

breeze which he hears invites him with cheerful accents to participate in its freedom, while it bloweth where it listeth, and no overseer or ruler can govern its movements.

It is justly said, in an address to the people of the United States, and unanimously adopted, that the Sabbath, 'as a period of rest after six days' continuous toil, is indispensable to the labourer. Without this great interval, his health and vigour prematurely decay, as certainly, although not as speedily, as if debarr'd from the refreshment;—and health and vigor are the poor man's capital. The statistics, now so greatly accumulated that we cease to gather them, showing the fearful waste of life in those employments which know no such suspension, are full of warning and instruction. Sad, indeed, is the lot of the labourer without this jubilee of the week to recruit his exhausted energies; when he may wipe the sweat from his brow, and lift up his body, and lift up his spirit, alike bowed down by daily toil.'

When a reduction of the hours of labor is advocated, the appeal is made to reason, and persons are left to the exercise of their unaided powers in forming an opinion. But the Sabbath is believed by the great body of professing christians to be a divine institution; and this conviction is of immense consequence in claiming the repose of the Sabbath for a toil-worn population. An appeal hence lies to conscience, and religious consistency; and such is the veneration in which the word of God is held, even amid abounding vice and scepticism, that thousands, and tens of thousands, whatever may be their temporal rank, or political party, or ecclesiastical denomination, will concur with you, and co-operate with you, in giving effect to the law of the Sabbath. So far from blaming you for demanding this day, they will esteem you more on that account. The fact of your demanding it, will raise you in their estimation, and give you a permanent hold on their sympathies, and secure you new and potent allies in acquiring other rights to which you are entitled.

But, perhaps, I am doing injustice to objections. Let us look at the strongest of them, and see what they are worth.

It may be thought absurd to speak of the Sabbath as being in danger if it be a divine institution, since God must be fully competent to maintain his own cause. As well may it be alleged that despotic cruelty is impossible, because God loves benevolence, and can easily secure its ascendancy. God works by means, and where ordinary means suffice, he will not work miracles. He gives us privileges, and faculties to discern the value of them, and defend them resolutely; but if we are so recreant as to part with them, he will punish a despicable servility by a galling slavery.

The Sabbath is a benignant day to all classes. It relieves the wasting cares of the master, as well as the manual toils of the servant. In improving the labourer, it makes him more trustworthy and valuable to his employers.—It gives security to the public generally, that all functionaries will be benefited by its privileges; and that the best interests of society will, in consequence, be respected and promoted. Still, you are the parties most immediately and deeply interested. If you consent to lie down and lick the dust on this day of release and independence, then, no doubt, men will go over you. While you are kissing your chains, it will be in vain that philanthropists propose to sever them; nor will God

perform signs and wonders to exempt willing serfs from a merited vassalage.

If the Sabbath is to be preserved to you, or rather, in many cases, recovered to you, it must be through the instrumentality of your own exertions; and no small effort will be needed to make good to you the weekly jubilee. The whole tendency of business is to encroach on your time, till the moments allowed you for eating and sleeping are stinted and inadequate. Some tell us that the sea, if its agency were not neutralized, would ultimately wash down all the dry land into itself, till the globe would present one level surface of prevailing waters. Commerce is that ocean, which invades time, and which, if not counteracted, would eventually submerge every hour of leisure, every holiday, every Sabbath, or would spare only a miserable remnant of them, resembling one of the Drongs—the jutting rocks of Shetland—which geologists describe as the monumental remains of once large and verdant islands. The agent that checks the sea is fire—the internal heat of the globe—which, in melting substances or turning them into vapour, expands their mass, and thus upheaves mountains, on the frowning cliffs of which is inscribed the Divine address to the deep, 'Hitherto shalt thou come but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.' The fire that is to arrest the overflowing of commerce is the fervour of your zeal in behalf of your day of rest. The upheaving that is here to avail is an upheaving of society—to shake off and keep at a distance all desecrating labours from this most needful, most blessed, and heaven-gifted quiet—above all a lofty and still rising determination in the labouring classes to serve man faithfully during six days of the week, but no more; and whoever may invade the remaining day, to repel the invasion, and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free.

