

Patterson, James.

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LETTER,

TO THE

MAYOR, THE COUNCILS, THE ALDERMEN,

&c. &c.

THE POLICE OF PHILADELPHIA

AND

THE LIBERTIES.

PHILADELPHIA.

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A LETTER,

To the Mayor, the Councils, the Aldermen, &c. the Police of Philadelphia and the Liberties.

GENTLEMEN AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

It is now near twenty years since Providence cast my lot among you. During this time, our city has improved in an unrivalled manner, in things both useful and comfortable to man. Among these, our noble establishment of Water Works is not the least; the advantages of which to the citizens for culinary purposes, promotion of health, safety in case of fires, for factories, &c. &c. are of no ordinary and common kind, and such as belong to few cities in our world. The expense of \$2,500,000 of which many complain, ought rather to be set down to our praise than otherwise. But while we speak this with thankfulness, for one, I must say, my soul is *troubled* and *stirred* within me, while I see so great a mass of human beings increasing so rapidly in vice and irreligion; and this must be manifest to all, if they will but apply any real test of true religion to our case. Our churches have not kept pace with the increase of population by any means.

With a population of 167,811, together with a great number of strangers always in the city, we ought to have at least 300 places of worship. Instead of that, we have not 100. And if we had 100, and each would hold on an average 600 people, still there would be near 100,000 souls of our own population, independent of infants and strangers, destitute of a place of worship to go to, were they inclined to go. The number of steamboats and rail-road cars too, to say nothing of the public stages and pleasure carriages, that every Lord's day start from this city on excursions of *pure amusement*, as though God had set apart that day specially for amusement, is another test of the state of religion among us latterly. In all these pleasure conveyances; hundreds and thousands of our citizens *profane the Sabbath and bring evil upon this city*. Formerly 'twas not so. But with our privileges our vices have increased. We have "*waxed fat and kicked*" against God.

And now, the end of all this has been to bring that sore judgment of God upon us with which we have just been visited; and which has sent, not in God's usual way, but in a way most shocking to every tie of family and kindred, so many of our fellow citizens to a premature grave. And if it be fair in interpreting God's judgments to infer, that He singles out particular vices, or rather the persons practising those vices, then, indeed, may we clearly see in the late plague how His anger has burned against the *Sabbath-breaker*, the in

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temperate, the prostitute and the scoffer. On these He has not spared His anger; and surely none will say 'twas a light thing, when 70 souls, from *under one roof in one day*, were precipitated into eternity. Arch-street Prison is here alluded to, where the hand of God, by the cholera, was peculiarly awful. The Sanitary Committee of that ward speak of it thus, "The scenes of that memorable day were of unparalleled fearfulness and loathsomeness in the history of disease and death in Philadelphia. At one time, about 80 individuals were the subjects of the formidable malady in its worst aspect, and nearly as many more in the premonitory stages; (there were 236 in the prison at that time) whilst those who were not yet attacked, became almost *frantic* through fear, and were filled with *desperation* almost to commit acts of violence and revolt. Four of the officers of the prison at that time being among the sick, it may be easily conceived that dismay and confusion reigned throughout the prison and before night, not less than seventy persons who were living in that building when the morning dawned, *were consigned to the grave.*"

And how many, while scoffing at the justice of God chastising the people for their sins, were suddenly cut down. He but turned Himself round from His work of chastisement, frowned upon them, and instantly they were dead.

Irreligion generally, and some vices particularly, have greatly increased in this city within the last twelve years, and we expected some judgment to visit us almost as confidently as we believed in the existence of God's government, unless a reformation should take place. Some of the vices which led to this state of general irreligion are the following:

1. Profanation of the Sabbath;
2. Intemperance;
3. Open infidelity, or "scoffers," as Scripture calls them, which should appear in the latter days;
4. Lewdness, or "houses of ill-fame;"
5. A determination to get rich at the expense of the life and health of others. Two things more particularly as to this have arrested my attention. One is the great number of houses rented for tavern-stands, and in places where no orderly citizen would say one was needed, but merely because they will rent for more money. Sometimes bringing *double or treble* the rent of a house of equal value in the same neighborhood. All this profit the proprietor pockets at the expense of the community. For in some places these taverns are such a nuisance to a whole neighborhood, that honest citizens unjustly lose on their property situated near them, for their houses will not rent at a fair rent. And last and worst of all, when these taverners and tavern-renters have destroyed the souls of the tavern-haunters and pocketed their money, they throw their distressed and pennyless wives and children on the benevolence of the orderly part of the community; and they themselves live iniquitously, partly on the spoils of ruined citizens, and partly by indirectly *defrauding their neigh-*

bors.—The other thing to which we allude, is the penuriousness and the inhumanity of the builders of courts, more generally in the suburbs of the city. Many of them are so constructed that they never can be ventilated—have not only no trees, no green vegetation of any kind to preserve the oxygen of the air, so necessary to human health, but have no yards at all; so that the offensiveness of the privy often vitiates the very food on the table. Now is it at all strange, that hundreds of our poor, dwelling in such places should every summer be sick, and thrown upon us as a heavy tax. Was there a police law, that the covetous landlords alone, who get the profits, and whose covetousness indirectly causes the sickness, should pay all the expenses of the sick poor in their courts, instead of its being taxed on the community, there would not be so much room to complain. But true it is, “Man’s inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn.” And although covetousness is hardly known among us as a sin, for “*the wicked even blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth;*” yet it is a sore evil to any community, and often terminates in its ruin; “*for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord; for from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness.*” And in the ruin of one of the proudest and most covetous nations that ever lived, the Lord reminded them, and most appositely too, to what their covetousness had brought them, in these words, “*Thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.*”

But of all these vices, the profanation of the Sabbath is the one I wish more particularly to bring to your notice. Other vices may be visited in the persons practising them, but this *treasures up judgments* for the community, and brings down community visitations from God. Yea, it is so essentially interwoven with the welfare of Christian society, that no such society or community ever has existed long, where the *Sabbath* continued to be increasingly profaned. We believe this is the universal voice of history touching Christian communities, and the exact fulfilment of that prediction from God, “*The kingdom and nation that will not serve God shall perish.*” The religious instructions to be given on the Sabbath, are the very means ordained by God to promote and keep alive the religion of communities. If communities *can live without religion*, then they can live without the Sabbath. But man is a “religious animal,” and he can no more live without religion, than he can live without bread. The highest authority asserts this, “*That man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God.*”

Let the Sabbath once be destroyed, and the duties it teaches, when rightly observed, once be lost, or generally unknown, depend upon it, supreme *selfishness, misrule, confusion, social and political death* will immediately ensue.

The French revolution is a good comment on the worth of the Sabbath to a community. Their political existence terminated with their destruction of that day. That moment

they *officially removed this land-mark or safeguard*, that moment God gave them up to themselves, and they committed political suicide.

The following table gives us at one view a sight of God's indignation against those that *profane the Sabbath*. By this table, which has been collected from reports of the Boards of Health in different cities where the cholera has raged in this country and in Canada, it will be seen by inspection that the number of cases on Mondays has been always greatly increased.

