

The Views

—OF—

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

RELATIVE TO

BEARING ARMS,

TOGETHER WITH THE

**OPINION OF THE GOVERNOR
OF MICHIGAN,**

AND A PORTION OF THE

ENROLLMENT LAW.



**STEAM PRESS
OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION.
BATTLE CREEK, MICH. :**

1864.

The Enrollment Law.

SECTION OF THE ENROLLMENT LAW OF 1863, RELATIVE TO THOSE CONSCIENTIOUSLY OPPOSED TO BEARING ARMS.

AN ACT to amend an Act, entitled, "An Act for the enrolling and calling out the National Forces, and for other purposes," approved March 3, 1863:

Section 17. *And be it further enacted,* That members of religious denominations, who shall by oath or affirmation declare that they are conscientiously opposed to the bearing of arms, and who are prohibited from doing so by the rules and articles of faith and practice of such religious denomination, shall, when drafted into the military service, be considered non-combatants, and shall be assigned by the Secretary of War to duty in the hospitals, or to the care of freedmen, or shall pay the sum of three hundred dollars, to such person as the Secretary of War shall designate to receive it, to be applied to the

benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers:
Provided, That no person shall be entitled to the benefit of the provisions of this section, unless his declaration of conscientious scruples against bearing arms shall be supported by satisfactory evidence that his deportment has been uniformly consistent with such declaration.

ENROLLMENT LAW OF JULY, 1864.

Sections 10 and 11 of Amended Enrollment Act, passed July 4, 1864, which provides for the present call, but revokes the clause commonly known as the \$300 exemption clause, contain the following relative to the law given above concerning those conscientiously opposed to bearing arms:

“Nothing contained in this Act is to be construed to alter, or in any way affect the Law relative to those conscientiously opposed to bearing arms.”

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.

The following is a letter from Hon. W. W. Woolnough, given to the General Conference Committee to introduce them to his Excellency, the Governor of Michigan:

To his Excellency, Gov. BLAIR, Jackson, Michigan:

SIR—Permit me to introduce to you Elders Byington and Loughborough, and Geo. W. Amadon. They visit your Excellency as representatives of a religious organization in our city, respectable as to numbers, and of Christian consistency, and daily walk and conversation worthy of emulation; and are themselves gentlemen of unquestioned integrity.

Should you be able to aid them in what they conceive an effort to maintain their consistency, you will confer a favor on many friends here, and also upon the applicants, who are, with the people they represent, thoroughly loyal. Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

W. W. WOOLNOUGH.

Battle Creek, Mich., Aug. 2, 1864.

The following endorsement of the foregoing letter was made by Hon. T. W. Hall, and E. W. Pendill, mayor of the city of Battle Creek :

We have read the above statement of Mr. Woolnough's, and can say that it is correct.

T. W. HALL,
E. W. PENDILL.



STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS.

The following is the statement laid by the General Conference Committee before the Governor, Aug. 3, 1864 :

To his Excellency, AUSTIN BLAIR, Governor of the State of Michigan :

We, the undersigned, Executive Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, respectfully beg leave to present for your consideration the following statements :

The denomination of Christians calling themselves Seventh-day Adventists, taking the Bible as their rule of faith and practice, are unanimous in their views that its teachings are contrary to the spirit and practice of war ; hence, they have ever been conscientiously opposed to bearing arms. If there is any portion of the Bible which we, as a people, can point to more than another as our creed, it is the law of ten commandments, which we regard as the supreme law, and each precept of which we take in its most obvious and literal import. The fourth of these com-

mandments requires cessation from labor on the seventh day of the week, the sixth prohibits the taking of life, neither of which, in our view, could be observed while doing military duty. Our practice has uniformly been consistent with these principles. Hence, our people have not felt free to enlist into the service. In none of our denominational publications have we advocated or encouraged the practice of bearing arms; and, when drafted, rather than violate our principles, we have been content to pay, and assist each other in paying, the \$300, commutation money. And while that provision remained of universal application, we did not deem any public expression of our sentiments on this question called for.

We would further represent that Seventh-day Adventists are rigidly anti-slavery, loyal to the government, and in sympathy with it against the rebellion.

But not having had a long existence as a distinct people, and our organization having but recently been perfected, our sentiments are not yet extensively known. The change in the law renders it necessary that we take a more public stand in the matter. For this

reason we now lay before your Excellency the sentiments of Seventh-day Adventists, as a body, relative to bearing arms, trusting that you will feel no hesitation in indorsing our claim that, as a people, we come under the intent of the late action of Congress concerning those who are conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, and are entitled to the benefits of said laws.

JOHN BYINGTON,
J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH,
GEO. W. AMADON, } *Gen. Conf.
Ex. Com.
of S. D.
Adventists.*

Battle Creek, Mich., Aug. 2, 1864.

THE GOVERNOR'S REPLY.

I am satisfied that the foregoing statement of principles and practices of the Seventh-day Adventists is correct, and that they are entitled to all the immunities secured by law to those who are conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, or engaging in war.

AUSTIN BLAIR,
Governor of Mich.

Dated, Aug. 3, 1864.