant reference to his accountability, has done his duty as an official. He may have false views of his own personal relations to God, but that does not vitiate his official act. If all the officers of the State are like him, of that State God would say: "Well done, good and faithful servant." On the other hand, if they fail in all the above respects in their official duties, their personal characters, however good, will not save the State from the charge of ungodliness.

It may be asked: Has the individual character of the people no relation to that of the State? Most assuredly it has. While they are not identical, their rootlets intertwine. They both spring from the same source, but one is official while the other is personal. We cannot expect a high moral standard to be embodied in constitutions and laws unless it first exist in the hearts of their subjects. But the latter cannot be a substitute for the former. Neither do we believe the moral character of a State could long survive general corruption in the people. All that constitutes its character would exist, if at all, only in dead words and forms. Admitting all this influence of individual character upon that of the State, still it remains an essential condition, as we believe, for the perpetuity of our State that an acknowledgment be set in its very crown, and on its breastplate, that its *life is in God and from God*. Accompanying this, there must be personal work in the home of every one's heart. Still it must be remembered that personal virtues are not the virtues of the State, and cannot be made over to its account in the day of reckoning. On the other hand it is equally true that they must exist, or the virtues of the State would soon perish.

But might not a Christian people, who ignore God in their Constitution and laws, be preserved and prospered, notwithstanding? I reply, the State, if atheistic, must perish. A reform, if in time may save it from utter extinction; but its atheism must be replaced by the highest type of theism.

We cannot say that God will not in some cases show especial favor to his people. He may open a way of escape to them while their state is engulfed in the awful storm. But so far as they constitute the personality and are responsible for the character of the State, they must suffer with others. All the social disturbance, the anarchy, the bloodshed, the tears for the dying, and wailings for the dead; all the agonies which attend the destruction of so great and strong a life, must be shared by them. We have just passed through a signal illustration of this truth. There was no blood on the lintels of the doors to turn away the destroying angel from godly houses. The good and the bad fell side by side; the circle around the hearth-stone, from which went up morning and evening a pure worship, still has its vacant seats. All these facts in our own history and in that of other nations can be explained on no other ground than the one I have attempted to sustain, viz: that its standard of right is God's character, and this it must recognize; and that it has itself a moral character official in its nature; and that this character must conform to the standard or it is justly held as forgetful of God, and must suffer the consequent pains and penalties.

We must not forget before closing to acknowledge with devout gratitude that there are evidences in the character of our State that it took its rise among a Christian people. The forms of thought and speech among such a people could hardly fail to impress themselves upon their laws and official customs. Let us hold fast to these, for they are precious footprints in our history. They show that the people were right at heart; but when they made a body politic majestic in its proportions, *they forgot to put their great heart into it*. Its charter contains admirable principles of human rights; but the deeper principle which gives vitality to these is wanting. Our otherwise noble Constitution has no God in it. Just where the recognition should be and must be to put our State among those that fear God, and give it a moral character, there it is not.

If that greatest of all truths, the recognition of a God and accountability to Him, headed like a mighty advanced guard the other noble and precious truths in that precious document, it would lift all the others into a higher and holier atmosphere. It would be the great sun gilding the beautiful hills and valleys of

earth with its own ineffable glory. Such a light in the Constitution, throwing its gorgeous coloring over the lesser lights, could not be disregarded. Such a truth, solemnly uttered by the greatest among States, would waken an echo in every heart. I have faith in man, and that faith compels me to feel that few nations are so low as to be able to stifle the voice of such a truth.

We do not suppose that the mere insertion of the amendment sought will of itself save this State and nation in the future. But it will be one step, and an essential one, in the cultivation of a God-fearing spirit, and in the construction of a right character. It will indeed be the crowning glory of our official character, and when supplemented by the same recognition in individual hearts, how blessed would be this nation, and how strong and beautiful a life it would live! And that life would not have its cycle of decay and dissolution, as some affirm, but would gain strength and beauty till earth has no more nations, and needs no more States.

The Rev. T. P. Stevenson, one of the editors of the *CHRISTIAN STATESMAN*, read the following paper on

THE LEGAL EFFECT AND PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT.

* There is no question which the advocates of this measure are more frequently called to answer, than this: What good will it accomplish? What will be its effect, and what is its practical value? Unless we can answer this question clearly to ourselves, we shall not labor earnestly, and we cannot labor intelligently, in the cause we have undertaken. Unless we can answer it to the satisfaction of the christian public, we shall fail, and we shall deserve to fail. It is the more necessary to answer this question now, because there is in the public mind a feeling of satiety with constitutional changes, a weary wish to be done with agitation, and a natural impatience with those who seem to compel the discussion of difficult or unpleasant questions. I say who *seem* to compel, for those who advocate the Religious Amendment of our National Constitution are not the real agitators of the question which it involves. It has been forced upon us. With our christian origin and antecedents, with the religious character of our Government imperfectly developed, and with the character of the immigration which has poured upon us, this controversy is an incident in the history of American institutions which might, from the first, have been foreseen to be inevitable. Since the Constitution was framed, this measure has always been necessary; we may thank the enemies of christian morality and religion for having, in recent years, demonstrated its necessity. Those who advocate it, are simply the exponents of the christian sentiment of the nation, striving to guard the most cherished features of our institutions from the overthrow which threatens them. I shall state, as briefly as I can, the Legal Effect and Practical Value of the Constitutional Amendment which we propose.

I. *It will be a becoming act of national homage to God.*—Nearly all men who believe in worship at all, that is, all except Atheists, believe that God is the God of nations, and that they ought to acknowledge this relation by worshipping him. All nations, heathen and christian, have worshipped their gods. Since this nation believes in Jehovah as the God of nations, have we not a sacred and inalienable right as a nation to worship our God? This is claimed as the inalienable right of the individual. Shall it not be conceded to the nation? This right we claim; this right we have always exercised. This right we will maintain, with

our lives, if necessary, as the highest of all rights; a right which no individual, and no minority of individuals, can limit or abridge. The right to worship God includes the right to worship him in such ways as his Word requires, or as our sense of duty or propriety may suggest. We have the right to set apart days to his honor; the right to hallow his Sabbath, and publicly to honor his Word; the right to pray to him, when we assemble for the administration of justice, or the enactment of laws; the right to inscribe this name, if we think proper, on every coin issued from our mints, on every public building, on all public documents, and on our Constitution itself.

