

of drunkenness and vice. In the city of San Francisco, where there is no Sunday law, the police were obliged to suppress the Sunday excursion as a public nuisance. Sunday excursions would go to the suburbs of San Francisco, and a crowd of male and female hoodlums would terrorize the suburbs all day. Then the trains would get back at night filled with a drunken rabble, the lights were turned out, and the scenes became so scandalous that the police of the city suppressed a Sunday excursion train as they suppressed a brothel. The planters of Louisiana were obliged to petition the Legislature of that state to prohibit Sunday excursion trains, because they led to a sulphurous Monday and a blue Tuesday, and their employees worked only four days in the week. It is the uniform testimony of employers of labour, that the efficient labourer, the happy, clean, self-respecting labourer, is the man who stays at home on Sunday, goes to church and Sunday school, and comes up to his work on Monday morning fresh and alert and ready to grapple with his duties; while the man who goes on a Sunday excursion is demoralized and bedraggled, if not worse, on Monday morning, and is unfit to go to his work. Such a man has not had what the Lord intended to give him, he has not had his Sunday rest, with Christian worship, and enjoyment in the bosom of his family; but he has been spending the day in dissipation. He might better have been at work for two days than to spend one day in that kind of dissipation. Therefore, aside from the fact that the Sunday excursions inevitably deprive the labouring man of the rights that should be guaranteed to him by law, they are vice breeders and undesirable in many respects.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I repeat that the provisions of this Bill are moderate, that it is not in any sense a drastic measure, that it is not a puritanical measure, that it is not open to the objection that it forces upon any class of people in this country any religious observance or usage whatever. I repeat that the object of the Bill is to secure to the labourers of this country certain civil rights—the civil right to the rest day, the civil right to religious observance if they wish to participate in them, the civil right of conscience that will permit them to go to church if they want to, and if they do not, they may settle the matter with their spiritual advisers. The object of the law is to provide that no employer of labour shall make a slave of a man and prevent him going to church on Sunday if he wants to. It is not a religious enactment; it stands purely and squarely on the principle of civil rights, and the religious portion of the law is merely incidental. Of course, religious conviction is an important matter. It is important that we would realize that the provisions of this Bill will be blessed by the great Lawgiver who gave the day of rest for man's benefit. But the Bill deals with a civil question, and aims to secure for men a civil right. Now,

the state should be on the side of justice, good order and turth.

Petitions have been presented to this House deprecating the passage of legislation of a religious nature, assuming that a measure of this kind is a measure to secure some kind of religious usage, or some kind of law that will affect a man's religious standing. Those petitions do not meet the case: the Bill is not one of the character that they assume. It does not propose that the state shall legislate with regard to any religious observance. It does not propose that the state shall say that Armenians are right or that Calvinists are right, or that the doctrine of the Trinity is right, or that Unitarianism is right; it does not propose to say one word about religious observances or tenets or ordinances. The Bill plants itself squarely and unequivocally on the principle that the state does not dictate to men what their religion shall be, but guarantees to them the enjoyment of the privileges of the religion that they believe in, and that is all there is in the measure.

Now, I wish to call attention to the significant character of the opposition to this Bill, and to all Bills of a kindred character. Not that some good men do not oppose the Bill; not that some conscientious men, a great many of them, do not oppose it. But I affirm that you can find no bad, vicious element of society in favour of this Bill. The hoodlum, the Anarchist, the thief, the brothel-keeper, the brothel inmate, the saloon keeper, the drunkard—every vile, satanic element in society is opposed to this Bill; and I call upon the men who oppose this measure to take notice of the society and associations in which they are placed. The bearing of this question, not upon religious life primarily, but upon national life, is a matter of very great importance to us. The highest requirements of statesmanship are involved in the consideration of this Bill. The question is, will this Bill have a tendency to lay broader and more securely the foundations of the state that we are building on the northern part of this continent. The question is, will this Bill promote religious liberty? Will it promote public virtue? Will it have a tendency to promote good morals, and from a blessed combination of good influences clustering around the christian Sabbath to graduate good men and good citizens? Will this Bill promote temperance? Will it promote obedience to law? Will it promote respect for God's commandments? Will it have a tendency to secure to the inhabitants of this country that higher education which must go with secular education if we are to turn out men properly equipped for their duties as citizens? These are the questions involved in the consideration of this Bill—questions of statesmanship higher than the consideration of a tariff or the question of the establishment of an experimental farm, or the usual questions sur-