

eyes! Men sit in front of the hotels, or loll in the bar rooms, reading the cheap sensations of the Sunday paper, discussing the latest manoeuvre on the checkerboard of politics, or the raciest and most salacious social scandal. Trains and boats are packed with pleasure-seekers, bound for suburban resorts where brass bands, beer, and base-ball banish the last vestige of reverence for the day which God has hallowed and claimed as His own.

What has changed the primitive reverence and sweet sobriety of the Sunday rest to the noxious levity which now parades itself on this Holy Day?

A variety of answers may be given, each partially describing the causes which have contributed to bring about this lamentable state of affairs.

The large influx of foreigners to our shores, and the prolonged sojourn of many Americans abroad, have led to an importation of foreign manners from those countries where the habitual and ancient respect for Sunday has fallen into abeyance. What regard for Sunday does a very large class of Germans bring, from a country largely secularized and rampantly and obtusely critical of revealed religion? What veneration for Sunday can the Frenchman bring, when at home the race for *Le grand Prix* and the election of deputies is held on Sunday? What estimation for sacred rites can those Italians bring from a country where Romanism beggars the poor for the enrichment of well-fed priests? Thousands come to the United States with a distrust of Christianity, an antipathy to whatever distinguishes its sacred seasons from common hours, and finding here unlimited liberty, they corrupt by evil example the simple souls who learned in a different school.

There are other streams, not foreign in their sources, tributary to the mighty river of irreligion. There is a re-action from the rigid Puritanism of the 17th and 18th centuries, with its harsh, unnecessary, loveless strictures against the joyousness of the scriptural Lord's Day. Many who were brought up under the old regime of Congregationalism, have departed from all faith. The feelings of this class are shockingly depicted in the exclamation of one trained under that stern religious dispensation, who burst forth one Saturday with the malediction: "To-morrow is that dreadful day! How I hate it!" If one may rely on Mrs. Alice Morse Earle's description of "the Sabbath in Puritan New England," we can scarcely wonder that the Jewish exaction of that day has driven many souls far from the faith of their fathers.

One other cause has had a subtle effect in diminishing observance of Sunday. Universalism, as popularly understood, has deadened the conscience of many to the high and gracious privileges of this day. We do not impeach any who profess the name of Christ, but we cannot refrain from noting as a matter of experience and observation, that many have imbibed the notion that as all men will be saved finally, they need not greatly concern themselves with duties that contribute to salvation of soul. Why keep holy the Lord's Day by the assembling ourselves together, if we are just as well off in the final disposition of all things as they who esteem it a delightful day, holy unto the Lord, and honorable?

Causes less powerful have operated to the same end, but these are some which, coupled with the often repeated cry about delinquencies of professing Christians, have helped to increase a disrespect for Sunday and a neglect of the services of the Church.

Before proceeding to suggest remedies, let me indicate some evidences of this defection, and the contrast between the piety and consecration of our parents and the painful lack of these qualities to-day.

Most of the clergy are interested in the spiritual welfare of a rural folk, whose horizons are narrow, despite the breezes of the hills and the

unfettered freedom of the pathless sky. Of the constituency of a city parish we are not now speaking. The Sunday desecrating habit has firmly established itself in the country districts. The foreign impulse, the pulsations of this restless age, the break on Manhattan Island, are felt across the country, and their remotest ripples plash against the base of the Rockies. Sunday morning dawns over the fairest scenery upon which God's hand has left its delicate and perfect workmanship. But alas! its joy and beauty shed no glow over many thousand hearts. The customary "chores" on the farm are done, the household duties of the village home performed; there is still time to prepare for the worship of the Church. But instead, the master of the house, who ought to set a good example to wife, children, and servants, picks up that Saturday decoction of scandal and falsehood, printed expressly for Sunday contamination, and lolls back in the best room, squandering the sacred hours over the spirit-benumbing sheet. Or he finds his way to some near-by tavern, and there with boon companions, propped up against the bar-room wall, wastes the morning in "foolish jesting" and idle laughter. This is no untruthful picture. Into how many homes in all the country-side, into how many public houses, you can go, and find the original of this sombre sketch.

