





Tract Society Department.

EDITED BY A. H. LEWIS. AGENT OF THE AMERICAN SABBATH TRACT SOCIETY. To whom all letters for this Department should be addressed, at Abena, Ohio, N. Y.

CAUSES OF CONSCIENCE.

DEAR PASTOR.—At my house last evening, by appointment, was held a meeting of the few Sabbath-keepers in this place. The design of the meeting was to hear the report of a committee, previously appointed, which report was adopted, as follows:

Your Committee appointed to ascertain—1, the number now keeping the Sabbath in this place; 2, the number who have abandoned the Sabbath; 3, the present views and feelings of these persons, so far as they may be with respect to the Sabbath and Sabbath-keepers; and 4, to make such suggestions as the facts elicited shall seem to call for, beg leave to report:

As to the first and second items, your Committee have no report to make, further than to say, that in the short time allowed them, they have not been able thoroughly to canvass the field. They have done what they could, and think it would be unwise to make any further report. The persons who have originated this movement, and to regard all others as belonging properly to the class of former Sabbath-keepers. Of this latter class, your committee were unable to estimate the number; but they can safely say, that there are enough to constitute a respectable and vigorous church, if they were all live Sabbath-keepers. Your committee have conversed with many of this class.

As to the third item, your committee have elicited the following: 1. With one or two exceptions, the persons with whom they have conversed are now, as they always have been, persuaded that the seventh day is the Sabbath of Jehovah, and that there is no other Sabbath.

2. These persons are living in the disregard of the Sabbath, not from choice, but from what they regard as the inexorable necessities of their worldly wants and avocations.

3. More than one-half of the entire number, so far as we could ascertain them, cannot be induced to give up their present avocations, and still keep the Sabbath.

4. Nearly all are living in the hope that they shall yet return to Sabbath observance. Some of them are hoping that a competent physician will justify their retaining their present avocations, and others are seeking for an opportunity to give up their positions without too great a money sacrifice.

5. All have promised to aid, with money and good wishes, an effort to establish a Seventh-day Baptist church here; but for only a few have promised absolutely and at once to give up working on the Sabbath.

6. A large majority of them were once members of Sabbath-keeping churches, but are now without any church connections.

With rare exceptions, they all justify themselves in the course they are pursuing, and which are the following: (a) First and chiefly, they must give up the Sabbath, or their business will be ruined; and after that, as they must make a living, and think it is no worse for them to do in person what others do by proxy, and who are retained as good and worthy members of Sabbatarian churches.

(b) Some were drawn into business with persons who had made under the promise that they would keep seventh-day; but once here with their families, they were told that they must work seventh-days or leave. With no other business offers or openings, and with little or no means to support their families, felt compelled to work on the Sabbath.

(c) Not a few with whom your committee conversed were the wives of First day keepers; these turned away from the Sabbath to please their husbands, and to secure greater religious privileges for their children.

Your committee confess that they are greatly surprised—1. At the large number whom they have seen or heard of in this place, aside from the Jews, who were brought up to observe the seventh day. In this respect, this place is not different from a hundred other places. If so, certainly Sabbatarianism must be a fruitful and God-blessed people, to lose so many by desertions, and still keep their numbers good, with a small, steady gain, not counting the additions from without.

2. Your committee are surprised to find persons still acknowledging the claims of the Sabbath, while practically disregarding them. 3. Your committee are pained to find these persons so unhappily circumstanced as to religious enjoyments and privileges. They are, as a class, persons of more than average integrity in the common transactions of life; persons of moral worth, respected and honored in the community. They are known as Sabbath-keepers in principle; for they always stand up for the seventh day, whenever the matter is in controversy; and they seem to have little or no faith in the religion of the Sunday-keepers.

Your Committee would raise the following inquiries, viz: 1. Are the persons here referred to, any of them, justified, under the circumstances, in disregarding the Sabbath? 2. And if so, or even if not so, is it wiser or best for the Sabbath-keeping churches with which they are or were connected, to disown them.

