

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

The Christian as a Citizen;

THE PART HE SHOULD TAKE,

AND

THE PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD GUIDE HIM,

IN RELATION TO

POLITICS & SOCIAL LIFE.

BY THE

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"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth JEHOVAH require of thee, but to do JUSTLY, and to humble thyself to walk with thy God."
Micah vii, 8 margin.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matthew vii, 12.

"SHINE YE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD!" Philippians ii, 15 margin.

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P R E F A C E .

THE discourse now in the hands of the reader has been delivered as a lecture in several places, and its publication has in many instances, and in the most urgent and flattering manner been requested. To the kindness, however, of friends in Plymouth, especially of Mr. Alderman E. R. BROWN, the author is indebted for its present issue. Upon its delivery to a large meeting of the Plymouth Branch of the Reform League in the Congregational Hall on Friday, March 22nd, the author was requested by a unanimous and an enthusiastic vote to repeat it to a more numerous assembly. This request was complied with on the following Thursday, March 28th, in the Mechanics' Institute, when a large audience which included many of the prominent members of the various christian churches in the town, listened to it with marked attention. In connection with a vote of thanks to the lecturer, a committee was appointed to superintend the printing of it at the expense of subscribers for the purpose. As the result of this arrangement the present edition has been passed through the press. Some introductory matter and occasionally a sentence, not necessary in a tract, although in place in a lecture, have been omitted. In the course of copying for the press it has been revised throughout and in a few instances, new matter has been introduced. Substantially, however, both as to matter and spirit, it is the same as delivered.

It may be well to observe, that the object of the author is not to argue the divine origin of christianity, nor the inspiration of the scriptures. It is not his province in this little work, either directly or indirectly, to attack those who are opposed to his most cherished convictions on these points. His business, as indicated in the advertisement which announced the lecture, is to show "the duty of christians in relation to politics and social life," in order to induce them to act out the principles which they receive as laid down by divine authority. For this purpose he must of necessity argue the question from a christian stand-point. To earnest political reformers, whatever their opinions of christianity, it may be interesting to find that

PREFACE

all who receive the bible as the word of God, are bound by its teaching to render their best help in promoting "the rights of man" as laid down or involved in the programme of the Reform League. The author, then, has been careful not to speak against anti-christians in any respect, but to address christians as such, in behalf of the moral and political equality of our fellow men.

It may be necessary to add that the author alone is responsible for the opinions herein stated and vindicated. It is true he is desirous to promote the objects of the Great Reform League, but it is distinctly understood, that neither the Council of that Body, nor any local Branch thereof may be called to account for the line of argument he follows, nor for the illustrations he employs. He represents the League simply in respect of the end it aims to secure, and is left free to argue the question in his own way and on his own responsibility. If blame be incurred, he alone must bear it. This discourse, however, is not confined to electoral reform; it embraces other matters than those included in the prospectus of the Reform League. Should any of the views he puts forth be unpalatable or startling to any one, which he hopes will not be the case, he respectfully submits that no one should be displeased by his honest exhibition of them. While he pays due respect to the rights of others, he is entitled to state his own belief, the result of enquiry and thought, as broadly and as clearly as he can. He has a right to differ from his neighbor, when he does so conscientiously, as clear as his neighbor's right to differ from him. He is a man in the midst of men; a christian in the company of christians; a brother amongst brethren; a student in a numerous class of students. No one wrongs another by honestly differing in judgment; nor is any injury inflicted by a sober and consistent statement of the points on which they differ. The writer feels no anger against any who approve not of what he advances, although he regrets such disapproval, because persuaded that he is on the right side. Let no person, then, be displeased with him, for he says nothing but what he believes to be true and useful. "Men are never so likely to settle a question rightly, as when they discuss it freely" and courteously. When opinion is founded in honest conviction and embodies a claim for right, its sober discussion cannot be harmful, nor the result of such discussion doubtful. In printing, as in delivering, the aim of the author is the advancement of truth, the benefit of men, and the glory of "the God of all the families of the earth."

2, ABBEY TERRACE,
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THE CHRISTIAN AS A CITIZEN.

WHAT is my duty as a professed disciple of Jesus Christ, towards my fellow man individually, and my fellow men collectively? What does the Bible teach me and require of me, if anything, in relation to Society? This is the question to be discussed; and the bare statement of it, in my opinion, bespeaks its importance. Let us calmly and carefully consider it. I may not pretend to pursue it through all its ramifications; but if with some degree of lucidity I show forth its prominent features, I shall be content.

This question concerns me as a man, a citizen, and a minister of "the doctrine of Christ." "I am a man,"—as TERENCE, the Roman poet, once a slave, nobly said: "I am a man; and whatever concerns humanity interests me." By the will of God I am a member of Society, and to whatever tells, or may tell upon the body politic, it is my duty, as it is the duty of every other citizen to give a proper amount of attention. My christianity lessens not, but heightens and sanctifies my duty herein. I am not less a man and a citizen because I am a christian, but the more. I must "let my light shine before men," and throw the reflection of christian principle upon the doings and designs of neighbors and governors, that, elucidated by its beams, the blackness of the evil may be made manifest, and the beauty of the excellent sparkle in the eyes of those around me and commend itself to their admiration and their love.

I sink not my manhood, nor my citizenship, in my ministerial office. I am a teacher of christianity, and therefore it is not apart from my work, but a part of it, to show what the christian ought to be and do in this world, in order that it may appear wherein his christianity has "the promise of the life that now is." I am in place, then, in preaching

the word—though not in a technically sermonical form—upon a point which involves the consistency of Christian professors and the welfare of society at large.

Obvious, however, as this is to me, I forget not that some persons, and some whose character and attainments give weight to their opinions, assert that christians, and christian ministers in particular, should stand aloof from all questions of this kind. I have heard it dogmatically insisted upon, even by a body of pastors, that the duty of a christian preacher is confined to questions affecting man as a sinner and God as a Savior ; or, in other words, to what is called “preaching the gospel,” using this phrase in a technical sense, much narrower in its range of discussion and application than the scriptures exhibit it. The assertion, as intended by those who make it, is fraught with absurdities. If this idea be correct, then 1st A minister ought to preach, as some alas ! do, as if there were no such relationships as those of husband and wife, father and mother, brother and sister, master and servant, king and subject, because they involve social and political questions of the widest extent. 2ndly The New Testament writers unpardonably exceeded their province, and were guilty of wrong in inculcating as duties various dispositions and practices pertaining to social and domestic life. Besides these, in the 3rd place, the guilt of man as a sinner against God lies very much in the neglect of his duties as a man, a neighbor, and a citizen. To violate the injunction, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” whatever be the form of the violation, is to disregard the command, “Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and mind and strength.” Duties never clash. The Gospel requires me to insist upon the duties of man towards man as arising out of his duty towards God, and as a part of that duty, not as being contrary thereto, nor as dissociated therefrom. To be pleasing to God, a man’s conduct must be socially and politically correct.

The crude assertion with which we are dealing, involves what the assertors themselves are unprepared to admit, either that christianity supersedes my duties as a citizen, and absolves me from all the claims of society ; or, that the bible is defective as the guide-book of daily life. If the christian

religion does not teach me how to act as a member of the body politic, it is seriously at fault ; if it does, it is my duty to ascertain its teachings and to act them out. If christians should be inattentive to these things, it follows that those men who are destitute of religion and those opposed to its sanctions and claims, its principles and precepts, should have the exclusive, the uncontrolled, and the unquestioned management of our parochial, civic, and national affairs. This conclusion carried out, would be followed by the saddest results ; and christians would have reason to bewail the consequences first and most. If on the contrary, such duties are either directly or indirectly marked out in the sacred volume, then it is obviously the province of preachers to be familiar with them, to expound and enforce them, and personally to put them into practice. Otherwise we must hold that God has required duties in His word, which are unfit to be mentioned in the preaching of that word, and upon which His gospel has no bearing.

