


Have We Been Defeated?

An observation.



What could not be done by force of war has been accomplished by deceit, no less so than that the enemy had goose-stepped into our National Capital and took control of our Government.

This defeat is evident in many Departments of Government, but none more so than the Library of Congress. The current Exhibit at the Library of Congress Web site entitled “RELIGION AND THE FOUNDING OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC” is sheer Christian propaganda as it excludes entirely the full scope of religious opinions that was rampant during the Revolutionary period, and the fact that non-Christian beliefs had more to do with the Founding of our Nation than did Christian beliefs.

The American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States were all a direct product of the Enlightenment; a period of history when religious skepticism and scientific investigation was supreme. The peoples of Europe was awakening from the nightmare of oppressive Monarchies, and even more oppressive mystical religions. And the people of America, with their glorious and successful Revolution against the mightiest Monarchy on Earth, Great Britain at that time, led the way toward a brighter world where people was to be free of kings and priests.

It was not the pen or preaching of Christian Divines that brought about the American Revolution, but the stirring words of a plain spoken pamphlet from the pen of Thomas Paine that turned the mind of the American Colonists from a simple redress of grievances to the demand for separation and the beginning of a new Nation. Historians know, and Honest Historians admit, that Thomas Paine’s pamphlet, ‘Common Sense,’ forcefully turned the minds of the American Colonists toward Separation as copies of that Work spread across the land. Almost all leaders of the American Revolution admit that the Revolution was attributable to Thomas Paine; THOMAS JEFFERSON to William Carver Monticello, December 4, 1823, said "I thank you, Sir, for the unedited letter of Thomas Paine which you had been so kind as to send me. I recognize in it the strong pen and dauntless mind of Common Sense, which, among the numerous pamphlets written on the occasion, so preeminently united us in our revolutionary opposition." But the name Common Sense does not even appear in the Library of Congress Christian propaganda series on ‘Religion and the Founding of the Republic’!

The Library of Congress could not admit that the Writings of Mr. Paine, the Deist, was the great engine that brought about the American Revolution. Thomas Paine then saved the Revolution with his Crisis Series; his writings inspired the French Revolution, caused the general fall of Monarchy and brought us into the modern world. The Works of Thomas Paine the outspoken Deist who, in his irrefutable ‘Age of Reason,’ demolished the foundations of the Christian religion, could not be remembered in the Libraries propaganda series or the theme that the Christian religion motivated and drive the Revolution to success would fall apart. And fall it should, for it is a great lie.

The Library of Congress admits that “Thomas Jefferson and John Adams are usually considered the leading American deists,” then goes on to say “Other founders of the American republic, including George Washington, are frequently identified as deists, although the evidence supporting such judgements is often thin.” Well, now, ‘Mr. Library of Congress’ let us see how thin the evidence for George Washington being a Deist really is – when we look at the evidence we see that Gen. Washington being a Deist is a well established historic fact. At the end of this essay I will add a chapter from an extensive study of the religious beliefs of six great American

leaders, the chapter I include presents the facts regarding Gen. Washington's religious beliefs and refers to the rejection of the Christian religion by most all the Founding Fathers.

But the Library of Congress is not the only trusted National Institution that perverts history for the benefit of the religion (Priestcraft) that has undermined our Government.

The last Memorial to a Founding Father constructed in Washington, D.C. was the Jefferson Memorial and, as Christianity had already undermined the Secular foundations of the American Government, that Memorial reflects the pious fraud inherent in all "supernatural" religions.

Around the Rotunda of the Jefferson Memorial in large letters are the words; "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." Oh, how pious and Christian that statement sounds – before you realize that the statement was taken completely out of context, and means just the opposite of what it seems to mean. This quote was taken from a letter that Thomas Jefferson wrote to Dr. Benjamin Rush in 1800 when Jefferson was running for President of the United States, and the Christian clergy was circulating pamphlets saying that no Christian should vote for Jefferson because he was an infidel. The entire paragraph from Jefferson's letter reads: "They (the clergy) believe that any portion of power confided to me, will be exerted in opposition to their schemes. And they believe rightly; for I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man. But this is all they have to fear from me; and enough too in their opinion."

So we see from the whole quote, that the tyranny over the mind of man that Jefferson was writing about was really the schemes of the Christian clergy. When one is aware of the frauds of organized religion one sees such corruption of truth as the inscription on the Jefferson Memorial, and the religious propaganda issued by the Library of Congress, as final proof that we have been deceived and defeated; that the grand Ideals that this Nation was founded upon have been undermined and corrupted by what some are pleased to call "religion."

Christianity, like all oppressive political systems, revises and perverts history for its own benefit and purpose whenever it has the power to do so. Had the Nazis won World War II our history books would tell us that Adolph Hitler was the savior and hero of humanity, and the atrocities of the Holocaust would be hidden and denied.

Honest Historians, about the turn of the twentieth Century, begin to notice the emergence of what they called "the New History." This was "revised" history that glossed over, or denied, the real facts of history that were not complementary to the Christian religion, and replaced those facts of history with falsehoods to the contrary. At first this 'New History' was rejected with scorn, just as is the assertions today that the Holocaust never happened, but if the lie is repeated long and often enough it will be accepted as truth. And so we have today a breed of history books that have but little resemblance to the great scholarly histories of the past that regarded fact as the only object of a work of history.

In view of that modern corruption of history, this writer has determined to devote his time and efforts to saving and reproducing the old scholarly, factual, books that are so rapidly disappearing from our society. No man (or woman) can better devote his life.

Emmett F. Fields
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GEORGE WASHINGTON. Was He A Christian?

During the presidential campaign of 1880, the Christian Union made the startling admission that, of the nineteen men who, up to that time, had held the office of President of the United States, not one, with the possible exception of Washington, had ever been a member of a Christian church.

Was Washington a church member? Was he in any sense a Christian? In early life he held a formal adherence to the church of England, serving, for a time, as a vestryman in the pariah in which he resided. But this being merely a temporal office did not necessitate his being a communicant, nor even a believer in Christianity. In his maturer age he was connected with no church. Washington, the young Virginia planter, might, perhaps, with some degree of truthfulness, have been called a Christian; Washington, the soldier, statesman and sage, was not a Christian, but a Deist.

