

Conservative Social Christianity, the Law, and Personal Morality: Wilbur F. Crafts in Washington

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In 1895, Wilbur F. Crafts opened an office in Washington, D.C. and proclaimed himself a Christian lobbyist. Over the next quarter century, until his death in 1922, he mobilized churches and individual Christians to pressure Congress on behalf of bills, some he had written, to limit divorce, to control sexuality, and to restrict or prohibit the use of narcotics and alcohol. He also led an unsuccessful campaign for federal censorship of the movies. Crafts deserves more attention than historians of American religion have paid him. His legislative accomplishments render his career important in itself, but an analysis of his theology and lobbying efforts also helps historians better conceptualize social Christianity and the social gospel.

Historians' conceptions of the social gospel are still shaped by three books published in the 1940s. The first to appear, Charles H. Hopkins's *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism*, chronicled, and often celebrated, the social gospel as a realistic response by liberal Protestants to "the impact of modern industrial society and scientific thought."¹ Out of that confrontation, Hopkins argued, emerged a new theology that stressed "the immanence of God," the organic nature of society, and the creation of the Kingdom of God "in the present world."² Bringing in the Kingdom, a few proponents of the social gospel believed, necessitated the adoption of socialism. Most, though, advocated a less radical transformation of the American economy based on the principles of "social justice, collective property rights, industrial democracy, approximate equality, and cooperation."³

The second book on the social gospel to appear in the forties, Aaron I. Abell's, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism*, as its title made clear, emphasized that the social gospel emerged in response to urbanization, rather than industrialization, but Abell described its

1. Charles H. Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865-1915* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1940), 3.

2. *Ibid.*, 320.

3. *Ibid.*, 224.

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theology and reform agenda much as Hopkins had.⁴ The third, Henry F. May's *Protestant Churches and Industrial America*, offered a more sophisticated analysis of the social gospel's roots in industrialization and urban growth, one which stressed fears of labor unrest and new forms of immorality. More important, May drew a distinction between the social gospel and two other types of what he termed "social Christianity": conservative, which favored a few economic reforms but did not challenge the existing economic order, and radical, which embraced socialism. Progressive Christianity, the only type to which May applied the term "social gospel," advocated thoroughgoing economic change short of socialism.⁵

Over the next five decades, scholars challenged various aspects of the interpretation of the social gospel developed by Hopkins, Abell, and May, including whether it constituted so decided a break in Protestant thought. More recently, some historians have become critical of the social gospel, concluding that it supported rather than challenged the social and economic order that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. The revisionist critics of the social gospel have not triumphed, however. In the last fifteen years, books on the social gospel by Donald K. Gorrell and Paul T. Phillips reaffirmed the traditional narrative's emphasis on liberal theology and progressive reform, and in a major study of church-state relations, Robert T. Handy did too.⁶ Handy, like May, also drew a distinction between the social gospel and social Christianity, although Handy designated three slightly different types: conservative, which sought primarily the regeneration of the individual through mission work; progressive, which combined liberal theology with political and economic reform;

4. Aaron I. Abell, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism, 1865-1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1943).
5. Henry F. May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1967; orig. published, 1949), 163-265.
6. Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957), 235-37; Robert T. Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Janet Forsythe Fishburn, *The Fatherhood of God and the Victorian Family: The Social Gospel in America* (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress, 1981); Richard Wightman Fox, "The Culture of Liberal Protestant Progressivism, 1875-1925," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (Winter 1993): 639-60; Susan Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); James H. Moorhead, *World Without End: Mainstream American Protestant Visions of the Last Things, 1880-1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 97-123; Donald K. Gorrell, *The Age of Social Responsibility: The Social Gospel in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920* (Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1988); Paul T. Phillips, *A Kingdom on Earth: Anglo-American Social Christianity, 1880-1940* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996); Robert T. Handy, *Undermined Establishment: Church-State Relations in America, 1880-1920* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991).

and radical, which advocated "reconstructionist, and socialist . . . positions." Proponents of all three forms of social Christianity, Handy's showed, talked of creating the Kingdom of God on earth, rejected "the individualistic ethic that had come to dominate much American political and social thought," and accepted "a more positive role for the state [that] led naturally to questioning conventional understandings of the separation of church and state."⁷

Neither Handy's nor any other study of the social gospel discussed Crafts or his legislative efforts. May quoted Crafts a couple of times, he and others mentioned groups with which Crafts worked, and many scholars included within the social gospel the movement for Prohibition that Crafts supported. For the most part, though, Crafts's lobbying campaigns do not fit within the traditional definition of the social gospel, which emphasized liberal theology and progressive reform. Crafts's theology and goals did incorporate the basic perspectives that, according to Handy, characterized social Christianity, and his efforts should be included in a broader definition of that strand of American Protestantism.⁸

Wilbur Crafts was born in Maine in 1850. His father, a Methodist minister, supported both the temperance and antislavery movements. As a young scholar, Wilbur, too, developed an interest in social reform but still held fast to traditional Protestant views on personal salvation. Crafts graduated from Wesleyan University in 1869 and the School of Theology of Boston University two years later. He then toured Europe, where Catholicism, the desecration of the Sabbath, and the people's drinking habits appalled him. On his return to America, Crafts served a series of pastorates in Methodist churches in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. During those years, he published Sunday School lessons and other brief books. He coauthored one of them with Sara J. Timanus, whom he married in 1874. Three years later, the couple moved to Chicago, where he took a church and participated in attempts to stop liquor sales to minors and other moral crusades. He left Chicago for a tour of the Holy Land and Europe; on his return in 1880, he became the pastor of a Congregationalist church in Brooklyn, New York.⁹

7. Handy, *Undermined Establishment*, 105-6 and 59.

8. May, *Protestant Churches*, 127-28, 130, 181; Hopkins, *Rise of Social Gospel*, 17-18.

9. Introduction by Joseph Cook in Wilbur F. Crafts. *A Practical Christian Sociology: A Series of Special Lectures Before Princeton Theological Seminary and Marietta College* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1895), 7-10; Mark E. Lender, *Dictionary of American Temperance Biography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1984), 112-13; vols. 1, 2, 3, and 4, Wilbur F. Crafts Notebooks, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Three years later, Crafts published, under the title *Successful Men Of To-day*, a series of addresses he had delivered to young men in his church. In preparing his talks, Crafts drew on questionnaires he sent to or conversations he had with men he considered successful. Their success, Crafts concluded, lay in working hard, avoiding bad habits (especially drinking and smoking), being honest in all matters, and holding fast to religious beliefs and moral principles. Although he held up some businessmen as role models, Crafts still warned young men against the immoral pursuit of wealth. He specifically condemned what he called "Polite Pilfering,"¹⁰ under which definition he lumped monopolies and adulterated foods, shops that violated the Sabbath, laborers who did poor work, anyone being late for appointments, and Christians who failed to tithe. Throughout his career, Crafts occasionally criticized the business and industrial system but usually stressed the importance of personal morality in improving society.

