

Our Contributors.

GREAT THINGS A TOURIST MAY USE.

BY KNOXIAN.

Does it ever occur to those chronic grumblers who fret and whine and sometimes curse because a boat or train is a little late, or because the bed or board in a summer hotel does not exactly suit them,—does it ever occur to them that if left to their own resources not one in a thousand of them would ever ride in a car, or sail in a steamer, or put up in a hotel.

Of the thousands of tourists now enjoying themselves in all parts of Canada how many could get up a tour solely at their own expense?

How many own a railway?

How many have a steamboat?

How many could run a hotel?

How many are proprietors of a lake, or river or island? And yet for the small sum of two or three dollars a man may enjoy a ride on a railway worth millions, or on a steamer worth tens of thousands, and enjoy it just as much as if he owned the railway or steamer. Not only so; he may enjoy a sail on a lake or river as much as if he owned the lake or river, or a dip in the Atlantic as much as if he had a title deed to the whole ocean. Just set your brains and your gratitude to work and see how much a man may use in this country for a few dollars.

With fifty dollars in your pocket you set out from Toronto for the Lower St. Lawrence. The cab that takes you down to the wharf may be worth seven or eight hundred dollars, but you can use it for fifty cents, perhaps for twenty-five. The wharf over which you walk at the foot of Yonge street cost many thousands, but you use it for nothing. The steamer you take passage in is worth thirty or forty thousand dollars, but you can ride to Montreal in it for about ten dollars and get your bed and board thrown in. Ontario is a grand lake but you sail over the blue waters for nothing so far as the water is concerned. The St. Lawrence is a magnificent river—nothing like it on this continent. You can enjoy the sail down just as much as if you owned the river yourself. The rapids are run for nothing; the Thousand Islands seen for nothing. All the way down you pass by farms that cost millions of money and the muscles of a generation, but you can enjoy looking at them without paying a cent for the privilege. Nature deadheads you all the way to Montreal. Your entire outlay if you are a total abstainer is for the boat. At Montreal you may get in a steamer—a magnificent floating palace—and sail down to Quebec for a mere trifle. All you pay for the privilege would not oil the engine half way down. You can see Montreal and Quebec for nothing. Of course you must pay your hotel bill but you would have to eat something and sleep on something no matter where you were. Looking at this trip alone just think of how much you can use for a few dollars and use it just as freely as if it were your own. In fact you are in a better position than the men who own the railway or steamer you use. They have to shoulder an immense amount of responsibility and often sustain serious losses, whilst you have no responsibility at all and cannot possibly lose much for you have not invested much in the concern.

Let us take a trip by another route and see how much can be used for a mere trifle. Leaving Toronto by the G.T.R. with twenty dollars in your pocket you can see the magnificent scenery of Muskoka and the North Shore. The train you go by is as good as any reasonable man would want to ride in. It may not be quite as splendid as the one Sir Joseph Hickson rides in but you are not Sir Joseph Hickson. Sir Joseph has more money than twenty dollars. The Muskoka express or the C.P.R. steamboat express are magnificent trains but you can use either of them for a trifling sum. Any train on either road is much better than the train you would have if you had to build a railway of your own. The little pasteboard ticket you buy for two or three dollars represents an expenditure of many millions. There are not six men in America who could afford to ride in a railway car if each individual man had to build and equip a railway like the Grand Trunk or C.P.R. Think of that you fellows who grumble if a train is a few minutes late.

Arriving at Gravenhurst, Midland, Collingwood, Owen Sound or any of our northern ports just see how much you can use for two or three dollars. At Gravenhurst you have your choice of four boats and can sail over the three lakes, Muskoka, Rosseau, and Lake Joseph for about three or four dollars. That is to say you can use property that cost many thousands and much labour and worry for the trifle mentioned. For a reasonable amount you can board at a hotel that cost thousands. The scenery costs nothing. Muskoka against the world for scenery of its class.

Leaving Midland, Collingwood or Owen Sound for the North Shore you can use as much property for a small sum as you can in any new country in the world. We don't know just how many islands are on the North Shore. We have heard the number several times but would not care to repeat it lest some of the readers of this corner should think we have forgotten the story of Washington and his hatchet. Whatever the number may be you can sail around among them for three days at a very trifling expense.

