

Contributions.

A Friendly Critic.

EDWARD TROUT.

When I opened the CANADIAN EVANGELIST a few days ago and turned over its pages, I was pleased with its improved appearance and general make-up; but, when I began reading its editorial pages, this pleasure was very soon dispelled. Instead of being pleased, I was pained and grieved. I regretted to read in a paper professedly set for the defence of the gospel of Christ any opposition to the good work that the Lord's Day Alliance were trying to do to prevent Sunday street cars. While I do not wish to defend the Alliance nor any other human religious society, I regretted, deeply regretted, to see the CANADIAN EVANGELIST—or, rather, THE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST (?)—prostituting its new name by advocating Sunday cars along with the Toronto *World*, the *Canadian Sportsman*, and the *Advocate*. The latter belongs to the Licensed Victuallers' Association—certainly nice fellow journalists. Some of them, if not all, gladly quoted what THE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST had to say on the subject. Is not this fact in itself sufficient to convince you that you have championed the wrong side of, possibly, a doubtful question? Can you afford to have the fair name of your publication dragged in the dirt by being mentioned in the same breath with papers of this class? Can you touch tar without staining your fingers? No, you can not; neither can you advocate the running of Sunday street cars, organ worship, nor any of these doubtful or untaught questions, without greatly impairing your influence and usefulness.

As you must well know, the tendency of the present age is to allow professed Christians to go "hand in glove" with the world, regardless of the teaching of the Bible or the Christlike, exemplary character the followers of Jesus should ever exhibit as "the lights of the world" and "the salt of the earth." Can you afford to join the ranks of those who are constantly trying to nullify the effect of the teaching of Christ and His apostles. Just think of what you are doing. Think of the example you are setting the younger and possibly less thoughtful readers of your paper.

Because we may differ, please do not stigmatize me as a fanatic, nor a bigot. I am neither one nor the other. Nor do I pose as a perfectly-modeled Christian; but, so long as a large number of our most intelligent and more thoughtful brethren are justly in favor of a quiet Lord's day, of quiet and hallowed wor-

ship, without the aid of blaring trumpets or other musical instruments, I shall not vote for either Sunday cars or in favor of organ worship on the Lord's day; neither will I absent myself from the Lord's table on His day because an organ is used to assist the singing.

Please pardon me, as one older than yourself and with possibly more experience in supervising the general tone and character of a respectable newspaper, in offering some kindly suggestions. One is that you pay less attention to the Henry George theory of single taxation, and that you say much less about how your readers should vote to fill our legislative chambers, and all such kindred and outside subjects which are in themselves divisive, and sometimes unfortunately engender ill-feeling and strife between brethren. Another suggestion is that you study the moral effect of your lax teaching. Go to Paris, where Sunday is a *fête* day. There the theatres and all sorts of worldly amusements have full play and are encouraged by the authorities. No, you need not go so far as France. Visit New Orleans, Jacksonville, Fla., and other cities "away down south," and you will find, as I have seen, on many Lord's days almost empty churches, but crowded cars, steamboats, parks, gardens and saloons. There are more cars and more excursions on His day "for the poor workingmen and their families" and "those who cannot walk to church," than on all the other days of the week. As you travel from there northward, you may notice this loose conduct and disregard for a day of rest and a day of worship growing gradually less and less. This is just what the *Advocate*, *Sportsman* and other kindred papers do not desire. It is what they are clamoring against. The president of the Toronto Street Railway Co. publicly admitted in court that many thousands of dollars had been spent in corrupting the public and the press. Why this expenditure, if Sunday cars are not immensely profitable? Why do you assist him in securing them? If THE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST (?) and other so-called religious papers continue to assist in this unholy alliance, I quite agree with you when you say, "We have no doubt but Toronto will take its place in the respect in question on the side of enlightened Sundayism? Would it not be more correct to say enlightened heathenism?"

I think that this is only the second or third time that I have inflicted upon you any newspaper correspondence, and I should not do so now did I not feel greatly interested in the success of the grand and glorious Gospel truths that you profess to advocate. Beside this,

I feel assured that the thoughts that I have endeavored to express will find an echo in the minds and hearts of a large number of your readers, especially the more thoughtful ones.