But the working man, it will be said, should have recreation on the Sabbath; and if so, boats should sail, and trains should run, to translate him from enveloping smoke to enchanting scenery. Willingly would I institute a comparison between the health of church-going and church-deserting operatives; willingly would I suspend the issue of the controversy—so far as it may be suspended on anything besides scrip ure—on the comparative comfort or wretchedness which their abodes respectively exhibit. As it is not all gold that glitters, neither is it all true pleasure that usurps the name: 'There is a way which seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.' Never shall I forget the mournful accents with which a condemned criminal, shortly before he was executed, said in my hearing, that his crimes began with small thefts, and pleasure excursions on the Lord's-day. But if you will not listen to such suggestions, I address to you another that may obtain your attention. Accept of no pleasures on the Sabbath, interlarding with fidelity to each other. If each of you help to enslave his fellow, there is no hope for you. Look to countries where the labouring classes are oppressed, and mark how that oppression is maintained. The operatives are kept down by the soldiery; and whence come the soldiery? From the working classes. One mechanic is lured to keep another in bondage, till they are all ruled with a rod of iron, and stripped of every distinction that makes a hu-

man being a man and a citizen. When benevolent gentlemen, then, propose to furnish you with pleasure on the Sabbath, make free to inquire by whom the working part of it is to be executed?—whether these affluent philanthropists are themselves to be the Sabbath-day labourers, and serve you one day when you have served them six? But if it appear that one section of your number is to be compelled to toil on this day for another section of your number, then touch not, taste not, handle not the luxury which a fellow-workman's strength has produced, and his sweat has sinned. Such are the relations of labour, that if one working-man toil, another must toil, all of you must toil. The principle is obvious in itself: its truth is confirmed by the general condition of the Continent of Europe; and I tell you again—I press it on your consideration—that IF YOU ARE NOT TRUE TO ONE ANOTHER, YOUR CAUSE IS LOST.

But the friends of the Sabbath are hypocrites, you are told—a set of Pharisees, who object to Sabbath trains, while they impose far heavier burdens on their dependents.—Easy would it be to retort this personal charge. The friends of the poor man who, on his account, started Sunday trains on the Edinburgh and Glasgow line, strangely forgot to lessen the price of his return ticket, when this privilege was extended to first and second-class passengers. The omission is sufficiently remarkable to merit a word of explanation from these compassionate benefactors. Instead however, of interchanging accusations, I beg simply to ask what they have to do with the question in hand? After all that has been said, or can be said about sanctimoniousness on the one side, and infidelity on the other, the single point for you to determine is, whether you are to have or are not to have one day out of seven for yourselves?—That point is in your determination. Will to have this day, and with the word of God and with the friends of God on your side, the expression of your will must be irresistible. There is, however, no time to be lost. One Railway company, and one Steam-boat company after another, resolves to have secular service on the Sabbath. The difficulties of this week may be trebled the next. If you are, then, to arise, arise now—be up and doing! From land's end to land's end besist yourselves, and let your first rest be that of an undisturbed Sabbath, rescued by your courage and intrepidity from vexatious and wasting thralldom.

It may be said that I have made no account of unavoidable service on the Sabbath. I answer in one sentence, that the rule is rest, and that exceptions must, in their nature, be few and occasional. See you to the establishment of the rule: the exceptions will make room for themselves. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, where the necessity has been pleaded, it has been created; and under a cry about works of mercy, cruelty has been inflicted.

It may be objected that my treatment of the subject has not been sufficiently religious. I answer, that a part, and a large part of religion is humanity, and that this is the fast which God has chosen, 'to let the oppressed go free, and that we break every yoke.' At the same time, while I have demanded that the way in which the working-man is to spend the Sabbath shall be left to his own responsibility, and not determined for him by an aggressive and insatiable avarice, I conclude by the statement—earnestly and affectionately