What a change has come over the spirit of American homes? What a departure there has been from the reverent habits of our forefathers. A generation ago the master of the house was a veritable father in Israel. He was astir betimes in the morning. He did not come alone when the church bell sent its sweet notes climbing the farthest hill sides and stealing in softened accents down the winding valley. With a wagon teeming with souls precious in God's sight, he drove up to the venerated portal of the church where his fathers had worshipped before him. In winter he shovelled out the drifts and broke the roads to reach the house of God. Neither snow storm, rain, nor tempest stood between him and his God. If by chance a party of guests crowded around his wide and genial hearthstone on the eve of the holy day, they did not prevent him from discharging his duty to God first. Sunday guests nor Sunday guests kept him from church. He took the former with him and went through the latter. His Christian faith was not of that accommodating nature that shaped itself to the perverse ways of the worldling. It was robust. It had muscularity as well as popularity. It rejoiced in and thrived on practice.

Can we think that the man who was found in his place at the services each Lord's Day went to his work with overtaxed body or dispirited mind on Monday morning? I venture to maintain that no harder, longer lived race of men could be found, than they whose axes felled the trees on these glorious hills and whose ploughshares turned the sod of these fertile valleys two or three generations ago. God's blessing was on these men and their families, as it will be on their descendants if they observe the habits of their fathers.

(To be continued.)

RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

The Rev. Dr. Hoffman, in an address to the Missionary Council of the sister Church in the United States, thus spoke of the duty and benefit of early and continuous religious training:

"We can scarcely begin too soon to impress upon their infant minds the great truths which are to influence all their lives. Years ago, when I had charge of a parish which maintained a parish school where the children, in accordance with the Catechism, were taught by the Creed what they were to believe, and by the Ten Commandments what they were to do, and by the

Lord's Prayer how "to call by diligent prayer for the grace to enable them to do these things," a neighbor called upon me one morning to know if I would receive her child into the school without requiring him to attend the religious instruction. Not being a member of the Church herself, she did not wish her child to be brought up in its quiet, sacred ways. I replied to her that in our school we knew but one method of training up a child in the way he should go; we did not believe in divorcing secular learning from religious instruction; we deemed them both necessary for the proper education of the human being, and we could not make an exception in her case. I suggested to her that, if she was not willing to have her child taught these things, there were other schools in the neighborhood in which they were not to be found. She answered, after urging her view of the case in the strongest way and finding that she could not prevail, that she thought our school was so much better than the other schools to which I referred that she was willing to place her child in it, and to take the risk of his learning those things which she did not believe. With this understanding, I received the boy among our pupils. He was scarcely six years of age. No special pains were taken to instruct him any differently from the other children. He remained in the school less than a year, when he was taken away in consequence of the family's removing from the town. Years afterwards, when I became the rector of a large city parish, I received a call from a young lady, who asked me if I could recall the circumstances under which I received this little boy into my parish school. I told her I remembered them very distinctly. She then stated that she was his sister, and added that the family could not understand what we did with her brother while he was in the parish school, but that after he left it, they had never been able to induce him to leave the Episcopal Church; indeed, he had given his mother and his sisters no rest until he had brought them all to become communicants in it. And at his urgency, now that I had a parish in the city, she had called to secure seats for them in the church of which I was then rector.

"I would have this training carried on in all our schools of learning. I have no faith in teaching the hand, the eye and the foot, or even the mind, to the neglect of the soul. I believe all education in worldly knowledge, without instruction in "the mother of all sciences," to be very unwise. I am sure that we are doing a great wrong to our children when we suffer them to grow up, as the saying is, "to choose for themselves," when they come to years of discretion, in that which is of more importance to them than any earthly advantage. "For what shall it profit a man, if," through our neglect in his early education, "he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

"I would follow it up in our colleges, when our young men have arrived at that age when they are most exposed to the temptations of this world, and when, above all other times, they need Divine guidance for conflict with them. To show how much may be done by the infusion of a proper spirit among our young collegians, I need only refer to the honorable example of the little company of students who, a few years since, banded themselves together to visit the different colleges in our country to urge upon their fellow-students the importance of consecrating their lives as missionaries of the Cross, and the very great success which attended their labors.

"And above all, I would, by means of missionary organizations, and by lectures and addresses on missionary subjects, keep alive the missionary spirit in all our theological seminaries. In the institution over which I have the honor to preside there has been for years a missionary society, conducted and controlled by the students, which meets every fortnight to