Quebec, June 9.		Montreal, June 17.		Albany, July 8.		New York, July 8.		Philadelphia, July 30.		Rochester, July 29.		Utica- Aug. 18.	
C.	D.	C.	D.	C.	D.	C.	D.	C.	D.	C.	D.	C.	D.
1 S	7	1 S	102	1 S	11	1 S	42	1 S	6	1 S	11	1 Sat	9
1 M	29	1 M	474	1 M	18	1 M	105	1 M	1	1 M	13	1 S M	6
2 S	97	2 S	51	2 S	17	2 S	133	2 S	15	2 S	4	2 Sat	4
2 M	114	2 M	44	2 M	29	2 M	163	2 M	26	2 M	9	2 S M	3
3 S	33	3 S	23	3 S	19	3 S	241	3 S	71	3 S	9	3 Sat	4
3 M	49	3 M	13	3 M	27	3 M	231	3 M	31	3 M	10	3 S M	3
4 S	31	4 S	14	4 S	35	4 S	122	4 S	49	4 S	7	3 S M	10
4 M	21	4 M	10	4 M	26	4 M	103	4 M	11	4 M	19	3 S M	10
5 S	9	5 S	9	5 S	19	5 S	90	5 S	54	5 S	8	3 S M	10
5 M	14	5 M	14	5 M	26	5 M	101	5 M	18	5 M	19	3 S M	10
6 S	8	6 S	8	6 S	22	6 S	67	6 S	6	6 S	2	3 S M	10
6 M	8	6 M	8	6 M	14	6 M	105	6 M	11	6 M	1	3 S M	10
7 S	7	7 S	7	7 S	12	7 S	57	7 S	3	7 S	1	3 S M	10
7 M	8	7 M	8	7 M	11	7 M	58	7 M	0	7 M	1	3 S M	10
8 S	10	8 S	10	8 S	12	8 S	50	8 S	6	8 S	1	3 S M	10
8 M	10	8 M	10	8 M	13	8 M	40	8 M	3	8 M	1	3 S M	10

C stands for case, D for death, S for Sabbath, M for Monday, Sat. for Saturday, 1 S stand for first Sabbath, 1 M stands for first Monday, 2 S for second Sabbath, &c.

From this table we remark:

I. Could any thing short of a direct voice from heaven proclaim more loudly the great disadvantage of profaning the Sabbath? 1. The great loss to the community—the citizens unable to prosecute their regular and necessary business on Mondays. 2. The great waste of human life from Sabbath revellings. 3. The great derangement of affairs by death—society left bleeding at a thousand pores; and all these independent of the moral consequences, viz. injury to the soul—misery beyond the grave, &c. In large cities many run into greater excesses on the Sabbath than on any other day of the week; eating fruits—drinking spirits—using ice creams, ice water, &c. &c. By these Sabbath revellings in pleasure parties to the country, &c., they particularly prepared themselves for death in the last plague. For on Sabbath night the system was better prepared for the disease, more susceptible of the cholera, than in any other period of the whole week. Accordingly more were seized by it and reported on Monday; and this swelled the Monday's bills, and before night many of them were in eternity. Sabbath revellers understand all about this. They call it "*Blue Monday*," i. e. unfit for business.

By looking at the first column in the table, under the head of Quebec, we find on the first Sabbath in Quebec, there were only seven deaths; but on the next day, viz. Monday, there were twenty-nine, that is, more than four times the number of deaths than there were on the day previous. Here is a waste from the profanation of the Sabbath, truly appalling. And by looking in the table under the head of Philadelphia, it will be seen that on the first Sabbath here, there were but six cases and one death; but on the next day, i. e. the first Monday, there were fifteen cases and seven deaths; on the second Sabbath, 65 cases and 26 deaths; but on the second Monday, i. e. the day following, there were 176 cases and 71 deaths. Here the deaths from the profanation of the Sabbath is nearly trebled. We say the increase was from the profanation of the Sabbath: for in this it was most manifest that if the Sabbath had been observed as it ought, in a quiet, orderly, and abstemious manner, free from revellings, the cases and deaths on Monday must have been far less than on any other day of the week: for the universal experience of that part of the laboring community, who scripturally observe the Sabbath as a day of rest, is that on Mondays their bodies are *more healthy* and *more vigorous* than on any other day of the week—consequently, would better resist the disease than on any other period of the week.

II. From the table, by looking under the heads Rochester and Utica, where the Sabbath is more scripturally observed as a day of rest, than in Philadelphia or Quebec, the reverse was the fact, particularly in Utica. There the effect was, what it always would be, from a proper observance of the Sabbath, viz. Monday was the healthiest day of the week. The

table shows, that in Utica, there were on Saturday, thirty-four cases and nine deaths; and on Sabbath and Monday following, both taken together, there were but thirty-three cases and six deaths; i. e. less cases on two days, Sunday and Monday, than there were on one other day of the week, viz. Saturday. It would have been gratifying to have known the exact number of cases there on Monday; but they have reported the Sabbath and Monday's cases both together.

