

troubles and unrest; we have to-day 200,000 miners on strike in the United States; we have an army of disaffected men marching on to Washington; we have bomb-throwing in almost every capital of Europe; we have society trembling on the verge of great social upheavals; and we are all standing in dread of the changes that may speedily come. What is the matter? Has all this trouble and unrest come because we have been dealing with the disaffected classes on the basis of Christian privileges and Christian usage? Is it because we have paid heed to the injunctions of the Teacher of Nazareth, and have found that these injunctions have proved insufficient? No, Sir; it is because we have disregarded those injunctions; it is because modern society disregards the principles of Christianity and the commands of its Founder; and the remedy for all these difficulties lies in the application of Christian principles, which will make better masters and better men. Unless these principles are applied, these social upheavals will continue; and the first step to take in applying them is to recognize God's law, that the sabbath-day is to be remembered and kept holy, and the labourer is to be secured in the possession of his right to enjoy that day as a day of rest.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I come to the point where I propose to inquire, do these Sunday laws that are proposed violate any of the true principles of human liberty? It is claimed that they do. It is claimed that it is an unjust interference with a man's natural right to say that he shall not be permitted to labour, that he shall not be permitted to employ labour, that he shall not be permitted to do just as he pleases with regard to such things. If a Sunday observance law is an infringement of any just and true principle of human liberty, then, of course, we cannot pass that law; and the question is, is it? With regard to this matter I wish to refer to just three authorities; though I might refer to hundreds. I wish first to refer to Blackstone, who we all know is a very eminent English jurist, whose opinion on a legal or any other question should command respect. With regard to the Sunday rest he says:

It is of admirable service to a state, considered merely as a civil institution.

Mr. Justice Field, of the United States Supreme Court, one of the foremost jurists of this continent, in giving a decision in California some years ago, when he was chief justice of that state, said:

The legislature had the right to make laws for the preservation of health and the promotion of good morals, and so to require periodical cessation from labour, if of opinion that it would tend to both.

Archbishop Ireland said in my hearing last September, at Chicago, with reference to this matter:

I know well we cannot ask the interference of the civil law for mere religion's sake. This considera-

tion is often urged against enactments of Sunday laws. But Sunday is more than a religious day. Sunday is the safety of society, the safety of the nation. Sunday is the inheritance of those who are disinherited from the wealth of the world. Sunday is the day needed by the masses of our people. On this ground I appeal to our lawmakers to aid us in preserving us it from desecration.

Noble words these, carrying conviction to every man who is open to conviction—words pronounced by one of the highest ecclesiastical authorities on this continent, and one of the foremost and purest men in the world. We have, in these declarations by jurists and ecclesiastics, the foundation laid for the vindication and proof of the assertion that Sunday laws do not violate the principles of human liberty. In conclusion, in urging this branch of the subject, I may say that it is proper for this Legislature, or for any Legislature, to impose any degree of restraint necessary for the general welfare. All laws impose restraints. Laws against theft impose restraint; laws against murder impose restraint; laws against any crime impose restraint. Any restraint it is necessary to impose for the purpose of securing the public weal is a restraint which the law-maker has a right to impose, and if it can be shown that this restraint with regard to Sabbath observance is a salutary one, calculated to benefit society, this Legislature has the right to impose it.

I propose to inquire briefly into the question: In what respect does a Sunday rest law promote the public interest? And in what respect is it necessary in the public interest? I answer that it is necessary in many respects. It is necessary, first, as a sanitary regulation. We have the power to make quarantine regulations. We appoint health officers who impose restraints, who interfere with individual liberties, and they have the right to do so in the public interest. We have the right, as a sanitary regulation, to abate a nuisance of any kind, detrimental and prejudicial to health. We have the right to regulate the hours of labour. We can pass a 10 or an 8 or a 12-hour law; we can regulate the hours of labour upon the grounds of a sanitary regulation. We can inspect food; we can prohibit the use of certain articles of food. We can exercise the most arbitrary powers in connection with food inspection, as a sanitary regulation. We can order the destruction of infected clothing and diseased cattle. We can do anything that the public good and safety require. And I say that the Sabbath observance law, as a sanitary regulation, is in the public interest. With regard to its bearing on the question, as a sanitary regulation, let us see what the outcome of the deliberations of the Royal Commission, appointed in 1832, was:

This commission took the testimony of medical men as to the utility of Sunday rest in repairing the waste of physical energy. The impression produced by this testimony was profound. All