

Chapter 17, *The Return of the Latter Rain*
"Religious Liberty--Take Not the First Steps in This Road That Leads to the Inquisition"
Fred Bischoff
www.scripturefirst.net

10/31/1888 to 2/27/1891

Thread of Items Relating to Religious Liberty (through 3/21/1890)

- 1888/10/31: Resolution: delegation of three, of which Eld. A. T. Jones shall be one, to appear before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, at the next session of Congress, and in the interests of religious liberty, to use every reasonable effort to secure the defeat of the Blair bill. {1988 EGWE, MMM 408.15}
- 1888/12/18: EGW article in *Review* "The *American Sentinel* and Its Mission": Much might have been done with the *Sentinel*, if counter-influences had not been at work to hinder it.... The *Sentinel* is like a trumpet giving a certain sound; and all our people should read it carefully, and then send it to some relative or friend, thus putting to the best use the light that God has given them. {RH, December 18, 1888 par. 2}
- ...The *Sentinel* has been, in God's order, one of the voices sounding the alarm, that the people might hear, and realize their danger, and do the work required at the present time. O for a religious awakening! ... The voice of the True Witness has been heard in reproof, but has not been obeyed. Men have chosen to follow their own way, instead of God's way, because self was not crucified in them. Thus the light has had but little effect upon hearts and minds. "Be zealous, and repent." {RH, December 18, 1888 par. 4}
- 1889: Religious Liberty Committee replaced by National Religious Liberty Association (NRLA); Captain Eldridge replaced A. T. Jones as president; Dan Jones was Vice President; *American Sentinel* (not officially connected with the NRLA) was the church's official religious liberty paper, with A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner as editors, with a yearly circulation of more than 260,000, and played a major role in alerting U. S. citizens to the impending Sunday-law crisis
- 1890/1/6: Breckenridge Bill to "prevent anyone from being forced to labor on Sunday" in D.C.
- 1890/1/23: Dan Jones to A. W. Allee: Jones and Waggoner were "champion anti-national Reform men"; did not "have very much confidence in some of their ways of presenting things"; "our more thoughtful men,—Bro. Smith, Bro. Littlejohn, Bro. Corliss, Bro. Gage, and others,—do not agree with them on many positions which they take on National Reform, and on some theological questions"; they had "high-falutin theory that never has worked and never will work anywhere."
- 1890/2/14: W. C. White to ATJ: "We are doing all we can to increase the circulation of the *Sentinel*."
- 1890/2/18: hearing was held before a House Committee on the Breckenridge bill; A. T. Jones argued very powerfully against the bill's constitutionality; went down in defeat
- 1890/3/17: Dan Jones to J. H. Morrison: "until there could be some change in the tone of the paper, I should oppose connecting it in any way with the NRL Association"; "Some of their hairsplitting, so called logical reasoning is ridiculous, and should not enter into such a paper."
- 1890/3/20: ATJ talk at the Minister's devotional meeting, reporting on the February hearing
- 1890/3/21: Dan Jones to R. A. Underwood: "very impressive to hear [A. T. Jones] tell of it, and how the Spirit of God worked for them there"; "during his speech it seemed that the words and sentences were just before his eyes as plainly as if they were written, and that he seemed to be reading them off as if they were held up before him in large letters"; still complained of "very bad shape" of things from law in Galatians and covenant questions
- 1890/5/8: EGW to O. A. Olsen: heard the news that Waggoner was to be "called to the east to attend the Ministerial Institutes, and to teach the school"; "I wish Dr. Waggoner could be teacher... and think it is his place, but could you see the pitiful condition of things here" in California
- 1890/5/26: EGW article in *Signs* "Candid Investigation Necessary to an Understanding of the Truth":
The papal authorities first ridiculed the reformers, and when this did not quench the spirit of investigation, they placed them behind prison walls, loaded them with chains, and when this did not silence them or make them recant, they finally brought them to the fagot and the sword. We should be very cautious lest we take the first steps in this road that leads to the Inquisition. The truth of God is progressive; it is always onward, going from strength to a greater strength, from light to a greater light. We have every reason to believe that the Lord will send us increased truth, for a great work is yet to be done.... Much has been lost because our ministers and people have concluded that we have had all the truth essential for us as a people; but such a

conclusion is erroneous and in harmony with the deceptions of Satan; for truth will be constantly unfolding. {ST, May 26, 1890 par. 2}

