



SERMON.

THE EIGHT HOURS QUESTION.

From a Christian Standard.

BY REV. ARTHUR D. STONE.

An address given at the Cliftonville Congregational Church, West Brighton, as the Working Men's Sunday Evening Lecture.

"Is not this the fast I have chosen—To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"—Isaiah lviii. 6.

I am thankful that the chapter read for the lesson this evening, and from which the text is taken, is one which is most suitable to the subject of this discourse, and is a stirring preface to any remarks I may make. No apology is needed for handling such a question in this pulpit. If apology be needed, it lies in the fact that in the pulpit, as well as out of it, the Christian church has not spoken straight words and practical truths to the masses of the workers. It only aggravates the culpable position some occupy to have to explain what is meant by the "Eight Hours Question," not because such knowledge is the admission of a right or wrong demand, but because there is a legitimate cry for widespread relief; a cry in which, no doubt, the lazy unite, but through which the over-taxed have a right to be heard.

Eight hours work; eight hours sleep; eight hours leisure, making the twenty-four hours. It sounds well; looks well on paper; has its attractiveness. Is it a right demand? Is it practicable? Will it be beneficial? Is it justifiable? Is it fair all round? The day may come when such services as this in which we are now engaged will be conversational; when not one will speak from the pulpit, but many will be able to ask and answer questions, as was done in the synagogues of old. I entirely deprecate the use of the pulpit for anything bordering on party politics. The pulpit is not for any such purpose, but for the assertion of principles of action. Christianity is what the level is in all kinds of work.

The level does not refuse to serve to show the right and square, whether the material of workmanship be wood, stone, iron, silver, or gold. Christianity is for the recognition of the rights of all before the God who made man. The church by which I do not mean any special denomination, but the church at large—has not been, as it should have been, a true witness for Christ; yet Christ is always the Friend of Man, and I challenge any one to show me where Christ is not the embodiment of the highest and noblest right. He is no respecter of persons, but fair, faithful, and just all round. Jesus Christ would never sacrifice workman for master nor master for workman, neither would He set labor against capital, nor capital against labor. He knows no caste amongst men. I hold that to be an essential principle which Peter declared: "Of the truth God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." You must be fair, my fellow working-men, if you expect others to be fair to you. You must remember that there are two sides to every question. Let us look at this subject from four points of view—God's, the workmen's, the master's, the nation's.

God's Share in All Reforms.

Time is His. Whose else if not His? He gave the day of twenty-four hours, and to Him we are responsible for its use. God has given to man a certain amount of strength. He does not expect from him the work of a horse, which is estimated to have seven or eight times his strength. He expects him to employ the power given to its utmost capacity in an honest day's work. He would bestow sufficient sleep to restore strength, and sufficient leisure to enjoy life. Such I estimate, is God's division of time.

Surely the Being that made us knows best what He has made us capable of, and if there be any court of appeal, should it not be to the Creator of man? God has not forgotten the interests of the working-men. Would not He be the first to condemn the unseaworthiness or overloading of ships, the fouling in the sweating-dens, the long hours of the miner toiling in the dark? He has, indeed, already spoken, not once nor twice, but many times, through God-teaching men, such as Plimsoll, Peabody, Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, and others, pleading the rights of sailors, workmen, slaves, and miners, besides scores of other toilers. Men who have regulated labor in workshops, factories and mines. And let it be noted that the few who have cared for the righting of the wrongs of working men, women, and children have almost invariably been those who have feared God and worked righteousness. Indeed, God Himself (to speak reverently) is the most radical of reformers. He is today, and always has been, most concerned that "the poor and him that hath no helper" should have justice done to them.

I cannot imagine any one setting about the work of social reform and asking God to stand aside. Surely if God Himself rested, the creature made in His own likeness may well follow His example.

Leisure for the Workman.

Secondly, the workman's point of view. Does any one say masters before men? Nay! The numbers and needs of the working-classes demand that they should have the primary consideration. In social economy, "the worker is before the capitalist," he is the producer of wealth. If there be a first place it has the right to it, because he is always, as it were, on the verge of starvation, and the payment of wages for his labor is a matter of life or death to him. Man is not a machine, and the workmen and workwomen are not to be considered merely in the light of what can be got out of them. To a large majority of miners, railway men, shop assistants, omnibus men, barmen and barmoids, life is not what it should be, as regards the

hours of toil, and there is a legitimate cry from them for help and deliverance. I should like to be able to place on the box of one of our omnibuses for a single day, the lady who recently wrote a letter to a local paper, asking that the omnibuses might run on Sunday. And why? That she, and others as selfish as herself, might attend some favorite place of worship, or listen to some fashionable preacher. Put such people on the box for only one day of the seven, and what would be their opinion then? It is too often forgotten that a workman is a social being, and has domestic affections. A man's work does not as a rule exert a moral influence upon himself. Moral influences are the outcome of his recreative life.