Not long after the publication of *Successful Men Of To-day*, which sold more than 40,000 copies, Crafts moved to a Presbyterian Church in New York City. There he preached a series of sermons on keeping the Sabbath. He first published them in 1884 as *The Sabbath for Man* and later expanded the book, which appeared in seven editions. Especially in its later editions, it compiled a great deal of information on the observance of the Sabbath, but the book consisted primarily of Crafts's warning that the Sabbath was imperiled. The threat, he maintained, came from Roman Catholic immigrants who had introduced in America the less-strict observance of the Sabbath that had appalled him in Europe. Crafts cited other dangers, including commercial amusements that opened on Sunday. The greatest threat, he thought, came from *the national habit of treating the laws as a bill of fare, from which each one can take what he pleases*. Crafts therefore demanded stricter enforcement of existing laws and called for new ones.¹¹

Effective Sunday laws, Crafts argued, did not violate the separation of church and state because they did not impose religion. His claim rested on a distinction he drew between "a *religious* Sabbath and a *civil* Sabbath."¹² A civil Sabbath stopped all work on Sunday, not to foster religion, Crafts explained, but to promote public health and education, reduce crime, and preserve home and nation. In other places in the book, though, Crafts made it clear that he sought Sabbath laws for

10. Crafts, *Successful Men Of To-Day and What They Say Of Success* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1883), 191.

11. Crafts, *The Sabbath for Man*, 6th ed. (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1892), 124.

12. *Ibid.*, 196.

religious reasons. Sunday laws, he wrote, were necessary for the preservation of religion, and religion was necessary for the preservation of the state. "The State," therefore, "has a right to protect the morals of the community." Exercising its right over public morals did not, in Crafts's view, necessarily involve restrictions on liberty, unless liberty was defined as the freedom to do as one pleased.¹³

The year after *Sabbath for Man* first appeared, Crafts began a campaign for a national Sunday law. He drew up a petition that asked Congress to ban military parades, mail, and interstate trains on Sunday and, for good measure, to establish a comprehensive Sunday law for the territories. In circulating his petition, Crafts received assistance from Josephine C. Bateham, head of the department on Sabbath observance of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and from other Sabbath societies. As the petitions arrived in Congress in 1888, Henry W. Blair, a Senator from New Hampshire who was an ally of the WCTU, held a hearing on the issue before the Committee on Education and Labor, which he chaired. Crafts took charge of presenting the witnesses and also spoke. At the end of the hearing Blair announced that Congress had received nearly 21,000 petitions but as yet no one had introduced any legislation. At the Sabbath forces request, Blair prepared a sweeping bill that incorporated the provisions of Crafts's petition.¹⁴ In the territories, District of Columbia, and all other places under "the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States," it banned all Sunday work, save that "of necessity, and mercy and humanity,"¹⁵ and all plays, games, or amusements that would disturb others. Blair's bill also outlawed, with some exceptions, Sunday mails, military and naval drills and parades, and much interstate commerce.

At Blair's suggestion, Crafts presented the bill to the Knights of Labor and other unions, and they endorsed it. The WCTU, along with the various Sabbath associations, circulated petitions in its behalf. Crafts, however, decided that the campaign demanded a new organization. In the spring of 1888, he convinced the Methodist Episcopal Church to create a committee on Sabbath reform and to invite other denominations to join in working for proper observance of the Sabbath. The main northern and southern Presbyterian churches, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, the Congregationalists, and

13. *Ibid.*, 265.

14. *Ibid.*, 566–67. J. C. Bateham, "Our Sabbath Observance Petition to Congress," *Union Signal* 13 (November 3, 1897): 12; *Notes of a Hearing Before the Committee of Education and Labor, United States Senate, Friday, April 6, 1888, on the Petitions Praying for the Passage of Legislation . . . [on] Violations of the Sabbath, 50th Cong., 1st sess., 1888*. Misc. Doc No. 108 (SS 2517); "National Sabbath Reform," *Our Day* 1 (April 1888): 337.

15. *Sunday Rest Bill, 50th Cong., 2d sess., 1889*, Sen. Misc. Doc No. 43 (SS 2615), 2.

other denominations agreed to participate. Later that year, the group formally organized as the American Sabbath Union (ASU). Elliot F. Shepard became the President and Crafts, who resigned his pastorate, its Field Secretary.¹⁶

During that meeting in December of 1888, Blair's committee held a second hearing on the bill for a national Sunday law. Crafts, Bateham of the WCTU, and others spoke in its behalf, but many opponents, including religious liberals and Seventh Day Adventists, testified against it. After the hearings, Crafts traveled the country mobilizing support. Even though Blair's committee received many petitions in favor of the bill, it failed to report it. Sabbath forces still claimed a partial victory since the Post Office reduced its activities on Sunday, and the army moved its formal inspections from Sunday to Saturday.¹⁷

Crafts and Shepard, who disagreed over labor issues, had a falling out, and Crafts was removed as Field Secretary and made head of publications, which curtailed his travel. He resigned his new post to continue to campaign across the country. At the next annual meeting of the ASU, in 1890, Crafts opposed Shepard's reelection; when Shepard won, Crafts resigned from the organization. He considered a return to the pulpit, but instead, in the fall of 1891, he moved to Pittsburgh to edit the *Christian Statesman*, the unofficial voice of the National Reform Association. The NRA was a small group, closely tied to the Reformed Presbyterian Church, whose primary goal was to amend the preamble of the United States Constitution to include a recognition of the authority of God, Christ, and the Bible.¹⁸