It is contended that attention to such matters bewilders the mind, and deadens the heart to superior things. This is true of an immoderate attention to them, and in such case only. In the same case, it is equally true of lawful business and the pure relationships of life. Dr. WATTS, referring to intemperance of the affections, says :

“ Our dearest joys and nearest friends,
The partners of our blood,
How they divide our wavering mind,
And leave but half for God ! ”

But how the Doctor would be astonished were this to be adduced as an argument against the having of partners and the love of kindred on the part of christians and christian ministers ! To assert that a becoming heed to politics will produce this effect, is to libel christianity as inconsistent with philanthropy and public justice, or as incompetent to aid us in promoting the welfare of our country and our kind.

As a notable instance of arguing against the use of a thing from its abuse, and as a plain statement of the objection we are meeting, I will read you a brief article from the “Remains of the late Dr. NEVINS, of Baltimore, U.S.,” edited by Rev. Dr. WINSLOW, of Clifton. (Page 278.)

“POLITICS AND RELIGION.”

“There are scarcely any two things which coalesce with so much difficulty as politics and religion. The man that assiduously applies himself to the one, generally does it at the sacrifice of the other. Meddle as little as possible with politics, if you mean to have anything to do with religion. Exercise your right of suffrage in behalf of the best men that are presented for office, and if your fellow citizens select you to serve them, serve them. This is the Christian’s duty. But let him stop at this, and not covet office, or court popularity. ‘How can they believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?’ The politician may sometimes ask with Pilate: ‘What is truth?’—but like that unhappy victim of the love of place and popularity, he will rarely wait for an answer, or repeat the question, but go out to parley with the people and hear what they have to say.”

So far Dr. NEVINS. What a strange confounding there is in this, of a discreet with an excessive attention to politics! Even theology is sometimes studied sinfully, because pursued to the neglect of health, resources, and family claims. It is not unfrequent that decency is sacrificed in waiting upon religious services, because in order to attend them, household duties and the demands of business are not properly observed. So the practice of singing, of instrumental music, of painting, or of any other art, or the study of any of the sciences may become a snare, and in such case be inconsistent with religion. In like manner the study and discussion of politics, if made the main employment of thought and time, must disagree with piety. But the evil is in the excess. “If you mean to have anything to do with religion, meddle as little as possible with politics!” This utterance is twice a slander: it scandalizes the religion of God and the duty of men. What! “Politics,” as some one has correctly said, “are the morals of a nation,” and yet religion is unconcerned therein, and even nullified thereby! Surely, never! unless, indeed, it were that ungodly religion so popular when Dr. NEVINS thus wrote, in the United States, and in Baltimore especially, which rivetted accursed fetters upon the bodies and souls of four millions of our fellow creatures! “The man who assiduously ap-

plies himself to the one, generally does so at the sacrifice of the other!" Then alas for both of them! But is this true? A sound and earnest politician, because he is so, generally speaking, is but half a christian, or no christian at all? In other words, a sincere and lively christian cannot continue to be such, but must sacrifice his religion, if he seeks with any degree of zeal to promote the good order and prosperity of society? Yes, a "sacrifice" this is; but not religion sacrificed, it is a religious sacrifice, "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing unto God." The assertion as made by Dr. NEVINS—that usually an assiduous attention to great public questions, on the part of a christian, involves the surrender, or renouncing of religion—is monstrous! Judging by the practice of this American Divine and that of his popular brethren generally, one may hold fellowship with the man-stealer and the slavedriver, without damage to our religion; but according to his teaching, one sacrifices religion if one keeps the ritualism which God has chosen and is active in the use of means "to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke." (Isa. lviii, 6.) This time-serving Doctor of Divinity, too faithful a prototype of some others in our own country, with marvellous inconsistency teaches his disciple that it "is the christian's duty" to "sacrifice" a brother christian for his country's weal by voting him into a political office! Did Clarkson, or Wilberforce, or Fowell Buxton, or George Washington, or Joseph John Gurney, or Thomas Spencer of Hinton Charterhouse, or Benjamin Parsons of Ebley, or William Knibb, or Charles Hindley, or Joseph Sturge, or John Burnett of Camberwell, not to mention hosts besides of departed christian worthies, sacrifice religion by their "assiduous" application to politics? Who will venture to affirm that in the present British Parliament, or American Congress, or in our National Reform League, or in the National Reform Union, there are no assiduous politicians who are also vigorous christians? Who will deny that they are better politicians because of their piety? Who will impugn the godliness of the devout Earl Roden, the active Earl Shaftesbury, the meek Lord Teynham, the profound Edward Miall, the intrepid John

Bright, the bountiful Sir Morton Peto, the unwavering Dr. Thomas Price, the logical John Howard Hinton, the undaunted Charles Stovel, the indomitable Henry Richard, the firm and cool-headed Edmond Beales, and many besides, both known and unknown to fame, who take a lively interest in all questions of political economy? The union or separation of church and state, prison-discipline, war and peace, slavery and freedom, monopoly and free-trade, taxes on knowledge, sanitary reform, colonial legislation, steam navigation, ocean penny postage, railway communication, international treaties, electoral reform, financial reform, and questions like these, which affect the peace and happiness of mankind, may surely be studied to advantage in the sunlight of gospel truth, and in connection with hourly prayer. I see no more incompatibility between religion and these matters than there is between religion and parochial affairs, religion and housekeeping, or religion and shoemaking. The need of religion to direct rightly in such matters, I deem to be obvious and absolute. Spirituality of mind is not in any degree akin to *monkery*, which would lead one into a hermitage or priory; it is not sanctimoniousness, fanaticism, etherialism, or vision-dealing; for then of all that is valuable it would be a mockery. Spirituality of mind attends to the duties of life, including the claims of society, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, and after his example and teaching. This is soberly and always zealous for truth, righteousness, "peace on earth, good-will to man, and glory in the highest unto God."

There are parties who attempt to deter, and to damage whom they cannot deter, by the bugbear cry, "A political professor," or, "a political parson!" This subterfuge is the offspring either of excuseless ignorance, or of loathsome wickedness. A bad cause in its lack of argument, is used to resort to some *ad captandum* outcry, some clap-trap cant, which it is thought—and often too truly—will work upon the ignorant, the unthinking, and the prejudiced. "The church is in danger!" "No popery!" "Political dissenters!" "Political parsons!" and "Beware of infidels!" are some of these political and fanatical scarecrows. When it is wrong for a believer in Jesus to be a good husband, a good parent, a good neighbor, a good citizen, and a good subject, then it will be wrong in him to be familiar with and to avow

the principles which God has laid down in order to make him so. There is no more impropriety in a man, even a minister, being a christian politician, than there is in such an one being a christian prince, a christian scholar, a christian philosopher, a christian tradesman, a christian mechanic, or a christian plowman. There are christian politics as well as unchristian and anti-christian politics, and christians should know the difference between them. Christianity commands attention, practical attention to "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," to everything virtuous, and to everything praiseworthy. (Phil. iv. 8, 9.) If this requirement includes not such questions as affect the freedom or fetters, the plenty or poverty, the health or sickness of our own kind and our own kindred, then I can only say that the inspired volume employs language in a loose and deceptive manner. Of those politics only which accord with christianity, as expressed or implied in this and similar injunctions, can christians consistently approve; and all such politics they should invariably advocate and labor to carry into effect. Give a country the things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, and the well-being of that nation is complete. Everything which is not virtuous and not praise-worthy ought to meet with the resolute and untiring opposition of every christian, even though he thereby incur the stigma that selfish and designing men attach to the charge of being political. SOLOMON says: (Prov. xxix, 17.) "The righteous considereth the cause of the poor." Be it observed that it is not only the case, or condition of the poor, which engages the attention of the upright man; but their "cause" also, their wrongs and injury, their rights and interests. whatever occasions their poverty and suffering, and the means whether legislative or pecuniary, whereby their poverty may be removed. "The righteous considereth," practically cares for "the cause of the poor; but the wicked regardeth not to know it," does not trouble himself about it. According to this, it is the duty and the practice of every good man, a part and proof of his uprightness, to interest himself in whatever oppresses, depresses, or benefits the poor, whether of a national, parochial, commercial, or domestic

character; and it is a piece and proof of wickedness to be indifferent to the same.