Most of us know that the happiest hours of life are those spent at home; but domestic affections need cultivation, and how can the man who has only eight hours out of the twenty-four for sleep and leisure hope to realize that the husband is more than a man, and the father more than a mere bread-winner? Many a man has told me that for weeks together he has never seen his children awake. With thousands there is no leisure to think, to read, or to remember that there is any life beyond the present. They are too weary to attend the house of God, even if inclined to do so. Surely this is wrong. Is the objection made that leisure is often put to a bad use? That is not a fair argument against it. We are not responsible for another's use or abuse of a good, neither are we responsible for the moral actions of anyone unless we control them; though, of course, it is incumbent to accompany the leisure given with every brotherly consideration that can govern its use. We fully acknowledge the fact that there is a shameful misuse of leisure among the laboring classes; but if they are so foolish as to spend the hours thus given in public houses and dissipation, or in such a way as to leave them worse instead of better for the rest, with them alone lies the responsibility and the condemnation.

Now, to come to the proportion of work and leisure. In this matter the special circumstances of each trade must be considered, and an agreement amongst workmen themselves is absolutely necessary. Perhaps some will say that this is not possible as long as human nature is what it is; but the miners are generally agreed, and therefore claim the aid of legislation. There are boys who work ten hours a day in a mine, and for six months of the year never see the light of day, except on Sunday. Work so varies that eight hours a day in one trade is not equal to eight hours in another, any more than it is a universal rule that eight hours' sleep is needed. In all cases, therefore, it is absolutely necessary that there should be, as far as practicable, united trade action.

My personal belief is that if a good case be made out, the legislature will intervene. The parliamentary measures passed by Earl Shaftesbury have undoubtedly proved a great check upon unjust masters. Violators of the law of right between men must be met by the law of the country. This applies also to the early closing movement. My own idea is that the hours are as unreasonable for masters as for workmen; since, in most businesses, the same work could be done in shorter time.

The Difficulties of Masters.

Thirdly, this brings us to the master's side of the question. It is an anomalous view to take, that all masters are unjust and unfair because some are. Were this true, it might be made to reflect upon the consistency of the workmen, who cried for consideration when workmen, but became deaf as masters to their workpeople's cry; giving ground for the saying that the hardest masters are those that have been servants. Masters have a right to be considered as well as servants. They have capital at stake; they often have to work as hard, if not with the hand with the head, as their men, and sometimes harder; often with little profit, and, certainly, with a much larger amount of anxiety. Servants are pretty sure of their wages; masters often have to go short. They have difficulties with customers; the strain of competition with the world, to say nothing of the very serious risk they run from alterations of fashion on the one side, tyrannical strikes on the other, and the frequent loss of time by workmen's irregularities and drinking habits, thus upsetting the calculations of masters for the delivery of work and fulfillment of contracts.

Workmen must be more considerate of masters before public opinion will favor them. By way of illustration, take the gas strike in London three years ago, as compared with the recent omnibus men's strike. The gas strike was most unfair, and public opinion was against the men; whilst in the omnibus men's strike, the men being in the right, public opinion favored them. On whichever side there is a pure spirit of greed, disregarding the just claims of the other side, there is created reciprocal ill-feeling and hatred, which intensifies the wrong.

The Nation's Point of View.

The fourth and last point of view is that of the nation. It is no use to look at a national question from the narrow side of self-interest only. In the long run the exercise of a considerate spirit is true self-interest. In an article entitled "The Balance-Sheet of Short Hours" in *The Contemporary* for October, it is proved and illustrated that in many businesses the curtailment of hours improves the quality of work. Also that a good deal of time is lost through sickness, and other causes for non-attendance. Shorter hours would tend to reduce that loss. "Besides reducing the interruptions of work in the course of the week, short hours have also reduced the interruptions in the course of the day, and in the course of the year. They brought with them greater promptitude and punctuality in beginning work in the morning, partly because the masters, since their work ran shorter time in the day, felt they must make a better use of the time that remains, and partly because the men themselves returned from their longer rest

with more zest and heart for their work." The greater portion of spoiled work is the result of carelessness through overstrain; and as it occurs at the end of the day or week is significant. Evidence is given that lessening of hours means increase of profit all round. Many a workman will do as good a day's work in eight hours as in nine or ten. There is an enormous productive value in mere cheerfulness and contentment of mind, a difference which is illustrated by the difference between the free will worker and the slave. Undoubtedly, co-operation will materially affect the question of shortening hours of labor, as it will become a matter of mutual self-interest both with masters and with men. It therefore is a decided gain to the nation to shorten hours of labor.