REPLY. COVENANT BROTHER.—Your letter in the behalf of a meeting of Sabbath-keepers assembled at your house, is before me, and contents noted. The enclosed report is one of deep interest. Your endeavors to promote the Sabbath cause are deserving of commendation, and will, I join with you in hoping, be imitated in other places.

You have invited me to assist you in resolving the matter contained in the report of your committee. And, first, you ask to know if the persons referred to, or any of them, are justified, under the circumstances, in disregarding the Sabbath, for the time being.

From the peculiar phraseology here employed, and especially from the underscoring, I am led to think that the committee are inclined to affirm this question; and if so, it is, I apprehend, from a misguided sympathy for the persons referred to, rather than from convictions of right, and that but for this they would have needed no help in disposing of this question.

Ask yourselves, then, is the work performed by those persons on the Sabbath, Sabbath-breaking? There is but one answer. It is an open, unmistakable violation of the Sabbath law; which says of the seventh day, "In it thou shalt not do any work." But in estimating the guilt of a wrong-doer, two things must be considered, viz: 1. The motives with which the wrong action is performed; and 2. The circumstances of the action.

I do not say, mark you, that a wrong act, performed from a right motive, is virtually a right act. No; for in order to do this, both motive and act must be right, i. e., agreeable to a right law. Nor do I say that circumstances ever make a wrong action right. But there are degrees of guilt. And your committee are evidently of the opinion, that those persons reported of, though Sabbath-breakers in form, are sorely sick in spirit, and hence are entitled to great consideration and leniency in judgment; for the following points are carefully noted in their report, viz: 1. That these persons are not Sabbath-breakers from choice, i. e., they would prefer to keep seventh-day; and they would keep it, if it was convenient to do so; for I will not say here, nor can I allow them to say, if possible; I cannot admit that circumstances are so omnipotent as to render it absolutely impossible for them to keep the seventh day. It may be impossible for them to do so and retain their present positions. It may be impossible for them to do so without great seeming sacrifice of personal feelings and prospects of worldly success.

And yet I am by no means prepared to admit that business can not be conducted, almost anywhere, on the six working days, resting on the seventh day, according to the commandment, if there was only a pre-existing determination to do so, connected with proper business qualifications. How is it that the Jews, in your place and elsewhere, keep the Sabbath, and succeed in business beyond any other class of people on the face of the earth? It is admitted, that the Jews own one half or more of all business capital. But I will waive this point, and ask you to consider what the Book says: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Is it not a wretched unbeliever, a wicked distrust of God as the God of providence, that he has led, and still leads these persons whom you report, to engage in business on the Sabbath? Does it help the matter much, that they prefer to keep the Sabbath, and are yet disregarding it? Does it not rather show that they are guilty of violating clear convictions of duty, and that, instead of excusing their conduct, add greatly to their guilt? I do indeed sorrow over and compassionate them. I pity especially those who, under a promise from their employers, that they might keep seventh day, were brought into the place, but were afterwards told that they must work seventh days, or leave.

But while I pity these, and all such, I blame them; not because I love him less, but God more; and I love his law and the maintenance of his rights, more than I do or can love to promote the selfish plans and worldly advantages of any person, or of all persons.

And I will here say, that if these Sabbath-keepers, whose employers broke their promises, had said, We will not work seventh days; we can not; we are in conscience bound to keep that day holy; and you have promised that we should be allowed to do so, and on that promise we were connected, to disown them.

3. Is the reclamation to Sabbath observance and church relations, of these persons, a more judicious course, than to leave them as they are, and let them go? I think their firmness and integrity would have won the day; for such men would have proved themselves invaluable; and honorable business always seeks such persons; they are worth more, day by day, than any others are six or seven; at any rate, they would have made good use of their opportunity to preach the truth, and would have brought upon themselves the favor and blessing of the Lord, had they taken a bold and decided stand. See how it was with Peter and John. Acts 4: 13. Also the three worthies, Daniel 3: 16, 17, 18.