Did space permit we might take tours in several other directions and see how much can be used at a very trifling outlay. And yet you hear people grumbling as if they owned much better lines of railway than the Grand Trunk or C.P.R. and better steamers than any on Canadian waters.

For unreasonable, unpardonable, criminal conduct in this regard commend us to the Church. A man goes into a church that cost twenty, thirty or forty thousand dollars, sits down on a cushioned seat, puts his No. fourteens on a carpeted floor, uses property worth many thousand—has the sermon, singing and prayers thrown in, and complains if you pass the collection plate to him for a cent. Quite often he never puts in a cent and probably goes away finding fault with everything he saw and heard. There is far more religion in the world than most people have any idea of. Were it not so the men who build and sustain churches would never put up with the unreasonable insolence that meets them almost every Sabbath.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM COCHRANE, D.D.

The Creator of man, who understood his necessities, ordained that after six days' toil he should rest on the seventh. The command is obligatory, and cannot be disregarded with impunity. Man cannot evade the consequences of Sabbath breaking. Overwork during the six days produces disease in the body and infirmity of mind. Between each day God has ordained a Sabbath for rest and refreshment. But in addition the seventh day or first day of the week is needed to recruit the faded and over-taxed power, both of body and mind. And what the Creator established as the law of humanity, Christ Jesus homologated and enforced in His teachings during His earthly ministry. The first day of the week, which has come in the room of the seventh, was made for man. It is not a mere ceremony or superstition, but the universal resting day for intelligent creation, until the end of the present dispensation.

As there are best rooms in our houses, so there are best days in the calendar. All days are not alike. The Jewish Sabbath and the Christian's Lord's Day are marked out from all the other days of the week. As has been well said:—

"Of all the customs fostered by the Church, no one is more beautiful in itself, or better adapted to promote the interests and welfare of the community than that of setting apart one day in seven from rest and toil, and for moral and religious uses. It would, indeed, be impossible to exaggerate the benefits, moral, social, religious and secular, which have flowed from this custom in the past and are likely to flow from it in all time to come. Its abolition, if such a thing were possible, would be an immeasurable calamity to the world. Of all the music by which the ear of man was ever enraptured, what is or can be sweeter or more fraught with delightful associations than that of the church-going bell, which summons the people from their homes to the place set apart for religious worship and instruction? Who that has ever heard that music floating on the still air of Sunday, and speaking to the heart of man of his immortal interests, can wish its vibrations hushed."

The Sabbath is a day of rest from ordinary physical toil, ordinary mental toil, ordinary week day pleasures. For the cultivation and development of our higher nature. Surely if six days are almost wholly given up in exercising the physical and mental, one day should be devoted to the moral and spiritual.

In our land business is prohibited by civil statute, but there are modes of Sabbath desecration, practised by many church members, as dangerous to the well-being of the individual and the commonwealth. Very few, indeed, will call in question the wrong doing of Sabbath visiting, Sabbath excursions, Sabbath travelling in order to save a week day. These things do not come within the range of works of necessity or mercy, which alone are permissible on the Lord's Day. What these are must be left very much to the conscientious judgment of Christian men, as they shall answer at the bar of God. But the Sabbath day has an intimate connection and bearing upon the home and the relations of social life. In this aspect it is to be made a "delight," a day to be looked forward to with gladness, and not regret. The Sabbath day is commemorative of a completed redemption, as the seventh day was a completed creation. It is the promise and earnest of Christ's second coming, and the future Sabbatic rest of heaven. It should not therefore be melancholy, gloomy or austere, burdensome with a round of unmeaning ritualism, restrictive or repressive in its prohibitions. While fenced in from all other days, in virtue of its holy associations and higher objects, it should be the gladdest day of all the week.

Now, the making of the Sabbath a delight to the inmates of our homes, and especially our children, is very much in the hands of Christian parents. The Sabbath days of childhood half a century ago in the old land were very different from those of the present. While we believe they were infinitely preferable to the way in which they are spent in many families now, and the lax discipline that prevails in religious matters, they were not calculated, as a rule, to make the Sabbath "a delight." Even the Bible and catechism may be made distasteful and the Sabbath day a weariness by the rigid enforcement of rules and penalties. The "do nots" and "must nots" of good conscientious men and women, however well intended, in many cases increased self-will rather than suppressed insubordination. As has been well remarked, "It is purgatory for children of active temperament to do nothing on Sabbath," or any other day. To say "you must not speak," "you must not laugh," "you must not pluck a flower, nor listen to the singing of the birds," is not only foolish, but antagonistic of the best feelings and natural instincts and emotions

of childhood. It is not therefore to be wondered at that in such homes the children wearied for the going down of the sun, and looked forward to its coming with repugnance and fear, rather than delight and welcome.