This, then, is the summation of the whole matter:—
I.—That the Eight Hours Movement cannot be a universal one, but that it is practicable and morally justifiable in many trades where labor is organized.

II.—That a serious responsibility rests on those who now have the physical and moral benefit of an eight hours' working day that they should so use their leisure that they may not hinder others from securing a like boon where practicable.

III.—That the Golden Rule laid down by Christ of doing to others as we would they should do to us, would do much to solve much of the questions of the day, and would enable men to bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfil the law of Christ.

Finally, I glory in the vantage ground of a Christian standpoint. Every day I live I am more and more persuaded that, in order to get righteous laws and to keep them, to secure the rights of the workman and master, it is necessary that all should have Christ, the Ideal Servant and Master, ruling in their hearts.

What other test of right and wrong can compare with this? Who so interested in the true liberty which sets us free? What Christ says should be law to us. What He would do, our fulfilling of the law. Be first to grasp this principle of action, if others are slow to reciprocate its adoption. It may be slower than some revolutionary measures, but it is sure. It never has to retrace its steps, but advances ever towards the better age that is surely coming for the people and the nation.

ABOUT CHURCH WORKERS.

What Was Done in the Past and is Being Done in the Present.

The feast of Purim will be celebrated with unusual fervor this year by the Jewish community in the United States and Canada.

Father McGlynn told a New Haven reporter recently that he would not be surprised to see Cardinal Gibbons elected Pope when Leo XIII. dies.

The Salvation army's annual report states that there are 3,154 corps and 10,893 officers. The circulation of its magazines in all the world has reached 45,000,000. The self-denial week produced \$200,000.

Five hundred missions, 20,000 mission stations, 40,000,000 Sunday school scholars, 1,000,000 native communicants, 2,000,000 native adherents—these approximately tell the story of Protestant mission work in heathen countries.

The number of French pilgrims to the Vatican has only been 7,000, while in the first year of the present Pontificate there were no fewer than 25,000. This great decrease has taken place in spite of greater facilities of travel and greater hospitalities at the Vatican.

Miss Soonderbai Powar, an Indian Christian of Bombay, speaking at the great anti-opium demonstration recently held in London, related that in India, with its 33,000,000 of people, the female idol worshippers said: "Tell the English people and Government if they will stop this trade we will regard them as our gods." When missionaries go to the Zennas to preach, they are told, "Go and convert your Christian Government first, and then come and tell us about Christ."

Of the 288,159,672 people in India more than two-thirds are really as Hindoos, less than one-fifth as Mahometans, about one-fourth as Buddhists, and less than one per cent.—viz., two and a quarter millions—as Christians. From this return it would appear that Buddhism does not hold the large place in Indian life that it has been given in English literature, and that Christianity is still on the stage of the "little heaven," by no means a despondent one, in that country.

One of the best sermons the great Beecher ever preached was on "Conversion." "It," said he, "is a captain in mid-ocean determines to put his ship about and head for New York rather than for Liverpool, the deed is done when the prow points to the west. The steamer has yet to make the trip, but its course is changed. So when a man determines to alter his mode of life, stops his folly and heads towards the right, he is converted. He isn't a saint quite yet, but he's on the road."

Spurgeon used to employ help in preparing some of his sermons and addresses. It is related that a gentleman who frequented the British museum used to find another man continually examining volumes of the Fathers and the Puritan divines. One day the first of these visitors said: "I suppose, sir, you are preparing some work of great research?" "Oh," said the other, "don't you know who I am? I am Spurgeon's man. I have to get up for him all the most telling anecdotes from old or not generally accessible books."

The growth of Episcopacy in non-Episcopal churches is very rapid and significant, says the N. Y. Herald. In most of our city churches Protestants and Congregationalists observe Christmas and Easter. The ministers wear robes, and the Te Deum, responsive readings and the ancient creeds of the church are used in the regimine, by lawful authority duly commissioned and sworn, reading and practicing in the said City of Saint John, personally came and appeared, WARD C. PITFIELD and SAMUEL HAYWARD, parties to and the signers of the annexed certificate, and in the said certificate mentioned and severally acknowledged, the said WARD C. PITFIELD that he signed the said certificate, and the said SAMUEL HAYWARD that he signed the said certificate.

advantage that notwithstanding it has been severely criticised as an episcopal innovation it will not be long before it will be generally adopted in non-episcopal churches.