But there are special reasons why such an acknowledgment should be made in the Constitution. According to the principles which have already been so ably vindicated on this platform, civil government is the ordinance of God. The powers it wields are derived from him. The ends it is to serve, are appointed by him. The law which it is to enforce, has been given by him. And government is completely dependent on his favor and help, for success in its work. Read the ends of government, as set forth in the Preamble to our national Constitution—"to establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, and promote the general welfare." Tranquillity, safety, prosperity,—who bestows these on nations? Who turns war into peace to the ends of the earth? Whose are the shields that defend the earth? These are blessings, the bestowment of which, God claims as his own prerogative. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." When a nation, therefore, undertakes to constitute government, it is bound, alike by the dictate of reason and the sentiments of religion, to have regard to God. Men assembled to organize government have no right to take the first step in their work, without regard to him by whose authority they act, and whose ordinance they propose to set up. Failure here, is impiety. Failure here, unless repaired, provides disastrous failure for the nation. The patriot can have no reasonable hope of the success of a government set up by a nation, which forgets or despises God. The nation, therefore, ought to make it plain to its own consciousness, plain to all its citizens, that in this matter, it is acting in the fear of God.

Now, how shall a nation realize this fact to its own consciousness, except by some public act or declaration? Prayer, worship, in the Convention which frames a nation's Constitution, would be valuable as a testimony? It would be truly a national act. But it might be misunderstood, as prayers in Congress sometimes are, as the personal devotions of the members of the convention. It is not an act which is brought directly to the notice, and which receives the express sanction of the whole nation. It is, moreover, a transient act. It passes away in the hour in which it is performed. History may preserve the record of the fact, but it may fail to preserve it. History, however, has preserved for us the painful fact that the convention which framed our National Constitution did actually refuse to have prayer offered during its sessions. Benjamin Franklin, in a brief, but effective speech, which is preserved in his collected writings, moved that "prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessing on our deliberations be held in this Assembly every mornning, before we proceed to business." Dr. Franklin himself appended a note to his own manuscript, saying—"The Convention, except three or four persons, thought prayers unnecessary!"—*Sparks' Works of Benjamin Franklin*, Vol. 5, p. 155.

But now suppose that the nation writes in its Constitution a distinct acknowledgment of God and of his moral laws; that is a declaration of equal dignity, authority and permanence with any other provision of the Constitution. It is

raised by every vote cast in favor of the adoption of the Constitution which contains it. It is known and read of all men. It solemnly evidences to every citizen, and to the world, that the nation sets up its government in the fear of God. There is no other way of equal authority and value in which this declaration can be made. All other acts are performed through the government, but the Constitution is the voice of the nation itself. All other acts of national homage, like fasts and prayer, and inscriptions on our coins, are transient, not permanent; they are dependent solely on the will of the current administration. But a constitutional acknowledgment of God and his law, is the continuous act of the nation in all its generations, the voice of the whole people, like the sound of many waters and unceasing as the ocean's roar, doing homage to God, the Nation's Upholder, Lawgiver, and Judge.

The design of a written Constitution is simply to exhibit and declare the exact features of the unwritten Constitution, or the actual character of the nation. A written Constitution is valuable, precisely, in so far as it conforms to, and truly expresses the real character of the State. So far as it departs from it, it is worthless. Therefore, a written Constitution is discussed by Judge Jameson, in his invaluable work on "The Constitutional Convention," simply as an "instrument of evidence," by the aid of which, the citizens arrive at a common knowledge and mutual understanding of the actual constitution of the body politic. But there is no fact in the vital constitution of a nation, which is so important in itself, or fraught with such important consequences, as its fear or disregard of God. There is no fact, therefore, so important to be truly evidenced in the written Constitution. Our Constitution, in its present form, with no acknowledgment of God, no allusion to a higher law, with the name of God excluded even from the oath which it prescribes, without a single word from which it could be determined that this is a christian nation,—we believe to have been false to the true character of the nation, when it was framed; we believe it to be false to the national character to-day. If the nation shall now, upon mature deliberation, adopt an amendment, such as we propose, it will be evidence of the highest character realizing to the consciousness of the nation, and declaring to the world, that most important of all facts concerning us, that this nation fears and serves God—the God of the christian Scriptures. If, after full discussion, the nation refuses to do so, it will be additional and painful evidence that, as a nation, we are without God, and, therefore, without hope, marching, as other nations have marched, to inevitable destruction.

II. *It will furnish a legal basis for all christian laws, institutions, and usages in our Government.*—This statement has been embodied in the call for this Convention and for two preceding Conventions. We deem it important, and wish it not to be misunderstood. It is, "all christian laws, institutions, and usages in *our Government.*" We do not propose to find a basis for the laws and institutions of the Church, of Christian families, or of the closet, in the National Constitution; but for that great body of laws, institutions, and usages, in *our government*, which are of christian origin, and which serve to distinguish us as, in some important sense, a christian nation. The chief of these are prayers in our Legislative Assemblies, occasional days of fasting and Thanksgiving appointed by the State and National Governments, the maintenance of chaplains in our army and navy, in prisons and asylums; the use of the Bible in our public schools, the religious ordinance of the oath, laws guarding the sacredness of the Sabbath, enforcing the christian law of marriage, and suppressing blasphemy and licentiousness. These features of our Government are regarded by the majority of this nation, as of

the very highest value. They serve to express and so to nourish a sentiment without which no nation has ever been organized, and no nation can long exist—a sense of public responsibility to God. If we give them up we lose all shadow of claim to be called a christian nation.

Now there is not one of these existing features of our civil institutions that is not actively and steadily opposed. The courteous and intelligent opponent whose voice has been heard on this platform to-day will candidly admit his opposition to these existing features of our institutions. He and his helpers are working zealously and persistently to overthrow them all. It is vain to close our eyes to the success which has attended their efforts. They have in many places practically abolished our Sabbath laws. In other places they have driven the Bible out of the schools. Laws against blasphemy are nowhere enforced. And there is remarkable consistency as well as persistency in their movement. They are not content that a shred of our christian character shall remain. Every acknowledgment of religious truth must be wiped out from our whole public life, until, as Prof. Lewis has expressed it, “our whole political page becomes a pure, unbelieving, irreligious, Christless, Godless blank.”

And by what line of argument do you suppose they seek to conduct the popular mind to this conclusion? Oftenest, and most plausibly, they reason thus:—“The Constitution is our political covenant, on the terms of which we have united in forming the American government. In that constitution there is no reference to any system of morality or religion, and therefore it is unfair to foist upon the government, in its administration, a religious character not agreed upon in our mutual covenant.” Or again they say: “The Constitution is the charter of the Government. It contains all the functions it may properly perform; all the powers it may ever exercise. The exercise of any religious function is therefore extra-constitutional, a clear departure from that secular sphere which alone is covered by the language of the Constitution. This departure may have been tolerated by general consent in the past, but it must cease whenever any party falls back, as we now do, on the letter of the Constitution and demands strict adherence to its provisions.”