This great man, like most men in public life, was reticent respecting his religious views. This rendered a general knowledge of his real belief impossible, and made it easy for zealous Christians to impose upon the public mind and claim him for their faith. Whatever evidence of his unbelief existed was, as far as possible, suppressed. Enough remains, however, to prompt me to attempt the task of proving the truth of the following propositions:

1. That Washington was not a Christian communicant.
2. That he was not a believer in the Christian religion.

Washington was not a communicant. This fact can be easily demonstrated. A century ago it was the custom of all classes, irrespective of their religious beliefs, to attend church. Washington, adhering to the custom, attended. But when the administration of the sacrament took place, instead of remaining and partaking of the Lord's Supper as a communicant would have done, he invariably arose and retired from the church.

The closing years of his life, save the last two, were passed in Philadelphia, he being then President of the United States. In addition to his eight years' incumbency of the presidency, he was, during the eight years of the Revolutionary war, and also during the six years that elapsed between the Revolution and the establishment of the Federal government, not only a frequent visitor in Philadelphia, but during a considerable portion of the time a resident of that city. While there he attended the Episcopal churches of which the Rev. William White and the Rev. James Abercrombie were rectors. In regard to his being a communicant, no evidence can be so pertinent or so decisive as that of his pastors.

Bishop White, the father of the Protestant Episcopal church of America, is one of the most eminent names in church history. During a large portion of the period covering nearly a quarter of a century, Washington, with his wife, attended the churches in which Bishop White officiated. In a letter dated Fredericksburg, Aug. 13, 1835, Colonel Mercer sent Bishop White the following inquiry relative to this question:

“I have a desire, my dear Sir, to know whether Gen. Washington was a communicant of the Protestant Episcopal church, or whether he occasionally went to the communion only, or if ever he did so at all. . . . No authority can be so authentic and complete as yours on this point.” To this inquiry Bishop White replied as follows:

“Philadelphia, Aug. 15, 1835.

“Dear Sir: In regard to the subject of your inquiry, truth requires me to say that Gen. Washington never received the communion in the churches of which I am the parochial minister. Mrs. Washington was an habitual communicant. . . . , I have been written to by many on that point, and have been obliged to answer them as I now do you. I am respectfully.

“Your humble servant,

“WILLIAM WHITE.”

(Memoir of Bishop White, pp. 196, 197).

In a standard Christian authority, Sprague’s “Annals of the American Pulpit,” written and compiled by Rev. Wm. B. Sprague, D. D., is a sketch of the life of Rev. James Abercrombie, D. D. In this biographical sketch is to be found some very important evidence from the pen of Washington’s other pastor, pertaining to the subject under consideration. I quote the following: “One incident in Dr. Abercrombie’s experience as a clergyman, in connection with the Father of his Country, is especially worthy of record; and the following account of it was given by the Doctor himself, in a letter to a friend, in 1831 shortly after there had been some public allusion to it:

“With respect to the inquiry you make I can only state the following facts; that, as pastor of the Episcopal church, observing that, on sacramental Sundays, Gen. Washington, immediately after the desk and pulpit services, went out with the greater part of the congregation—always leaving Mrs. Washington with the other communicants—she invariably being one—I considered it my duty in a sermon on Public Worship, to state the unhappy tendency of example, particularly of those in elevated stations who uniformly turned their backs upon the celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

I acknowledge the remark was intended for the President; and as such he received it. A few days after, in conversation with, I believe, a senator of the United States, he told me he had dined the day before with the President, who in the course of conversation at table said that on the preceding Sunday he had received a very just reproof from the pulpit for always leaving the church before the administration of the Sacrament; that he honored the preacher for his integrity and candor; that he had never sufficiently considered the influence of his example, and that he would not again give cause for the repetition of the reproof; and that, as he had never been a communicant, were he to become one then it would be imputed to an ostentatious display of religious zeal, arising altogether from his elevated station. Accordingly, he never afterwards came on the morning of sacramental Sunday, though at other times he was a constant attendant in the morning’ ” (Annals of the American Pulpit, Vol. v, p. 394).

Here we have a confirmation of the statement previously made that Washington absented himself from church on sacramental Sundays; undeniable proof that during the later years of his life he was not a communicant; and, above all, the assurance of Washington himself that “he had never been a communicant.” The Rev. E. D. Neill, in the Episcopal Recorder, the organ of the church of which it is claimed Washington was a communicant, says:

“As I read, a few days ago, of the death of the Rev. Richard M. Abercrombie, rector of St. Matthew’s Protestant Episcopal church in Jersey City, memories of my boyhood arose. He was born not far from my father’s house in Philadelphia and was the son of the Rev. James Abercrombie, a fine scholar and preacher, who had in early life corresponded with the great lexicographer, Dr. Samuel Johnson, and in later years was the assistant minister of Christ’s and St. Peter’s churches, in Philadelphia, where my maternal ancestors had worshiped for more than one generation. One day, after the father had reached four score years, the lately deceased son took me into the study of the aged man, and showed me a letter which President George Washington had written to his father, thanking him for the loan of one of his manuscript sermons. Washington and his wife were regular attendants upon his ministry while residing in Philadelphia, The President was not a communicant, notwithstanding all the pretty stories to the contrary, and after the close of the sermon on sacramental Sundays, had fallen into the habit of retiring from the church while his wife remained and communed.” Referring to Dr. Abercrombie’s reproof of Washington, Mr. Neill says:

“Upon one occasion Dr. Abercrombie alluded to the unhappy tendency of the example of those dignified by age and position turning their backs upon the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. The discourse arrested the attention of Washington, and after that he never came to church with his wife on Communion Sunday.”

The Rev. Dr. Wilson, in his famous sermon on the Religion of the Presidents, also alludes to this subject. He says:

“When the Congress sat in Philadelphia, President Washington attended the Episcopal church. The rector, Dr. Abercrombie, told me that on the days when the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was to be administered, Washington’s custom was to rise just before the ceremony commenced, and walk out of church. This became a subject of remark in the congregation, as setting a bad example. At length the Doctor undertook to speak of it, with a direct allusion to the President. Washington was heard afterwards to remark that this was the first time a clergyman had thus preached to him, and he should henceforth neither trouble the Doctor nor his congregation on such occasions; and ever after that, upon communion days, he ‘absented himself altogether from the church.’ ”

The Rev. Bird Wilson, D. D., author of the “Memoir of Bishop White,” says:

“Though the General attended the churches in which Dr. White officiated, whenever he was in Philadelphia during the Revolutionary war, and afterwards while President of the United States, he never was a communicant in them” (Memoir of Bishop White, p. 188).