III. From this table, it appears, that the waste of life on Mondays was proportionably less, ten or twelve days after the disease commenced, than what it was at first. This is accounted for from the fact, that the Sabbath was far less profaned ten or twelve days after the disease commenced, than what it was at first. The citizens became *alarmed, afraid of death*, and their *consciences* would not let them revel on the Sabbath as before. This was visibly true in *our city*: for our steamboats and railroad cars which at the beginning of the disease carried out on Sabbaths hundreds and hundreds of the citizens on pleasure excursions; but as soon as the panic and fear of death become somewhat general, they ran *almost empty*, and very few of them ran at all. So visible was the change for the better, in this city, as to keeping *holy time*, and so well filled were all the churches on the Sabbaths and on the fast days, and so desirable was the religious effect over the whole city, generally, *in the height of the sickness*, that we almost wished the cholera might remain among us forever.

Now, gentlemen, is there no provision made to arrest all this waste of life? There is. Where is it? Answer: In the constituted civil authorities of the community. Then, gentlemen, if you are thus the constituted guardians of human life, oh waste not, or let not be wasted that life which you cannot give. You "*are the powers that be;*" i. e. the power is lodged with you—you can arrest this Sabbath profanation; consequently can lessen this waste of life. And what can hinder you if you were willing? "The powers that be, are ordained of God." Hence it is evident that your authority is higher and mightier than mere legislative enactments. Again we say, gentlemen, *you have the power—will you exercise it?* We dare not resist you—"Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation." "*Let every soul, therefore, be subject to the higher powers.*" Such is the command of God: and this, together with the legal authority under which you hold your offices, and the good sense of the people of this community, will bear you out in the full and wholesome execution of all the laws intrusted to your care. The citizens do not refuse to pay the taxes levied by legislative power; and the same power both in heaven and earth, that has authorized taxes to be raised, hath authorized that the Sabbath *be not profaned*.

God commanded the primitive Christians to submit themselves peacefully to the constituted civil authorities, even

under heathen governments: "wherefore, it is necessary for you to be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this reason, therefore, pay ye taxes also to them; because they are public ministers of God—render, therefore, to all their dues—to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."

You then, gentlemen, are the public servants of God. You are to guard and protect His rights from being invaded by wicked men. For this you hold your trust. And of all his rights intrusted to your guardianship, none is more sacred than the Sabbath. On a right observance of it, is *suspended the health of the community*. Then if you wish well to the community, guard against the *profanation of the Sabbath*.

What a noble example do the *rulers* in the Sandwich Islands set, to older nations on this subject! Shortly after the laws prohibiting the sale of ardent spirits, riding out on the Sabbath, gambling, &c. &c. at Honolulu, one of the Sandwich Islands, an English merchant who was a member of the Church of England, came to Kaahumanu, to persuade her to relax a little on some points; and among other various arguments, adduced with this view, he said, "they do not prohibit these things in England or America." She replied, "We do not rule there. But these islands are ours, and *we wish* to obey the word of God." The merchant then said, "I don't know that there is any law against riding on the Sabbath. Where is it?" Kaaahumnu rejoined: "yes you do know there is a law against it. *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*"

Now, gentlemen, why cannot the laws of God be enforced in this community, as well as in the Sandwich Islands, among a people just emerging from barbarism? Has any people under heaven more cause to reverence and honor God, than we, Americans? If the laws for the regulation of this particular community should be found to be *inefficient*, if enforced, let us apply to the proper source, and have them made *efficient*; and let the gentlemen whose duty it is to ward off the evils we dread, exonerate themselves by showing that the laws are inefficient.

There is another subject, concerning which I wish to say but a word or two at present, and that merely because it is somewhat connected with the Sabbath, and therefore properly comes under your notice.