The talented, candid, and liberal Archbishop WHATELY says: "It is a christian duty to do good to our fellow creatures; and if so, it must be also a duty to study to the best of our ability to understand in what their good consists, and how it is to be promoted. To represent therefore any branch of such study as inconsistent with christianity, is to make christianity inconsistent with itself." Dr. ADAM CLARK, in his comment on Matt. xiv, 15, says; "The disciples of Christ are solicitous for the people's temporal as well as spiritual welfare; and he is not worthy to be called a minister of Christ, who does not endeavor to promote both to the uttermost of his power." JOHN ANGELL JAMES, in his *Pastoral Addresses* says: "A professor of religion has duties to discharge as a citizen as well as a christian, since he is a member of society at large, as well as of the church; and it is a misguided sanctity, a spirit of fanaticism alone that attempts to dissuade him from discharging the obligation he owes to the community. But then, he should act as a christian, at the very time he is acting as a citizen. Instead of making his religion political, he should make his politics religious. * * * * * Religion should induce a man to carry his conscience with him, as a guide and protector, into all the scenes and circumstances in which he is required to act for his country; and he should ever give his voice or his vote, as he would do if he knew he was to be called to account for the act the next moment at the bar of God."

This reminds me of the command of the Lord Jesus: (Matt. xxii, 21,) "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." I am reminded also of the paraphrase of this command by the Apostle Paul: (Rom, xiii. 7,) "Render to all their dues"—what they may justly demand; "tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." In obedience to this "law of Christ," I must ascertain what is due to Cæsar, and what is due to God, and must examine in the light of scripture, every proposal and demand made by governments of every degree, in order to know whether they harmonize, and guide my course accordingly. In other words, I must be a politician in order to be

a consistent christian ; for if Cæsar claim "the things that are God's" I must not comply therewith ; and I must understand when he does not, that, within this limit, I may "be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." In further vindication of this duty, we might cite largely the recorded utterances and deeds of the "perfect and upright" patriarch of Uz ; of "Moses the man of God ;" of "the sweet singer of Israel ;" of "the preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem," and wisest of men ; and also of the several prophets, who by divine authority denounced or encouraged as the politics of the nations in their times were just or unjust. Omitting these, we turn to the great apostle of the Gentiles for a precedent and a precept in our favor. For his example, we refer to Acts xxiii, 1, where we are informed that, standing before the Jewish Sanhedrim under a false accusation, he earnestly gazed upon the august Council and said : "Men, brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day." The phrase "I have lived" is (*pepoliteumai*) literally : "I have performed my part as a citizen ;" I have discharged my civil and political duties, and claimed my rights as a "free-born" subject "in all good conscience," so that as a member of society I "know no guilt, grow pale for no offence." His injunction is given in his epistle to the Philippians (i, 27) : "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ ;" or, as it may be rendered : "Only act the citizen," (*politeusthe*) or *citizenize* as becometh the gospel Christ." In other words : "Be christian politicians"—take your share in the requirements and responsibilities of society, "as becometh saints." Carry out your christian principles in all your sayings and doings as members of the community. Sanctify your politics by the righteousness of your aims and the purity of your motives. Desire nothing, design nothing, do nothing, say nothing as citizens, but what you may as christians ; and neglect not to attend in that capacity to everything to which your christian principles are not opposed. In all matters political, as in all other matters, be just, prudent, disinterested, and philanthropic.

"So will you best proclaim abroad
The honors of your Savior, God,"

It is argued that the forms of government in the days of

the apostles, in the countries where christian churches were planted, were different from ours, and that neither the apostles, nor the converts interfered therewith. This objection may seem worthy of an extended reply ; but we think we can dispose of it with brevity. First. The difference referred to is in favour both of our comfort and of our argument. The form of government in this country being popular and representative,—for even the crown and peers are dependent upon the people—we are justly expected to take our part, and so by favor of divine providence we have opportunity to show that christians can be good citizens and the best politicians. Therefore, assuming the correctness of the objection, it is in my aid ; for in carrying out the principles of our national organization, christians fail of their duty if they fulfil not their part as citizens. But, secondly, we demur to the assertion, unsupported as it is by proof, that christians in apostolic times took no part in political matters. It is true that the particular proceedings of the primitive christians in reference to local or passing politics, are not stated ; but the silence does not prove inaction or indifference. Not a word is said about their particular conduct in their own homes or in trade ; but we may not thence infer that they did not eat, drink, treat their children, buy, sell, and move amongst their neighbours much as we do now. Silence is no proof in opposition to such teaching on the part of Christ and His apostles as we have already adduced. Be it not forgotten, there were amongst them converts of high rank, wealth, and influence. There was, for example, “a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch,” or groom of the chamber, “of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure,” being, I presume, equal to the Premier of our own beloved Queen, “First Lord of the Treasury.” There were likewise “those of Cæsar’s household,” who held office in “Cæsar’s Court.” These and others are referred to by Paul, as the “not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called,” yet some such were converted to display the power and riches of that grace which is “no respecter of persons.” It is highly improbable, to say the least, that agreeably with their new character, these persons, especially such as filled political offices, neglected to employ

their influence prudently, to hinder or modify the wrong, and to advance the right. To suppose them guilty of such neglect, is to write them down unworthy of the christian name. Then, let me ask, why did so many suffer imprisonment, cruel mockings, scourgings, expulsion from home and country, or even ignominious death in horrid forms? To say the least, they offered passive resistance to unjust politics, and this is invariably found to be effective resistance. Beyond doubt, however, in accordance with the principles laid down in the various parts of scripture which have been, or which may be quoted, their direct, verbal testimony and practical protest were faithfully given in favor of the "true, honest, and just" on the part of governments. Again: supposing they were silent and abstained from all political action, it is sufficient to say in answer to the inference deduced therefrom, that the apostles planted a seedling, which immediately struck root, and from that time grew until it expanded into a great tree, even "the tree of life," whose very "leaves are for the healing of the nations." In other words, involved in the gospel, which is "to heal diseases of the mind," there are principles—secondary matters, some would call them—whose development has already produced, and must necessarily yet produce, mighty changes social and political, of the happiest kind. This influence, which is distinct from conversion to Christ and the inner life of godliness, we see and realize in the diffusion of knowledge and the general liberties of Europe; the destruction of hoary and cunningly ramified systems of idolatry; the decline of despotism; the extension of commerce and art throughout the world; and especially in the freedom, refinements, and popular power of our own United Kingdom, of our national children, the colonies, and of our sturdy, self-willed, and touchy son Jonathan. These improvements are unquestionably attributable to the development of christian truth, and can justly be ascribed to no other cause. In confirmation of this, let us recollect the evils which have been redressed, and the good done by christian activity in politics. The breaking up of the rotten Borough system, the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the destruction of the African slave trade, Catholic Emancipation, the liberation of eight hundred thousands of our enslaved brothers in the West Indies, the opening of a free course for Missionary exertions, the abolition of the Corn

Laws and the commencement of Free Trade, the annihilation of the East India Company and their gigantic system of oppression, the establishment of the penny postage, and many other measures, fraught with benefits to our country and to the world, were greatly advanced by the zeal of christians, and I hesitate not to affirm, are entirely the results of christian teaching.