The Rev. Beverly Tucker, D. D., of the Episcopal church, has attempted to prove that Washington was a churchman. But while professing to believe that he was a communicant before the Revolution he is compelled to admit that there is a doubt about his communing after the Revolution. He says:

“The doubt has been raised partly on the strength of a letter written by Bishop White in 1832. He says that Washington attended St. Peter’s church one winter, during the session of the Continental Congress, and that during his Presidency he had a pew in Christ church, ‘which was habitually occupied by himself, by Mrs. Washington, who was regularly a communicant, and by his secretaries. This language is taken to mean, and probably correctly, that Washington did not commune.” Dr. Tucker is evidently not acquainted with Bishop White’s letter to Col. Mercer in 1835.

There is no question as to the meaning of that letter. Continuing, Dr. Tucker says:

“The doubt rests again on the recollection of Mrs. Fielding Lewis, Nelly Custis, Gen. Washington’s step-granddaughter, written in 1833, who states that after the Mount Vernon family removed from Pohick church to Christ church, Alexandria, the General was accustomed, on Communion Sundays, to leave the church with her, sending the carriage back for Mrs. Washington.” Washington’s biographer, the Rev. Jared Sparks, who seems to have entertained the popular notion that Washington was in early life a communicant, admits that at a latter period he ceased to commune. He says:

“The circumstance of his withdrawing himself from the communion service at a certain period of his life has been remarked as singular. This may be admitted and regretted, both on account of his example and the value of his opinions as to the importance and practical tendency of this rite” (Life of Washington, Vol. ii, p. 361).

Origen Bachelier, in his debate with Robert Dale Owen in 1831, made an effort to prove that Washington was a Christian communicant. He appealed for help to the Rev. Wm. Jackson, rector of the Episcopal church of Alexandria, the church which Washington had attended. Mr. Jackson was only too willing to aid him. He instituted an exhaustive investigation for the purpose of discovering if possible some evidence of Washington having been a communicant. Letters of inquiry were addressed to his relatives and friends. But his efforts were unsuccessful. While he professed to believe that Washington was a Christian, he’ was compelled to say:

“I find no one who ever communed with him” (Bachelier-Owen Debate, Vol. ii, p. 262).

This, as might be supposed, did not satisfy Mr. Bachelier, and he entreated the rector to make another attempt. The second attempt was as fruitless as the first. He writes:

“I am sorry after so long a delay in replying to your last, that it is not in my power to communicate something decisive in reference to General Washington’s church membership” (Ibid., ii, p. 370.)

In the same letter Mr. Jackson says:

“Nor can I find any old person who ever communed with him.” The “People’s Library of Information” contains the following:

“The question has been raised as to whether any one of our Presidents was a communicant in a Christian church. There is a tradition that Washington asked permission of a Presbyterian minister in New Jersey to unite in communion. But it is only a tradition. Washington was a vestryman in the Episcopal church. But that office required no more piety than it would to be mate of a ship. There is no account of his communing in Boston, or in New York, or Philadelphia, or elsewhere, during the Revolutionary struggle.”

The tradition of Washington’s wishing to unite with a Presbyterian minister in communion, like many other so-called traditions of the same character, has been industriously circulated. And yet it is scarcely possible to conceive of a more improbable story. Refusing to commune with the members of the church in which he was raised, and the church he was in the habit of attending, and going to the priest of another church—a stranger—and asking to commune with him! Had Washington been some intemperate vagabond, the story might have

been believed. But Washington was not an inebriate, and was never so pressed for a drink as to beg a sup of sacramental wine from a Calvinistic clergyman.

Gen. A.W. Greely, U.S.A., in an article on “Washington’s Domestic and Religious Life” which was published in the Ladies’ Home Journal for April, 1896, says:

“But even if he was ever confirmed in its [the Episcopal] faith there is no reliable evidence that he ever took communion with it or with any other church.”

Some years ago, I met at Paris, Texas, an old gentlemen, Mr. F. W. Miner, who was born and who lived for a considerable time near Mt. Vernon. He told me that when a boy he was once in company with a party of old men, neighbors in early life of Washington, who were discussing the question of his religious belief. He says that it was admitted by all of them that he was not a church member, and by the most of them that he was not a Christian.

Mr. George Wilson of Lexington, MO., whose ‘ancestors owned the Custis estate, and founded Alexandria, where Washington attended church, writes as follows: “My great-grandmother was Mary Alexander, daughter of ‘John the younger,’ who founded Alexandria. The Alexander pew in Christ church was next to Washington’s, and an old lady, a kinswoman of mine, born near Alexandria and named Alexander, told me that the tradition in the Alexander family was that Washington NEVER took communion.”

In regard to Washington being a vestryman, Mr. Wilson says: “At that time the vestry was the county court, and in order to have a hand in managing the affairs of the county, in which his large property lay, regulating the levy of taxes, etc., Washington had to be a vestryman.” The St. Louis Globe contained the following in regard to the church membership of Washington :

“It is a singular fact that much as has been written about Washington, particularly with regard to his superior personal virtue, there is nothing to show that he was ever a member of the church. He attended divine service, and lived an honorable and exemplary life, but as to his being a communicant, the record is surprisingly doubtful.”

In an article conceding that Washington was not a communicant, the Western Christian Advocate says;

“This is evident and convincing from the Life of Bishop White, bishop of the Episcopal church in America from 1787 to 1836. Of this evidence it has been well said: ‘There does not appear to be any such indubitable evidence existing. The more scrutinously the church membership of Washington is examined, the more doubtful it appears. Bishop White seems to have had more intimate relations with Washington than any clergyman of his time. His testimony outweighs any amount of influential argumentation on the question.’ ”

The following is a recapitulation of the salient points in the preceding testimony, given in the words of the witnesses., It is in itself an overwhelming refutation of the claim that Washington was a communicant:

“Gen. Washington never received the communion in the churches of which I am the parochial minister.”—Bishop White.

“On sacramental Sundays, Gen. Washington, immediately after the desk and pulpit services, .went out with the reater part of the congregation.”—Rev. Dr. Abercrombie.

“After that, [Dr. Abercrombie’s reproof,] upon communion days, he absented himself altogether from the church.”—Rev. Dr. Wilson.

“The General was accustomed, on communion Sundays, to leave the church with her [Nelly Custis], sending the carriage back for Mrs. Washington?”—Rev. Dr. Beverly Tucker.

“He never was a communicant in them [Dr. White’s churches].”—Rev. Dr. Bird Wilson.
“I find no one who ever communed with him.”—Rev. William Jackson.

“The President was not a communicant.”—Rev. E.D. Neil].

“This [his ceasing to commune] may be admitted and regretted.”—Rev. Jared Sparks.

“There is no reliable evidence that he ever took communion.”—Gen. A. W. Greely.

“There is nothing to show that he was ever a member of the church.”—St. Louis Globe.

