

future day, will have anything but a "cheering" work to do in trying to bring back families and children from other Churches and Sabbath schools, or from the streets. That minister not only left Nanaimo, but the Province; making in all *ten* ministers of our Church, and about *forty* others, who have left since my arrival; and all of them, I believe, on account of the difficulties, discouragements and disappointments met with. "Conflict of opinion and action on the part of individual ministers belonging to the rival Churches" had about as much to do with those changes, and the constant and discouraging failures to obtain supplies as they had to do with the transit of Venus. Had the Canadian or other Presbyterian Churches given us the necessary supplies our position would be different now, notwithstanding the great disappointments in the progress of the Province. And yet, as may be seen from the first part of this letter, not so very different after all, compared with other parts of the Dominion. We might have had self-supporting congregations in Victoria and Nanaimo; the former being the capital and chief centre of population and business; and in the latter, on account of the extension of the coal mines; also a few more ministers in other places at heavy expense, though not at all in encouraging circumstances. For be it noted, that outside of Victoria, there is not a self-supporting congregation belonging to any Protestant denomination, notwithstanding most zealous efforts, and in many instances with the field all to themselves. Since reading the Deputy's Report my sympathy has very greatly increased in behalf of those poor Israelites in the brick fields of Egypt. No great wonder, verily, "that the officers of the children of Israel" indignantly expostulated with Pharaoh saying, "Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick; and behold thy servants are beaten; but the fault is in thine own people."

There have been other hindrances to our progress, but they have been only such as are common, more or less, to all new places, and not worthy of mention compared with the two pointed out, and altogether ignored by the Deputy in his Report.

3. If not trespassing too much upon your valuable space, please allow me room for the correction of another of the many mistakes (unintentional of course) in the report. Writing of New Westminster, it is said: "From the report (congregational) submitted to the last General Assembly, we learn that the membership is thirty-eight, and that there has been little or no increase for some years past: that the Sabbath school is attended by thirty children." The facts are, however, as correctly quoted from the report, "There have been six names added to the communion roll, which now contains the names of thirty-eight members resident in the bounds. The Sabbath school was attended by fifty children." But where was that very suggestive sentence obtained—"There has been little or no increase (in the membership) for some years past?" It is not in my report; nor has it any foundation in fact. For the fact is, that in the two preceding years the "additions" were twenty-six; and the decrease by deaths and removals from the bounds just the same number, twenty-six. Other statements made about New Westminster are mere matters of opinion and speculation with no proper basis to rest on, and can be taken for what they are worth, and in the light of the foregoing. I presume, however, that I am at liberty to form an opinion of those statements, and, in the circumstances, to give utterance to it; and my opinion is that they are as ungenerous as they are unjust.

I have only to add that the Rev. Mr. McElmon, of Comox, gives me liberty to say that he fully endorses my description of the Deputy's Report as "very misleading"; and he adds, "I think it is altogether too bad that the doctor did not give you some credit for your arduous labours under so many discouragements." The Rev. D. Gamble, Victoria, writes me *anent* the report, "The whole thing is strongly calculated to mislead, even where truth is partially told. . . . His report concerning your work is contemptible in the extreme."

ROBERT JAMIESON.

New Westminster, B. C., February 2nd, 1883.

P.S.—I have just this moment learned that Mr. Dunn, of Langley, has announced his intention of leaving the Province very shortly, to go either to Oregon, U. S., or to Scotland. Thus every member of the Presbytery as at first organized, except myself, shall have left—Messrs. Nicholson, Murray, MacGregor, Clyde, and Dunn.

### SABBATH DESECRATION— WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO STOP IT?

MR. EDITOR,—This is a vitally important question, and although the answer to it has been partly suggested by what has already been said, it needs to be given more fully. First then, we would remark that the highest and most unassailable ground upon which the sanctification of the Sabbath can be generally and authoritatively demanded and enforced, is that of its being a Divine institution. If it is purely human in its origin, if it is only a civil, or even an ecclesiastical institution, if it has no higher or more sacred warrant than such as these, the power which made it can also unmake it. The first and most obvious step then, for all who regard the Sabbath as Divine in its origin and sanctions, is to show, establish and impress this in every way, and to the widest possible extent, upon the public mind and conscience. The chief and most powerful instrumentalities for effecting this are, the pulpit, home and Sabbath school teaching, the press, and a consistent example on the part of all who profess to believe in the Sabbath as a Divine institution, and the obligation to keep it holy by rest from our ordinary worldly employments. All who hold such views should regard it as a sacred duty to keep aloof from all employments in which Sabbath-breaking is required, and if pressed to desecrate the day, refuse and suffer rather. Such preaching, teaching, and example could not but act as a corrective and a protest against the excessive love of gain, the grasping worldliness, and making haste to be rich, which are the chief immediate causes of the increasing desecration of the Sabbath.