As to apostolic silence, it should be remembered that nothing is said in the New Testament in direct denunciation of despotism, such as was then undermining the Roman empire; of the soldierism or war-system, then closely interwoven with idolatry; of polygamy, the fruitful parent of wide-spread misery; or of slavery, although generally practised and intrinsically unjust and cruel. It was their mission to "save men's lives," and not recklessly to expose them to wholesale butchery. But they taught such tenets and enforced such practices, as inevitably sapped these and kindred abominations from the roots upwards. Hence I am persuaded that the outcry against christians taking part in political movements, is to be traced to the teachings of self-seeking abettors of class legislation and tyranny. Men in the wrong are ever afraid of the right, and therefore are opposed to the activities of unfettered and purified minds. It is plain, then, from all that has been advanced, that the question: "Can christians consistently take part in politics?" should rather be: "Can christians consistently neglect them?"

Before proceeding to the second branch of my subject, it appears requisite to notice an objection too frequently urged, that christians may not be concerned in political agitation because men of heterodox creed and infidels are prominently engaged therein. I must say that I never hear this objection without surprise. In my view it would be as becoming to refuse to live in England because drunkards are found therein, or to object to go to a public market because unbelievers resort to it. Christians may not, of course, give countenance to infidel notions or practices; but it should not be forgotten that infidels are not answerable to us for their opinions any more than we are to them for ours, and also that they are subjects of the government and payers of taxes equally with ourselves, and entitled to the same rights as members of the community that we are. Be it remembered too, that so far as such men are zealous in opposing tyranny and seeking

public rights, they are performing a duty to which every christian ought to attend. Even were there motives questionable, their action in aiding a moral agitation is commendable; and it were a pity if in this or in any other respect, their conduct should be more accordant with christian principle than that of christians themselves. I would avail myself thankfully of the aid of infidels and men of every rank, color, and creed, in laboring for the removal of political grievances and the promotion of parliamentary reform, just as I should be glad of their help in extinguishing a burning building, staying a plague, freeing a slave, or feeding the hungry. To be consistent, those who urge this objection ought to retire into a sectarian "settlement," or "go out of the world." Christians and Christian ministers have not scrupled to unite with men of every creed, infidels included, in favor of Free Trade, and of the abolition of slavery, and of other reforms also, all equally political, and involving moral issues not more real or important than those the Reform League would promote. Assuredly then, they may with equal propriety, and for the sake of consistency they should lend the weight of their influence, and give the benefit of their wealth and personal activity to a cause so sound in its principle, and so important in its bearing upon the interests of every class at home and abroad, both now and throughout successive generations.

Having established the duty of christians to be prudently active in civil and social matters, I now invite attention to the principles which the scriptures supply for their guidance in discharging it. I am not to show what are the politics of the bible, but what are the political principles it enunciates. Politics, as I understand, are measures required, or supposed to be required by existing circumstances, or expected events, and therefore are continually changeable. Political principles are tenets, or laws, according to which national affairs should be conducted, or with the spirit of which the measures of government, or public bodies should be embued. These therefore are immutable. Political principles prescribe and regulate politics. The politics set forth or alluded to in the bible are happily abolished, or denounced, as opposed to christian principles, for I need scarcely remind you, these were the economics of the Jews, Syrians, Persians, Greeks, and other nations, all strangers to "the true light which now

shineth" upon us. Proceed we, then, to ascertain what are the principles laid down in holy writ, which should rule our proceedings in social and national matters.

First. The scriptures teach THE COMMON ORIGIN AND THE ESSENTIAL EQUALITY OF MANKIND. The Great Being out of nothing, "by the word of His power" framed and fashioned the universe, called forth the angelic hosts, the lights of the firmament, the multitudes of the waters, the myriads of beasts and reptiles, the teeming tribes of wing and song, and all the varieties of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms; and He also ordained the laws by which they are distributed, harmonized, and made co-operative. This same Being "created man upon the earth," and "fixed the bounds" of human habitation. He controls the varied events and incidents of their several situations and histories. In His infinite wisdom, this almighty Parent of the race "hath made of one blood all the nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth." (Acts xvii, 26.) Every man therefore is of "the blood royal," being descended from "the King of Kings." In His sight the entire race stand naturally, socially, and morally upon a perfect equality. "Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" (Mala. ii, 10.) "Did not He that made me in the womb, make him"—my manservant, my neighbor, though of a different color of skin, located in a different clime, or placed in a poorer condition?—"and did not ONE fashion us in the womb"—and assign to us those diversities of form and feature, height and hue, which distinguish man from man, and tribe from tribe? (Job xxxi, 15.) Such are the language and teaching of holy writ. It follows therefore, that naturally one man is not more nor better than another; one is not greater nor less. What you are, I am; as I am so are ye. Physical differences, mental diversities, official distinctions, and pecuniary inequalities ever have existed, and I suppose ever must exist in this world. But every man everywhere, of every color, character, and condition, of every clime and time, is equally a man—one of God's offspring and care. A monarch is not more a man for the sceptre he sways, than is the laborer who wields the flail. It is not the fault of the peasant that he was not born a prince; it is not the praise of the noble, that he is not a plebeian. These dissimilarities are not matters of accident, but of design; and they neither

add to the properties of manhood, nor detract therefrom. God has appointed the lowliness of one and the loftiness of another, and both for the advantage of each. Both arise out of our equality, and are necessary to its development. The dependence of money upon labor, is equal to the dependence of labor upon money; and the indebtedness of mental ability in one to physical strength in another, is as great as that of bodily power to inventive genius. Plowmen are equal to physicians in value to the community; penmen are equal to printers; and chimney sweepers are equal to merchants.

“The workshop must be crowded,
That the palace may be bright;
If the plowman did not plow,
The poet could not write.
Then let every toil be hallow'd,
That man performs for man,
And have its share of honor,
As part of one great plan.”

Accordingly, God “is no respecter of persons.” (Acts x, 34.) “He accepteth not the persons of princes”—more than of plowmen—“nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of His hands.” (Job xxxiv, 19.) “The rich and the poor” of every land, “meet together” on an equality as men, “and JEHOVAH is the maker of them all.” (Prov. xxii, 2.)

Secondly. The scriptures teach THE BROTHERHOOD AND SOCIAL DEPENDENCY OF THE HUMAN RACE. To show that in respect of property and interest men are identified and linked together, as well as to teach their consanguinity—their oneness of origin and nature, and their consequent duty to maintain a loving and peaceful intercourse, nations are styled in the bible, “the families of the earth,” and the “kindreds of the earth.”

“God, ever working on a social plan,
By various ties attaches man to man:
He made at first, though free and unconfined,
One man the common parent of the kind,
That every tribe, though placed as He sees best,
Where seas or deserts part them from the rest,
Differing in language, manners, or in face,
May feel themselves allied to all the race.”

(Cowper.)

“God said unto” the whole race in the persons of the first pair, “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it,”—not subdue one another, but the earth, “and have dominion”—not nation over nation, nor

tribe over tribe, nor white over black, but "over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God said, behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you," mankind, "it shall be for meat." (Gen. i, 28, 29.) "The profit of the earth," or, land "is FOR ALL; the king himself is served by the field," by agricultural labor. (Eccles. v, 9.) "God that made the world and all things * * * * * giveth to all life and breath and all things," (Acts xviii, 24, 25) not that parties large or small may appropriate to themselves alone the advantages peculiar to their local positions; but that all by helping all may serve themselves.

"'Tis thus reciprocating each with each,
Alternately the nations learn and teach;
While Providence enjoins to every soul,
A union with the vast terraqueous whole."

(Cowper.)

Thus we see that the great Parent hath equalized and associated all intelligent creatures, making them in the mass proprietors of the earth, and providing for them in its productions a sufficiency for sustentation and enjoyment. By His appointment, agriculture is the original source of the supply of human needs. Out of agriculture, with the increasing wants of multiplying and collected persons, arise the arts and sciences, handicrafts and commerce, these being but the means whereby the capabilities of the earth are developed. He who ordained the source of supply, appointed its course also. He has given to some a bent of mind which leads them to "till the ground," and He "teaches them to discretion" in so doing. (Isa. xxviii, 28.) To others He has given artistic skill, or mental readiness and energy, by which the productions of husbandry are made available for the general good. "The earth hath He given to the children of men," (Psa. cxv, 16) and intelligence hath He given to bring out its resources, mould its productions, and guide to the enjoyment of the same. This dispensation is accompanied by the repeated and rigid command to "do justly and love mercy," and to deal every man with every other man as a brother. (Zech. vii, 9, 10. Malachi ii, 10.) The observance of this command is the only pre-requisite to universal plenty and peace.