Now, opposed to all this, the Sabbath day should be a day of domestic reunion—a day when absent ones are welcomed home for a few hours' fellowship, when the names of far-off sons and daughters are lovingly mentioned, and prayers ascend for their welfare; nor do I think it a sin that ere the day closes these absent ones should write letters to the dear ones from whom they are separated. Our Saviour never frowned upon such methods of spending the Sabbath day; and why should we? Anything that makes the earthly home a type of heaven, however faintly it can be foreshadowed, is to be sought after. Not in the church alone, but at home, we should have the delights of praise. Surely there is no better way than for the children on Sabbath evening to gather round the piano or harmonium and pour out their hearts in sacred song. The Sabbath is a day of happy fellowship. The members of the family perhaps do not see much of each other during the busy week, but they spend the Sabbath together, receiving impressions and strengthening golden chords of love that can never be broken nor effaced from memory. Such a scene has been described in the "Cottar's Saturday Night" in language that for simplicity and beauty has never been surpassed:—

Then kneeling down to heaven's eternal King,
The saint, the father and the husband prays;
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days;
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Let me say still further that I do not think it a sin for a Christian man to walk in his garden or orchard or fields on the Sabbath day, nor for the hard-wrought artisan to wander among the beauties of nature, not as a substitute for, but during the intervals of worship. Christ was not the hermit or recluse that some men picture Him. He loved flowers and birds, and drew His most graphic pictures by the seashore, upon the mountain top, or by waving corn fields. And he is most like Christ who sees types and symbols of the supernatural in nature, who sees God's hand and wisdom in the creeping worm, the butterfly, the busy bee, the lion and the lamb, in the daisy and lily, the giant oak tree, or cedar of Lebanon. Since the days of old Isaac, the patriarch, who went out into the fields to meditate, the heavens have acquired a new glory, and he who can interpret their teachings in the light of the atonement of Calvary is the true scholar and the highest type of man.

From what I have said you will easily perceive that I am not an advocate for what, I fear, has been ignorantly called the Puritan or Covenanting Sabbath, if by this it is meant that our forefathers, by their severe and literal interpretation of Old Testament Sabbath laws, made the Lord's Day a thing to be disliked rather than to be enjoyed. It would be presumption in me to defend the men of bygone days whose lives and Christian influence are still the admiration of the world. They may not have grasped the fuller toleration of New Testament Sabbath keeping which we now profess to understand, but their somewhat severe and stern training produced men and women that have few equals in our day. Suffice it to say that, in the words of our Lord, "the Sabbath was made for man," not man for the Sabbath; and whatever will help us to a better life, a higher standard of manhood, a closer fellowship with the unseen, a more intelligent grasp of invisible realities, and a holier living, is allowable on the Lord's Day. A truly earnest soul is not limited in his choice of what will advance his higher being.

How we spend the Lord's Day is a good test of Christian character. Indeed, we need to know little more than this of any man. If he regards it as neither better nor worse than other days; if he does not seek to make it the holy of the Lord and honourable, "not doing his own ways, nor finding his own pleasure, nor speaking his own words;" if in his home there is noise and wrangling and strife and the entire absence of reverence and devotional feeling; if the children, instead of religious training and example, listen to nothing but gossip, and the idle words of their seniors, and hear the politics of the week discussed by their father and his friends, and perhaps hear disparaging remarks about the length of the sermon they have heard and the dulness of the service, is there much hope for that man or his family? "Them that honour Me, saith the Lord, I will honour; and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

We are living in an age when the Sabbath day, I fear, is observed outwardly by many who have no deep religious feeling, and only conform to the requirements of the day out of regard to custom, and for the sake of reputation. They honour with their lips but their heart is elsewhere. They say like the Jews in the time of Amos: "When will the new moon be gone that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat."

Need I say that the most awful curses contained in the Scripture are pronounced upon those who profaned God's holy day by engaging in pleasure or secular employments? In the days of Nehemiah, such unlawfulness and ungodliness were rampant and called forth the prophet's indignant protest and rebuke. And so we read in the thirteenth chapter and