A German Secularist lands on our shores. After a proper time he seeks to be invested with the rights of citizenship. The American Constitution is held out to him as the fundamental bond of our political union. He finds in it no recognition of a God in whom he does not believe, or of a law whose authority he denies. He assents to it and becomes a citizen. A school tax is levied on his property. He pays it, and then demands that the reading of the Bible cease in the schools. “It was,” he says, “no part of the compact by which I became a citizen that I should be taxed to maintain public instruction in the Christian Scriptures.” It may be said that in becoming a citizen he accepted the Constitution of Ohio, it may be, as well as of the United States, and thus did become the party to an acknowledgment of the Christian religion, not as his religion, but as religion of the State. But acknowledgments of God have not always been found in all our State Constitutions. And why should they? If it is good for the National Constitution to be devoid of religious character, why is it not good for a Constitution of a State, of all the States? And must not the National Constitution exert a powerful and constant influence to draw the State Constitutions to its own likeness in this respect? Suppose he has become a citizen in a state whose Constitution contains no acknowledgment of God, then *how will you answer his argument?*

I have not invented these arguments and put them into the mouth of any class

of men. I take them as I find them. How largely the arguments of counsel retained against the Bible in the Cincinnati school case turned on the non-religious character of the National Constitution, you are aware. The New York *Independent* at that time said: "The American people who have no theology in their governments, State or National, who have consented to live together as citizens under a common civil polity, without any reference to their sectarian differences, and, indeed, *without any reference to religion at all*, are simply true to the essential principles of their political covenants and life in dispensing with religion in their State schools whether in the form of teaching or of worship. Fact it is that neither Christianity nor any other religion is part of the law in this land, and this fact constitutes an unanswerable argument why the State cannot perform the functions of a religious teacher. The truth is, it has no religion to teach."

The Internationals remonstrated against the order prohibiting their parade in New York on the second Sabbath of last December, because "nothing in the city charter, in the Constitution of the State, or of the United States will be violated by the proposed procession."

The *Volksblatt*, of this city, last July, argued thus: "We ask fair play, and base our demands on the non-religious character of our political institutions. *On the ground of the non-recognition of any religion by the national and state constitutions*, we deny that they have any right to invoke the state or municipality to their aid in order to confer upon them an official predominance over those of a different faith, or of no faith, or to lend a special legal protection to their specific mode of worshipping God. Those of no faith in this country are entitled to the same religious rights and privileges as believers, and the laws are binding upon Israelite and Christian with equal force."

I do not say that there is no rebutting argument to all this. There is a great deal to be said on the other side, drawn from established usages, from particular statutes, from the precedents of our past history, and from important judicial decisions. But I do say that they have an argument too in the silence of the constitution, an argument which is strong in proportion to the overshadowing dignity and authority of that instrument, an argument which is used as a powerful lever to overturn the most cherished and important features of our institutions. We must wrest this argument from the unbeliever or he will wrest from us every argument which defends our christian institutions. We can no longer leave so precious, so vital a body of laws and usages as those which defend the Sabbath, Christian marriage, the sacred name of God, and the oath, exposed to the argument drawn from a Constitution which contains no utterance in their favor. We must throw around them the shield of Constitutional provision, we must provide for them a basis in our fundamental law, or they perish out of our life as a nation.

III. *It will restrain the government from acts in violation of Christian morality.* Government is the agent of the nation, the organ through which the nation acts. As a moral agent it is capable of violating the laws of God. It can be truthful or false in its diplomacy, faithful or perfidious in its observance of treaties and covenants; pure or corrupt in the administration of justice. It can break or keep the Sabbath. It can make unlawful war, oppress the weak or grind the faces of the poor. For the acts of the government the whole nation is responsible. Other nations hold it so. If the Government of Great Britain commits acts of hostility against us, we make war, not on the British Government, but on the British nation. France last year complained bitterly that she was held responsible for the crimes of the Empire, after the Empire had fallen, but her remonstrance did

not avert the terrible punishment which Germany chose to inflict. God, too, holds the nation responsible for the acts of its government. During the early part of David's reign there was a famine in the land three years, year after year, and when David inquired of the Lord, the answer was: "It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites,"—God, in his righteousness, holding the nation responsible for the unexpiated crimes of the former dynasty. But the nation, in turn, has absolute control over her government. She can bind it by law, she can alter or abolish it at pleasure. And a written constitution is a law enacted by the nation for the regulation and restraint of its government.

Now, I ask, what provision has this nation against acts by the government in violation of Christian morality? God says: "When thy king sitteth on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, and he shall read therein all the days of his life that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes to do them." The injunction is addressed to the nation, which is to require this of her rulers. We have not put that law—the law by which the nation is to be judged for the conduct of its government, into the hands of our rulers, nor by the faintest allusion have we referred them to it. And this error has shown itself to be an evil. We are in danger to-day because of the sins of our government. Let me point to one, the desecration of the Sabbath.

A year ago the Board of Visitors to the Naval School at Annapolis found the studies prescribed and pursued on the Sabbath as on other days. A vigorous recommendation against this practice was embodied in their report to Congress. I believe it was effectual for a time. We have no security for the future.

A year ago last December, on Sabbath, the 4th of that month, the telegraph carried from Washington the following intelligence: "The trains yesterday and to-day brought large accessions to the number of Congressmen already here. There is already more than a quorum of each house, and by to-morrow morning it is expected that nearly every member and Senator will have arrived."

The most profound sentiment of respect for his high office does not forbid me to allude in this connection to the frequent journeys of President Grant on the Sabbath.

The Russian Grand Duke was received by our navy in New York Harbor on the Sabbath, with the thunders of cannon. The reception which God had postponed for a month, by the winds of heaven, to the deep anxiety of two nations, could not be postponed for a day in honor of his Sabbath.

The Congress which adjourned finally on Monday, March 4th, 1867, sat through the entire previous day. Out of deference to the common law which invalidates legal transactions on the Sabbath, they did not adjourn on Saturday, but took a recess to meet again on the Sabbath, so that on the journal it appeared as a continuation of Saturday's session, but the subterfuge could not hide the sin from the eyes of God. But worse than all these is the continual carrying of the mails by the government, at the dictate of an avarice which grudges the interruption of a day of worship and rest, employing thousands of men, bribing the railroads to dispatch trains which but for the mail service would not run, and in thousands of villages and tens of thousand homes invading and destroying the quiet and sanctity of the day of rest. But no law enacted by the nation is violated by these acts of the government, and nothing restrains the government from still grosser and more general violations of the Sabbath. Nothing gives us Sabbath quiet in the arsenals and ship-yards, the treasury and the other depart-

ments of the government, except the caprice of the present administration. And what is true of the Sabbath is true of every moral law. The nation has not bound its government to the observance of any. Having failed to do so the nation is righteously held responsible for its transgressions. There is but one earthly power which can restrain a government from immoral acts,—the nation. There is but one way in which it can properly do so—by law. There is but one law which is above the government,—the Constitution. Give us the amendment which we ask, in these words, “the revealed will of God as of supreme authority,” and all immoral acts of the government will be unlawful under the Constitution.

