

EVANGELICAL TRUTH AND APOSTOLIC ORDER.

# The Western Churchman.

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## PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

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## SPECIAL NOTICE.

Owing to the present publishers withdrawing from "The Western Churchman," the connection of The Stovel Company as Business Managers will cease with this issue.

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## SUNDAY OBSERVANCE IN THE WEST.

In spite of the lamentations that from time to time are heard in respect of the desecration of the Lord's Day, our experience, until lately, had led us to imagine that Western Canada was, on the whole, to be commended for the quietness and order that characterizes its weekly day of rest. During the present winter, however, we have seen such an amount of deliberate violation of the sanctity of the Sunday, that we feel constrained to join our fellow-Christians in their strong denunciation of this iniquitous practice. Were we able to say that it was only the ignorant and debased who profaned the Lord's Day, we should look for a remedy in the multiplication of agencies for the extension of a knowledge of the Gospel; but, unfortunately, many of the worst offenders are those who have been brought up under the care of one or other of the Christian bodies that are at work among us. In the city of Winnipeg might have been seen, any Sunday this winter, scores of well-dressed men, hurrying along towards the Assiniboine, skates and hockey clubs in hand, and returning in a crowd two hours afterwards, when they had completed their afternoon's round of pleasure. At first we could not believe that such a thing was possible under the British flag, but, unfortunately, it is too true. On our

remarking upon the strange sight, we were answered that these young people had doubtless already performed their religious duties by attendance at church, and were now having a short time of simple, innocent recreation after the labors of the week. To this several objections present themselves. In the first place, only a very few of these could have been at any church service, as the number of men who attend the early celebrations of Holy Communion is infinitesimally small, compared with the numbers we have seen going to the hockey rink, and they could not have been present at the ordinary forenoon service, as they were then engaged in their game. In the second place, we deny that the Sunday has been duly ob-



HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF RUPERT'S LAND.

served by attendance at one service of worship. Perhaps our opponents will say—these men would attend evening service, well, all we can say is that it is an insult to Almighty God to give to His worship only the hour that cannot be utilized for selfish pleasure, and that, too, when the strain of an enthusiastic game has made them too tired to do anything but rest and sleep. The labors of the week are in no case so heavy, in the winter season here, that men cannot enjoy a good game in one of the covered rinks in the evening. As a matter of fact, some of the

best and most enthusiastic games have been this winter played by men who were busy all day long at their various avocations.

But, it is also a well known fact that a very great deal of gambling and card playing is carried on in various parts of the city, both in public places of resort and in private houses on Sunday, and, it is not at all an uncommon thing to hear secular music both played and sung as one passes along some of the residential streets of the city. Surely all of these are entirely unnecessary, when we think of the long winter week-nights that can be given to such things.

But, Sunday desecration is not confined to the city,—there is a great deal of it done in towns and hamlets as well. Some times the argument is brought forward that in many places there are no regular Sunday services for people to attend, and they must have something to do to fill in the time. Surely, in these days of cheap, wholesome literature, this difficulty need not arise,—besides, cannot some manly, sympathetic fellow take his Prayer Book and Bible, and read the Church's Service with his neighbors? The clergy, we are sure, will only be too glad to back up the efforts of such. Has it not always been of the very essence of Christianity, when not asleep, to meet and satisfy each new condition of things as it arises?

What are our St. Andrew's Brotherhood men doing? And the members of our many Church Guilds—both of men and women? Cannot they take up and deal with such a very crying evil as this is? Surely here is work lying ready to their hands—work that will meet with the approval of our Blessed Master! A corporate crusade is what is needed, and even that will fail unless it is taken up with hearty zeal, and earnest prayer, and wise forethought. But, let church people take up the matter thoughtfully, and organize, and a way will be made clear for the removal of this flagrant and depressing desecration of the Lord's own day. We call the attention of our readers to a little incident in the life of Her Gracious Majesty, given in another column of this issue, which has an important bearing on this subject.