Crafts had first encountered the teachings of the NRA during college and began reading the *Christian Statesman* at that time. He supported the attempt to amend the preamble and, in 1893, he and representatives from the NRA convinced Elijah A. Morse to enter the Christian Amendment, as it was called, in Congress. It had been

16. "Editorial Notes," *Our Day* 2 (December 1888): 523-34; "American National Sabbath Reform: The Origin and Organization of the American Sabbath Union," *Our Day* 3 (January 1889): 44-54; *Woman's Christian Temperance Union Minutes*, 1888, 62; John P. Rossing, "A Cultural History of Nineteenth Century American Sabbath Reform Movements," (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1994), 227-82.
17. *Sunday Rest Bill; Congressional Record*, 50th Cong., 2d sess., 2640; James D. Richardson, comp., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (np: Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1903), 9: 29; "Wilbur F. Crafts to the Postmaster-General," *Christian Statesman* 24 (March 12, 1891): 3.
18. Rossing, "Cultural History," 258-61; *Christian Statesman* 23 (April 17, 1890): 2; "The 'Christian Statesman's' New Management," *Christian Statesman* 25 (November 19, 1891): 1. On the National Reform Association, see Stewart O. Jacoby, "The Religious Amendment Movement: God, People and Nation in the Gilded Age," (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1984).

promoted during and shortly after the Civil War, but never before had the Christian Amendment actually been introduced in Congress. The proposal remained before congressional committees for a few years, but none ever reported it. Crafts apparently did little else to lobby in its behalf. As editor of the *Christian Statesman*, he advocated a broad agenda of moral and some economic reforms and played a prominent role in another lobbying crusade, to close the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition on Sunday. The Sabbath forces won that one; Congress made the federal contribution to funding the Fair dependent on its closing on Sunday.¹⁹

That victory, along with the success of the WCTU's Mary Hunt in lobbying state legislatures to establish scientific temperance education in the schools, convinced Crafts "that Christian patriots who do not belong to the first or second House of Congress should join 'The Third House' and lobby by letters or in person, that 'government of the people, by the people, for the people' may 'not perish from the earth.'"²⁰ Crafts envisioned a Christian lobby in Washington, and in December of 1893 resigned as editor of the *Christian Statesman*. He had no financial support, however, and the depression that struck that year delayed his plan.²¹ In September of 1894 Crafts finally announced the formation of a National Bureau of Reforms "to promote such moral reforms as the Christian churches generally approve by securing the enactment and enforcement of good laws and the defeat of bad ones in regard to Sabbath reform, gambling, purity, temperance, public schools, immigration, civil service reform, ballot reform, voluntary industrial arbitration, etc."²² The Bureau, he added, would serve as both "the watch-tower of Christian reform, to send out swift alarms, and . . . the channel by which the swift protests, petitions and letters of the people can be brought to bear in the interest of righteousness upon the lawmakers, both of the nation and the states."²³

19. Crafts, *Practical Christian Sociology*, 416; S. Res. 56 and H.R. Res. 120, *Congressional Record*, 53d Cong.: "What We Shall Help to Do," *Christian Statesman* 25 (November 19, 1891): 8; Gaines M. Foster, "A Christian Nation: Signs of a Covenant," *Bonds of Affection: Americans Define Their Patriotism*, ed. by John Bodnar (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 131-33. Despite the victory in Congress, and after considerable legal maneuvering, the Fair closed on Sunday.
20. "Sabbath Closing of the World's Fair," *Christian Statesman* 26 (October 22, 1892): 3.
21. "Mrs. Hunt as a Christian Lobbyists," *Christian Statesman* 26 (June 17, 1893): 8-9; Crafts, "Valedictory: Five Years of Sabbath Reform Campaigning," *Christian Statesman* 27 (December 30, 1893): 8-9.
22. Crafts, "Practicable Sabbath Reform," *Our Day* 13 (November-December 1894): 523.
23. *Ibid.*, 524; "Circular Announcing the National Bureau of Reforms," frame #392, reel 21, Historical File of the National Headquarters, Woman's Christian Temperance Union Papers, Temperance and Prohibition Papers, Joint Ohio Historical Society-Michigan Historical Collections (microfilm edition), hereinafter cited as T&P Papers.

Notwithstanding the list of varied reforms that he announced, Crafts would lobby only for laws designed to eliminate what he termed "the 'Big Four' evils, intemperance, impurity, Sabbath breaking and gambling."²⁴ His concentration on the Big Four may have reflected a pragmatic evaluation of the types of legislation he thought the people would support. Crafts divided "reform problems into two groups," those "in the proclamation stage" and those "in the conference stage." The second group included most economic and social reforms. For them, Crafts thought, no consensus existed so they should only be discussed in an attempt to build support. The "'Big Four,' " Crafts believed, were in the proclamation stage; most "right minded people"²⁵ agreed that they were evil, and efforts to legislate against them might well succeed. More than a pragmatic assessment of his chance of success, however, Crafts's choice of legislative goals reflected his own priorities.

Shortly before Crafts went to Washington, he delivered a series of lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary that revealed his reform priorities as well as how his thinking both resembled and diverged from the social gospel. Crafts made it clear that he had not abandoned the personal faith he had developed during seminary. He spoke of the crucifixion and the resurrection and preached a gospel of salvation. He deemed conversion essential—but not sufficient. "Individual conversion [does not] give the *method* of social regeneration, but only *motive*."²⁶ In "the divine order of development," he said, "*the salvation of individuals through the Saviorship of Christ precedes the salvation of society through the Kingship of Christ.*"²⁷ Crafts believed society in need of salvation in part because of industrialization, urbanization, and the other social changes that historians have concluded gave rise to the social gospel. Crafts also adopted the basic perspectives that Robert Handy claims defined social Christianity—an abandonment of the individualistic ethos, a desire to create the Kingdom of God, and a commitment to an activist state.

Crafts told his Princeton audience: "Many are restive in the new social conditions because they have not recognized that with the doing away of individualism in production and distribution, and of rural isolation, that was formerly the common lot of families, personal liberty must necessarily be curtailed both in commerce and in moral

24. Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (Washington, D.C.: International Reform Bureau, 1910), 62.