It is this, the enormous expense of drunkenness to this city and districts. Every taxable inhabitant in this community groans under this; and what is worse, will continue to groan under it, unless the profanation of the Sabbath is prevented. For it is the intemperate, who are always Sabbath-breakers, getting no religious instruction necessary to make them good citizens, that swell our poor tax list. Gross, who was executed not long since in this city, for the murder of his wife, told me just before his execution, that his first sin was Sabbath-breaking on a pleasure party to the country, when very young; and that this led him to drinking: for, said he, the second Sab-

bath we went out, we all drank freely of whiskey. He afterwards became a drunkard, and in a drunken frolic murdered his wife, and that brought him to the gallows.

Within the last twenty-nine years, the poor tax levied and collected in the city and districts of Philadelphia, has amounted to more than *three millions of dollars*. The whole sum levied in the twenty-one years, from 1803 to 1824 inclusive, was \$2,361,941 49; and the assessments made since, are as follows, which were kindly handed to me by a gentleman who officially knew all about it.

Poor tax assessed in 1825 to 1832.

1825	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$129,386	32,
1826	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	89,973	03½,
1827	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	89,455	22,
1828	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	89,700	46,
1829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88,508	69,
1830	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,560	74,
1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	91,827	66,
1832	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	139,871	70.

This makes a grand total of \$3,161,225 25. Our poor tax has been as high sometimes as at the rate of \$150,201 54 per annum. It was that in 1817.

And this enormous sum of *three millions* of dollars is aside from the thousands of dollars, collected almost every year in the severity of winter, by voluntary subscription of benevolent individuals; and also aside from those thousands of dollars given annually as charity to the poor, by the churches, benevolent associations and private individuals; and also aside from the principal and interest on all the monies given for the erection of buildings for the poor; the Hospital, Almshouse, House of Refuge. Over and above the subscriptions for this house, the legislature ordered \$10,000 annually to be paid for several years, to aid in establishing this House of Refuge. To all these ought to be added the criminal tax; for Sabbath-breaking and drunkenness prepare men for almost any and every crime—and the criminal tax is not light—the expense of supporting and trying criminals; expense of judges, turnkeys, principal and interest on building prisons for them, &c.; all these taken together, cannot be much short of *another million*. \$4,000,000. *What a sum to expend for Sabbath-breaking and intemperance in twenty-nine years!!!* And all in one small place too: not for a continent or a whole country. This will be among the items of history, that posterity will rank among the *marvellous*—unwilling to believe it. *Four millions of dollars* the expense for a few years of Sabbath-breaking and intemperance; for I aver that these are the two principally contributing causes of this expense. I know there are some exceptions of pious paupers, but they are very few. I have been called to visit sick and distressed persons in the Hospital, Almshouse, and jails, occasionally, for near twenty years, and sometimes have preached in them and conversed with many and I have never found but a solitary few in either of those

places that I thought were truly religious. I assert it again, it is the *open profanation of the Sabbath, and drunkenness*, which saddles this community with this *enormous tax*. Sabbath-breaking and drunkenness are kindred vices. These Sunday pleasure excursions to the country in steamboats and rail-road cars, are always attended with drinking spirits less or more, and are usually the first step of a citizen in the ruin of himself, and not unfrequently end by leaving himself and family an expense on the community.

A poor tax in this country is almost only another name for a tax to support drunkards and their distressed families. In a tour I made through this state two years ago, I searched the county records of five counties, and one county in the state of Maryland, and I found universally that a very large portion of their annual county taxes was to support their poor. And by going into their poor-houses and inquiring of their keepers and attending physicians, I found that in almost every case, the paupers had been brought there through intemperance. Sometimes out of fifty or sixty in one county poor-house, there would be two or three concerning whom it would be doubtful whether drunkenness was the cause of their being brought there; but of all the rest, it was perfectly known that drunkenness was the sole cause. In one poor-house containing fifty-four paupers, every individual had been brought there through intemperance. In another, containing forty, all were intemperate but one, and his case was doubtful. And in all the counties that I visited, and in some of them the county tax was as high as \$29,000 a year, it was truly astonishing to see, after the poor and annual tax, which may be called a tax for drunkards, was stricken off, how small a portion was left, i. e. how small the tax would be which was really necessary for *purposes purely governmental*. It seldom amounted to more than about one-third, while the other two-thirds was a tax on the community to support drunkenness and profligacy. Many of the people were almost unwilling to believe *their own eyes*, when this subject was presented to them, although taken from their own county records;—to think that drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking profligacy would have possibly cost the community so much!