“I have never been a communicant.”—Washington, quoted by Dr. Abercrombie.

The claim that Washington was a Christian communicant must be abandoned; the claim that he was a believer in Christianity, I shall endeavor to show, is equally untenable.

WAS WASHINGTON A CHRISTIAN?

In the political documents, correspondence, and other writings of Washington, few references to the prevailing religion of his day are found. In no instance has he expressed a disbelief in the Christian religion, neither can there be found in all his writings a single sentence ‘that can with propriety be construed into an acknowledgment of its claims. Once or twice he refers to it in complimentary terms, but in these compliments there is nothing inconsistent with the conduct of a conscientious Deist. Religions, like their adherents, possess both good and bad qualities, and Christianity is no exception. While there is much in it deserving the strongest condemnation, there is also much that commands the respect and even challenges the admiration of Infidels. Occupying the position that Washington did, enjoying as he did the confidence and support of Christians, it was not unnatural that he should indulge in a few friendly allusions to their religious faith.

In his “Farewell Address,” the last and best political paper he gave to the public, the Christian religion is not once named. In this work he manifests the fondest solicitude for the future of his country. His sentences are crowded with words of warning and fatherly advice. But he does not seem to be impressed with the idea that the safety of the government or the happiness of the people depends upon Christianity. He recommends a cultivation of the religious sentiment, but evinces no partiality for the popular faith.

In the absence of any recorded statements from Washington himself concerning his religious belief, the most conclusive evidence that can be presented is the admissions of his clerical acquaintances. Among these there has been preserved the testimony of his pastors, Bishop White and Dr. Abercrombie.

In a letter to Rev. B. C. C. Parker of Massachusetts, dated Nov. 28, 1832, in answer to some inquiries respecting Washington’s religion, Bishop White says:

“His behavior [in church] was always serious and attentive, but as your letter seems to intend an inquiry on the point of kneeling during the Service, I owe it to the truth to declare that I never saw him in the said attitude. . . . Although I was often in company with this great man, and had the honor of dining often at his table, I never heard anything from him which could manifest his opinions on the subject of religion. . . . Within a few days of his leaving the presidential chair, our vestry waited on him with an address prepared and delivered by me. In his answer he was pleased to express himself gratified by what he had heard from our pulpit; but there was nothing that committed him relatively to religious theory” (“Memoir of Bishop White,” pp. 189-191; Sparks’ “Life of Washington,” Vol. ii., p. 359).

The Rev, Parker, to whom Bishop White’s letter is addressed, was, it seems, anxious to obtain some evidence that Washington was a believer in Christianity, and, not satisfied with the bishop’s answer, begged him, it would appear, to tax his mind for some fact that would tend to show that Washington was a believer. In a letter dated Dec. 21, 1332, the bishop writes as follows:

“I do not believe that any degree of recollection will bring to my mind any fact which would prove General Washington to have been a believer in the Christian revelation further than as may be hoped from his constant attendance upon Christian worship, in connection with the general reserve of his character” (“Memoir of Bishop White,” p. 193).

Bishop White’s testimony does not afford positive proof of Washington’s unbelief, but it certainly furnishes strong presumptive evidence of its truth. It is hardly possible to suppose that he could have been a believer and have let his most intimate Christian associates remain in total ignorance of the fact. Bishop White indulges a faint hope that he may have been, but this hope is simply based on his “constant attendance” at church, and when we consider how large a proportion of those who attend church are unbelievers, that many of our most radical Freethinkers are regular church-goers, there are very small grounds, I think, upon which to indulge even a hope. But even this “constant attendance” on the part of Washington cannot be accepted without some qualification; for, while it is true that he often attended church, he was by no means a constant attendant. Not only did he uniformly absent himself on communion days, but the entries in his diary show that he remained away for several Sundays in succession, spending his time at home reading and writing, riding out into the country, or in visiting his friends.

But if Bishop White cherished a faint hope that Washington had some faith in the religion of Christ, Dr. Abercrombie did not. Long after Washington’s death, in reply to Dr. Wilson, who had interrogated him as to his illustrious auditor’s religious views, Dr. Abercrombie’s brief but emphatic answer was:

“Sir, Washington was a Deist.”

Washington rarely attended, as we have seen, any church but the Episcopal, hence, if any denomination of Christians could claim him as an adherent, it was this one. Yet here we have two of its most distinguished representatives, pastors of the churches which he attended, the one not knowing what his belief was, the other disclaiming him and asserting that he was a Deist.

The Rev. Dr. Wilson, who was almost a contemporary of our earlier statesmen and presidents, and who thoroughly investigated the subject of their religious beliefs, in his sermon already mentioned affirmed that the founders of our nation were nearly all Infidels, and that of

the presidents who had thus far been elected—George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Jackson—not one had professed a belief in Christianity. From this sermon I quote the following:

“When the war was over and the victory over our enemies won, and the blessings and happiness . of liberty and peace were secured, the Constitution was framed and God was neglected. He was not merely forgotten. He was absolutely voted out of the Constitution. The proceedings, as published by Thompson, the secretary, and the history of the day, show that the question was gravely debated whether God should be in the Constitution or not, and after a solemn debate he was deliberately voted out of it. . . . There is not only in the theory of our government no recognition of God’s laws and sovereignty, but its practical operation, its administration, has been conformable to its theory. Those who have been called to administer the government have not been men making any public profession of Christianity, . . . Washington was a man of valor and wisdom. He was esteemed by the whole world as a great and good man; but he was not a professing Christian.”

Dr. Wilson’s sermon was published in the Albany Daily Advertiser in 1831, and attracted the attention of Robert Dale Owen, then a young man, who called to see its author in regard to his statement concerning Washington’s belief. The result of his visit is given in a letter to Amos Gilbert. The letter is dated Albany, November 13, 1831, and was published in New York a fortnight later. He says:

“I called last evening on Dr. Wilson, as I told you I should, and I have seldom derived more pleasure from a short interview with anyone. Unless my discernment of character has been grievously at fault, I met an honest man and sincere Christian. But you shall have the particulars. A gentleman of this city accompanied me to the Doctor’s residence. We were very courteously received. I found him a tall, commanding figure, with a countenance of much benevolence, and a brow indicative of deep thought, apparently approaching fifty years of age. I opened the interview by stating that though personally a stranger to him, I had taken the liberty of calling in consequence of having perused an interesting sermon of his, which had been reported in the Daily Advertiser of this city, and regarding which, as he probably knew, a variety of opinions prevailed. In a discussion, in which I had taken a part, some of the facts as there reported had been questioned; and I wished to know from him whether the reporter had fairly given his words or not. . . . I then read to him from a copy of the Daily Advertiser the paragraph which regards Washington, beginning, ‘Washington was a man,’ etc., and ending, ‘absented himself altogether from the church.’ ‘I indorse,’ said Dr. Wilson, with emphasis, ‘every word of that. Nay, I do not wish to conceal from you any part of the truth, even what I have not given to the public. Dr. Abercrombie said more than I have repeated. At the close of our conversation on the subject his emphatic expression was—for I well remember the very words – ‘Sir, Washington was a Deist.’ ”

In concluding the interview, Dr. Wilson said: “I have diligently perused every line that Washington ever gave to the public, and I do not find one expression in which he pledges himself as a believer in Christianity. I think anyone who will candidly do as I have done, will come to the conclusion that he was a Deist and nothing more.”