IV. *It will restrain the states of the Union from unchristian legislation.*—A nation must preserve its own integrity,—the integrity of its territory against dismemberment; the integrity of its character against influences which would divide it against itself and so destroy it. Thus every one feels the necessity that this nation be and remain in all its parts a republican nation. We would not allow any state to set up a monarchical form of government,—not because monarchy in itself is perilous to national existence, but because a house divided against itself cannot stand. If we are to be one nation we must have one form of government. Far more important is it that we be and continue in all our parts a christian nation. The nation could not, without infinite guilt and peril, allow any State to set up a distinctly anti-christian form of government, because intestine division is of itself perilous, because the guilt of the local apostasy from God would be rightly chargeable on the whole nation which would tolerate it, and because the corrupt leaven would speedily affect the whole nation. Thus Israel reasoned when under the leadership of Joshua they marched against the tribes which had built an altar on the other side of Jordan. And by the same argument the wrath of the nation was appeased when they learned that the altar was designed not for idol worship, but as a standing witness to their common interest in one God and one religion.

How shall this nation preserve in all its parts the integrity of its character, as a christian nation? There are two methods. One is the application of force, when an emergency arises, outside of the Constitution, in the exercise of the imminent right of self-preservation. In this way we dealt with the theory of State Sovereignty when it embodied itself in actual secession. The other is by Constitutional provision. In this way we have secured our republican character. We have enacted in our fundamental law that Congress shall have the right to secure to every State a republican form of government. Thus we restrain any State from setting up any other form of government, at the peril of coercion by the whole power of the nation. In the same way we have restrained the States from restoring Slavery, and we refused to rehabilitate the seceding States till they had ratified this provision. In other respects, too, the Constitution operates as a restraining law upon the States, prohibiting them from contracting treaties, coining money, and exercising other attributes of sovereignty. This supreme, overruling prerogative the Constitution claims for itself, anything in the constitutions or laws of the States to the contrary notwithstanding.

But, now, there is nothing in the Constitution by which any act of a State legislature can be set aside as unchristian or anti-christian. Nay, further, strange as the assertion may appear, there is nothing there which would be violated if any State were to repudiate the christian religion altogether, and establish paganism as the religion of the State. Congress can make no law respecting the establishment of religion, but nothing forbids the States to do so. If the Chinese

should ever be in the majority in any western State, or the Roman Catholics in any other, nothing hinders that they should make the religion of Confucius, or the religion of Rome, the religion of the State, and support their priesthoods and build their temples out of the civil treasury. Our danger, however, does not lie in that direction, but in the opposite direction of political Atheism. In France and Italy political elections are usually held on the Sabbath day. If the State of Ohio, ten or twenty years hence, with a largely increased irreligious population, were to fix her annual election on the "second Sunday in October," nothing in that Constitution which determines her relation to the Union could be urged against her action. If any territory were to frame a constitution with such a provision, and seek admission as a State, there is no bar against its admission. If any State should go farther and abolish the Sabbath as a civil ordinance altogether, abrogate all devout observances in connection with government, annul the Christian law of marriage and leave the relation of the sexes free from legal restraint, abolish the religious ordinance of the oath,—in short, divest itself of every christian feature and blot out every trace of the influences of christianity in our institutions, no constitutional objection could be urged against it. This is practically admitted by the anxiety to effect the abolition of Polygamy before the admission of Utah as a State, because then all control over the matter by the nation must cease,—a plain admission that the Constitution contains nothing antagonistic to that peculiar institution.

The danger which supplies this whole argument is not to be scouted as imaginary. Who knows how soon the active, restless, vigilant party who are striving, as they say, to bring our institutions in these minor respects into accord with the principles of the national Constitution, may seek to realize their conceptions of government in some State where they may have the requisite numerical strength? Who that has seen the rapid growth and the startling success of this party in recent years can view the future without some measure of apprehension. Many States have already taken no inconsiderable strides in this direction. California, by an enormous majority in the legislature of 1870, repealed her Sabbath laws so far as they applied to theatres, and the Anti-Sabbath Press announced that "Shakespeare, Schiller and Goethe had triumphed over the preacher, the theatre over the Church." The divorce laws of many States have been aptly described as differing from the marriage laws of Utah only in this, that at Salt Lake a man can have as many wives as he likes; in Indiana and Connecticut he has the same liberty, provided he takes one at a time. Seriously, the divorce legislation of many States is in flat violation of the plainest commandments of Jesus Christ. Now we propose simply to incorporate in our fundamental law, an acknowledgment of the moral laws of the Christian religion as the supreme standard and guide for all lower legislation. Give us the amendment we ask, and an appeal will lie directly from any unchristian legislation by any State to the Supreme Court of the United States on the ground of its unconstitutionality. The movement, therefore is wholly in the interest of national integrity and unity. May God grant that the question whether we are, and are to be, in all our parts, a Christian nation may not be solved as the question of human liberty has been, in tears and blood.

V. *It will promote the purity of the public service.*—The year which lately closed will be memorable in our history for the astounding disclosures of political corruption which it has witnessed, and the vigorous steps of reform which have been taken by an outraged and indignant people. The growth of this evil has been watched for years by thoughtful men with the deepest anxiety, but the revelations

of last summer and autumn surpassed our gravest apprehensions. We have seen the balance of power in American legislatures held by shameless takers of bribes; we have seen corrupt "rings" using ballot-box, legislature and courts as hardly disguised instruments of plunder; we have heard men of previously good repute plead the sanction of universal custom for their equivocal dealings with public trusts, and there is no evidence that we have yet fathomed the depths of the abyss which has suddenly opened under our feet. The whole country exults to-day in the suddenness and completeness of the victory which the people of our chief city have won over the banded thieves who had plundered them so long, but what assurance have we of the permanence of this so-called "reform"? What PRINCIPLE of good government, the neglect of which has wrought this mischief, have we recovered and put under our feet, as the ground of our confidence? The success of the recent efforts shows that no horde of bribe-takers and extortioners will dare to face or can long resist an aroused and angry people. But that truth was self-evident. It needed not all this passionate discussion and vehement action to establish it. What security have we that these evils will not reappear in that inevitable hour when the people shall relax their vigilance and regain their composure? Reform movements are of the nature of revolutions. They are not the normal state of the political body. The people cannot for ever stand guard over the ballot-box and the treasury, the judiciary and the legislature, with mass meetings and "committees of seventy," as the instruments of their will.