Providence being the outworking of Divine purpose, is the exponent of revelation. Hence, in accordance with the teaching of scripture, we see plainly that fields and flocks, mines and quarries, silver and gold, iron and brass, fruits and herbs, are given to various portions of the common family occupying different localities, that exchanging one with another on equitable terms, all may be mutually benefited. It is equally plain, that God hath filled the encircling oceans and opened the courses of flowing rivers, to serve as highways and byeways whereby that fraternal interchange may be facilitated. Trades and commerce, then, are essential to husbandry, while husbandry is their creator and life. Wheat and wool, hides and flax, cotton and timber, and other agricultural produce we could not consume in their native state. We must have millers, dyers, tanners, spinners, weavers, sawyers, tailors, shoemakers, toolmakers, miners, and other artizans and laborers to give them shape, use, and value. Then we must have collections of habitations, advised by the proximity of materials, or of water-conveyance, that these several craftsmen may work into each others' hands. As population increases and productions multiply, ports must be opened, ships built, sailors go out, penmen write, and merchants transmit and import. Additions of mouths lead to the extension of manufactures, of tillage, and of commerce, that the said mouths may be filled. This superinduces improvements in tool-making and machinery, which are but the application of skill for the easy and profitable working up of raw materials, that with fair play, must add to the comfort and credit of the toiling classes. Of course, amongst the toilers are included mental workers as well as manual workers; for heads in many departments, are as necessary and valuable as hands are in others. Governments also there must be to attend to the common rights of the communities they rule, or confusion and ruin must ensue. Thus God has united the interests of men by the law, that the requisites of life and comfort be furnished by agriculture, moulded by trade, and distributed by commerce.

"How various nature! Turgid grain
 Here nodding, floats the golden plain;
 There worms weave silken webs; here glowing vines
 Lay forth their purple to the sun;
 Beneath the soil kings' harvests run;
 And royal rev'nues ripen in the mines.

What's various nature? Art divine,
 Man's soul to soften and refine.
 Heaven different growths to different lands imparts,
 That all may stand in need of all,
 And interest draw around the ball,
 A net to catch and join all human hearts.

Thus has the great Creator's pen,
 His law supreme to mortal men,
 In their necessities distinctly writ;
 E'en appetite supplies the place
 Of absent virtue, absent grace,
 And human want performs for human wit.

So wrote the celebrated author of the "Night Thoughts," in his poem entitled "The Merchant," more than two hundred years ago. A modern writer says :

"To some we find
 The plowman's annual toil assign'd;
 Some at the sounding anvil glow;
 Some the swift-sliding shuttle throw;
 Some, studious of the wind and tide,
 From pole to pole our commerce guide;
 While some of genius more refined,
 With head and tongue assist mankind.
 In every rank, or great or small,
 'Tis industry supports us all."

Thirdly. The scriptures prescribe PHILANTHROPY—THE LOVE OF MAN—AS THE DUTY OF MAN. Patriotism, the love of country, in the sacred volume is not inculcated nor commended. It is at variance with every principle of the gospel and with its grand purpose, as it is equally with the wording and spirit of the moral law. To this evil sentiment slavery, monopoly, and war owe their origin, and from it they draw their strength. It is a hollow-hearted, smooth-tongued plausibility, a moral deformity, and a foe to mankind, although petted and pampered by a depraved philosophy and a deteriorated theology. Enthusiastic and unwearied are its efforts to incite our selfishness, in opposition to prudent and far-sighted self-love, and to win our esteem. To this end it employs the blandishments of beauty, tips the pencil of the artist, honeys the tongue of eloquence, and strings the harp of poesy. But deceitful are the lessons it gives, vicious the habits it forms, and enormous the cost of its evil tuition.

"Man through all changes of revolving time,
 Unchanging man, in every varying clime,
 Deems his own land of every land the pride,
 Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside:
 His home the spot of earth supremely blest,
 A dearer, sweeter, spot than all the rest."

In opposition to the Divine Being, this evil principle teaches that we should not "love our neighbor as ourselves," but

that we should regard the men of other climes and shades of skin as our natural enemies, or as our natural inferiors, and therefore it is our duty to protect ourselves against them, and our right, if we have the might, to subdue them under our control. Hence, as my favorite COWPER says :

“ Lands intersected by a narrow frith,
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations who had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.”

Where is the line of demarcation between man and man ? Are not all alike in nature, susceptibilities, liabilities, capabilities, and destinies ? Are they not in interest identified ? Bless a part, you bless the whole ; curse some, you curse all. As in the body physical, so in the body politic, “ whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it ? ” (1 Cor. xii, 26.) Weal and woe are reciprocal and diffusive. The employer is benefitted as well as the employed ; the strong is advantaged as well as the weak ; the benefactor is blessed as well as the recipient ; the wronger is injured as well as the ill-treated. Break a string of this instrument, and the jarring which ensues destroys its music ; jerk a pebble into this lake, and circular ripples will successively spread over its entire surface and break upon its shore. Then what should, or what can make men natural enemies, or natural inferiors, except the unnatural proceedings or policy of some against others ? Let those proceedings be discontinued, and that policy be changed ; let right become the rule and love the temper, and it will soon appear that such enmity, or inferiority, has no existence in nature. The spirit of scripture-teaching on this head is, *THE EARTH IS EVERY MAN'S COUNTRY, AND MANKIND ARE EVERY MAN'S COUNTRYMAN.* In substance the injunction of the bible is : “ Be all for each and each for all.” The world is evidently for the earth, and the earth for the world ; brotherly love being the bond of union, and justice the ruler of exchanges. As Mrs. BARBAULD beautifully puts it, though in another connection :

“ The well-taught philosophic mind,
To all compassion gives ;
Casts round the world an equal eye,
And feels for all that lives.”

Accordingly, “ England is my home, the earth is my country,” is a worthy pass-word for true British christians.

“ Where is the true man’s fatherland ?
 Is it where he by chance is born ?
 Doth not the yearning spirit scorn
 In such scant borders to be spanned ?
 O yes ! his fatherland must be
 As the blue heaven wide and free !

Where’er a single slave doth pine,
 Where’er one man may help another,—
 Thank God for such a birthright, brother,—
 That spot of earth is thine and mine !
 There is the true man’s birth-place grand,
 His is a world-wide fatherland ! ”

(*J. R. Lowell.*)

I am aware that this tenet thus plainly put, may startle many, and be accounted extravagant and preposterous. It has, however, been a point to which I have given close attention during a long course of years. My appeal is “to the law and the testimony.” If a single text of scripture, fairly interpreted, justifies the love of a class or tribe of men, or of a country or nation, in contradistinction from the love of the human race, I will promptly confess that in this particular I have erred. I am not unmindful of the asseveration of the Jews in Babylon, recorded in the 137th Psalm: “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.” This is the only text I remember to have heard adduced in favor of patriotism, and the only one I can call to mind which seems to favor it. A quotation more unfortunate for the purpose could scarcely be made. It gives the language of men writhing under the iron roof of oppression. They were degraded captives, forcibly driven from home, and treated heartlessly in a strange land. No wonder that they longed for the freedom and comforts of which they had been deprived. The oppressed in every instance would prefer the places where liberty had been realized and property possessed. Be it also noted, that their inheritance of Canaan was a special one. Their land had been selected for them by divine sovereignty, and given to them for a purpose chiefly ecclesiastical and religious. Then, be it observed, their preference was rather religious than local. It was not Palestine so much as “Jerusalem,” the site of their sacred temple and centre of their devotions, the memory of which was so ardently cherished. Be it further remembered, that the abolition of types, the destruction of Jerusalem, and dispersion of the Jews, together with the teaching of Jesus to the Woman of Samaria, (John iv, 20-24.) and the gospel commission,

(Matt. xxviii, 19, 20; Mark xvi, 15, 16.) prove that christianity is adverse to the localizing of religion, or the consecration of particular spots, and to the exclusive or selfish love of a country or tribe. The avowment in that text, therefore, disagrees not with the love of mankind, as distinct from patriotism. A solitary example, like the one therein presented, unsupported by any precept or principle of scripture, cannot have the force of law. I may prefer a particular locality for residence without despising or disregarding the inhabitants of other places. Indeed, many of the Jews and their descendents, when received as citizens of Babylon, refused to return to their own land. Patriotism is sadly propped if this be its only support in scripture.