25. Crafts, "Our Day in Review: Monthly Review of Reform Progress," *Our Day* 16 (September 1896): 482–83.

26. Crafts, *Practical Christian Sociology*, 29.

27. *Ibid.*, 28.

conduct. Personal liberty, such as is demanded by the would-be triumvirate of society—Covetousness, Lust and Appetite—can be found only in the solitude of the wilderness” where one can do as one pleases. “But he who changes solitude for society surrenders a part of his liberty in exchange for the more valued fellowship and protection of society.”²⁸ Crafts worried that Americans had too much liberty, that they were descending to the level of the beasts “caring for nothing higher than the gratification of [their] appetites and passions, with no more attention to the moral nature that separates us from animals than if we had none.”²⁹

Rejecting the individualistic ethos, Crafts preached the need to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. “The heart of Christian sociology,” Crafts told his Princeton audience “is the Kingship of Christ. The individual is saved by his cross, but society is saved by his crown, that is, by the application of the law of Christ to all human associations—to the family, the school, the shop, the Church, the State.”³⁰ “*The Kingship of Christ rather than the Saviorship of Christ, is the Bible’s ultimate theme.*”³¹ The Bible demanded the creation of “the New Jerusalem ‘let down from God’—the kingdom of heaven, a divinely ordered, divinely promised, human and humane society of purity and justice and brotherhood and humanity, in which God’s will is done on earth as in heaven.”³² Crafts believed establishing the Kingdom required the help of the state. Government, Crafts urged, should and could shape the environment to foster morality and religion. Crafts did not fear that such laws threatened the separation of church and state; rather, he proclaimed the state’s responsibility to acknowledge God’s authority and to promote Christian morality, which was why he supported the Christian amendment.

Crafts not only embraced the central perspectives that, according to Handy, defined social Christianity; he at times sounded like its progressive or, less often, radical proponents. At Princeton Crafts offered a lengthy if somewhat confused discussion of the struggles between capital and labor and advocated “conference” not “conflict” in their relations.³³ He also endorsed the secret ballot and the referendum, as well as economic reforms such as the abolition of child labor, tenement improvement, and municipal ownership of power companies. He even proposed what he called a “conservative Anglo-Saxon so-

28. *Ibid.*, 171.

29. Crafts, *Before the Lost Arts and Other Lectures* (Washington: The Reform Bureau, 1896), 60.

30. Crafts, *Practical Christian Sociology*, 23.

31. *Ibid.*, 28.

32. *Ibid.*, 31.

33. *Ibid.*, 147, and 115–92.

cialism" (to distinguish it from German socialism) in which "the people, through popular government, should by legal means gradually acquire ownership and control of the various departments of production and exchange as they come to be removed, one by one, from the field of competition and by private and perilous socializing in the form of trusts; the end in view being equitable, not equal, distributions of profits."³⁴

Yet Crafts's commitment to labor reform, much less socialism, was perfunctory at best. He never displayed much antipathy toward business leaders; after all, his first major book held them up as role models. Possibly because of his personal identification with the middle and upper classes, and certainly because of his opposition to violent strikes, the sympathy Crafts expressed for labor at Princeton faded quickly. In a 1910 book, Crafts criticized strikes that turned violent, what he called labor riots, and linked them with lynching and municipal misrule, arguing that all three involved a refusal to enforce the law and threatened the "very foundations of government and civilization."³⁵ Like many Progressives, Crafts prized order more than the rights of the working class. Even in his Princeton lectures, Crafts devoted more time to the importance of preserving the family, the need for religion in the schools, and various types of legislation to control individual moral behavior than he did to socialism and progressive reforms. In Crafts's mind, the greatest problems Americans faced were the temptations posed by commercial vice in the intense, stimulating environment of cities.

Crafts condemned what he considered his society's headlong pursuit of pleasure and obsessive emphasis on the accumulation of wealth. That greed for gold, he believed, created an urban social environment rife with temptations for the young—saloons, gambling dens, houses of prostitution, theater and tobacco ads, and revealing clothes. Confronted at every turn with these appeals to their appetites, Crafts feared, people would be unable to maintain their self-control and morality. He thought African Americans and immigrants especially susceptible, but he knew that young males of his own race and class were also in grave danger of succumbing to sin and descending into savagery. He continued to believe in self-restraint, as had many Victorian Christians before him, but he feared that an increasingly

34. *Ibid.*, 174.

35. Crafts, *National Perils and Hopes: A Study Based on Current Statistics and the Observations of a Cheerful Reformer* (Cleveland, Ohio: F. M. Barton, 1910), 24. See also Crafts to Woodrow Wilson, February 20, 1913 (reel 46), Woodrow Wilson Papers, Library of Congress.

urban and commercial society threatened to overwhelm self-control, and therefore he turned to government to eliminate the temptations and establish a moral social order. That goal, not the progressive economic agenda usually associated with the social gospel, became the focus of his lobbying efforts.³⁶

In 1895, Crafts moved to Washington and set up an office, eventually in a building at the corner of Second Street and Pennsylvania Avenue across from the National Library. There he operated what he first called the Reform Bureau, and later, the International Reform Bureau. In the early years it operated on a budget of less than \$4,000 a year, but spending grew steadily until it passed \$10,000 by 1910 and peaked in 1920 at around \$18,000. Crafts raised most of the money himself, principally through collections taken during speaking tours. Although he had a few large contributors, the Bureau remained a grass-roots operation; almost half of its supporters gave a dollar or less a year. Donations came from almost every state, but nearly half of them from three—New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.³⁷

As the contributions grew, Crafts expanded his operations. He always had several part-time office workers and usually had one or two field secretaries who traveled and lobbied in behalf of the Bureau as well. Numerous people served on his advisory board, including Booker T. Washington, O. O. Howard, John Eaton, Mary Hunt, Anthony Comstock, and former Senator Blair. The Reform Bureau, however, remained primarily a two-person operation, run by Crafts and his wife. Sara pursued her own reform work, serving as the Superintendent of the Sabbath School Department of the WCTU and President of the International Primary Union of Sabbath School Teachers, and also worked in the Reform Bureau's Washington office. He traveled about the country making speeches in behalf of reform and the Bureau; most years he averaged five lectures a week. On many of his trips Crafts became involved in local or state campaigns against gambling, prostitution, or other evils that concerned him.³⁸

As the location of his office indicated, however, the primary focus of Crafts's efforts remained Congress. To keep individual Christians and local churches involved in the national legislative process, Crafts and his wife sent press releases to various religious magazines and

36. Crafts, *Before the Lost Arts*, 63.

37. Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (1910), 52–53; Cashbook in International Reform Federation Collection, Bentley Library.

