

is free for any other purpose save for works of necessity and mercy. This view is well stated in the familiar words of the Shorter Catechism: "The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy." At the present day this view is represented mainly by the Reformed Protestant Churches of Britain and America; but it is perhaps worthy of note that, whatever the practice may have been, no portion of the Christian Church has ever formally committed itself to any different view in any creed or canon that has ever been adopted, though this view has not always been explicitly asserted. The other view is that only a portion of the day is necessarily to be devoted to religious uses and that the remainder may be occupied with such pleasures and recreations as are compatible with rest. This is the distinguishing feature of what is known as the Continental Sunday. It is the prevailing practice in the Greek and Latin communions, in the Protestant churches on the Continent of Europe and to some extent in the Anglican Church. It is tacitly permitted by their clergy, often defended and excused, but it has seldom been encouraged. Even the famous Book of Sports published by James I, and again by Charles I, in 1633, went no further than to order that certain recreations 'should not be barred to the people.' Its chief advocates always have been and still are outside the church among those who find no use for a religious day and would fain have countenance for their amusements. There is no doubt, however, that their views produce an effect on the minds of many in all the churches who do not care to avow it, and to a large extent influence their practice. We must therefore examine them.

The grounds on which they plead for this liberty are three-fold:—

1. First that this is most in accord with the spirit of the New Testament dispensation under which we live,—a dispensation not of gloom or of harsh stern restrictions like the Jewish, but one of liberty, of gladness and of joy.

2. That this is most in accord with the idea of the day—being a day of rest and refreshment, intended to fit men to go back to work with fresh zeal and spirit. Every man needs recreation of some kind, if he is to be at his best, and there is no better time for him to take it than on the day that is set apart for his release from toil.

3. That it is in fact an absolute necessity, that men should have some relaxation from religious duties. They cannot keep up the exercises of worship all day long without a weariness that is far more hurtful than moderate recreation. The surest way to disgust the young especially is to make the day thus grievous to them. Constant repression can only