In February, 1800, a few weeks after Washington’s death, Jefferson made the following entry in his journal:

“Dr. Rush told me (he had it from Asa Green) that when the clergy addressed General Washington, on his departure from the government, it was observed in their consultation that he

had never, on any occasion, said a word to the public which showed a belief in the Christian religion, and they thought they should so pen their address as to force him at length to disclose publicly whether he was a Christian or not. However, he observed, the old fox was too cunning for them. He answered every article of their address particularly, except that, which he passed over without notice” (Jefferson’s Works, Vol. iv., p. 572).

Jefferson further says: “I know that Gouverneur Morris, who claimed to be in his secrets, and believed himself to be so, has often told me that General Washington believed no more in that system [Christianity] than he did” (Ibid).

Gouverneur Morris was the principal drafter of, the Constitution of the United States; he was a member of the Continental Congress, a United States senator from New York, and minister to France. He accepted, to a considerable extent, the skeptical views of French Freethinkers.

The “Asa” Green mentioned by Jefferson was undoubtedly the Rev. Ashbel Green, chaplain to Congress during Washington’s administration. In an article on Washington’s religion, contributed to the Chicago Tribune, B. F. Underwood says:

“If there were an Asa Green in Washington’s time he was a man of no prominence, and it is probable the person referred to by Jefferson was the Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green, who served as chaplain to the Congress during the eight years that body sat in Philadelphia, was afterwards president of Princeton College, and the only clerical member of Congress that signed the Declaration of Independence. His name shines illustriously in the annals of the Presbyterian church in the United States.”

Some years ago I received a letter from Hon. A.B. Bradford of Pennsylvania, relative to Washington’s belief. Mr. Bradford was for a long time a prominent clergyman in the Presbyterian church, and was appointed a consul to China by President Lincoln. His statements help to corroborate the statements of Dr. Wilson, Thomas Jefferson, and Mr. Underwood. He says:

“I knew Dr. Wilson personally, and have entertained him at my house, on which occasion he said in my hearing what my relative, the Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green of Philadelphia, frequently told me in his study, viz., that during the time that Congress sat in that city the clergy, suspecting from good evidence that Washington was not a believer in the Bible as a revelation from heaven, laid a plan to extort from him a confession, either pro or con, but that the plan failed. Dr. Green was chaplain to Congress during all the time of its sitting in Philadelphia; dined with the President on special invitation nearly every week; was well acquainted with him, and after he had been dead and gone many years, often said in my hearing, though very sorrowfully, of course, that while Washington was very deferential to religion and its ceremonies, like nearly all the founders of the Republic, he was not a Christian, but a Deist.”

Mr. Underwood’s article contained the following from the pen of Mr. Bradford:

“It was during his [Dr. Green’s] long residence in Philadelphia that I became intimately acquainted with him as a relative, student of theology at Princeton, and a member of the same Presbytery to which he belonged. . . . Many an hour during my student and clergyman days did I spend with him in his study at No. 150 Pine street, Philadelphia, listening to his interesting and instructive conversation on Revolutionary times and incidents. I recollect well that during

one of these interviews in his study I inquired of him what were the real opinions Washington entertained on the subject of religion. He promptly answered pretty nearly in the language which Jefferson says Dr. Rush used. He explained more at length the plan laid by the clergy of Philadelphia at the close of Washington's administration as President to get his views of religion for the sake of the good influence they supposed they would have in counteracting the Infidelity of Paine and the rest of the Revolutionary patriots, military and civil. But I well remember the smile on his face and the twinkle of his black eye when he said: 'The old fox was too cunning for us.' He affirmed, in concluding his narrative, that from his long and intimate acquaintance with Washington he knew it to be the case that while he respectfully conformed to the religious customs of society by generally going to church on Sundays, he had no belief at all in the divine origin of the Bible, or the Jewish-Christian religion."

The testimony of General Freely, whose thorough investigation of Washington's religious belief makes him an authority on the subject, is among the most important yet adduced. From his article on "Washington's Domestic and Religious Life" I quote the following paragraphs:

"The effort to depict Washington as very devout from his childhood, as a strict Sabbatarian, and as in intimate spiritual communication with the church is practically contradicted by his own letters."

"In his letters, even those of consolation, there appears almost nothing to indicate his spiritual frame of mind. A particularly careful study of the man's letters convinces me that while the spirit of Christianity, as exemplified in love of God and love of man [Theophilanthropy or Deism], was the controlling factor of his nature, yet he never formulated his religious faith." "It is, however, somewhat striking that in several thousand letters the name of Jesus Christ never appears, and it is notably absent from his last will."

"His services as a vestryman had no special significance from a religious standpoint. The political affairs of a Virginia county were then directed by the vestry, which, having the power to elect its own members, was an important instrument of the oligarchy of Virginia."

"He was not regular in attendance at church save possibly at home. While present at the First Provincial Congress in Philadelphia he went once to the Roman Catholic and once to the Episcopal church. He spent four months in the Constitutional Convention, going six times to church, once each to the Romish high mass, to the Friends', to the Presbyterian, and thrice to the Episcopal service."

"From his childhood he traveled on Sunday whenever occasion required. He considered it proper for his negroes to fish, and on that day made at least one contract. During his official busy life Sunday was largely given to his home correspondence, being, as he says, the most convenient day in which to spare time from his public burdens to look after his impaired fortune and estates."

Dr. Moncure D. Conway, who made a study of Washington's life and character, who had access to his private papers, and who was employed to edit a volume of his letters, has written a monograph on "The Religion of Washington,?" from which I take the following:

"In editing a volume of Washington's private letters for the Long Island Historical Society, I have been much impressed by indications that this great historic personality represented the Liberal religious tendency of his time. That tendency was to respect religious

organizations as part of the social order, which required some minister to visit the sick, bury the dead, and perform marriages. It was considered in no wise inconsistent with disbelief of the clergyman's doctrines to contribute to his support, or even to be a vestryman in his church."