The First Missionary in Japan.

A native Japanese Christian Protestant recently told the story of the first Protestant Christian in Japan. This was one Murata, a military retainer of the lord of Saga, in the southern island of Kiusiu. In 1860 he went to Nagasaki, by order of his chief, one evening, as he was crossing the harbor in a boat, he picked up a book that was floating about in the water. The writing ran from side to side, "like the crawling of crabs," and upon sending it to one of the Dutch then settled at Nagasaki, he learned that it was the Christian Bible, then a proscribed book. Curiously spurred then on, and he had one of his assistants learn the language of the book and translate it for him sentence by sentence. His study was continued in secret, with a few friends, after his return home. When a difficult passage was found a messenger was sent to Dr. Verbeek, a well known missionary then in Nagasaki, for its interpretation. Murata was afterwards baptized, and his name now stands first on the roll of Protestant Christians in Japan.

An Historic Church.

The grand old Historic Church in Wittenberg, to the doors of which Luther nailed his ninety-five theses, is being remodelled in magnificent style. Work has been going on for several years and is now approaching completion. The building will now practically be the memorial church of the Reformation in a manner which even the proposed protestant cathedral at Spire cannot rival. One of the features of the structure is a stone balustrade round the nave, in which the arms of eighty prominent Reformation heroes are chiselled, and beneath it are the portraits in relief of twenty princes, scholars and artists of that period, cast in bronze in Lauchhammer.

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Notice of Dissolution

THE undersigned hereby give notice and certify that a certain limited Partnership under the laws of the Province of New Brunswick, conducted under the firm name of "W. C. PITFIELD & Co.," for the buying and selling at wholesale of dry goods and other merchandise, and generally a wholesale dry goods and general jobbing and commission business, which by the certificate of Limited Partnership registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds of the City and County of Saint John in the said Province, was to commence the Twenty-first day of December, A. D. 1891, and terminate the First day of January, A. D. 1892, did terminate and is and was dissolved the said First day of January, A. D. 1892.

(Signed) WARD C. PITFIELD.
S. HAYWARD.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAINT JOHN, to wit: Be it remembered that WARD C. PITFIELD and SAMUEL HAYWARD, parties to and the signers of the annexed notice and certificate, personally came and appeared at the City of Saint John, in the City and County of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, before me, J. E. BARNES, one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said City and County of Saint John, and acknowledged the said WARD C. PITFIELD that he signed the said notice and certificate, and the said SAMUEL HAYWARD that he signed the said notice and certificate.

Given under my hand at the said City of Saint John this Twenty-first day of December, A. D. 1891.

(Signed) J. E. BARNES,
J. P. City and County of Saint John.

Partnership Notice.

THE undersigned, desirous of forming a Limited Partnership under the Laws of the Province of New Brunswick, hereby certify:

1. That the name of the firm under which such partnership is to be conducted is "W. C. PITFIELD & Co."

2. That the general nature of the business intended to be transacted by such partnership is the buying and selling at wholesale of dry goods and other merchandise, and generally a wholesale dry goods and general jobbing and commission business.

3. That the names of all the general and special partners interested in said partnership are as follows:

WARD C. PITFIELD, who resides at the City of Saint John in the City and County of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, is the general partner, and SAMUEL HAYWARD, who resides at the Parish of Hampton in the County of Kings and Province aforesaid, is the special partner.

4. That the said SAMUEL HAYWARD has contributed the sum of forty thousand dollars as capital to common stock.

5. That the period at which the said partnership is to commence is the Second day of January, A. D. 1892, and the period at which the said partnership is to terminate is the Second day of January, A. D. 1896.

Dated this Thirty-first day of December, A. D. 1891.

(Signed) WARD C. PITFIELD.

S. HAYWARD.

PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAINT JOHN, SS.

Be it remembered that on this Thirty-first day of December, A. D. 1891, at the City of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, before me, JAMES A. BELYEA, a Notary Public in and for the said Province, by lawful authority duly commissioned and sworn, reading and practicing in the said City of Saint John, personally came and appeared, WARD C. PITFIELD and SAMUEL HAYWARD, parties to and the signers of the annexed certificate, and in the said certificate mentioned and severally acknowledged, the said WARD C. PITFIELD that he signed the said certificate, and the said SAMUEL HAYWARD that he signed the said certificate.

In witness whereof, I the said Notary have hereunto set my hand and Notarial Seal at the said City and County of Saint John, the said Thirty-first day of December, A. D. 1891.

(Signed) JAMES A. BELYEA,
Notary Public.

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