It is pleasing to find the course of events to be in opposition to obstinate nationalities. Emigration, proceeding on so broad a scale as it has covered for many years past, will largely aid in breaking the suicidal bond which has opposed kingdom to kingdom. When the love of country harmonizes with the love of our kind, or in synonomous terms, when patriotism is absorbed in philanthropy, we walk by a right rule. With an allowable attachment to friends and soil and climate, let due regard be paid to the interests of all persons dwelling in every land. Let men of every tribe and tongue indulge freely in intercourse and barter upon equal terms, so far as need requires or opportunity serves. Thus let the whole family of man sit in loving brotherhood at the well-spread table of universal providence, and participate in the bounteous gifts of their one, loving Father. All hail the day when patriotism is thus swallowed up in philanthropy! "Then shall our" international "peace flow as a river," perpetually, calmly, and fructifyingly, "and our righteousness be as the sands of the sea," a breakwater against the ruinous encroachments of ambition and pride.

"Our country is the wide, wide world!
 At least it so should be,—
 Where heaven's blue banner is unfarl'd
 Where groweth flower or tree;
 In sunny clime, or snowy waste,
 On fettered land or free;
 Despite the claims of clan or caste,
 OUR COUNTRY it should be.

Fourthly. The scriptures recognize THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF MEN and impose upon them EQUAL AND APPROPRIATE DUTIES. This has been involved in points already advanced, but for the sake of emphasis, we give it distinct prominence.

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men” near or remote, exalted or debased, “should do unto you, do ye even so unto them: for this is the law and the prophets,”—the sum and substance of all divine injunctions and all divine revelations, all that is obligatory upon man in his social, national, and international standing. Such is the command of Christ, as given in Matthew 7th chapter 12th verse. The apostle James says: (ii, 8, 9) “If ye fulfil THE ROYAL LAW, according to the scripture, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, YE DO WELL:” this is doing good or justly. “But if ye have respect to persons”—to the rich more than the poor, the educated more than the untaught, the English more than the Hindoo, the Turk more than the Russian, the French more than the South Sea Islander, the white-skinned more than the black—“ye commit sin:” pray, mark this: “YE COMMIT SIN and are convinced,” or more accurately reading it, “convicted by the law as transgressors.” The apostle commands that while we “fear God and honor the king”—or, ruling power, we “honor” or “esteem all men,” and regard all alike as one with ourselves in nature and interests, rights and duties. Am I a magistrate? Then, whatever be the grade of my magistracy, whether supreme or subordinate, I must remember that God hath said: “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God;” must be “a man of truth, hating covetousness;” and must “not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness judge his neighbour.” (2 Sam. xxiii, 5. Exo. xviii, 21. Lev. xix, 15.) Am I an employer? Then I am required to let JUSTICE AND EQUALITY regulate my dealings with my neighbors who are in my service, “knowing that I also have a Master in heaven.” (Colos. iv, 1.) Am I a parent? Then I must “not provoke my children,” or harass them by harshness or severity, “lest they be discouraged.” (Colos. iii, 21.) Am I a citizen? Then I must “submit to every ordinance of man”—of the community of which I am a member, providing it militates against no divine requirement, “for the Lord’s sake: whether unto the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them who are deputed by him, for the punishment of evil doers and the praise of them that do well.” (1 Pet. ii, 13, 14.) Am I in the employ of another? Then I must “obey in all things” pertaining to my office, “not with eye-service after the manner of men-

pleasers, but with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" only. (Ephes. vi, 6, 7.) Am I a child? Then whatever my age and whatever the station or condition of my parents, I must "honor my father and my mother, and obey them," or either of them, "for this is right." (Ephes. vi, 6, 7.) So the wife must "submit to her own husband" in loving adherence, and "the husband love his wife as his own body." (Ephes. v, 22-25.) In like manner, all men who claim to be christians, are required to "be of one mind" in these and such like matters, "having compassion one of another, to love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing." For he that "loves life and would see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him depart from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it." (1 Pet. iii, 8-11.) In this way the scriptures require us to cherish the recollection of our mutual dependence, to exercise sympathy one with another, to be invariably honest, just, forbearing and forgiving, and to abstain from retaliation or revenge. Hence no man and no body of men have right or authority to tyrannize over or oppress any other man, or any number of other men, in any manner or measure, by law, or on the plea of expediency, or on the ground of superior might, intellect, or education, or under any name or pretence whatever. As a man and a fellow creature I am a member of society, and as such I claim as my right, whatever my neighbor should claim as his right. Of such right I may not be deprived, unless by my own invasion of the rights of others, or by mental imbecility, my right is forfeited. What is my duty to my neighbor, is my neighbor's duty to me. My rights are the duties of society towards me: my duties are the rights of society at my hand. Thus rights and duties co-exist, and involve each other. If one man may claim freedom as a birthright, so may I, and so may every man all the earth over. The liberty of one may not infringe upon the liberty of another. If any one may claim protection, every one may equally do the same. One man's wrong cannot be another man's right; and whatever is morally improper, cannot be politically good. Therefore let each be protected from each, and all from all.

These things being so, we arrive at a proper conclusion

respecting the source and intention of social government. Authority can be invested in some, only by consent of the community, in whatever form this consent be expressed, and should be exercised to secure to all men impartially, freedom of thought and speech, freedom of trade and commerce, freedom of knowledge, freedom of conscience and religion, in one word, the utmost latitude of individual freedom compatible with the equal freedom of every other person. A self-elected government is a usurpation, which has no claim upon the respect or submission of the community. Tyranny should be peaceably resisted, because it is a denial of this freedom; licentiousness should be repressed, because it is an invasion of it. Magistracy, from the throne downwards, is appointed "for a terror to evil-doers"—to restrain ill-disposed persons from invading the rights of their neighbors, and so to become "the praise of them that do well." When it becomes the terror of the virtuous and the boast of the vicious, or in other words, when it disagrees with the teaching of the bible, it sins. In so far as it is sinful, it should be discountenanced in a moral way only, not resisted by physical force. At once then, we see the duty of cheerful submission to rightful authority in all civil matters. Loyalty to "the powers that be" demands opposition, becomingly expressed, to the powers that ought not to be. In order that righteousness and peace may abound in our nation and age, we must reprehend the unrighteousnesses which prevail and generate war. That we ourselves may enjoy and secure to others also, the sweets of liberty, we must denounce that which violates it, and advocate that which would promote it. On this subject, I may only refer without quotation, to the following passages as affording a specimen of New Testament teaching: Rom. xiii, 1-7. 1 Tim. ii, 1-4. Titus iii, 1, 2. Matt. xxii, 21. 1 Peter iii, 13, 14. Col. ii, 20-22. Acts iv, 19; v, 29; xvi, 35-39; xxii, 25-30.

