

laws are Christless and Godless. As well say that ministers of religion on board a tempest-tossed ship to whose vacant command the passengers are about to elect one of the crew, have nothing to do with the character and qualifications of the seaman that is to have charge of their own lives and the lives of their flock on board, as to say that ministers have nothing to do with the character of the men into whose hands are entrusted the guidance of public affairs.

No one, therefore, can justly assert that when questions are at stake that concern deeply the public weal (such as: Is the Sabbath to be sanctified? Is the Bible to be in our Public Schools? Is Rome to rule the Dominion, or is it to be the Licensed Victuallers, or is it to be both combined?)—when such questions are at stake who will venture to say that ministers of the Gospel should stand coldly or timidly by, for fear of giving to unreasonable men offence, and see principles for which other generations shed their blood, vilely trampled under foot. Such was not the estimate of a minister's position in reference to the higher questions of politics that was entertained by the Reformation Fathers and the Puritan Divines. And who that know the history of the struggle between freedom and despotism that terminated in the Reformation of 1517, and in the revolution of 1688 will maintain that it had been better had the ministers of these days—bishops and presbyters—never taken any interest in the questions at stake.

But after all this is granted, the other important question will arise, where, when, how, ought the influence that we grant to ministers in regard to important questions in politics, to be exercised? We maintain decidedly that in our day—with a free and unfettered press—it is unwise to use the pulpit too freely or too frequently for this purpose; that it is unwise for ministers to contend with wicked men from whom they cannot expect the common courtesies of life, on the political platform or hustings; that it is unwise to *dictate* to the people, failing to satisfy their judgment by reasoning, what course to pursue; that it is unwise to subject any member of the Church to public censure for voting according to his conscientious convictions. All these things are granted.