In the case of those whom it might be impossible to convince of the Divine authority, and sacredness of the Sabbath as a day of rest, other means would require to be adopted. Many of these love their kind, at least, and are concerned for the wellbeing of their country. Such persons would have to be reached and induced to right action on grounds of reason, simply, if not of religion as well. In their case it might be shown, and the means to do so exist in abundance, that Sunday labour is unnecessary. Wherever Sabbath labour has been abandoned, none of the anticipated inconveniences have arisen. The nation is as prosperous, and the public service is as well performed now as when work was done in Government offices on Sabbath. That vast volume of private business over the whole land, so much greater in the aggregate than that of any railway corporation, stands still on Sabbath, and all are the better for it. It cannot be pleaded, then, that railway work, or that of other large corporations, is a necessity, and it can be shown to any honest mind that it is not. Then why demand it? To the reason, too, of those who can only be reached by it, it might be shown, as it can be, that Sunday work does not pay in the lowest sense, and still less does it in any higher. We may only mention one most pregnant fact in proof. In Germany, in the United States, and some other countries where Sabbath desecration has been carried to the greatest lengths, a reaction is taking place on behalf of Sabbath rest, not on religious grounds, or by religious people purely by any means, but on the part of honest, intelligent, worldly men, and on grounds of humanity and of the public good in the largest sense. Fair and honest minds can be appealed to by arguments such as these.

Another means which could well be used to protect the Sabbath, and ought to be put into operation at once, is organized effort for that end among people of all kinds who desire to preserve the Sabbath rest and quiet. This is a platform broad enough for all to act together upon, however different their views upon other questions. Here is a noble work for some one to enter upon who will but take it up with the requisite qualifications for doing it. Few things would confer a greater blessing upon the whole country than to roll back the tide of Sabbath desecration which is coming in upon us, and raise up guards around this day so as to defend it from the unhallowed assaults that are now being made upon it.

Closely connected with the above is invoking the aid of efficient legislation to protect the Sabbath. It is not necessary to discuss any theories about the province of the Legislature in matters of this kind. The Legislature has already taken to do with it. All that is wanted is to provide means whereby great corporations should not have it in their power to set the law of the land at defiance with impunity, whereby the law that can stop a farmer drawing his grain to his barn on Sabbath,

may, with equal promptitude and ease, stop a railway train drawing grain or anything else on that day. The suppression by law of slavery, of duelling, of coarse and degrading sports, of the liquor traffic, where that has been done, are all instances of legislation of that kind which has already been applied to protect the weekly day of rest. What is wanted is, to perfect that legislation so that it can be easily and effectively applied. It is done, not on religious grounds, but on those simply of humanity, that it is necessary for the well-being of the State—for self-preservation, even. Nineteen out of twenty of our citizens, we believe, in Ontario at least, would be willing for and heartily rejoice at such legislation, and it does appear to be in the last degree unreasonable that a mercantile company, merely because it dares to do it, should be allowed, or should be able to insult, trample upon, and set at defiance our most sacred feelings, and what the vast majority of our people believe to be their most precious, because divinely bestowed, rights. We are confident that it only needs united, energetic and persistent action on the part of all who, for whatever reason, prize the Sabbath as a day of rest from everyday work, to put a stop to the further progress of desecration, and regain all that has been lost. The responsibility for such action rests obviously first, and with the greatest weight, upon the churches and professing Christians, and much, very much, depends upon the press for keeping this important matter before the public and agitating it until such practical action is taken as will effectually guard and maintain the Christian Sabbath as a day sacred to rest and worship.

W. D. BALLANTYNE.

Pembroke, Feb. 12th, 1883.

### THE ELDERSHIP.

MR. EDITOR,—Your issue of the 7th ult. contains some observations on an overture brought into the Hamilton Presbytery in favour of term service in the eldership. I heartily concur in all you have said in favour of the purposed change, for it is a fact, taught us by experience, that we are sometimes far astray in our judgment of the mental or moral qualifications for that office that we may have formed of some with whom we thought ourselves well acquainted. The purposed change would give us an opportunity of correcting the error we had made.

Permit me to suggest an addition to the said overture, namely, that it should include the ministers as well as the elders. If we are liable to make mistakes in choosing our elders, with whom we have been previously well acquainted, how much more liable are we to blunder in our choice of one to be our spiritual guide, when we have scarcely any knowledge of his fitness for that responsible position. And if it is desirable that a ready way should be opened up for getting rid of an inefficient elder, how much more important is it that the flock should have an honourable way, at the end of a few years, of rectifying the mistakes they had made, and getting clear of it, it may be, a worse than inefficient pastor. The faithful, zealous minister who has won the love and confidence of his flock, would have nothing to fear; he would be re-chosen again, and the bond of union between him and his people would thereby be strengthened. And it would also do good to those drones that had to go, as it would teach them that it requires work to keep a congregation as well as to get one. These frequent changes indicate the tendency of the age to be in favour of shorter terms than our theory of Church government allows. Now fair play requires that congregations be put on more equal terms with those ministers who indulge in the unseemly practice of using their charges as stepping stones from which they fish for calls to more desirable situations.

Such at least is the opinion of EQUITY.

King, March 3rd, 1883.

IN a recent note bearing upon the general unanimity of opinion amongst clergyman that it would be injurious to the cause of temperance were the licensing power again entrusted to municipalities, the reported expression of the Anglican Bishop of Toronto was cited. From the indefinite mode of reference it is just possible that some might suppose that allusion was made to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toronto. The opinions of Archbishop Lynch on this matter are not open to the charge of ambiguity. They have been expressed with strong emphasis against the reinvestiture of municipalities with the licensing power.