"In his many letters to his adopted nephew and young relatives, he admonishes them about their manners and morals, but in no case have I been able to discover any suggestion that they should read the Bible, keep the Sabbath, go to church, or any warning against Infidelity."

"Washington had in his library the writings of Paine, Priestley, Voltaire, Frederick the Great, and other heretical works."

Conway says that "Washington was glad to have Volney as his guest at Mount Vernon," and cited a letter of introduction which Washington gave him to the citizens of the United States during his travels in this country.

In a contribution to the New York Times Dr. Conway says:

'Augustine Washington, like most scholarly Virginians of his time, was a Deist. . . . Contemporary evidence shows that in mature life Washington was a Deist, and did not commune, which is quite consistent with his being a vestryman. In England, where vestries have secular functions, it is not unusual for Unitarians to be vestrymen, there being no doctrinal subscription required for that office. Washington's letters during the Revolution occasionally indicate his recognition of the hand of Providence in notable public events, but in the thousands of his letters I have never been able to find the name of Christ or any reference to him.'

There is no evidence to show that Washington, even in early life, was a believer in Christianity. The contrary is rather to be presumed. His father, as Dr. Conway states, was a Deist; while his mother was not excessively religious. His brother, Lawrence Washington, was, it is claimed, the first advocate of religious liberty in Virginia, and evidently an unbeliever, so that instead of being surrounded at home by the stifling atmosphere of superstition, he was permitted to breathe the pure air of religious freedom.

It is certain that at no time during his life did he take any special interest in church affairs. Gen. Greely says that "He was not regular in church attendance save possibly at home." At home he was the least regular in his attendance. His diary shows that he attended about twelve times a year. During the week he superintended the affairs of his farm; on Sunday he usually attended to his correspondence. Sunday visitors at his house were numerous. If he ever objected to them it was not because they kept him from his devotions, but because they kept him from his work. In his diary he writes:

"It hath so happened, that on the last Sundays—call them the first or seventh [days] as you please, I have been unable to perform the latter duty on account of visits from strangers, with whom I could not use the freedom to leave alone, or recommend to the care of each other, for their amusement."

When he visited his distant tenants to collect his rent, their piety, and not his, prevented him from doing the business on Sunday, as the following entry in his diary shows:

"Being Sunday, and the people living on my land very religious, it was thought best to postpone going among them till to-morrow."

His diary also shows that he “closed land purchases, sold wheat, and, while a Virginia planter, went fox hunting on Sunday.”

He did not, like most pious churchmen, believe that Christian servants are better than others. When on one occasion he needed servants, he wrote:

“If they are good workmen, they may be from Asia, Africa, or Europe; they may be Mahomedans, Jews, or Christians of any sect, or they may be Atheists.”

These extracts contain no explicit declarations of disbelief in Christianity, but between the lines we can easily read, “I am not a Christian.”

There is no evidence that he ever entertained any special reverence for the Bible, or devoted any particular attention to its teachings. The writer has seen Washington’s Bible and is prepared to vouch for the correctness of the following notice of it which appeared in the Washington post:

“It is not injured inside, the leaves are not dog-eared, nor the margins marked, and it does not look as if it was ever used at all.”

Had Washington been a Christian it is reasonable to suppose that on his death-bed, at least, he would have let fall from his lips some word revealing the fact, conscious as he was from the first that his illness would prove fatal. We have the certificate of Dr. Craik and Dr. Dick, the physicians who attended him during his last illness, and this shows that he made no recognition of Christ or Christianity. This is corroborated by the testimony of his private secretary, Mr. Tobias Lear.

Thus writes Moncure D. Conway of his last hours:

“When the end was near, Washington said to a physician present—an ancestor of the writer of these notes—‘I am not afraid to go.’ With his right fingers on his left wrist he counted his own pulses, which beat his funeral march to the grave. ‘He bore his distress,’ so next day wrote one present, ‘with astonishing fortitude, and conscious, as he declared, several hours before his death, of his approaching dissolution, he resigned his breath with the greatest composure, having the full possession of his reason to the last moment.’ Mrs. Washington knelt beside his bed, but no word passed on religious matters. With the sublime taciturnity which had marked his life he passed out of existence, leaving no act or word which can be turned to the service of superstition, cant, or bigotry” (Open Court).

In his discussion with Bachelier, Robert Dale Owen says:

“When I spoke of Washington’s death-bed, I had the account of an eye-witness lying before me. And most strongly does that corroborate my opinion that Washington’s religion was of the most liberal stamp. No clergyman around his death-bed. No protestations that in the dying hour religion afforded him aid. No praying. No repeating texts. No asking for a Bible to read a chapter. Not a syllable about the redeeming blood of Christ, or the saving efficacy of divine grace. Not even a straw for the orthodox to catch at and work up in tract form, as ‘The dying testimony of that distinguished Christian, George Washington.’ True, the father of his country died the death of a patriot; he died as he had lived, in dignity and peace; but he left behind him not one word to warrant the belief that he was other than a sincere Deist.”

“It has been confidently stated to me,” says Mr. Owen, “that he actually refused spiritual aid when it was proposed to send for a clergyman.”

The Rev. Dr. Miller, of Birmingham, England, who devoted much time to an investigation of this subject, in *London Notes and Queries*, says:

“My researches do not enable me to affirm that Washington, on his death-bed, gave evidence of Christian belief.”

In the last hour of the day, on the last day of the week, in the last month of the year, at the end of a long and illustrious career, with the simple words, “I am not afraid to go,” the hero of a dozen battle-fields surrendered.

Every child is familiar with the story of Washington praying at Valley Forge. The Peter Parleys who write historical romances and label them “School Histories” have repeated it as a historical fact. But it is false. It bears the stamp of fiction on its face, and is of itself sufficient to excite the suspicion that Washington was not a religious man. Unable to prove that he was in the habit of praying in public, unable to cite a single instance of his ever having uttered a prayer in his family, this pious tale was fabricated.

Referring to the Sunday-school stories that have been related of Washington, and that have gained popular credence, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* says :

“The story of the hatchet and the cherry tree, and similar tales, are quite apocryphal, having been coined by Washington’s most popular biographer, Weems.”