The pending "reform movement" fails to recognize the true principle on which the purity of the public service must forever depend. In all the discussions which have attended it, not the remotest reference has been made to that Supreme Eye which is ever upon cities and commonwealths, and upon their public servants, holding them to a strict account for their use of all the revenue, authority, and influence which is put into their hands. Bribery, extortion, and robbery have not been mentioned as *sins* for which the land is guilty before God. It has not been suggested that God has any rights in the premises, or any part in the controversy, nor that other official sins and immoralities, as well as dishonesty, are crimes against him and perilous to the nation. The whole affair has been treated as a matter simply of dollars and cents, and wholly between the people and their rulers.

Philosophy, experience, and religion unite to declare that permanent reform on such principles is impossible. No charters can be framed and no laws enacted, which the ingenuity of dishonest officials will not find means to evade. The only sufficient and abiding safeguard for official integrity is in the moral character of the men chosen to office. The idea implied in the political maxim, "vote for measures, not for men," is utterly false and mischievous. The one question of transcendent importance to the people, is not "to what party does the candidate belong?" "on what platform does he stand?" but "has he a conscience?" All human relations, rights, and duties are determined by the will of God. This gives them their only sacredness. Therefore the unjust judge who feared not God regarded not man, and these two traits of character stand in inseparable conjunction. He who despises God can have no true morality, and can never be safely trusted. Habit, the force of custom or opinion, or a wise selfishness may mould his conduct into the form of morality, but it has no inner vitalizing principle, and falls to pieces at the first breath of temptation, when these external forces are weakened or removed. Government in the hands of men who fear not God is like a ship in the hands of blind men, who can see

neither compass or beacon, sun or stars. The author of civil government has enacted a "civil service law," enduring as the everlasting hills, and binding all the nations of the earth: "Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, *such as fear God*, men of truth, hating covetousness." "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."*

How then shall a nation provide against the intrusion of bad men into places of power? In two ways: *First, by law, fundamental, constitutional law*, demanding right moral character in her public servants; *second*, through the wise, discriminating action of the people, educated and guided by the Constitution, at the polls. Our mistake has been in discarding the first of these methods, and trusting wholly to the second. When the absence of such a safeguard was urged in the North Carolina Legislature against the adoption of the Federal Constitution, Mr. Iredell replied: "It is never to be supposed that the people of America will trust their dearest interests with persons of no religion or of a religion materially different from their own." Theophilus Parsons, afterwards Chief Justice, said in the Massachusetts Convention: "No man can wish more ardently than I do that all our public offices may be filled by men who fear God and hate wickedness, but it must remain with the electors to give the government this security." In the same convention Rev. Mr. Shute, a Congregational clergyman, expressed himself thus: "The presumption is that the eyes of the people will be upon the faithful in the land, and from a regard to their own safety they will choose for their rulers men of known abilities, of known probity and of good moral character."

These pleasing anticipations have been rudely dispelled. This single, unsupported reliance has failed us, as we might have known that it would. Not only have we missed the educating power of a law demanding righteous men for civil office, but the Constitution in its silence concerning the moral character and responsibilities of the nation has powerfully inculcated the notion that politics have nothing to do with religion, and that the State, having no conscience itself, cannot properly demand a conscience in its servants. Inquiry concerning the moral character of candidates has been resented as impertinent, or ridiculed as the suggestion of bigotry and intolerance. Moreover since the nation has thrown this responsibility wholly on the voters, it must abide by their decision, and if the slums of New York city choose a gambler and prize-fighter as their representative in Congress, he must forthwith be accepted as lawgiver for the nation. The citizens have followed the example of the nation in shirking the responsibility which ought to have been shared between them. They have naturally neglected the duty to which nothing in the supreme law called their attention. Bad men have corrupted others, and drawn men of like character to their side. No sentiment or declaration in the Constitution has invited and sanctioned united effort against these debasing influences, and a slow but steady and dangerous decline of official integrity has been the result.

We do not imagine that the adoption of this Amendment will at once cleanse the Augean stable of our politics, but we maintain that a Constitution which reverentially acknowledges the authority of God, and the responsibility of nations to him must exert a powerful silent influence in drawing moral, God-fearing men to the administration of government. Under such a Constitution the moral character of candidates for office could not be deemed irrelevant to the question of their election. The acknowledgment, in the terms of the proposed

* Exodus xviii. 21. II Sam. xxiii. 3.

Amendment or any similar terms, of the "revealed will of God as of supreme authority" would make the law I have quoted from the Bible supreme law in this land, and candidates and constituencies would govern themselves accordingly. If it be objected that men would become hypocrites to obtain office, we can only say that the hypocrisy which abstains from blasphemy and licentiousness, and conforms the outward life to the morality of the Christian religion is a species of hypocrisy which we are exceedingly anxious to cultivate, and which all our laws restraining immorality are adapted and intended to produce.

I have sketched briefly our own conception of the legal effect and practical value of the Amendment which we propose. We are aware that a long controversy lies between us and these results. A host of minor practical issues will be decided in the course of the conflict which is to determine whether we are, and are to be a christian nation. But just as, when the chains fell from the slave, we hastened to embody in the Constitution a guaranty against the re-establishment of Slavery, so we shall one day seal the practical triumph of truth and righteousness over immorality and corruption, by a Religious Amendment to our fundamental law. In arguing for this measure, we are arguing for every practical reform which lies between us and our goal, like the cannon ball which, as Schiller says, shatters all in its way that it may shatter its mark.

The Committee appointed to nominate officers of the National Association for the ensuing year made the following report, which was unanimously adopted:

PRESIDENT:

The Hon. Wm. Strong, United States Supreme Court.