38. *Moral Legislation in Congress, Passed and Pending, . . . Report of the Work of the International Reform Bureau*, 58th Cong., 2d sess., 1904, S. Doc. No. 150 (SS 4589); records in International Reform Federation Collection. On Sara, see "News Worth Telling," *Christian Statesman* 31 (February 27, 1897): 68.

mailed supporters a newsletter explaining bills before Congress as well as petitions calling for specific legislation. They cooperated with other reformers interested in moral legislation, especially the WCTU, whose president, Frances Willard, praised his "admirable work of reform" that "has been greatly strengthened by our Society, even as we have profited by his wise counsels."³⁹

Crafts sought to mobilize the churches and groups such as the WCTU because he had confidence in the power of grass-roots political pressure. Although he believed that the state had a responsibility to follow the laws of God, Crafts realized that members of Congress responded less to appeals to religious authority than to pressure from voters. "On the doors of the Capitol one sees the words, 'Push' and 'Pull,'" Crafts maintained, "and the greatest of these is 'Push,' for ours is a wheelbarrow government which will go forward to almost any moral reform which the sovereign people really 'push,' despite the politician's contrary 'pull.'"⁴⁰ Like many in the Progressive era, though, Crafts's celebration of the power of the people obscured a less populist strategy: interest group politics. He sought to make the churches and their members an organized political force, an interest group that Congress would ignore at its peril. Crafts reminded one congressional committee that he and his allies represented "the sentiments of the churches of this country, whose membership is 27,000,000, more than one-third of our population."⁴¹ Crafts knew that even so large a group had to mobilize and focus its efforts to secure its goals in Washington. He therefore urged congregations and individuals to send petitions to Congress, but like other interest-group lobbyists, he also made personal appeals on their behalf to the president, cabinet officers, and, most often, members of Congress. On many occasions, he convinced individual members to introduce legislation he had written and, as he had with the national Sunday law campaign in the late 1880s, testified before Congressional hearings. He directed his lobbying efforts primarily in behalf of laws to stop Sabbath breaking, gambling, impurity, divorce, intemperance, and immoral movies.

Crafts met with little success on Sabbath observation and gambling. During his early years in Washington, he attempted to revive interest in a national Sunday law, but to no avail. He and his allies then sought a Sunday law for the District of Columbia and failed in that attempt

39. *WCTU Minutes*, 1897, 155. See also for Crafts's appearances, *WCTU Minutes*, 1895, 53; 1897, 26; 1898, 42 and 57; 1899, 47; 1900, 39; 1902, 71.

40. Crafts, "Our Day in Review: The March of Progress and Reform," *Our Day* 16 (April 1896): 181.

41. Committee on Immigration, *Foreign Immigration: Report to accompany H.R. 12199*, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1902, S. Rept. 2119 (SS 4264), 176.

as well. In the case of gambling, Crafts did secure, in 1908, a bill that outlawed betting in the District of Columbia but never one to stop interstate gambling, although at his instigation Congress held several hearings on the issue between 1909 and 1916.⁴²

Crafts had more success in securing laws to suppress "impurity." He believed in sexual purity for men as well as women and thought illicit sex and prostitution were increasing. He blamed the prevalence of such vices among African Americans on the heritage of slavery and their religion, which, except for "a few noble exceptions . . . , gives undue attention to emotion, and provides too little ethical instruction and discipline." Sexual immorality occurred among immigrants, Crafts felt, because the Roman Catholic faith "neglects ethics to exalt ritual." "Americans," Crafts admitted, also gave in to lust, and he attributed their failings to "the growth of luxury" in which "pleasure becomes the chief object of life." Like Esau, licentious Americans lived "for the present, ready to sell the birthright of purity for the momentary gratification of passion."⁴³

To counteract the many threats to purity, Crafts campaigned in Congress for several types of legislation. He lobbied for a bill, passed in 1897, that extended to interstate commerce the Comstock Law's ban on mailing obscene materials—not just pornography but any items or publications relating to birth control and abortion. In 1899 he and a broad coalition of purity reformers succeeded in raising the age of consent in the District of Columbia. Between 1912 and 1914 Crafts successfully campaigned for a law for Washington that permitted citizens to enjoin an owner whose building was used for prostitution and, in the case of a second offense, to close it for a year as a public nuisance.⁴⁴

42. Crafts, "Our Day in Review," 183–84; Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (1905), 258–66; H.R. 4063, *Congressional Record*, 60th Cong.; *Prevention of Transmission of Race-Gambling Bets, Hearings Before Subcommittee on Interstate Commerce, April 3, 1916* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916); Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Interstate Transmission of Race-Gambling Bets: Report to accompany, H.R. 15949, 64th Cong., 1st sess., 1916*, H. Rept. No. 773 (SS 6905).

43. Crafts, "Purity," *Union Signal* 23 (July 15, 1897): 4–5. See also. Crafts, *Practical Christianity*, 71–73.

44. Crafts, "Our Day in Review," *Our Day* 16 (July 1896): 361–62; S. 1675, *Congressional Record*, 54th Cong.; Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (1910), 89; H.R. 1136, *Congressional Record*, 55th Cong.; *Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on the District of Columbia, United States Senate, Sixty-Second Congress, Third Session on S. 5861* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913); *Hearings Before the Judiciary Subcommittee of the District of Columbia, House of Representatives on Kenyon Act (S. 234)* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1914); Crafts to Wilson, 6 and 20 February 1913, and filed with the latter, "To Leaders in the Fight for 'Red Light' Bill," 10 February 1913, all on reel 44, Wilson Papers, LC; S. 234, *Congressional Record*, 63d Cong.

