

## The Principle of Sabbath Observance.

BY REV. GEORGE A. TEWKSBURY.

The principle of Sabbath Observance lies imbedded as a direct and easy inference in the statement of our Lord: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." If this may suggest that the Sabbath was made for man as a whole, generically regarded, it also suggests that it was made for the whole of every man individually considered. Every man has a tripartite nature; he exists in three departments. Adopting Jeremiah's figure of a garden, we see in him three plots or beds—the physical, the intellectual, the spiritual.

These divisions do not lie horizontal within him, and artificially separate; but they rise terrace-like, one above another, representing an ascending scale of importance. As the central design of each, from below upward, the growing plants are made to form the words body, mind, soul, and the most important, giving the law to the others, is the soul. The body is not for itself, neither is the mind, but both are for the soul or the spiritual nature, and the soul is for God. One part is not to rob the others of their rights in the day. The body is to get rest in it, but the body is not to say: "Now Sunday is come; I will spend the day in sleep, I will not get up till ten or eleven o'clock"—too late to go to church—"I will take my ease and so get rested for another week's work." Nor is the mind to monopolize it to the exclusion of needful bodily rest and spiritual improvement. Nor, again, is the soul so to take it as to leave the body and mind unhelped in its return. The fair and full distribution of its good is to be secured. But as the spiritual is the highest, most important part of every man, the body and mind being subordinate and tributary to it, so all the benefits of the day to the body and mind are to accrue in the spiritual. The respite from worldly care, the interim of accustomed labor which the day marks and measures, is first and last to be turned toward the end of enabling one to give attention to those high and sacred concerns which lie on the divine side of his being; incidentally it will give its full measure of blessing to the mental and physical. "Seek ye first God's Kingdom and righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The grand ultimate end of the Sabbath is the spiritual nature.

While other days are for body, mind and soul, this day is chiefly, as defined on an Assyrian tablet, "a day of rest for the heart." It is the window of the week, commanding a view of celestial landscapes. It is the perspective glass, to help the vision from the hill called Clear. A man in Newcastle, Eng., who had a house to let, took an applicant to the top of it and, speaking of the distant view it gave, added "We can see Durham Cathedral on a Sunday." "On a Sunday," said the listener, "and, pray, why not on Monday?" "Because on the week days the great furnaces and pits are pouring forth their smoke and we cannot see so far, but when the fires are out our view is wide."

Here, then, is readily yielded to us the principle of Sabbath Observance. It is found to be really a principle of affinity. Whatever will promote the great end of the day, or be as a glass in the hand whereby one may almost discover "the golden spired apocalypse," the cathedral gloria of heaven, may, self-evidently, come within its consecrated hours. Whatever will not do this is to be rigorously excluded. It is manifest upon the face of the matter that the fires of secular employment must be put out, their smoke no longer filling the air. Spiritual ends must be subserved by spiritual means. "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work." Will the spending of much of the day in sleep, will the bringing into it of social and convivial pleasures, with the studying of the week day lessons or exacting intellectual effort, will business letter writing or the making up of accounts, will bicycle riding, will Sunday newspapers, help forward the higher ends of the day? Only as they do may these things and a host of others like them be allowed. Confessedly it is not easy to see any more fitness in them for these ends than in a stick to discern the glories of the stars. But the principle is imperative. And every man is responsible so to apply the principle that the Sabbath as made for man may fulfil for him its blessed mission.—*The Congregationalist*.

## Grace in its Divine and Human Aspects.\*

BY REV. ADDISON P. FOSTER, D.D.

Our Saviour gave three parables of grace together, each throwing light on the rest,—the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. He gave three, partly for emphasis, partly to bring out several sides of the truth, partly for climax and partly to argue from several instances of human nature. This series of parables begins by laying special emphasis on

## THE DIVINE ASPECTS OF GRACE.

The parable of the lost sheep brings out God's pity. No matter how many are already saved, if there be one unsaved, God's pity would find for it a way of salvation. The parable of the lost coin shows God's appreciation. A silver drachma is worth but a few cents. It seems to us too insignificant for such a search and jubilation. That is the point of the parable. No soul is so trivial in God's eyes as not to be worth saving. The parable of the lost son brings into view with rare fulness and reiteration God's forgiveness. The moment the son returns, the father reinstates him with all the privileges of sonship. The parable lingers around this great truth with loving and graphic touches.

The three parables alike show God's joy in the restoration of the sinner. Nothing is more emphatically stated in Scripture than that God is glad to welcome the repentant sinner and give him every privilege. No one can read these three parables of grace and not recognize this.

But these parables do not present alone the divine aspects of grace. These could not well be set forth without bringing into view the state of man. So the parables show also

## THE HUMAN ASPECTS OF GRACE.

The parables all indicate man's need as lost. He is out of the way. Like a lost sheep he has thoughtlessly wandered from God's care; like a lost coin he has ceased to be of use; like a lost son, he is wayward and obstinate. But this is not all. The parables show man's opportunity. God finds him and presents the truth to him. The sheep may be brought home; the coin may be restored to its place; the son among swine may find welcome in his father's house. The first and second parables, dealing with morally irresponsible objects, are fitted only to teach man's need and opportunity in most general terms, but the parable of the prodigal broadens out much as a mountain stream swells into a lake and on its broad circumference has a great variety of scenery. Here is set forth man's sinfulness. Sin is the cause of his need. He is lost because separated from God. If he had not insisted on living apart from God all would have been well with him. Here, too, is shown his responsibility. A lost sheep and a lost coin are irresponsible. But a lost son owes his condition to his own folly and willfulness. He is responsible, also, if he continues in this condition. We might not know from the first and second parable that man had anything to do about it. The eagerness to save as set forth in both and the powerlessness of the object lost to resist might give a false impression but for the teaching of the third parable. We are not the subjects of irresistible grace, but have a will of our own in the matter. The prodigal son came to himself, reached a decision, arose, and went to his father. Here are outlined the steps taken in the exercise of the sinner's individual responsibility. Here is the practical manifestation of repentance and faith. When the prodigal saw his folly, was sick of it and turned from his life with swine, here was repentance. When he thought of his father as still loving him and sure to welcome him and when he set out in this confidence, here was faith. Without these there is no salvation. Man's privileges in salvation are also outlined in the parable. Man is the son of God and in his welcome as he comes back to God, he is now treated as a son and has son's rights. God does nothing half way. Having forgiven the prodigal, he absolutely reinstates him and gives him all a son could ask. When the son came back and felt the warmth of his father's welcome, he could not say "Make me as one of thy hired servants."

The latter part of the third parable is but an expansion and more positive statement of the ruling