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

His Excellency, W. B. Washburn, Governor of Massachusetts;* his Excellency, James M. Harvey, Governor of Kansas; his Excellency, Seth Padelford, Governor of Rhode Island; the Hon. J. W. McClurg, ex-Governor of Missouri; the Hon. W. H. Cumback, Lieutenant Governor of Indiana; the Hon. Wm. Murray, Supreme Court of New York; the Hon. M. B. Hagans, Superior Court of Cincinnati; Felix R. Brunot, Esq., Board of Indian Commissioners, Pittsburg, Pa.; John Alexander, Esq., Philadelphia, Pa; Charles G. Nazro, Esq., Boston, Mass.; Thos. W. Bicknell, Esq., Commissioner of Public Schools, Rhode Island; James W. Taylor, Esq., Newburgh, New York; Prof. Tayler Lewis, LL.D., Union College, N. Y.; Edward S. Tobey, Esq., Boston; Russell Sturgis, jr., Esq., Boston; the Right Rev. Manton Eastburn, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts; the Right Rev. G. T. Bedell, D. D., Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio; the Right Rev. G. D. Cummins, D. D., Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Kentucky; the Rev. C. S. Finney, D. D., formerly President of Oberlin College, Oberlin, O.; the Rev. F. Merriek, D. D., LL.D., President of the Ohio University, Delaware, Ohio; the Rev. Joseph Cummings, D. D. LL.D., President of the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.; the Rev. A. D. Mayo, D. D., Cincinnati; the Rev. T. A. Morris, D. D., Bishop of the M. E. Church, Springfield, O.; the Rev. J. H. McIlvaine, D. D., Newark, N. J.; Prof. O. N. Stoddard, LL.D., Wooster University, O.; the Rev. M. Simpson, D. D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the Rev. J. Blanchard, D. D., President of Wheaton College, Ill.; John S. Hart, LL. D., Princeton College, New Jersey; the Right Rev. John B. Kerfoot, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburg; the Right Rev. F. D. Huntington, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Central New York; the Rev. T. L. Cuyler, D. D., Brooklyn; the Rev. Levi Scott, D. D., Bishop of the M. E. Church, Delaware; Prof. Julius H. Seelye, D. D., Amherst College, Mass.;

* See pages 70, 71.

the Right Rev. Charles P. McIlvaine, D. D., LL.D., D. C. L., Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio; the Rev. A. A. Miner, D. D., President of Tuft's College, Mass.; the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, D. D., Peoria, Ill.

GENERAL SECRETARY:

The Rev. D. McAllister, 410 West Forty third street, New York.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:

The Rev. T. P. Stevenson, 1405 North Eighteenth Street, Philadelphia.

RECORDING SECRETARY:

The Rev. W. W. Barr, Philadelphia.

TREASURER:

Samuel Agnew, Esq., 1126 Arch Street, Philadelphia.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

THE SECRETARIES AND TREASURER OF THE ASSOCIATION, *ex-officio*: R. B. Sterling, Joshua Cowpland, John Alexander, Jas. S. Martin, the Rev. S. O. Wylie, D. D., Robert Taylor, Wm. McKnight, Thos. Walker, Thos. Brown, Philadelphia, Pa.; Henry Harrison, Robert B. Maxwell, William Neely, Walter T. Miller, Jas. Wiggins, Henry O'Neill, Geo. Silver, New York; The Rev. Wm. S. Owens, Indiana, Penna.; D. Chestnut, Esq., Pittsburgh; Henry Martin, Esq., Cincinnati.

After resolutions of thanks to the railroads which had granted reduction of fare, to the hotels for reduced rates of entertainment, and to the reporters, the Convention adjourned, *sine die*.

The following is an abstract of the intended address of the Rev. J. EDWARDS, D. D., of Peoria, Illinois, who was prevented by sickness from attending the convention.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT AND THE CONSCIENCE QUESTION.

I must be allowed, at the outset in my remarks, to make a re-statement of the aims of this National Association. This will be a good point of departure, when we can all start fair and together. It may give us occasion for rendering substantial justice. It may afford a good opportunity for correcting some injurious misapprehensions.

Be it known and noted then that we do not propose to strike out, to nullify, to change, nor even to touch one of the principles of our National Constitution. It is indeed not essential that we deal at all with the body of the Constitution, nor have we ever proposed to do so, except, at most, incidentally and very remotely. We find our place and work not in the body of the Constitution, but in its Preamble. The Preamble is a statement made in advance of the Constitution, which is explanatory of its authorship and its aims. The world and posterity are there addressed by those who make this Instrument, and they declare themselves and their purposes in what follows. This Preamble declares that the Constitution is made and ordained by "the People." And, further, it intimates that although this people had achieved, and had now for more than ten years enjoyed their independence under the confederation of their States, they contemplated certain ends for which their Articles of Confederation had

been found inadequate. They designed to effect a more perfect union, and to secure sundry great moral, social, and civil benefits, such as the establishment of justice, the insuring of domestic tranquility, providing for the common defence, promoting the general welfare, and securing and transmitting the blessings of liberty. All this, I admit, is mere statement, but it is both valuable and potential, nevertheless. It indicates the point of departure for all future legislation; it explains laws that may afterwards have been acted; it declares the general national aim, drift, and scope; it *creates presumptions which are of use to interpret law*. Thus we have found in our national history such presumptions, emanating originally from this Preamble, working in favor of the rights of the people, and in favor of national unity, integrity, and eminent domain, as against state sovereignty, sectional interests, excessive official power and patronage, and the influence of overgrown corporations. And this Preamble we have found to be susceptible of amendment—which amendment we desire should be made. There is an omission which we desire to see supplied. As it now stands it does not seem to do full justice to the people. Something should be inserted which shall indicate the loftiness of their patriotism, their deep convictions, their conscientious earnestness.

As government is an ordinance of God, and is not an invention or institution of man, the fruit of some imaginary social compact, the exponent of some civilization, a devout people, worshippers of the living God, should be allowed, in setting up their government, to signify that they do it in his name. This, then, is what we propose: That the Preamble represent the people as fully conscious of the gravity of their work and the grandeur of their privilege, by “humbly acknowledging Almighty God * * and Jesus Christ * * and the Sacred Scriptures” in their several and joint and all-important relations to Civil Society. We ask that this be done, inasmuch as these terms are fitting to the occasion of making a National Constitution, and are true and just of the people who then made it, and still more of the people who this day sustain the Constitution, and glory in it. They express the living, characteristic faith of almost all this nation. But truth and justice not only consent to this insertion—they require it. Until it is made the people are misrepresented before the world and before posterity. The body of the Constitution is studiously silent in reference to religion. This may be well enough, but what of those early treaties of ours with foreign nations, in which the plain statement is made that this government is in no sense founded upon Christianity, and that our institutions will not be found embarrassing to a good Mussulman? Treaties are the same as Constitutions in their force, and our silent Constitution, alas! is interpreted by our outspoken treaties! We are now made to say to the world, in effect, that we are no more Christian than we are Mohammedan! Is this true in fact? Is this just to the people?

The papers have published in their brief, blunt way, that we are an association trying “to put God into the Constitution.” Apart from the way of putting it, this may be true, in a sense, but it is equally true that we are trying to *put the people into it*, trying to make our Constitution, at least in its genesis (as Carlyle would say), and its presumptions, a fair and true, and not a libellous exponent of the nation.