The following are some of the acts of the legislature of this state for the suppression of drunkenness, profanation of the Sabbath, and profane swearing, with the persons specified who are to execute them:

AN ACT for the prevention of vice and immorality.

Sect. 1. If any person shall do or perform any worldly employment, or business whatever on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, works of necessity and charity only excepted, or shall use or practise any unlawful game, hunting, shooting, sport, or diversion whatsoever, on the same day, and be convicted thereof, every such person so offending, shall for every such offence forfeit and pay four dollars. [And in case they refuse to pay, or are unable to pay, they] *shall suffer six day's imprisonment in the house of correction.*

AN ACT to prevent profanation of the Sabbath by drinking and tipping.

Sect. 2. All persons who are found drinking and tipping in ale-houses, taverns, or other public house or place, on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, or any part thereof, shall, for every offence [be fined,] and all constables are hereby *empowered*, and by virtue of their office *required*, to search public houses and places suspected to entertain such tipplers, and them, when found, quietly to disperse, [and if they refuse to disperse, they may be] *bound over to their good behaviour.*!

And the keepers of such ale-houses, taverns, or other public house or place, as shall countenance or tolerate any such practices, being convicted thereof, by the *view* of a *single magistrate*, his own confession, or the proof of one or more credible witnesses, shall, for every offence, forfeit and pay ten shillings.

AN ACT to prevent the grievous sin of blasphemy.

Sect. 1. Whosoever shall wilfully, premeditatedly, and despitefully *blaspheme*, or speak loosely and profanely of Almighty God, Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, or the Scriptures of truth, and is legally convicted thereof, shall forfeit and pay the sum of ten pounds for the use of the poor of the county, where such offence shall be committed, or suffer three months imprisonment at hard labor.

AN ACT to prevent profane swearing and drunkenness.

Sect. 2. If any person of the age of sixteen years, or upwards, shall profanely curse or swear *by the name of God, Christ Jesus, or the Holy Ghost*, and be convicted thereof, shall pay 67 cents for every such profane curse or oath; and whosoever of the age of sixteen years or upwards, shall curse or swear, by any other name or thing than as aforesaid, and shall be convicted thereof, shall pay the sum of 40 cents for every such curse or oath; (and in case they are unable to pay,) shall be committed to the house of correction, not exceeding twelve hours for every such offence.

Sect. 3. If any person shall intoxicate him or herself by the excessive drinking of spirituous, vinous, or other strong liquors, and shall be convicted thereof, he or she shall forfeit and pay the sum of sixty-seven cents for every such offence, (*or if unable to pay it,*) he or she shall be committed to the house of correction of the proper county not exceeding twenty-four hours.

Sect. 4. The *Justices* of the Supreme Court severally throughout this state, every *President* of the Courts of Common Pleas within his district, every *Associate Judge* of the Courts of Common Pleas, and every *Justice* of the Peace, within his county, the *MAYOR* and *ALDERMEN* of the city of Philadelphia, and each of them within the limits of said city, and each *burgess* of a town corporation, within his borough, are hereby *empowered, authorized, and REQUIRED* to proceed against and punish all persons, offending against this ACT, and every person who shall *profane the Lord's day*, or who shall *pro-*

fancily curse or swear, or who shall intoxicate him or herself as mentioned in the next preceding section of *this act*, and for that purpose, each of the said *Justices or Magistrates*, severally *may* and SHALL convict such offenders, upon *his own view* and hearing, or shall issue, if need be, a warrant, summons, or *capias*, to bring the body of the person accused before him and proceed accordingly, &c.; (and if convicted and refusing or unable to pay, together with costs,) they shall commit the offender, without bail or main prize to the house of correction, during such time as is herein before directed, to be fed on bread and water only and to be kept at hard labor.