Of all these apocryphal tales none is so utterly unworthy of credit as is this fable about his praying at Valley Forge. Intelligent Christians are ashamed of it. The Rev. E. D. Neill, whose father’s uncle owned the building occupied by Washington at Valley Forge, thus writes:

“There is a story about Washington being found in the woods in winter time in prayer by the owner of the house which he used as his head-quarters at Valley Forge, which I would like to believe, if it were not so improbable, and if it had not first been put in print by the eccentric and not very accurate Episcopal minister, Rev. Morgan L. Weems. . . . With the capacious and comfortable house at his disposal, it is hardly possible that the shy, silent, cautious Washington should leave such retirement and enter the leafless woods, in the vicinity of the winter encampment of an army, and engage in audible prayer” (*Episcopal Recorder*).

Alluding to the same subject, Rev. Minot J. Savage, in a sermon, said:

“The pictures that represent him on his knees in the winter forest at Valley Forge are even silly caricatures. Washington was, at least, not sentimental, and he had nothing about him of the Pharisee that displays his religion at street corners or out in the woods in the sight of observers, or where his portrait could be taken by ‘our special artist.’ ”

Moncure D. Conway, whose researches enable him to speak authoritatively, makes the following statement, which will be a profound surprise to the student of Weems:

“Many clergymen visited him, but they were never invited to hold family prayers, and no grace was ever said at table” (*Open Court*).

General Greely says : “When he was urged to have public prayers in camp, so as to excite the curiosity and foster the conversion of the Indians, he ignored the recommendation” (Ladies’ Home Journal).

Washington was a great man and a good man, but he was not a demigod nor a saint. He was entirely human and possessed of human virtues and human frailties. If the churchmen could read his diary, and read the testimony of those who knew him best—in short, could they become acquainted with the man Washington—they would scarcely conclude that he had much regard for Christian piety. They would be disposed to believe that after all the race track had more attractions for him than the church; that he preferred a glass of good brandy to a drop of communion wine; that he was probably more addicted to swearing than he was to praying.

Washington was one of the leading spirits who molded our present form of government, presiding over the convention that framed our Constitution. His influence was very great, and the greatest deference was paid to his opinions. Had he desired it he could probably have had the government established upon a Christian foundation; and had he been a very zealous adherent of that faith, it is reasonable to suppose that he would have done so, or at least have favored some recognition of its claims in the Constitution. But he did not utter a word in its behalf.

Above his official signature, as President of the United States, appears this important declaration:

“The government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion” (Treaty with Tripoli).

He further solemnly declares that “the United States is not a Christian nation any more than it is a Jewish or a Mohammedan nation,” referring to it, of course, in a political and not in a religious sense.

Washington, like Paine, Jefferson, and Franklin, was a staunch opponent of ecclesiastical tyranny. Almost immediately after his first inauguration, in answer to an address presented by the Baptists of Virginia, he said:

“If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution framed in the Convention, when I had the honor to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it; and if I could now conceive that the general government might be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution.”

In reply to an address received from the Quakers, he said:

“Government being, among other purposes, instituted to protect the consciences of men from oppression, it certainly is the duty of rulers, not only to abstain from it themselves, but according to their stations, to prevent it in others. . . . While men perform their social duties faithfully, they do all that society or the state can with propriety demand or expect; and remain responsible to their maker for the religion, or mode of faith, which they may prefer or profess.”

That he was fully cognizant of the intolerant spirit of Christianity is evidenced by a letter written to Sir Edward Newenham, dated October 20, 1792, in which he says:

“Of all the animosities which have existed among mankind, those which are caused by a difference of sentiments in religion appear to be the most inveterate and distressing, and ought most to. be deprecated. I was in hopes that the enlightened and liberal policy, which has marked the present age, would at least have reconciled Christians of every denomination so far that we should never again see their religious disputes carried to such a pitch as to endanger the peace of society.”

To Lafayette, who was trying to secure religious toleration for France, he wrote:

“I am not less ardent in my wish that you may succeed in your plan of toleration in religious matters. Being no bigot myself, I am disposed to indulge the professors of Christianity in the church with that road to heaven which to them shall seem the most direct, plainest, easiest. And least liable to exception.”

Soon after he became President, the First Presbytery of the Eastward sent him an address containing the following: “We should not have been alone in rejoicing to have seen some explicit acknowledgment of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, inserted somewhere in the Magna Charter of our country.” To this Washington replied:

“The path of true piety is so plain as to require but little political direction. . . . In the progress of morality and science, to which our government will give every furtherance, we may confidently expect the advancement of true religion and the completion of our happiness.”

Washington’s most popular biographers were Weems and Sparks, both clergymen. Weems’ “Life of Washington,” the delight of many an American boy, a work made up of historical facts highly colored and interwoven with traditional stories and anecdotes, has long since been discarded as an authority. Weems does not give us the real Washington, but an ideal hero of his own creation. This hero he surrounds with a halo of piety. And yet the religion of this hero is not the religion of Christ, but the religion of God. The Washington of Weems is a Theist, not a Christian. Sparks affirms that Washington was a Christian. But from his standpoint the affirmation was one easily made. Sparks was a Unitarian—one who rejects the dogmas of the inspiration of the Bible and the divinity of Christ—one who defines Christianity as “one with the absolute religion of nature and reason” one who classes as Christians all good men, regardless of their religious belief. It is true that Sparks declares that Washington was a member of the Episcopal church, but he also admits that during his life he ceased to be a communicant of this church.

Theodore Parker, in his “Four Historic Americans,” describes the religion of Washington as follows:

“He had much of the principle, little of the sentiments of religion. He was more moral than pious. In early life a certain respect for ecclesiastical forms made him vestryman at two churches. This respect for outward forms with ministers and reporters for newspapers very often passes for the substance of religion. It does not appear that Washington took a deep and spontaneous delight in religious emotions more than in poetry, in works of art, or in the beauties of nature. . . . Silence is a figure of speech, and in the latter years of his life I suppose his theological opinions were those of John Adams, Dr. Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, only he was not a speculative man, and did not care to publish them to the world.”

The Rev. Dr. Minot J. Savage, in a sermon on Washington, Bays: “Those best qualified to testify tell us that he wafa decidedly Liberal in his theology in his mature manhood; and we know he was not shocked by the teachings of Thomas Paine. That he trusted in God, believed in a Providence that in some large way guided human destiny, is, doubtless, true; but that he was an evangelical Christian is almost certainly not true.”

The Rev. John Snyder, of St. Louis, in an article on Thomas Paine says: “If Thomas Paine is in hell on account of his religious opinions, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson are in his company. . . . He shared the religious convictions of Washington, Franklin and Jefferson.”