A very specious form of objection to this amendment, the odium of which is thrown upon this association for desiring the amendment, is that it is oppressive, that it interferes with the rights of conscience; and Atheists, Deists, Jews, and Seventh-Day Baptists, are mentioned as cases in point.

I shall first speak of and about this objection, and then speak to it, and I remark:

1. Every detail of government may be expected to press somewhere. Somebody will be inconvenienced, pass what law you will. As Washington, the President of the Convention which formed the Constitution, said in his letter to Congress, laying the Constitution before that body, "Individuals entering into society must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest." A fundamental and familiar principle of republicanism, is that majorities govern. The opinions, the interests, the comfort, the tastes and habits of majorities, make and modify the laws. Accordingly restrictions are continually to be met with upon what are the acknowledged rights of individuals, and these restrictions are generally submitted to without complaint. In some cities you may not smoke your cigar in the street; you may not build a frame house, nor operate a foundry, a tin-shop, a livery-stable, a slaughter-house, a glue factory or a chandlery in certain localities, yet none of these are in themselves improper things—there is no harm in them. To you they may be matters of preference, of interest, of great importance; but the majority governs, and the majority does not relish the danger, the din, or the fumes of these things. "Oh!" you say, "what are these to rights of conscience?" Well, then,

2. I remark—though it may seem somewhat invidious, yet it is true—these parties, who are now claiming to judge our liberty by their conscience, (which the Apostle Paul intimates is unreasonable and unendurable, and which certainly does put a premium on ignorance and prejudice and bigotry), these parties did not found nor make this government. The school of thought to which they belong never was progressive enough to originate this Constitution, this style of citizenship. In the old world, when they *were* oppressed, they were so faintly conscious of having rights or wrongs of conscience, that they made but little complaint of what they endured. Is it not just possible that they use this magic phrase, "rights of conscience," to conjure with, while what they conceal under it is general unwillingness to be bound by any government, any morality?

3. I cannot speak to this objection without insisting that the majority in this case have consciences as well as the minority. They are sincere; they are earnest; they have looked long and carefully into the matter, until they have become intelligent. They know what they are about. They have a definite aim. They state it with reasons. These reasons are true and practical and given of God. And in this case, as in every other where right conflicts with right, where opinion clashes with opinion, it is simple Republicanism that says "*Let the majority govern.*" No material nor lasting evil can result from submitting to the majority.

Now, as to the objection—or rather the objectors—I should like to ask, are you opposed to this amendment because it is a new thing, different from what has been heretofore, and *because you are satisfied with things as they are?* Then I call your attention to the fact that the usual objection made to us heretofore has been that we are doing an unnecessary work; that the amendment is uncalled for because this is, always has been, and necessarily must be a Christian nation. The amendment then can be no novelty, no radical innovation upon our civil institutions as to letter or spirit. Are you content with this? Are you willing things should remain as they are? Well, how stands the case now?

(1). All of you can vote. This great right of a freeman, and which ought to be counted a right of conscience, is not denied you. No citizen is disfranchised, be his religion or irreligion what it may.

(2). But no man can be sworn who denies a future state of rewards and punishments. Whoever holds religious views of this sort and tenor, cannot be allowed his oath, and may therefore be disallowed in every case where men have to be sworn. He cannot bear witness; he cannot, legally, hold office.

(3). It is questionable whether the peculiar views of the Friends do not debar them from most of our high executive offices. A Quaker President is necessarily our war chief—head of the army and of the navy—which his conscience would revolt from.

It amounts to this—as things now are—that the man who does not hold the fundamental views in religion and morals which are held by the majority of this nation, can legally and with a good conscience exercise very few political rights among us. You are witnesses that this does not involve injustice or wrong. You are not questioned concerning your creed; you are not asked—still less are you commanded—to change it; you are offered asylum, citizenship, protection. In no other land on the face of the earth would you fare so well as you do here. That is why you have left all other lands to come here. Now are you content? Will you be satisfied if we let things remain as they are?

If you are not content with things as they are, your opposition is not to our proposed amendment, but to American Republicanism and Liberty.

If you are not content, tell us what you propose—*what is your amendment?*

The objection is untrue. It is some misapprehension or misconstruction of what is proposed that takes this shape. The amendment is not and cannot be oppressive. It is not legislation. It does not require legislation. It has power to regulate legislation only so far as to keep alive in any and every law a presumption in favor of Christian morals and religion, as well as in favor of popular government.

THE SIGNATURES TO THE CALL.

Shortly after the Call for the Convention at Cincinnati had been published, Governor Marshall Jewell, of Connecticut, issued the following circular. The reply which follows it was also, with his acquiescence, given to the public.

HARTFORD, Jan. 6, 1872.

REV. D. McALLISTER—

General Secretary of the National Association for securing the Religious Amendment to the Constitution of the United States—

MY DEAR SIR: My attention has just been called, for the first time, to the action of the National Association, in placing my name on the list of Vice-Presidents.

Such action on the part of the Association was entirely unwarranted, and, so far from consenting to it, I desire that my name may be stricken from the list. I should have refused my name had I received notice of it.

After giving the matter considerable thought, I am entirely opposed to the movement, and the objects sought to be accomplished by it, believing that it is impracticable and uncalled for.

If the people at large do not acknowledge in their actions the Divine authority, it is worse than useless to attempt a national acknowledgment.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

MARSHALL JEWELL.

CINCINNATI, Jan. 22, 1872.

THE HON. MARSHALL JEWELL, DEAR SIR: Your circular letter, forwarded from New York, has just been received.

You state that the action of the National Association to secure the Religious Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, in placing your name on the list of Vice-Presidents, was entirely unwarranted.

In reply, I would simply state the fact that your name was included in the list of Vice-Presidents at the National Convention held last January at Philadelphia, because you had signed the call for that Convention—a document which stated the design of the movement, and the argument for it, in the most explicit terms.

The National Association has been exceedingly careful to use no name without warrant; nor has it a desire to retain the name of any one who, upon giving the matter further thought, ceases to favor the movement.

As the form of your letter indicates that it is designed for circulation, it is but justice to give equal publicity to this reply.

Very respectfully yours,

D. McALLISTER,

General Secretary of the National Association.

P. S.—I am happy to receive, just as this goes to press, your candid acknowledgment to the Rev. T. P. Stevenson, Corresponding Secretary, of the correctness of the above statement.

Since the Convention, the *Springfield Republican*, (Massachusetts,) has stated that Governor Washburn, of that state, in a letter which

the editor had seen, declares that his name too had been used without authority.