Crafts's commitment to ensuring purity was linked to his conviction that stable families were essential to the preservation of morality and the social order. He favored laws that limited divorce to the grounds allowed in the Bible, primarily adultery. He especially opposed so-called "divorce mills" in the West, including Oklahoma, the Dakotas, and other federal territories, where brief residence requirements made it easy for rich people from states with strict divorce laws to secure a quick end to their marriage. In 1896, Crafts and others secured passage of a divorce code for the territories that limited divorce to people who had lived there for one year. Crafts, who wrote the bill, actually favored a longer residence requirement but figured a year was the best he could get. Four years later, Crafts wrote a divorce law for the District of Columbia that made adultery the only grounds for divorce, but allowed legal separation in certain cases. It passed with little discussion.⁴⁵

Along with lobbying for laws on the Sabbath, gambling, impurity, and divorce, Crafts sought federal action against alcohol. Although long a supporter of national, constitutional prohibition, Crafts during his first years in Washington worked for less dramatic legislation, including a tighter licensing system in the District of Columbia. Between 1898 and 1901, he played a crucial role in convincing Congress to stop the sale of beer in army canteens, the prohibition movement's first major victory in Congress. Crafts next worked with the lobbyists from the WCTU and the American Anti-Saloon League to convince Congress to ban the sale of beer or other intoxicants in immigrant stations. The temperance lobbyists then turned their attention to the sale of alcohol in the Philippines. Congress refused to end it there, but it did agree to ban the sale of alcohol, opium, and firearms to other islands in the Pacific. After that success, Crafts never again played so central a role in temperance legislation. He did, however, remain influential within the coalition led by the Saloon League and WCTU, serving on a succession of committees that discussed legislative strategy and the wording of the Prohibition amendment. Once Congress sent it to the states, the Reform Bureau worked in behalf of ratification.⁴⁶

45. Crafts, "Marriage and Divorce," *Union Signal* 23 (June 3, 1897): 4; Crafts to Samuel W. Dike, January 1, 1896, Samuel W. Dike Papers, Library of Congress; Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (1910), 89; Jno. Gillett to Crafts, February 7, 1896, Dike Papers, LC; H.R. 5217, *Congressional Record*, 54th Cong.; Crafts, "Our Day in Review," *Our Day* 16 (January 1896): 303; S. 1514, *Congressional Record*, 54th Cong.; Crafts to Dike, February 28, 1896, and January 19, 1902, Dike Papers, LC; Crafts to George W. Ray, April 7, 1900 (HR56A-H13.4), box 95, RG 233, National Archives; H.R. 9835, *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong.
46. On canteen, "Notes and Comments," *Union Signal* 25 (March 30, 1899): 1; H.R. 11022, *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 2d sess. On immigrant stations, Committee on Immi-

As he had in the campaign for Prohibition, Crafts at first led the fight in Washington against another form of intemperance, the use of drugs. His most significant intervention in federal narcotics policy followed America's acquisition of the Philippines. Under Spanish rule, a government monopoly sold opium to, and only to, resident Chinese. The American Army put a stop to the practice, but the Philippine Commission, the American executive agency that took over the government of the islands from the army, instituted a program similar to Spain's. Appalled, a group of American missionaries in Manila cabled Crafts and asked for the Reform Bureau's help in ending the program. Crafts organized a campaign that besieged President Theodore Roosevelt with two thousand protests, and he quickly ordered government-approved sales stopped. Later, in 1904, Crafts's Reform Bureau organized a hearing at the State Department, where he and representatives of the Christian Endeavor Society, WCTU, National Temperance Society, and Anti-Saloon League urged an end to the opium trade in China. After that, Crafts devoted much of his time to battling the opium traffic. To mobilize opposition to it, he took an extended tour of England and Asia in 1906 and again in 1908; the following year his Bureau hired a missionary to serve as a permanent voice against opium and in behalf of the Christian cause in Asia. At home and within Congress, however, Crafts's role in setting narcotics policy declined. The major federal legislation to control drugs, the Harrison Act passed in 1914, owed little if anything to his influence.⁴⁷

Crafts played a more important role, and his most public one, in a campaign for movie censorship. His involvement began when he became concerned about prizefight films. In 1897, Crafts wrote a bill that made it a crime to send through the mails, by telephone, or in interstate commerce a picture or description of a prize-fight as well as a proposal or record of betting on one. Although favorably reported,

gration, *Foreign Immigration: Report to accompany H.R. 12199*, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1902, S. Rept. 2119 (SS 4264). On Pacific islands, "Our Country's New Responsibilities: Call for a National Christian Citizenship Convention at Washington, D.C. Dec. 13-15, 1898," in folder 11, and Crafts form letter, February 18, 1902, folder 13, both in box 1, reel 2, Scientific Temperance Federation Papers, T&P Papers; Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (1910), 29; *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 57th Cong., 32, pt. 1, 33. On role in Prohibition, see S. E. Nicholson to P. A. Baker, April 27, 1911 and Nicholson to Members of the Headquarters Committee, July 17, 1911, both in folder 2, box 1, reel 17, Nicholson Subseries, American Anti-Saloon League Papers, T&P Papers; Margaret Dye Ellis, "Our Washington Letter," *Union Signal* 37 (December 21, 1911): 3 and 12; "Conference Decides Hobson Resolution to Remain Unchanged," *American Issue* 22 (July 24, 1915): 7; Anna Gordon, "Important Statement of National Legislative Conference," *Union Signal* 43 (July 5, 1917): 3.

47. Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (1910), 29-30, 72-78, 88; *Patriotic Studies* (1905), 204, 234-35, 237-46. For passage of the Harrison Act, see David F. Musto, *The American Disease: Origins Narcotic Control*, expanded ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 24-68.