Now, gentlemen, have you taken an oath of office before God "truly and faithfully" to execute these laws according to the best of your ability? And do you regard that oath as binding you to consequences to be revealed at the day of judgment?

As to the legislature's acting right or wrong in *making* laws for the *moral wants* of the people, that is not to be agitated here. That is a point long since established, that a legislature ought to provide for the moral wants of the people. When God was the immediate and only legislator of Israel, he provided specially for their moral wants, and no well organized government ever since has neglected it. Even in the Royal Institute of France, a nation never famed for being over rigid in religion, a decision has just been had, which puts that subject where it ought to be, viz. that it is the duty of a legislator to provide for the moral wants of the people; and that no subject ought to engross his attention sooner. It was in adjudging ten thousand francs to Mr. Matter, for his prize essay, on the "*influence of laws over manners, and manners over laws.*" Mr. Matter expressed an opinion in his essay, "that the first duty of the legislator was to provide for the *material necessities* of the people; and his next, to supply the moral wants; whereas, the *Academy* considered that the latter object should be at least on a level with, if not entitled to precedence to the former."

Now, to what purpose have we laws if they are not to be executed? What profit will the dead letter be to the community? What health or vigor *can it* infuse into the community?

We might as well be infidel in law-making, as in law-executing. For my part, I know not, I cannot understand, how conscientious peace-officers, who hold the power in their hand, could refuse to apply it, to stop the *often profanation* of the Sabbath, and *drunkenness*; two vices, which acknowledgedly bring such moral ruin upon society. What has become of the conscience of such peace-officers? How do they *dispose of their oath*? With the life and death of society in their hands, it *seems* almost, as if they had determined upon the latter. Yet we are not willing to believe this. But do they not in *fact* nullify legislative efforts to preserve the health of society? And do they not *seem to tie up* the very hands of God, and *leave Him* no way to preserve society; unless He resorts to miracles or judgment to purge the body politic from time to time, and so preserve a

sickly life. For if the health and existence of society is to be preserved, it must be done by means, and not by miracle. The means are wholesome laws; particularly those providing for society's *moral wants*. But were the laws ever so wholesome, what health can they diffuse through the body politic, if not executed? As well might we suppose that healthful food being provided for the human body, but not eaten, would make it healthy.

How cautious a man ought to be in accepting a peace-office in large cities, unless he means to bury his oath of office from his conscience till the resurrection. For there he must grapple with vice in *high places* and in *popular places*, or sacrifice his conscience.

What a lesson may all great cities learn from God's dealings with London, one of the oldest Christian cities in the world. That city has been visited with judgments nearly every half century for almost 1200 years.

A few of these may be mentioned. In 664 it was ravaged by the *plague*. In 764, 798, 801, and 1077, it suffered severely by *fires*. In 1090 a dreadful hurricane overthrew 600 houses. In 1258, in a *famine*, 20,000 persons died of hunger. From 1314 to 1317, scarcity of provisions produced another famine, and many died. In 1348, a terrible *pestilence* commenced, which lasted nine years, and carried off about 30,000 inhabitants. In 1407, the plague carried off 10,000. In 1500, the plague returned, and carried off about 30,000 again. In 1603 the plague again carried off a still greater number. In 1665, what was called the *great plague*, raged. It made its appearance in December, 1664, and did not entirely cease till January, 1666. The whole number of souls carried off during the two years was estimated to be 100,000; and nothing on record is known to have surpassed the distress of that city at that time. "At night the dead-carts moved with slow pace through the streets by torch-light, and the appalling cry every now and then, *bring out your dead*, thrilled horror through every heart." Commerce was almost wholly suspended, insomuch that scarcely a single foreign vessel entered that port for the space of three years. All this did not yet cure the love of sinning and dissipation; the people turned to it again as though they were hardened by calamity; and in less than a year after, the *great fire* of 1666-7 broke out. And on Sabbath day too, as tho' God would remind that *Sabbath-breaking* city of what they had brought upon themselves by their *Sabbath profanation*, to which particular sin they were so much addicted. It commenced on Sabbath, September 2d, and raged four days and four nights before it could be checked; and of the twenty-six wards in the city, fifteen were *utterly* destroyed; and eight others were much shattered, and about half destroyed. The loss of property was estimated at more than £10,000,000 sterling; 400 whole streets, 13,200 dwelling houses, 89 churches, among other public buildings of great value, were *entirely destroyed*. This was the sorest calamity as to loss of property, that ever befel that city.