But, 2d, your committee note that it was the intention of these persons, at the outset, to keep the Sabbath. And this too is a confession that they have gone to work on the Sabbath under the solemn and earnest

protest of their own consciences. This aggravates rather than lessens their guilt. But, 3d, it is said that they consented to seventh day with their first-day neighbors. And what now if they should convince these that seventh-day is the Sabbath of the Bible? As they have the best of the argument, they may do this, but no more; they would probably hit at nothing more, let they be met with the reproof, "Physician, heal thyself." Thus do they neutralize, by their unscriptural and unholiness practices, the otherwise good effects of their preaching. And, more than this, they are teaching others to disregard their enlightened convictions, and making their converts, if they make any, two-fold more the children of hell than themselves. See Matt. 23: 5. The work of Sabbath-reform is greatly hindered by such examples, for they pass, with our opposers, as the representatives of Sabbath reformers.

Your committee make other points in their report, evidently indicating their leaning toward a justification of these persons, under the circumstances, in disregarding the Sabbath, for the time being. I admit that they do hope and intend to return to Sabbath observance at some future time; that they are ready and glad to help, with their money and good wishes, the cause of Sabbath reform; that they are regarded by their fellow citizens as persons of moral and intellectual worth. But how do these things look from God's standpoint? Is he satisfied to suspend the operation of his Sabbath law, in order that these persons may make a competency, or find advantageous opportunities of vacating their present Sabbath-breaking positions? They may be in tight places, but they are responsible for being there; and God may have permitted just these trials of their faith, in order that the shallowness and hollow heartiness of Sabbatarian professions might be made manifest, and rebuked. That just this state of things does widely exist, is evident from the second inquiry of the report, viz: Is it wiser or best for our churches wholly to disown these persons? I should say that it is both wise and best to disown such persons, wholly, after due labor, as Sabbath-breakers; and churches that have not the moral courage, or the wholesome discipline, to do this, are in whole unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." But it should be observed, in this connection, that if our churches were active and earnest in the work of Sabbath reform, and helping instead of hindering it, there would not be so many "cases of conscience," nor so many desertions of the Sabbath truth and cause.

As to the third inquiry of the report, little need be said. Labor earnestly to reclaim these wanderers; press them with the claims of Sabbath truth; show them their wickedness and folly; warn them of the curse of God which they are bringing on themselves, and their posterity. Do not pet but pity them. Their lusts are not to be crowned, but crucified. They are living in the practice, if not in the love, of known sin. They are willful sinners; and are to be saved, if at all, with feet, pulled out of the fire. See John 23. But I must confess that I do not regard such a field as this the most hopeful one for our Benevolent Boards. The world is full of people who know little or nothing of the claims of the Bible Sabbath. It seems to me that the first duty of our Benevolent Boards is owed to this class; and if Sabbath-keeping churches cannot or will not look after their own members, if they will allow their love to God's neglected Sabbath to run so low as virtually to annul their discipline, then must these Boards seek their constituencies from the open field of the "world," as God shall open before them the door of opportunity.

I am, with best wishes for your prosperity, Yours pastor, JAMES BAILEY.

REPORTS FROM ELDER BAILEY. The following communications were received, in the absence from home of the Corresponding Secretary of the Sabbath Tract Society, which fact will account for the delay in their publication. Let the good tidings they bring, inspire every friend of the Sabbath to pray, with greater fervor and faith, for the progress of the truth. We hope that brethren who have wealth, will gladly improve the opportunity to aid the Ebon church in their effort to build a house of worship. Donations for this object should be sent to Eld. W. Donnell, Reynoldsburg, Johnson County, Ill.

J. B. CLARKE, Cor. Sec'y. REYNOLDSBURG, Ill., Feb. 27, 1871. Dear Brother Clarke.—It is now about one month since I entered upon my mission as lecturing agent of the Tract Board. I here give you a report of the work.