Crafts's bill was never passed. Crafts then directed his efforts elsewhere, but in 1912, at the behest of the WCTU and southern legislators appalled by the distribution of films of African American champion Jack Johnson beating the "great white hopes" who opposed him, Congress adopted an interstate ban on the distribution of fight films.⁴⁸

By that time, Crafts had expanded his interest in censorship from prize-fight films to all movies. Crafts perceived the educational potential of the new medium and thought "adequately censored motion pictures"⁴⁹ could serve as an alternative to the saloon. Nevertheless the power of the medium to shape the behavior of the young, especially teenagers, frightened him: "The devil never could put anything before the minds of children in print so effectively as is done in these vivid moving pictures."⁵⁰ As early as 1910, Crafts participated in censorship campaigns in several cities. Emboldened by his success and encouraged by Congress's passage of the ban on distributing prize-fight films and another ban on importing obscene movies, Crafts pressed Congress for national censorship. Joining him in the cause was William Chase, an Episcopal canon in New York City, and the WCTU.⁵¹

Crafts wrote a bill creating a federal commission to censor all films shown commercially within the United States. Appointed by the President, the five members of the commission he proposed would set policy and have final authority over censorship, but hire others to help them preview the films. Producers would submit their films and for each pay a fee to cover the cost of the process. No film would be allowed in interstate commerce or granted a copyright without the approval of the commission. To introduce his bill, Crafts turned to Senator Hoke Smith and Representative Dudley Hughes, both of Georgia. In 1914, Hughes held hearings on the bill and the following year his committee reported it, pretty much as Crafts had prepared it.

48. Crafts, *National Perils and Hopes*, 42-48; Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Transmission by Mail or Interstate Commerce of Pictures or Any Description of Prize Fights: Report to accompany H.R. 10639, 54th Cong., 2d sess., 1897, H. Rept. No. 3046 (SS 3556); H.R. 10369, Congressional Record, 54th Cong., 2d sess.; "The Anti-Kinescope Crusade," Union Signal 23 (April 1, 1897): 8-9; S. 7027, Congressional Record, 62d Cong.*

49. Crafts to Cora F. Stoddard, September 9, 1915, box 4, Scientific Temperance Federation Papers, New York Public Library.

50. *Federal Motion Picture Commission. Hearings Before the Committee on Education, House of Representatives, Sixty-Fourth Congress, First Session on H.R. 456* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 77.

51. Crafts, *Patriotic Studies* (1910), 60; Margaret Dye Ellis, "Our Washington Letter," *Union Signal* 40 (March 26, 1914): 2.

The bill did not pass. In 1916, Hughes's committee held a second, longer set of hearings.⁵²

In his opening remarks during the 1914 hearings, Crafts entered into the record magazine articles by Chase that offered a broad defense of the right of government to uphold moral standards and to restrain the "personal liberty"⁵³ of individuals in order to protect the whole community, an argument similar to the one Crafts had made in behalf of Sunday laws three decades earlier. Chase rested government's power to do so on majority rule but also defended the right of the church "to influence the state to enact God's will into law." Indeed, he insisted, the church had the responsibility to petition, advise, and counsel, although Congress retained that of "rejecting or accepting our advice."⁵⁴

In the 1916 hearings, however, Chase and Crafts minimized the church's obligation and portrayed their plan as a matter of licensing and regulation; they even denied the commission would have much to do with determining morality. Crafts compared the bill to the Interstate Commerce and Pure Food and Drug Acts. The President, he predicted, would appoint to the commission, not ministers or moral leaders, but psychologists and other experts trained to understand the impact of the movies. A commission staffed with psychological experts, Crafts stressed, would not judge a movie's morality. He and other supporters of the bill often spoke as if they assumed a national consensus on moral standards, but at other times made it clear variations existed between the morality of towns and that of cities, especially New York. New York, where the values of the stage dominated, should not be allowed to set the moral tone for all of America, Crafts told the committee. As in his earlier arguments for a "civil Sabbath," Crafts's attempt to minimize his goal of legislating morality was far from convincing.⁵⁵

Certainly Crafts's opponents did not accept it. Film industry organs denounced Crafts as "a professional reformer and promoter of legislation to give him and his ilk the power of attending to other people's business" and charged that he held "to a code which would adjudge 99 per cent of the population of the United States as bound for moral

52. Committee on Education, *Federal Motion Picture Commission: Report to accompany H.R. 14895*, 63d Cong., 3d sess., 1915, H. Rept. No. 1411 (SS 6766).

53. *Motion Picture Commission: Hearings Before the Committee on Education, House of Representatives, Sixty-Third Congress, Second Session on Bills to Establish a Federal Motion Picture Commission, No. 1* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1914), 21.

54. *Federal Motion Picture: Hearings*, 167.

55. *Ibid.*, 62, 169-70.

destruction at a high rate of speed."⁵⁶ Some within the industry clearly feared Crafts's power, however. A few major producers met with him and worked out a compromise, which Crafts presented at the end of the 1916 hearings. Other producers and the exhibitors continued to oppose the compromise and any federal censorship. The bill never passed, although one that made movies subject to existing obscenity laws did.⁵⁷

In 1921 Crafts and Chase renewed their demand for federal censorship. After first agreeing with producers on a voluntary plan to clean up the movies, Crafts changed course and again pushed for the creation of a federal commission. This time, Crafts's bill did not get out of committee. Nevertheless, his renewed efforts, along with pressure from other groups and increasing public outrage not only about the content of films but marriage and sexual scandals within the industry, led the movie moguls in 1922 to form a new trade association, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America. Headed by Will H. Hays, it began a process of self-censorship that led in the early 1930s to the adoption of a rigorous production code. Crafts did not live to see its adoption. He died in 1922.⁵⁸

Eighty years after his death, Crafts and his role in legislating morality have been almost forgotten. He clearly does not deserve the obscurity into which he has fallen; he played a significant role in the passage of much important legislation. An obituary in *The New York Times* claimed that Crafts was "for years a picturesque figure in congressional lobbies and committee rooms" and that "those in sympathy with his policies" credited him with "having an influential part in the enactment of prohibition, of laws to restrict the use of narcotics and of legislation of similar nature." As befit an interest-group lobbyist, Crafts was best known in Congress and among reform groups that shared his agenda. The same obituary claimed that he was "widely known,"⁵⁹ but Crafts never became a household name. The *Times*, for example, regularly covered his activities only toward the end of his life. No doubt, he was better known in church circles. Crafts convinced the Methodists to become active in the fight for Sunday observance and was well-enough known to be invited to lecture at Princeton Seminary. But apparently he was never particularly influ-

56. "Mutual Fights Censor Bill," *Reel*, January 22, 1916, clipping in folder 2, box 3, Dudley Hughes Papers, Russell Library, University of Georgia.