1890/8/13: C. H. Jones to O. A. Olsen: regarding upcoming Ministerial Institute: "somewhat surprised" that Jones and Waggoner would be "selected to teach any school of this kind when their theology has been so severely criticized"

1890/9/19: Dan Jones to E. W. Farnsworth: "The prospect seems quite favorable for a good attendance at the Ministers' School. With Prof. Prescott as principal and one of the leading teachers, and Eld Smith to come in also as one of the leading teachers, and Dr. Waggoner to connect with it with his energy and zeal, I think the school will be one of real value to all who attend." "Bro. A. T. Jones made us a short visit here, day before yesterday, on his way to the Pacific Coast. He is full of zeal and energy. No one can talk with or hear him talk without being impressed that he is in earnest, and that he has the spirit of God with him."

1890/10/7 EGW to OAO: "Smith is placed in positions as teacher to mold and fashion the minds of students when it is a well known fact that he is not standing in the light; he is not working in God's order. He is sowing seeds of unbelief that spring up and bear fruit for some souls to harvest...."

"I consider the position and work of Elders Butler, Farnsworth, Smith, and numerous others, is to unsettle the faith of the people of God by things which they say but which they ought not to say, and things left unsaid which they ought to say. And this state of things—unbelief, prejudice, and Pharisaism— is leavening the church.... They have had all the evidence that will ever be given them in the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit of God attending the messages given, but they have closed their eyes lest they shall see, and hardened their hearts lest they shall feel. The Spirit of God has been grieved, and they are so dull of comprehension that they know it not...."

"There is much loose work done everywhere, and the efforts that have been made for the few years past tend to put out the eyes that Israel shall not discern their defections, and God withholds His Spirit from them and darkness envelopes them as it did the Jewish nation."

1890/10/31 to 1891/2/27 Ministerial Institute (thread from 1890/5/8 through 1891/2/27, except next one here)

1890/11/3 EGW in Salamanca NY; NOLA convened its Annual Session in Battle Creek; move to make its work and *Sentinel* non-sectarian

1890/11/4 O. A. Olsen *Review* article "The Opening of the Ministers' School"; sixty ministers present and "still more to come," the Ministerial Institute began its opening exercises. W. W. Prescott, E. J. Waggoner, and W. A. Colcord would be the main presenters, with Uriah Smith and others filling in

1891/1/13 EGW Diary: EJW gave a positive report: "He rejoiced that there was an entirely different atmosphere pervading the meetings than was in the ministerial institute last year."

1891/1/14 EGW Diary: some who attended meetings were giving suggestions and asking questions 'full of unbelief'; "a multiplying of expressions with little substantial knowledge, little increase of solid principles"

1891/2/16 G. I. Butler to Dan Jones: regarding W. W. Prescott teaching Waggoner's "absurd position" on the book in Galatians: "Great Scott, has it come to this that such things are to be indoctrinated into the minds of our young people?"

1891/2/27 EGW at closing meeting of Institute:

I referred to the fear that had been expressed by some who were not members of the ministerial institute, and who had not been present at all the Bible classes of the school--a fear that there was danger of carrying the subject of justification by faith altogether too far, and of not dwelling enough on the law. {1888 890.2} Judging from the meetings that I had been privileged to attend, I could see no cause for alarm.... None of the members of the class who had been studying the Word to learn "What saith the Scriptures?" entertained any such fear. The Bible, and the Bible alone, has been the subject of investigation in this school. Every lesson has been based, not on the ideas and the opinions of men, but on a plain "Thus saith the Lord." {1888 890.3}

When precious rays of light from the Sun of Righteousness have shone upon our pathway, some have opened wide the door of the heart, welcoming the heaven-sent light into the chambers of the soul. They receive the words of Christ Jesus gladly. Others have needed the divine anointing to improve their spiritual eyesight, in order that they may distinguish the light of truth from the darkness of error. Because of their blindness, they have lost an experience that would have been more precious to them than silver and gold. Some, I fear, will never recover that which they have lost. {1888 895.1}