The following brief note from the New York *Daily Tribune* completes the vindication of the National Association :

To the Editor of the Tribune :

SIR: In your issue of yesterday you gave currency to the charge against the National Association to secure the Religious Amendment of the United States Constitution, of using prominent names without authority. The facts in the case show the utter groundlessness and injustice of the charge.

1. Governor Jewell signed the call for the Convention which met in Philadelphia, January, 1871—a document in which the aim of the Religious Amendment movement was stated in the clearest terms. As one of the most prominent signers of the call, he was very naturally and properly included among the Vice-Presidents chosen at that Convention. As soon as Mr. Jewell sent out his circular, stating that his name was used without authority, a letter was sent to him reminding him of his action in signing the call, which he seemed to have forgotten; and I now have in my possession his reply to that letter, admitting the truth of the above statement. 2. The call for the Cincinnati Convention was sent to Governor Washburn last December, with a note containing the following words: "Trusting that the inclosed call meets your approval, your name is solicited to be added with those of the gentlemen concurring." I have now before me Mr. Washburne's reply, in which he says: "I approve of your movement." I have only to add that, if any gentleman, after committing himself to a movement by his own signature and acknowledged approval, sees fit to withdraw, there is an honorable way of so doing. It is due to all concerned that an intimation of withdrawal be made, in some way, to the Association to which the signature and endorsement were given. Until this is done, the endorsement and approval stand.

D. McALLISTER,

General Secretary of the National Association.

NEW YORK, Feb. 16, 1872

*2. 2. 3. m.
2/16/72*

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Sensible to the vast influence of a written Constitution in moulding the character of a republican people; believing that our National Constitution is seriously defective in that it contains no acknowledgment of Almighty God as the source of civil power, of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the ruler of Nations, or of the supreme authority of God's moral laws; discerning that in its present form it leaves the government which it establishes without *political* obligation to observe the Sabbath, or maintain any other religious forms in our civil life, feeling that it has a powerful tendency to draw the Constitutions of the several States to its own likeness in this respect, and so to remove every legal basis for the maintenance of religious education in our school, and for the enforcement of christian morality, We, citizens of the United States, do hereby associate ourselves under the following ARTICLES, and do solemnly pledge ourselves to God, and to one another to labor, through wise and lawful means, to secure such an amendment to the Constitution as will remedy this defect and indicate that we are a Christian Nation.

ARTICLE I.

This society shall be called, The National Association to secure the Religious Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Society shall be to obtain such an amendment of the Constitution of the United States as shall suitably acknowledge Almighty God as the source of all power and authority in civil government, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Ruler of Nations, and the revealed will of God as of Supreme authority in civil affairs.

ARTICLE III.

All persons approving this Constitution and paying to the Treasurer the sum of no less than one dollar annually, shall be a member of this Society.

ARTICLE IV.

The officers of this Association shall be the President, Vice Presidents, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. The Secretaries and the Treasurer with twenty-one other members shall be the Executive Committee of the Association, any five of whom shall be a quorum. All the officers shall be elected annually.

ARTICLE V.

The means employed by the Society to secure its object shall be the circulation of petitions to Congress, the holding of meetings and conventions, the dissemination of documents, the collection of funds for its own treasury and that of the National Association, and other legitimate methods of forming public sentiment and influencing the action of the government.

ARTICLE VI.

Any Society adopting a Constitution which places it in harmony with the aims of the National Association and contributing annually to the funds of the Association shall be recognized as auxiliary, and all members thereof shall be members of the National Association.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CINCINNATI CONVENTION,

(*Pamphlet edition.*)

Single copies, 25 cents; 8 copies for \$1; 25 and upwards, 10 cents each.

THE CHRISTIAN STATESMAN:

A SEMI-MONTHLY JOURNAL,

Devoted to the Cause of Public Morals and National Religion.

The design of this paper, as its name suggests, is the discussion of the principles of civil government in the light of Christianity. It has been established to advocate the proposed Religious Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. At the same time it will aid in maintaining all existing Christian features of our civil institutions: in particular, Laws against the Desecration of the Sabbath, the Christian Law of Marriage and Divorce, the use of the Bible in the Public Schools, and Laws prohibiting the traffic in intoxicating drinks. As a measure fundamental to all these, it will labor for the adoption of such amendments to the National Constitution as will indicate that this is a Christian nation, and will place all Christian Laws, Institutions and Usages in our government on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the nation.

We append the following expressions of the favor with which the CHRISTIAN STATESMAN has been regarded by those best qualified to judge of its worth:

From the Rev. Dr. EDWARDS, late Pres't Washington and Jefferson College.

5 LLOYD ST., BALTIMORE, MD., Dec. 8, 1869.

Having carefully read the CHRISTIAN STATESMAN from the first, you will permit me to say that it has been the exhibit of ability, patience, earnestness and truth, such as well justify its noble name and vindicate its noble aims. My only objection to it would be met by making it larger, or by issuing it weekly.

J. EDWARDS.

From Prof. TAYLER LEWIS.

Although I have written a few articles for the CHRISTIAN STATESMAN, that shall not prevent a frank expression of my opinion respecting the skill, ability and truthfulness with which it has been conducted. In no paper in our land do we find so full and clear a discussion of the great principles which must underlie our own and all other political systems. This gives it great value as a literary and philosophical storehouse of ideas, aside from that most important question of the "State's moral character and accountability," which it was established to advocate. It is, too, remarkably fair and truthful. These qualities make it deserving of the patronage of every thinking and cultivated mind, aside from individual concurrence in all its views.

TAYLER LEWIS.

During the four years of its publication, the CHRISTIAN STATESMAN has contained articles of rare and permanent value from some of the most eminent writers in the country. Prof. Tayler Lewis has been a constant and frequent contributor to its columns, and articles on *State Neutrality in Religion Impossible*, *Lynch Law*, *The One Bible*, *The State Ordained of God*, *The State a Moral Power*, *The State Theology*, besides many others have appeared from his pen. Prof. Seelye, of Amherst has written on *Laws and Law-Making*, and Dr. Patterson, of Chicago has directed his vigorous logic against *Communism* and its theory of Public Education.

The STATESMAN has also contained thoughtful and reasonable discussions, of the *Sabbath Question*, in its various aspects, the *Relation of the Bible to Public Education*, *Temperance Legislation*, *Marriage and Divorce*, *The Chinese Question*, *Romish Aggressions in America*, *Prison Reform*, *The Peace Movement*, *Political Corruption*, etc., besides careful discussions of passing events in the light of morality and religion.

Judicious selections from the writings of the highest authorities on the subject of National Religion, have been a prominent feature in these pages.

Full news has been given of the Movement to secure the Religious Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, including complete reports of Conventions which have been held, addresses delivered, the formation of auxiliary Associations, &c.

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