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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the
editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to
any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

THE proposal to have the street cars in this city run on Sunday is being again discussed with a good deal of earnestness. To our thinking the question is simply one of expediency, using that term in its highest and best sense. Will it be better for the city in the long run, financially, socially, and morally to exchange the quiet, restful Sunday to which we have been so long accustomed for the bustling, business-doing and pleasure-seeking Sunday which prevails in the greater part of the United States and of Europe, or will it not? If it can be shown that it will, we know no sufficient reason why the change should not be begun at once in the manner proposed. Few thoughtful persons will, we suppose, doubt that the proposed change, though at the outset so simple and comparatively slight, involves a principle and a tendency which will more or less gradually, but surely, carry us to the end indicated. Indeed, unless we seriously misjudge the sentiments of most of those who are striving to bring about the change, they would frankly admit that their opinions and wishes would carry them at once to the European Sunday. The end to be gained by the running of the cars on the seventh day is to increase the facilities for travelling on that day. These increased facilities are desired for purposes of pleasure, or of business, or of both combined. But it goes without saying that the logical complement of the increased facilities for travelling for such purposes would be increased facilities for the things themselves. The pleasure-seekers would soon demand and have a right to expect enlarged opportunities for pleasure, such as theatres, steamboat excursions and entertainments of various kinds. Those intent on business would be equally inclined to keep open their own offices and places of business and to expect others to do the same. We are not saying all this by way of reproach to those who advocate a relaxation of our Sunday restraints, but in order that we may face the question fairly, with all that it involves, and ask, before committing ourselves: "Will it pay?" We hope, also, that no one will deem us irreverent, or unmindful of the supreme claims of religion, when we refuse to regard the question as one of religious obligation. We are not aware of any Divine law which binds us to observe the first day of the week, above all other days, as a day either of rest or of worship. Nor do we recognize any power, or

authority, or wisdom in our Municipal or Provincial authorities, entitling them to enforce with the pains and penalties of statute law, Sabbath-keeping, or any other religious obligation. Every question of religious duty we regard as pertaining solely to the individual conscience. But none the less do we believe firmly that the original institution of the Sabbath was based upon a profound knowledge of the needs, bodily and spiritual, of the human race, and that in the perpetuation of that institution, in its spirit and essence, the highest well-being of the race is deeply involved. This view is, we hold, confirmed by the investigations of science, and by the experience of workers of all classes, whether with brain or hand. We are glad, therefore, to see in Great Britain and Europe strongly marked tendencies in the direction of better Sunday observance, on purely utilitarian grounds. This being so, is it a time for us, who are, may we not say, exceptionally peaceful and prosperous under our present system, to begin to cut loose from the moorings which have hitherto secured us a day of rest and recuperation, grateful to tired muscles and brains, and have saved, too, our young people and old from a thousand snares and temptations which would have much more abounded had our observance of Sunday rest been less complete. We have not space to discuss the subject in detail, but must content ourselves at present with stating the problem in its broad outlines. We may observe, however, in passing, that to whatever extent the railway contractors may be bound to give their employees one day in seven, there can be no doubt that the inevitable effect of Sunday cars will be eventually to deprive hundreds of their day of rest.

SINCE the foregoing paragraph upon the Sunday street car question was written, the Ministerial Association of the City have taken action in the matter and, by means of a deputation, have brought their views to bear upon the City Council. The resolution adopted by this highly influential body, and the arguments by which that resolution was urged upon the attention of the civic authorities, involve principles which are fit subjects for serious discussion. The first and most fundamental of those principles involves the question whether it is, in any case, the right and duty of the State or the municipality to interpret and enforce any religious observance as such. We say, "interpret and enforce." The two words are important, because the duty to enforce involves the right and the necessity of interpreting. The whole broad question of State-Churchism is involved, for if it is the business or duty of the State—we use the term for convenience' sake to include the municipality, as the whole includes the part—to enforce one religious observance, why not another? If it may or must declare authoritatively the teaching of Scripture upon one point, why not upon every point? The case in hand well illustrates the problem, for it is evident that the ministers themselves were not agreed in regard to the Scriptural law of the Sabbath, and hence the decision reached has the authority of a majority vote only. But even had that decision been unanimous, it could not bind the Council. To argue otherwise would be to argue that both Council and citizens are under ecclesiastical rule. That the Council do not so understand their functions is clear from the fact that they proceeded to discuss the question upon its merits, some of them taking high ecclesiastical grounds, others the opposite, as was inevitable. Is anything further needed to reduce the argument from Scripture to absurdity than the fact that the logical outcome of that argument is to devolve upon the City Council of Toronto the duty of determining what are the teachings of the inspired Word, and what the religious obligations of the citizens in the matter? We trust we are not insensible to the paramount claims of religion. We are very strongly of the opinion that the running of the street cars on Sunday, while not without its advantages, would be, on a careful balancing of good and evil results, fraught with very serious injury to the social and moral well-being of the community, and that the depriving a large number of labourers of their Sunday rest, though a very serious injustice and wrong, would be but one of many evils involved. At the same time we are constrained to admit that, in our estimation, the distinct recognition of the right of the City Council to order or forbid the running