Fifthly. The scriptures teach that EVIL IS VISITED UPON ALL DENIALS OR INFRINGEMENTS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." (see Rom. i, 18. Job xxii, 5-7. Amos viii, 4-8. Isa. lviii, 3-7. James v, 1-4. Psalm lxxxii, 1-4. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12; xxi, 13.) The scriptures throughout teach that the divine displeasure is

manifested against all that is wrong in the dealings of men with men in every relation and of whatever form. "The wrath of God" is not always revealed in the shape of pestilence, famine or earthquake, or any other extraordinary calamity. The direct and obvious results of the evil done are ordinarily the judgments of Jehovah upon the same. When governments err, punishment comes in the form of insubordination and civil disquietude. When nations are unjust, war—unreasoning, brutal, and ruinous war, is the rod of correction. Domestic brawls, disease, and want are the avengers, when families, or members of families do ill. When wrongs between employers and employed are perpetrated, discontent, thefts, strikes, riots, drunkenness, or bankruptcies are the sword forged by those wrongs and turned by justice into the avengers thereof. In one word, sin is punished by sin, for wrong originates wrong and arouses the evil passions of its victims in opposition to it. What is wrong in men's manner of resisting wrong, provokes fresh wrongs in retaliation. The result of these perpetual cycles of evil, but for the checks put upon them by God's over-ruling providence, would be a fearful exemplification of Cicero's aphorism: "man is a wolf to man"; for the race would be self-destroyed. Solomon says: "He that withholdeth the corn"—to raise the price unnaturally, especially in a time of scarcity—"the people shall curse him," not by Divine approval, but of their own depraved anger. Here is one sin in punishment of another. Thus "evil shall slay the wicked;" and thus "the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands." In accordance with this principle, we trace to bad legislation many of the offences which fill our prisons, add to our local and national taxation, and disgrace our country, Poaching and smuggling, with all the evils attendant and consequent thereupon, are the progeny and the punishment of our indirect taxation, and of our accursed game laws. So we trace to the giving of votes to property instead of persons the bribery, treating, intimidation, coercion, drunkenness, brawling, fighting, breaking of promises, party-spirit, rancorous feelings, dissensions, and other improprieties attendant upon our corporate and parliamentary elections. Retribution certainly follows upon every evil done, and takes its character from the nature of the wrong it punishes. (See Jer. iii, 17-19.)

Having shown the duty of christians to be active and christian-like citizens, and having indicated the great principles by which all civic and national proposals should be tested, and all social procedures regulated, it remains that a few inferences be suggested. This must be done with the utmost brevity.

First. Is it not evident that CLASS LEGISLATION IS MIS-LEGISLATION? Tried by the teaching of scripture, our present system of elections is obviously unsound. To prefer money to men, or in other words, to place the worth of a man in his material property, is iniquitous. According to "the royal law" I may not reject or slight a man because he is poor, nor esteem a man merely because of his wealth.

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gold for all that."

Not premises nor possessions of any description or amount, but persons in their own right, should elect our representatives, parochial, corporate, and parliamentary. All who are taxed, if not under punishment for crime, should vote irrespective of the amounts they pay. Indeed the right to vote precedes the duty to pay, for rates and taxes, whether local or parliamentary, can only be levied by votes. No man and no body of men, according to the principles we have been considering, may take money from another however humble in condition without asking him for it, either in person, or through some one he has appointed to act for him. To do otherwise is to be guilty of robbery, even if under the guise of law. The poor laboring man has in fact, although not in form, as much at stake in the country as the wealthiest. The toiling classes are unquestionably the sinews of the kingdom, and they feel most severely any derangement in its economy. To claim the power to impose laws and payments upon your neighbor or a number of your neighbors, under the pretence of paying a higher house-rent, or a larger amount as poor rates, while every such neighbor pays in other forms and in proportion to his income no less, it may be, more than you, is not to do unto your neighbor as you have a reasonable ground to expect him to do unto you.

Should it be said, "the masses are not fit to vote; they would misuse the right," I must regret my want of space

fully to meet the assertion. I might ask: First, By what right do the present minorities claim to vote in distinction from the rest of the tax-paying population? And Secondly, wherein lies their peculiar fitness for the franchise? Is it in their truckling to landlord influence, or in their wholesale dealing in bribes, as parliamentary committees are ever and anon bringing to light? The scenes witnessed at every election sufficiently indicate the need of improvement. Passing from this, I would remind you that in every case justice is the wisest and safest policy. Give a man his right and you fit him for its use. Bondage of every kind debases, freedom always elevates. Let the law of right regulate our representative system, and certainly no upright man would desire a return to our present partial, bungling arrangements, or wish to substitute any form of crooked, crafty policy. Meet men in the spirit of justice and brotherly kindness, repose confidence in them, and you will evoke gratitude, respect, and confidence in return. Give them their admitted right, remembering that they will not use it as a class, in opposition to any other class as such; but as men amongst men, who differ in judgment one from another, and think they have different interests. We plead for the right, irrespective of the way in which it may be used.

In examining the matter, we beg you to con over the principles already laid down, and what they involve. Every man is equal in nature, and equally a member of the community in the midst of which by divine providence he is placed. Every man, not a criminal, is equal in value to the community, although that value may differ widely in outward form. Every man has a stake in the country, is interested in its condition, and affected by its legislation: the poor man especially so. Every man is equally responsible to God as a member of the community. Therefore, every man is equal in his claims upon the State—equal in rights.

All that pertains to this law of justice is just. A right to an end, includes a right to the means whereby that end may be attained. My right to a vote as an equal member of society, involves my right to be perfectly free in recording that vote, and, therefore my right to be protected from intimidation, coercion, or bribery. The ballot, or secret voting, is the only means whereby every voter can be placed upon an equal footing at the polling booth, and therefore it is the voter's right. The noble JOHN BRIGHT has said: "I dread to think of the consequences of a wide extension of the suffrage in the manufacturing districts,"—and so with equal force he might have said of our agricultural districts—"should it be obtained without the ballot. It will tempt employers of labor to a hateful tyranny, and it will doom multitudes of the employed, I fear, to a not less hateful condition of political degradation."

In order to make votes equal in value, and give a fair representation according to population, it is absolutely necessary to abolish the present ridiculous distinctions between voters in counties and boroughs, and divide the country into equal electoral districts, after the manner of our poor-law unions. The whole community being thus impartially represented, would have inducement beyond precedent in our history, to industry, contentment, and mutual good-will.

THE REFORM LEAGUE, then, I would urge every christian to join, because it is opposed to class legislation, and proposes by the employment of moral means only, to do justice to the entire manhood of the country, irrespective of parties, and to the extinction of prejudices and opposing interests.

Secondly. In the light of the principles enunciated, let us examine into INDIRECT TAXATION. Since our common Father bestows His in-

numerable and unmeasured bounties upon mankind by a wise distribution, for the sake of securing an equitable interchange; and bestows them as freely as the winds blow, as the rains fall, as the sun shines, as the oceans roll, as the earth's surface vegetates, and as human mind thinks;—is it proper for man, in order to gain any selfish end, to restrict their use by mischievous imposts, falsely called "duties" or "dues?" Should any taxes be imposed upon goods used in trade and commerce? Should not industry in all its branches and forms be absolutely free? Is not any restriction thereupon unjust, injurious, and foolish? Do not such restrictions place difficulties in the way of honest enterprise? Do they not add to the natural market value of the goods, not only the amount of the tax imposed, but interest also upon the prepayment of such tax by merchants, and wholesale dealers? Were not the fifty millions of pounds, more or less, paid last year (1865-66) into the Exchequer as Customs, Excise, and Stamps duties, so much capital withdrawn from trade and commerce? Are not these imposts a producing cause of smuggling, unhealthy competition, adulteration, slop-work, and other vices? Is it right so to arrange these imposts as to withhold from the toilers the best of the fruits upon which their labor and skill have been expended? The divine law is: "the husbandman laboring first must be partaker of the fruits." (2 Tim. ii, 6.) But in our country in consequence of our iniquitous laws, the husbandman is dragging on a wretched existence, notorious for privations which would be disgraceful to a land far inferior to ours. "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof?" The English gardener! "Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" The English shepherd and farm-laborer, who see the flesh-meat sold off the farm at too high a price for them to buy, and the milk given to the pigs or sent to distant towns out of their reach. "He that ploweth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of the hope"; (1 Cor. ix, 7, 10) but in christian England as with false boast it is called, through our system of aristocratic taxation it may not be as God would have it. One sows and another reaps; one builds and another inhabits; one weaves and another wears the garment; one pays the taxes which another votes, and pays the voter's taxes as well as his own. These things ought not so to be. Evidently, the necessary expenses of the State should be equitably charged upon the male members of the State personally and directly,—a small sum being required annually from every adult, as a tax for personal protection, and then a scale of charges upon real property, exempting what is necessary for actual support, but ascending in amount according as the total of income increases. In this way, the burden would be lightened to the poor and would bear most heavily upon those best able to sustain it,—while trade and commerce would be absolutely free—customs, excise, and stamps being swept away. To tax even the soup of the pauper, and the dumpling of the plowman is abominable. To throw the heaviest proportion of the awfully extravagant expenses of our nation upon the poorest and most hard-worked of the community, as we do by taxing goods and especially as in some instances the raw material, is a crying iniquity. No one can reconcile with scripture teaching our practice of making the day-laborer pay at the rate of twopence in the shilling, or more, out of his miserable pittance for taxes or taxation purposes, while the rich landowner, pays at the rate of a few pence in the pound of his immense income.