57. *Federal Motion Picture: Hearings*, 264-71; H.R. 9521, *Congressional Record*, 44th Cong.

58. *New York Times*, 15 March 1921, 26; Charles M. Feldman, *The National Board of Censorship (Review) of Motion Pictures, 1902-1922* (New York: Arno, 1977), 191-99.

59. *New York Times*, 28 December 1922, 17.

ential in denominational councils or, after its formation in 1908, the Federal Council of Churches.⁶⁰

Perhaps Crafts's historical reputation suffered because his public and denominational profile was not as high as such social gospels divines as Washington Gladden or Walter Rauschenbusch. They certainly had a greater influence than Crafts on the theologians and Christian reformers who followed them, primarily because of what they taught and preached, not what they accomplished. Crafts's reputation also suffered because much of the legislation he helped secure and the moral causes that he championed soon fell into disfavor. Many, even some who had advocated its passage, quickly turned against Prohibition. The reversal was part of a larger cultural shift in the 1920s in which many intellectuals came to criticize not only Prohibition but also Victorian morality and its strict rules of personal behavior. Many embraced a radical individualism and moral relativism, and those who did disapprove of efforts such as Crafts's to restrict personal freedom and impose moral standards. When liberals, like the scholars in the forties who defined the social gospel, wrote the history of late-nineteenth-century Protestantism, they praised the "realism" of Christians who condemned the existing economic order and sought progressive reforms; they generally ignored or dismissed as backward-looking those who championed Prohibition and other attempts to legislate morality.⁶¹

Crafts's theology and reform efforts therefore do not fit easily into the categories first developed in the forties and still most commonly employed to define the social gospel. Yet its proponents and Crafts agreed that Christians were called to make society better—they just disagreed on how to define better. Social gospel ministers sought to regulate business and improve working conditions; Crafts sought to promote individual morality in a society increasingly shaped by a commercial culture that celebrated personal pleasure and individual fulfillment. He lobbied for laws that restricted individuals' right to pursue their lusts and appetites—stronger divorce laws or age of consent legislation—or, more often, laws that eliminated the sources of vice within society—houses of prostitution, "divorce mills," the sale of narcotics and alcohol, the distribution of immoral or violent movies. It makes little sense to incorporate these campaigns or

60. Recent studies of the passage of the prohibition amendment, the Mann Act, and other moral reform legislation quote or mention Crafts.

61. On changes in values, see Henry F. May, *The End of American Innocence: A Study of the First Years of Our Time, 1912-1917* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959) and Stanley Coben, *Rebellion Against Victorianism: The Impetus for Cultural Change in 1920s America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Crafts's perspective into *the* social gospel, a term best reserved only for Christians who did pursue a liberal theology and a progressive social and economic agenda. But Crafts's assumptions about the Christian's role in creating a society that emphasized individual morality and self-restraint do fit into May's and especially Handy's broader conception of "social Christianity" and reaffirm the importance of distinguishing that larger movement from the social gospel.

Crafts's career, though, also points up the need to expand the conception of social Christianity. Crafts's economic views did not differ dramatically from May's conservatives, and he certainly did not oppose the individual regeneration championed by Handy's conservatives. But, unlike both, Crafts focused his efforts on promoting personal morality through law. Another scholar, Paul Boyer, labeled the campaigns for prohibition, purity, and other moral legislation in which Crafts participated "coercive environmentalism." It is an apt description of how Crafts sought to employ government power, although the adjective "coercive" may be somewhat pejorative, especially since Boyer contrasts it with "positive environmentalism."⁶² The economic reforms championed by the "positive environmentalism" of the social gospel also constrained certain behavior; even such beneficial measures as child labor laws involved the coercion of working-class families. The use of government power inevitably involves coercion and restrictions on someone's liberty. Perhaps a more neutral description would be fairer. In any case, Crafts and the reformers with whom he worked can best be understood as part of the conservative strand within a very broad social Christianity influential at the turn of the century. He and its other adherents preached and practiced that Christians and the churches had a responsibility to use law to create a society that promoted personal morality.⁶³

Their form of conservative social Christianity had much in common with antebellum campaigns for prohibition and Sunday observance and persisted in late-twentieth-century attempts to outlaw abortion or

62. Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978). The term "coercive" also raises the question of whether Crafts's reform efforts constituted a form of "social control," a concept with a long history in the scholarship of reform movements, including that on Progressivism that has given more attention to efforts to legislate morality than has that on the social gospel. Crafts's efforts obviously did involve social control, but as suggested earlier in the text, he sought laws not just to control African Americans and the working classes, as the concept of "social control" usually connotes, but all members of society, especially the young of his own class.

63. On the larger movement of which Crafts was a part, see Foster, *Moral Reconstruction: Christian Lobbyists and the Federal Legislation of Morality, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

the marriage of homosexuals. The attitudes and goals of the "new Christian right," as many have termed those who have recently championed legislating morality, differ from those of Crafts in various ways. Crafts worked closely with female reformers who sought to expand the public role of women. He never made taxes or the other economic issues that form an important part of the Christian right's agenda part of his and had deep reservations about the commercial society emerging about him. Nor did Crafts identify himself so closely with one political party as the Christian right has or intervene so publicly in electoral politics. Even the types of personal morality they worried most about differed. Nevertheless, Crafts did share with many in the new Christian right a commitment to the legislation of personal morality and a belief that government had a responsibility to create a Christian society. Crafts, and the reformers with whom he worked, therefore, serve as a precedent for the efforts of the new Christian right, a more direct one than most that have been offered.

More important, the emergence of the new Christian right reminds historians that Crafts and his allies cannot be dismissed as the last gasp of Victorian orthodoxy, but must be seen as part of an important, continuing tradition within American Protestantism, one that affirms society's right to set moral standards and the Christian's responsibility to ensure that government enforces them. That tradition has been as, if not more, influential within American Protestantism and society than the radical social gospel of Rauschenbusch. In the final analysis, Crafts's historical importance rests both on his legislative accomplishments and his advocacy of a significant, persistent form of social Christianity, one committed to using law to establish and enforce individual moral behavior.