As there is no public conveyance from the railroad to this place, I accepted an invitation of Bro. Kelly to visit Villa Ridge, and by conveyed by him to this place. I preached three times at that place, and had the largest congregation ever assembled there for the Sabbath church organization; but we thought it prudent to wait a while before organizing, to give time for further investigation. A heavy rain had so raised the bottom lands, that good congregations could not be secured. Bro. Kelly and family were ready to leave, but I staff and returned here, leaving Eld. Isaac R. Cagle and his family in the faith of the Sabbath. Bro. Cagle is an Elder in the Harrison Springs Baptist church, Johnson County. He lives about five miles nearly south of Villa Ridge, and has an address in Vienna. There are two other Elders, and two licen-

dates, in the same church, who concede that our arguments are unanswerable. It is safe to say for them all, and to hope that some of them will embrace the truth. It may be that we have here many "stony ground" hearers. But we will pray in hope, if our brethren will ground in faith, and wait and see what God will do. Respectfully, JAMES BAILEY.

EXPERIENCE. Bro. Nathan Wapner sends the following extract from a letter to himself from Bro. Donnell: "I often thought of the difficulty of making the Sabbath of Sunday and Sunday the first day of the week. I often commenced an investigation of the subject, but would become discouraged and cease to investigate, thinking that other people understood it. I supposed I was right, or older, or better, and better scholars would not practice as they do. I served the church to which I belonged, as clerk, some five or six years. In writing the minutes of each month, I sometimes used the term Sabbath, and sometimes Sunday. I did not know what to call the day. I often wished I could form the acquaintance of some Seventh-day Baptist. I supposed they had a shorter way of arriving at the facts than, as yet, I had obtained. The articles of faith" of our association, or older, or better, and better scholars would not practice as they do. 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THE WAR ENDED.

Paris has been formally occupied by the Prussians, and again evacuated. The terms of peace have been accepted by the National Assembly...

Exactly at half-past ten the Emperor drove up to the back of the grand stand, in a low open carriage, escorted by dragons and the great officers of his household...

He was followed along the line, which he bore bravely, and the troops saluted him. The Emperor looked exceedingly well, and rode dashingly, despite his lingering indisposition...

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The following is given as the text of the preliminary articles of peace, signed by MM. Thiers and Favre on the part of France, and Bismarck, Bray, Wachtel, and Jolly, on the part of Germany...

The line of the demarcation between France and Germany, as at first proposed, is retained, with one exception. It commences in the north-western frontier at the Canton of Otennein in the Department of the Moselle...

Following from a recent number of our readers: A few years ago, as for our contributors and writers for Clinton Jackson, on the 5th of...

CONGRESS. MONDAY, Feb. 27. Senate, the Post Office Appropriation bill was passed, with an amendment...

THURSDAY, March 2. Senate, the Army Appropriation bill was passed, with a vote of 49 yeas and 31 nays...

FRIDAY, March 3. Senate, the House bill regarding telegraph cables was passed, with a vote of 49 yeas and 31 nays...

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GENEROUS BEQUESTS.—The late William Craig, of Auburn, Mass., left an estate valued at \$24,821, and having no near relatives, disposed of the whole, by will, for benevolent purposes...

THE PUBLIC DEBT was reduced over seven millions of dollars in the month of February. The town receives \$100 as the fund of a free public library...

MURDER AND SUICIDE.—John Hess escaped from jail at O'Leary, Wis., on Saturday, Feb. 25th, and proceeded to Neenah, his former home. During the night he entered the house of his wife, from whom he had been divorced, and murdered her...

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE. The late Mr. Mearns, of Morristown, N. J., after making ample provision for his family, in addition to the noble gift of the Orphan Asylum built by him at a cost of \$50,000...

THE PRATYNG STYLER.—A Jew and a Christian—two suttlers attached to the German army—were taken by the French and sentenced, without any investigation into the matter, to be hanged as spies...

THE MONT CENIS TUNNEL.—At the completion of the Mont Cenis Tunnel, the last partition of rock in the middle of the tunnel was reserved to be blasted at the formal celebration. But a small hole was made in it, and the workmen on both sides, who had for 13 years and 6 months been toiling towards each other, now for the first time saw each other's faces through it...