Thirdly. Do not the principles in question instruct us as to THE TRUE NATURE OF THE RELATION BETWEEN THE EMPLOYER AND THE EMPLOYED? Every man, as we have seen, is every other man's brother; and obviously

every man who labors in the pay of another, is in partnership with his employer, since the money and mind of the one and the strength and the skill of the other, are united for the benefit of both. The brothership and the partnership should be borne in mind on both sides, and should rule their engagements and dealings one with another. No man should be regarded as the mere drudge of another, and as being sufficiently recompensed for toil that occupies his thoughts and time, and exhausts his energies, if paid the lowest pittance that circumstances may enable the employer to force upon him. Justice and equality should regulate all such relations and transactions, agreeably with the injunctions of scripture. Then oppressions and strikes would be unknown; bankruptcies on the one side, and the shirking of labor on the other would be greatly diminished, if not wholly superseded; and the pleasure of making happy, the purest pleasure on earth, would be largely realised.

Fourthly. CAN WAR BE RECONCILED WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPTURE? "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," thy fellow creature, whoever and wherever he be, "as thou lovest" or ought to love "thyself." If any one has wronged thee, "say not I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work." (Prov. xxiv, 29) "It hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you," is the language of the great Lawgiver of the christian church, "love your enemies" and all you deem to be so, for they are your neighbors still, be they Hindoos, Chinese, Burmese, Russians, or Frenchmen; do not shoot your enemies, but love them, pray for such as shamefully ill-treat and defraud you; do not burn down their dwellings, lay waste their fields, dishonor their women, and triumph in the sufferings you inflict. Do them no harm either by word or deed, nor attempt to treat them as in your decided judgment they deserve. This applies to all enemies, real or suspected, one or multitudes, obscure or famous, public or private, isolated or organized. "Recompense to no one" and to no number of ones, "evil for evil." "Avenge not yourselves"—exact not justice for yourselves—"but rather give place unto wrath," submit to injustice inflicted by anger, malice, envy, or pride: "for it is written vengeance"—the exaction of justice—"is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." "Be not conquered by evil, but conquer by returning good for evil." (Matt. v, 38-43. Luke vi, 27-38. Rom. xii, 14, 17-21.) Such is the teaching of Christ, and whatsoever is more or other than this "cometh of evil," issuing from the lusts of depraved humanity.

"If religion we profess, love to man must be our aim;
Then true peace will soon progress, and our brethren we reclaim.
Haste the glorious, happy time, dimly seen by prophets past,
Peace and love through every clime, e'en while earth itself shall last!

Fifthly. Let us study the principles enunciated in their bearing upon FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE! It is evident that truth is not authorized to punish error, and that error has no right to persecute truth. Let no man step into the province of God, and judge his brother in things pertaining to conscience.

"Let Cæsar's dues be ever paid to Cæsar and his throne, but consciences and souls were made to be the Lord's alone."

Sixthly. How plainly and fully THE BIBLE IS THE PEOPLE'S BOOK! No other book in existence claiming to be of universal authority may compare with it in this respect. No other is so decidedly the poor man's friend. No other can be so safe a counsellor. Let every working man who reads these pages, ponder the principles that have been advanced—and much more to the same effect may be adduced did space permit—and he will see, if he has doubted before, that every wrong done to the laborer of any grade, is reproved and denounced in the sacred volume. Yet it is not the book of a class—of any class whatever. It is for the millions all the earth over. Every right for every man by it is claimed, but claimed by way of enjoining appropriate duties upon men of every class and in every relation. Did every man perform his duties, every man would enjoy his rights; for as we have already seen, my rights are the duties of another or of others towards me, and my duties involve the rights of those with whom I have to do. Be this book, then, our "chosen heritage,"

"Our guide to everlasting life,
Through all this gloomy vale."

In conclusion. To all my christian readers I would say, be not party politicians. Be not tories, whigs, liberal conservatives, radicals, nor chartists, as such; be not Derbyites, Russelites, nor Gladstonians; but BE CHRISTIAN CITIZENS. Let your christianity rule your politics. Follow any man so far as his leadings consist with true, christian principle; and sanction no measure which disagrees therewith. "Right is right." "Honesty is the best policy."

"God speed the year of jubilee
The wide world o'er!
When from their galling chains set free,
The oppress'd shall vilely bend the knee,
And wear the yoke of tyranny,
Like brutes, no more:—
That year will come, and freedom's reign
To man his plundered rights again
Restore.

"God speed the day when human blood
Shall cease to flow!
In every clime be understood
The claims of human brotherhood,
And each return for evil, good—
Not blow for blow:—
That day will come, all feuds to end,
And change into a faithful friend
Each foe.

"God speed the hour, the glorious hour,
When none on earth
Shall exercise a lordly power,
Nor in a tyrant's presence cower,
But all to manhood's stature tower,
By equal birth!—
That hour will come, to each, to all,
And from his prison-house the thrall
Go forth.

"Until that time, or death arrive,
With head, and heart, and hand I'll strive
To break the rod, and rend the gyve,—
The spoiler of his prey deprive,—
So witness heaven!
And never from my chosen post,
Whate'er the peril or the cost,
Be driven."

(W. Lloyd Garrison.)

NOTE.—Since this lecture has been in the hands of the printer, the proceedings of parliament upon the reform question have been of a singular character, without precedent, it is supposed, in the history of English legislation. By a succession of extraordinary concessions, the government under the parliamentary leadership of Mr. Disraeli, have promoted a measure of a far more liberal character than the so-called "Liberal Party" in the House were prepared to propose. This has been done in opposition to their known principles, obviously for the sake of pay and patronage. It is estimated that if this bill become law the voters throughout the kingdom will be about doubled. But supposing the total number should exceed two millions and a half, we shall still have upwards of three millions of adult male taxpayers treated as unworthy to vote away their own money. Denied the protection of the ballot, the poor voter will be at the mercy of landlords, employers, and customers, and consequently a fearful increase of intimidation, bribery, drunkenness, and promise-breaking may be expected. Neither in its principle nor its provisions is this bill in harmony with the maxims of law or the principles of scripture. Therefore the work of the Reform League, whose sturdy agitation has extorted this measure from the place-loving party in power, is by no means accomplished. They must persist and prosper.

ERRATA.

Cover and title-page. After the word JUSTLY in the first text of scripture, add the words, *and to love mercy*. Micah vii, should be, Micah vi.

Page 11 line 17 from top, instead of *our religion*, read, one's piety.

Page 36 line 4 from bottom, instead of *harmony*, read harmony.