It has been claimed that Washington’s failure to demand Paine’s release, when he was imprisoned in France, was because of Paine’s Infdelity. Nothing can be further from the truth than this. His failure to interfere in Paine’s behalf was owing to the misrepresentations of his minister, Gouverneur Morris, who declared that Paine had become a French citizen, and his determination to observe a strict neutrality in regard to European affairs. His love for Lafayette was scarcely less than that of a father for his son; yet when Lafayette was imprisoned in Austria he wrote: “As President there must be no commitment of the Government to any interference of mine.”

The Rev. Dr. Swing of Chicago, in a sermon on Washington and Lincoln, said: “It is often lamented by the churchman that Washington and Lincoln possessed little religion except that found in the word ‘God.’ All that can here be affirmed is that what the religion of these two men lacked in theological details it made up in greatness. Their minds were born with a love of great principles. Washington loved and exalted each great principle. He was compelled by his nature to select from Christianity its central ideas. This tendency was intensified by the local friendship for France. France was battling against a vast bundle of false Christian particulars. The Colonies so hated England and so admired ‘France that most of our early statesmen reduced Christianity to that French Rationalism which was quite well satisfied with the doctrine of a creator. A superstitious Christianity was falling to pieces, and the new orthodoxy had not yet come. Many of those statesmen when they took any steps at all in the path of religion walked with God alone.”

Judge J.B. Stallo, minister to Italy during President Cleveland’s first administration, in an argument before the Superior Court of Cincinnati, made use of the following words: “The men who assembled in Philadelphia to frame our Constitution were, many of them, imbued with the spirit of Freethought then prevalent. I am not without apprehension that this will be found to be true to a certain extent of George Washington—clarum et venerabile nomen—who presided in that convention; that when you turn to the reliable accounts of his life and not to the rhetoricians, who have seen fit to meddle with it, the suspicion will arise that he would hardly have subscribed to any of the dogmatic creeds of the day.”

The centennial of Washington’s inauguration called out an increased degree of interest in his history. Everything pertaining to the man, including his religious belief, was fully and freely discussed. It was gratifying to note that the facts connected with this subject, which of late years have been exhumed and made public by our industrious truth seekers, had had their effect in largely disabusing the popular mind of the fraudulent claims so persistently maintained by the church. Twenty-five years ago Washington’s orthodoxy was rarely questioned. Now, in spite of religious prejudice and bigotry, the secular press, the barometer of public sentiment, generally affirms its improbability.

Even the religious press is beginning to admit the truth. The Western Christian Advocate, one of the most influential organs of the leading Protestant denomination of the United States, editorially says:

“The simple truth is, that while many denominations claim Washington, he belonged to no church, and was not perhaps a Christian in that experimental sense necessary, by the New Testament standards, to constitute a child of God.”

The Catholic World makes this significant admission: “In all the voluminous writings of General Washington, the holy name of Jesus Christ is never once written.”

A Southern paper, the Memphis Commercial Appeal, recently gave a pen picture of Washington which, although rather harshly drawn, is a more truthful picture than the one usually drawn by Sunday-school artists:

“Several writers of late have marred the perfect wooden image which history has left us of George Washington. They have shown that he was a master hand at swearing; that he could carry about as much liquor as any other of his esteemed contemporaries, and that he was, in short, something of a dead game sport. Human nature is such that it has rather rejoiced over these revelations. It gags at perfection just as strenuously as it condemns total depravity. “Zealous efforts have been made by priestly falsifiers to make the ‘Father of his Country’ something he was not. They represented him, while at the head of the army, frequently going aside to pray. This is wholly false, as is the hatchet and cherry-tree story told by Elder Weems.

“Truthful history presents Washington as irascible, impetuous, and very profane on great occasions. ‘He wa9 human, with the infirmities of human nature. He was not an orthodox believer, but, like nearly all the fathers of the Republic, he was a Deist.”

The following extracts from the evidence adduced epitomizes this evidence and clearly show that the truth of my second proposition, “Washington was not a believer in the Christian religion,” has been established:

“I do not believe that any degree of recollection will bring to any mind any fact which would prove General Washington to have been a believer in the Christian revelation.”—Bishop White.

“Sir, Washington was a Deist.”—Rev. Dr. Abercrombie.

“Like nearly all the founders of the Republic, he was not a Christian, but a Deist.”—Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green, quoted by Mr. Bradford.

“He had no belief at all in the divine origin of the Bible.”—Ibid.

“I think anyone who will candidly do as I have done, will come to the conclusion that he was a Deist and nothing more.”—Rev. Dr. Wilson.

“Gouverneur Morris . . . has often told me that General Washington believed no more in that system [Christianity] than he did.”—Thomas Jefferson.

“He left behind him not one word to warrant the belief that he was other than a sincere Deist.”—Robert Dale Owen.

“It has been confidently stated to me that he actually refused spiritual aid when it was proposed to send for a clergyman.”—Ibid.

“My researches do not enable me to affirm that Washington, on his death-bed, gave evidence of Christian belief.”—Rev. Dr. Miller.

“In mature life Washington was a Deist.”—Dr. Moncure D. Conway.

“Many clergyman visited him, but they were never invited to hold family prayers, and no grace was ever said at table.”—Ibid.

“In the thousands of his letters I have never been able to find the name of Christ or any reference to him.”—Ibid.

“In several thousand letters the name of Jesus Christ never appears, and it is notably absent from his last will.”—Gen. A.W. Greely.

“In all the voluminous writings of General Washington, the holy name of Jesus Christ is never once written.”—Catholic World.

“He belonged to no church, and was not perhaps a Christian in that experimental sense necessary, by the New Testament standards, to constitute a child of God.”—Western Christian Advocate.

“That he was an evangelical Christian is almost certainly not true.”—Rev. M.J. Savage. “I suppose his theological opinions were those of John Adams, Dr. Franklin and Thomas Jefferson.”—Theodore Parker.

“He [Paine] shared the religious convictions of Washington.”—Rev. John Snyder.

“Most of our early statesmen [including Washington] reduced Christianity to that French Rationalism which was quite well satisfied with the doctrine of a Creator.”—Rev. Dr. Swing.

“The men who assembled in Philadelphia to frame our Constitution were, many of them [including Washington] imbued with the spirit of Freethought then prevalent.”—Judge J.R. Stallo.

Washington was not a church member; he was not a Christian. Like Paine and Jefferson, he was a disbeliever in Christianity—a Freethinker.

(This Chapter on George Washington is from ‘Six Historic Americans’ by John E. Remsburg. This book will be one of the books of American History that will reproduced on an upcoming Bank of Wisdom CD-ROM – ‘AMERICA; The Historic Facts.’)

Emmett F. Fields.
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