REMARKS ON EDUCATION.—At the recent examination of the new building erected at Westchester, Penn., for the use of the State Normal School, John W. Forney made the following remarks:

MEMORIAL TO ALICE CARY.—It is proposed to insert a Memorial Window for Alice Cary in the "Church of the Strangers" in New York. From this church Miss Cary was buried. It was the last to which she was attached...

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN CHICAGO.—The Lyceum and the Law Institute of Chicago lately joined forces for an evening's discussion of the question of woman suffrage. There were four speakers on each side, each one of whom was limited to 15 minutes. At the close of the debate the question was put to vote, and an immense majority voted against allowing women to come to the polls.

THE MAYFLOWER NOT A SLAVE-TRADER.—The Mayflower that bore the Pilgrims across the ocean to the Rock at Plymouth was not, after all, employed in the slave trade. Dr. Dexter, of the Congregationalist, who is now in England studying early New England history, writes that there were 20 vessels named the Mayflower in England at that time...

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Two boys have lately died in Providence, from over dose of bad whisky. If others take warning, they may have lived and died not entirely in vain.

Hardly one of the successful journalists in Chicago had it, stated in his early life, any kind of new experiences or aspirations. One of them was a theologian, another a college professor, a third a merchant, a fourth a public singer, a fifth a broker, and the sixth a bookseller.

The town of Bath, in the State of Maine, has at least one bright school-marm. Seeing that the ordinary reading books failed to interest her, she thought it would be a good idea to enlist their tastes on the side of their improvement; and so she laid aside the books; and set them to reading in the magazines. In this one school 60 copies of a single popular monthly are taken for this purpose.

A learned classical scholar has discovered that Sappho was a thorough woman's rights woman, and in the habit of delivering lectures on the Complete Equality of the Sexes for 1,000 drachmas per night. She was more popular in Thebes and Sparta than in Athens, and does not seem to have been favorable to the lyceum.

The gas companies are coming out of the coal famine in New York. Coke, which in ordinary times is sold at \$1.00 per ton, is now sold at \$1.50. The coal is bought in the first instance for less than the coke is sold for, and thus the gas virtually costs the company nothing, for the labor, interest, etc., are no higher than at other times.

The Rothschilds of Paris clothed during the siege 48,000 children, 32,000 women, and 12,000 men, with warm garments, at an expense of \$12,000, on Sunday, the 19th Feb., towards the "Memorial Fund" W. W. Phelps and his sister contributed \$5,000 each. It was unanimously resolved to give the entire sum to the American Missionary College, at Beirut, Syria.

In replying to an article advocating the abolition of Theological Seminaries, the New York Examiner, after disclaiming any disposition to regard them as perfect or beyond-improvement, says justly remarks, that "to talk about abolishing them is like talking of dispensing with steam and electricity."

The late venerable Albert Barnes, when he was coming to be seventy years of age, preached a sermon on the subject of "The Christian's Life a Threescore and Ten." It is an admirable treatise for the old and those not old, full of curious, interesting and impressive teaching, very suggestive and encouraging.

Miss Sarah Wilson, who gave \$30,000 to the Wilson Female College in Clinton, N. Y., died recently, at the age of seventy-five years. She had given large sums for other good purposes.

Rev. Dr. Isaac Ferris, of New York, commemorated the 50th anniversary of his ministerial life by a sermon on the morning of the 20th of February. The sermon was a glowing one, and was distinguished for business capacity and integrity. He accumulated a large fortune, in the use of which he displayed a high judgment and a high character.

The questions of railway management, passenger and freight tariffs, &c., are occupying much of the attention of the public mind, not only in this State, but throughout the New England and Western States, and the importance of the subject warrants all that is likely to be said on it.

The Germans are not especially fond of the pet cats which are kept by their domestics. They are left behind them. However, they give them food. But of the singing birds, which they often find abandoned in the dwellings which their owners have left, they take the greatest care.

Stamford harbor is the most dangerous harbor on the Connecticut coast, and a petition is circulating in that town applying to the Light-house board to erect a light on the point known as the reef known as "Barbor Ledge," and the placing of buoys and spindles on the most dangerous rocks.

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