In 1703, a dreadful *storm of wind and rain* destroyed many houses and lives—damage sustained in the city alone was estimated at \$2,000,000 sterling, and in the suburbs proportionally great. In 1729, a great *mortality* carried off about 30,000 persons. In 1739–40, occurred one of the “most intense frosts of cold” ever known in that country, and many perished.

Oh what a chapter of misery! and to fall on one spot of earth too, all within a few centuries!! My heart sickens while I prospectively survey the *miseries* that will inevitably befall on great American cities, unless their police laws have more of a religious cast, and are more rigidly executed.

Great cities ever have been vast collections of *wealth, wickedness, and misery*, and the man that would invent some *popular lectures* of a scientific and religious cast, for the vast number of idlers in them that know not what to do with their time, and which should supplant the theatres, would be a benefactor to the world; for our great cities give a tone and a cast to the morals of the world.

Now, gentlemen, we have presented this subject thus before you and our fellow-citizens, because we have deeply felt for those miseries, which inevitably must befall this great and rapidly increasing population, unless a more rigid regard is had to those very laws, ordained by God to preserve the moral health of the society.

And now, gentlemen, will you, invested with authority from God, and from your fellow-citizens, stand by and look on, at all this waste of life—the public morals injured—the Sabbath constantly profaned—God provoked to come out in judgments against us—and not put forth your efforts to arrest it? And if God shall be provoked to send another judgment upon us, and revisit us with the cholera more mortal another season, who will be to blame? And where will the guilt lie? But there is another day, gentlemen, when this subject will be *reviewed*, and your official conduct as public servants of God, be very minutely looked into, to see the immortal bearing it may have had upon the thousands that composed this community.

I feel for your difficulties, gentlemen, in the execution of your duties; and from my very heart I sympathize with you. If you *would do your duty honestly and thoroughly*, you must expect difficulty. But what office of high trust to a conscientious man *is not* attended with difficulty? If a man has no conscience but as to the emoluments of office, he may get along without much difficulty *from men*. But, gentlemen, your obligations and accountabilities are not merely to men. They are high and solemn as eternity: and nothing, I am persuaded but a disbelief of *future accountability* at the bar of God; or a faithful and conscientious performance of duty, ever can relieve your minds from the painful and distressing thoughts of *that misery which may befall* this community through a deficiency of duty on your part.

And now, gentlemen, may Almighty God make *you* wise and useful in the execution of your high trust to *shield us* from those calamities and judgments, which have befallen all great and wicked cities! And for this we shall ever pray.

Very respectfully, your fellow citizen,

JAMES PATTERSON.

In 1757, a circular tower of wood and brick was built
houses and lives—damage assessed in the year 1757
valued at \$2,000 sterling, and in the year 1758
great. In 1757, a great quantity carried off, and
and. In 1732-10, occurred one of the greatest
with the rest of the country, and many
Of the tower of wood and brick, I will not
back on which I have mentioned, they have
proprietors were the way that will be held on
great American cities, where the police laws have
to the care, and a better supply expected.

Great cities, even, have been collections of
withdrew, and away, and the men that would invent
withdrawing, and away, and the men that would invent
number of letters to them that know how to write
and which would suggest the idea, would be a
director to the world; for the great one's place, and a
to the minds of the world.

It is not a matter, we have presented the subject
and our friend, because we have depicted for
the mystery, which is the great one's place, and
to the minds of the world.

And now, gentlemen, will you favour with
Gentlemen, from your fellow-citizens, and
All this waste of life—the number of letters, and
consequently, and for that your efforts, and
and that it be presented to the great one's place, and
and every one will be the great one's place, and
who will be the great one's place, and

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