of the cars, and to enact and enforce any by-law whatever, on religious grounds, would be a worse evil, and one more injurious in its effects and tendencies, both to civic well-being and to true spiritual religion, than the running of the cars on Sunday could possibly be. We are sorry, therefore, that the majority of the members of the Ministerial Association should have, apparently, pleaded their righteous cause on wrong and untenable grounds, instead of resting upon the sound and invincible arguments drawn from the right of the people to a day of rest, as, in accordance with the laws of nature, a physical, social and moral necessity. Having said so much, we need not stay to discuss the minor questions involved, such as the moral right of the Association to recommend the City Councillors to violate their distinct pledge, or its failure to recognize the right of the people to determine for themselves a matter of this kind. We shall be surprised and disappointed if an overwhelming majority of the citizens do not emphatically pronounce against the innovation. But if the majority are otherwise minded there is no rightful power or authority in Council or Ministerial Association to forbid.

COMMENTING, last week, on Mr. Mowat's letter to Mr. McKay, in connection with the Woodstock Annexation meeting, we observed that the question whether Mr. Mowat's letter could be fairly taken to indicate a divergence of views between him and Mr. Laurier and other advocates of the Liberal policy of unrestricted reciprocity, depended mainly upon two other questions which Mr. Mowat himself alone could answer, viz., whether he regarded unrestricted reciprocity and commercial union as convertible terms, and whether he shared Mr. Blake's apprehensions, or rather convictions, as to the ultimate effects of commercial union, in relation to Canadian political independence. We added that we saw no reason to expect that Mr. Mowat would think it necessary to gratify public curiosity on these points. Contrary to our supposition, Mr. Mowat has already again taken the public into his confidence and set these questions, or at least one of them, at rest. In a lengthy and lucid, though scarcely exhaustive, letter addressed to the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, he has made it unmistakably clear that he is distinctly in favour of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States and believes it to be the only form of reciprocity which there is any reason to think attainable. In regard to the other point he is less explicit, though it would not, probably, be unsafe to take the unfavourable opinion of commercial union, or any form of the Zollverein, which, speaking as the mouthpiece of Mr. Mackenzie, he expressed on the hustings, as indicating also his own view. Be that as it may, Mr. Mowat declares that his object in writing this second letter is "to urge on Liberals to stand by all the accepted principles of the Liberal Party in Canada, including the two articles of British connection and unrestricted reciprocity." While this clear announcement will effectually prevent Conservative speakers and writers from making political capital out of an alleged want of harmony between the Ontario Premier and the leaders of the Liberal Party in the Dominion Parliament, on the question of reciprocity, the fact that Mr. Mowat has thought it necessary to address Canadian Liberals at such length on the question of loyalty to British connection, and to urge so many cogent reasons why they should set their faces as a flint against political union with the United States, may, it is not unlikely, be itself taken as an indication of Liberal disloyalty, or of an apprehension of it in the mind of the writer. However, it is, we suppose, impossible for a political leader, under such circumstances, to take any action which may not, by the ingenuity of party opponents, be turned to account in some way. This at least may be said, that it would be difficult for any writer to present the argument for Canadian loyalty to British connection more forcibly, from almost every point of view, than has been done in this letter. That it will have a good deal of weight with many wavering minds, if there be such within the party ranks, cannot be doubted.

WE have intimated that Mr. Mowat's second letter, admirable as it is on the whole, does not touch every point upon which many of his admirers would, pro-