Toronto, 3rd April, 1895.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I find the following in the *World* of the 4th inst., which I presume was copied from the *Hamilton Spectator*, and I think your readers should know how your remarks are used:

"This is not the opinion of an unregenerate layman. It is the opinion of the editor of a religious journal, THE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST AND CANADIAN EVANGELIST, and the editor of the journal is the Rev. George Munro, pastor of the Hamilton Church of the Disciples, and President of the Hamilton Ministerial Association."

Against the Sunday Street Cars.

EDITOR DISCIPLE OF CHRIST:

DEAR SIR: I like the change of name in your paper; but, as a Disciple of Christ, I wish to repudiate your claim to represent the people known as Disciples of Christ in this country, in so far as your views on Sunday street cars are concerned. I am grieved to see a hitherto well conducted Christian paper advancing the views of grinding and oppressive monopolistic capitalists, who would not only run street cars on Sunday, but everything else that money can be made out of. Indeed, if your arguments for Sunday cars are valid, there is no reason why there should be any restriction on any other way of making money on Sunday.

I could expect a worldly paper like the *Toronto World* to take such a position as you do, and in to-day's issue it laments that the Legislature has not seen fit to allow milk trolleys to run north of this city. If it had been allowed, then, with a few milk-and-water Christians, with Bibles under their arm, to ride the trolleys, and an amateur photographer to photograph the saintly group, an excellent Sunday car campaign picture would be available for the next campaign in this city. You will, with your *new title*, prove a valuable ally of the *World*. Our quiet, orderly and restful Sundays are not made so by the fourth commandment, but by the laws of this Christian land; and when people chafe under them and long for the husks of a foreign and less Christian land, I see no reason for their remaining here: they might easily be assimilated in Chicago, for instance.

As a Disciple of Christ, I believe in His golden rule, and it should be your rule. If it is, you should be willing that Disciples should run the cars as well as ride them; and the principle is the same, whether all the employees

were Disciples or non-Disciples, or *vice versa*. If the former, and in the event of your advocacy of Sunday travel having its desired result, your paper would announce that "early on the first day of the week, the Disciples met together at the car barns, to convey picnickers to the Beach and other pleasure resorts." Cars can not run without operators. If those operators are Disciples, they cannot be at the Lord's table and operate the cars at the same time. If Disciples are unwilling to thus deny themselves the boon of immunity from secular labor on the first day of the week, what about the golden rule, when they are willing that others be deprived of that boon, who, because of their defenceless position, are unable to help themselves?

Respectfully yours,

BENJAMIN KIRK.

105 Bleeker St.,
Toronto, March 30, 1895.

Sunday Street Cars.

TO THE EDITOR: My dear Brother,—It is not often I dissent from you. Indeed I am an admirer of your correctness on many important matters; but I feel I ought to say to you that I very much regret your remarks on the Sunday street car question. I agree with you that "the Lord's Day Alliance" is on the wrong track when it appeals to the fourth commandment of the Mosaic Decalogue for authority to turn the Lord's day into a Sabbath; but it does not seem to me that a wrong text or a weak argument alter the character of the cause it seeks to advocate.

What the most of us are concerned about is *the Lord's day*. Many of us believe that the running of street cars and various other forms of everyday labor not positively necessary do not tend to good order or to the physical or spiritual well-being of the people, nor to a becoming and profitable observance of a day which the Bible calls *the Lord's day*. The general sentiment of a Christian people has enacted some laws touching this very thing, and we believe the same Christian sentiment can enact other laws, if necessary, which shall tend to righteousness.

Now, my brother, I wish you could place yourself squarely on the side of better observance of the Lord's day, even if the "Alliance" do use the wrong text, and hinder the work by a poor argument. The text, as is not unusual, will be forgotten: the sermon, which is on the whole a wholesome one, will remain. Perhaps I have misunderstood you. Are you in favor of any legislation looking to a better observance of the Lord's day? Tell us in one of your clear articles as early as you can.

Your brother, J. LEDIARD.