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THE DAY OF REST.

A SHORT REVIEW BY "CRUX."

The following paragraph from the New York "Tribune" of Sunday last will explain itself, and at the same time my reason for touching upon the above-mentioned subject:—

"The humorous view of the arrest at Yonkers for playing golf on Sunday, into which the 'Tribune' cartoonist was betrayed last Wednesday, has stirred up a lively discussion. The general secretary of the American Sabbath Union started the ball after the fashion of a latter day John Knox, by telling the 'Tribune' what he thought of its cartoonist and its luckless self in good set terms. Those sympathizing with the Yonkers golf player seem to be in greater numbers, but they generally evince more moderation. A valuable illustration of modern phases of thought on a question that touches everybody."

"No intelligent and good citizen doubts the supreme importance of maintaining the seventh day of rest from secular toil. The only dispute possible among such citizens is as to whether the State, when undertaking to safeguard this rest, must enforce it solely for religion and prohibit recreation. It is a point on which, now that the Yonkers trial has sustained the golf, if correspondents are courteous, brief and interesting."

Here you have the subject set forth pretty clearly. It is no intention of mine to encroach on space with references to or extracts from the many contradictory letters which the "Tribune" publishes. They are just as conflicting—no more, no less—as the various sects from which they emanate. It is, however, to be noticed by whomsoever reads them, that there is not one Catholic letter in the batch. It is quite possible that no Catholic considered it worthy his while to bother with the matter. In this we cannot be found. We Catholics are not exact and unvaried teachings concerning the observance of the Sunday, and we have our own practices, which are either prescribed by the Church or permitted by her—prescribed in what is obligatory, permitted in what is allowable. We cannot disregard the Church's ordinances, no matter how strict or how lax the law of the State may be. For this reason there is no place for us in the subject as viewed by the different other elements of society. But what has arrested my attention in a special manner, is the editorial pronouncement of the "Tribune."

Naturally I must suppose that the "Tribune's" editorial is a result of all the clashing letters on the question of Sunday observance, which have been sent in. If so, I can fairly take that editorial—making due allowance for the paper's desire to keep in favor with all its readers—as a sample of American sentiment in regard to "The Day of Rest." Of course, I would not wish to saddle the whole American people with any responsibility for the individual opinions of the "Tribune," or of its editor; but I cannot close my eyes to the fact that what the editor writes is intended to harmonize, as much as possible, with the general views of its readers. Now such readers being very numerous, and of all creeds and races, it is no easy matter to move along without clashing with some of them.

In hurriedly analyzing that editorial expression I am very probably sitting the general feeling of the people. Of course, I always make exception of the Catholic citizen's attitude and the Catholic Church's teachings. These have but little to do with the "Tribune's" opinions, or the opinions of any other secular organ. With the introductory sentences of the article under consideration I have nothing to criticize. Where I find it expedient to write a few remarks, is when the "Tribune" says:—

"This is a nominally Christian country in the sense that a majority of its citizens are at least professing Christians, and therefore the Christian point of view as to Sunday recreation ought to have a certain amount of weight in the civil government. Yet when Christians urge a rigorous observance of Sunday on the ground that God has imposed such an observance on all mankind they must be reminded that the government of this country as such has no duty to do with this view. Individuals as Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, what not are, of course, bound about their denomination's teaching about Sunday. But when the member of some denomina-

tion tries to bind the people of a community or a state by his particular denominational conception of Sunday he goes beyond his powers and his rights. Under our political system the municipality or the State can take no cognizance of any alleged divine sanction for Sunday observance. Its only concern is to enforce such an observance of the day of rest as will best promote the intellectual and physical welfare of all the people irrespective of their religious creed. And it follows from this that the civil authority may at any time strengthen or relax the laws relating to the observance of Sunday whenever such modification is plainly demanded in the interests of the people, even though it may be opposed by some particular religious body."

So the American Republic is "a nominally Christian country." Practically what is it? We have here a very clear statement to the effect that God has got nothing to do with the constitution of the country, or do with matters concerning the religious convictions of its citizens. Accepting this lamentable statement as true, I feel at a loss to know how the civil authority "may at any time strengthen or relax the laws relating to the observance of Sunday." If the State ignores Divine authority and Divine laws, upon what ground can it base its interference with such authority and such laws? Not only do we thus find the civil authority repudiating the Divine authority, but actually making the latter subservient to its whims and opinions.

Let us now pass to another paragraph:—

"It is undoubtedly true that civil legislation concerning Sunday was originally based on religious grounds. The state recognized Sunday as a holy day and enacted regulations concerning its observance that at least implied an admission of its divinity. It is needless, however, to say that such a view is contrary to the present day conception of the relation which the State holds to the church. It is but certain that a majority of the Christian people of the country would reject such a basis for Sunday legislation. Practically most of the laws implying a religious sanction for Sunday have fallen into disuse, and before many years it is possible that they may be wiped off the statute books, not out of any hostility to religion, but because it will come to be perceived that such a qualification of church and state is contrary to the genius of American institutions."

If this means anything it is a fresh repudiation of religion and religious influences: it is a driving out of God from the State; it is an ignoring of all Divine authority, whence the State derives all the rights and authority that it possesses. If the enactments concerning the observance of Sunday implied a divine character and that such a view is contrary to the present day conception of the relation which the State holds to the Church, it is clear that in practice, if not in theory, the American State is just as godless as the most anti-Christian government of Europe. The benefits, physically and otherwise, derived from Sunday observance, are not denied; but simply from a materialistic point of view are they considered. This is made still clearer by the following:—

"But many of the old conceptions as to the mode of its observance have passed away forever. Some of them are grounded on theological views that are themselves decadent. Others are founded on a strained interpretation of Biblical texts that seem to be negated by other texts equally weighty. And still others are made impossible of realization by the changed and changing conditions of modern life."

I do not pretend that the American State and American statesmen endorse these views of the "Tribune"; but they do not repudiate them. In all this do I note the constant absence of the Catholic church; she is not considered, her doctrines and practices are apparently ignored in this general statement. I will venture to say, and I do not think that I can be contradicted, that the last quoted sentences find no application as far as Catholics and Catholicity are concerned. "The changed and changing conditions of modern life" in no way affect the Catholic Sunday. To-day, as in all the past, the Catholic is obliged to attend Mass on Sundays; the concept is there at this hour just as it was a century or two, or three, or more centuries ago. The command to abstain from all unnecessary servile work is the same at this hour as it has been

from time immemorial. The definition of servile work is unaltered, times may change; conditions of life may change, but who she is ever willing to treat with such new conceptions in a rational and liberal manner, the rules and laws of the church do not change, because she is from God and God cannot change.

NOTES FROM ROME

CARDINAL GIBBONS IN ROME.—Cardinal Gibbons, of Baltimore, since his arrival in the Eternal City, has taken up his quarters at the Canadian College. He was met at Naples by a number of eminent members of the American colony, including Mgr. Denis O'Connell. He met, on arriving in Rome, Mgr. William O'Connell, the newly-consecrated Bishop of Portland, Maine. A well-informed correspondent writes:—"The presence in Rome of Archbishop Chapelle, Apostolic Delegate to the Philippine Islands, of Mgr. Nozalea, formerly Bishop of Havana, coinciding with Cardinal Gibbons' visit, has given rise to exaggerated rumors concerning a political mission with which it is alleged that His Eminence has been entrusted by the United States. I have every reason to believe that these sensational reports are unfounded. Cardinal Gibbons has been five years absent from Rome, and this fact is in itself sufficient to explain the reason of his visit 'ad limina.' His Eminence will undoubtedly confer with the Holy Father on matters touching the organization and welfare of the Church in the United States and in the recently acquired American colonies, but that can hardly be styled a 'political mission.'"

BRESCI'S SUICIDE.—The suicide of King Humbert's murderer has given rise to much gossip, no little sensation, and considerable uneasiness in Rome. Already a number of threatening anonymous letters have been received at the Quirinal, and the vigilance round King Victor Emmanuel III. has been redoubled. Unhappily enough the young King of Italy narrowly escaped being the victim of what might have proved a fatal lift accident on the very day of Bresci's suicide. The police authorities have adopted severe measures against the anarchists, especially in view of the approaching festivities in honor of the advent of an heir to the Italian Crown, when several members of foreign Royal families are expected to come to Rome. Apropos of this happy event, some papers have announced that the ceremony of christening the Royal baby will take place in the Pauline chapel of the Quirinal. This, however, is impossible, as the beautiful Papal chapel of the Quirinal Palace has been placed under an interdict since 1870.

A LADY'S GENEROSITY.—Professor Boni continues his scientific researches and systematic excavations in the Roman Forum. The distinguished archaeologist recently expressed the wish that the ancient Via Sacra and other parts of the Forum might be planted with laurels and myrtles, which would greatly add to the charm of the ruins, now so bare and desolate. Unfortunately, no funds were forthcoming for the purpose. An American lady, Mrs. Higginson, of Boston, having heard of Professor Boni's plan, generously presented him with the necessary sum for its execution, so that the Forum will soon present a changed and most attractive appearance. It is announced that the British Ambassador, Lord Currie, who is an enthusiastic archaeologist, has bought an estate near Subiaco, where he will excavate on a large scale. One of Lord Currie's predecessors, the late Lord Arden, was also a most learned and valuable archaeologist, and excavated with great success at Nemi, and on the site of the ancient Lanuvium, where he discovered the ruins of the temple of Juno Sospita.

THE CENSUS OF ITALY.—The census returns for Italy show an increase of four millions since 1881. The population is now 32,449,754. The strongest fact is that immense numbers have emigrated to America, and yet the increase goes on. In several regions, such as Campania, Abruzzi and Basilicata, a notable decrease in the population has been observed, due solely to the enormous emigration to America. It has transpired that in spite of the stringent laws regulating emigration, no less than 170,000 persons left the province of Potenza, one of the smallest in Southern Italy, numbering 490,000 inhabitants, in the course of last year!

MR. REDMOND UNWELL.—The Liverpool "Catholic Times" makes this announcement:—"Mr. J. E. Redmond, M.P., who has not been well for the last two or three weeks, will be unable to attend any public meetings during the recess. He is going abroad for a short rest, but will be back in London in time for the re-assembling of Parliament on Thursday, June 6th."

DIAMOND JUBILEE.—The Right Rev. Dr. Crane, Bishop of Sandhurst, Australia, celebrated the diamond jubilee of his priesthood on April 18th. The sermon was delivered by the Very Rev. T. O'Farrell, C.S.S.R., Provincial of the Redeemers in Australia.

AN AMERICAN HALL OF FAME.—At the dedication of the Hall of Fame, in New York, on the 30th May last, Mr. Chauncey Depew delivered an oration, in the course of which he said, referring to the memorial tablets that were unveiled:—"There has been the broadest catholicity of judgment, and no passions or prejudices of sectarianisms, parties or creeds, among the judges."

AN ARISTOCRATIC PRISON.—Under the innocent looking title "La Maison Paternelle," there exists in France what might be briefly designated as an authorized aristocratic prison for juvenile offenders. It was founded by a legal luminary, M. De Metz, a man deeply interested in the training and welfare of the young, with a view to checking the growing spirit of insubordination to authority, both at home and at school, which had become specially marked in the highest ranks of society in France.

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