

SUNDAY OBSERVANCE.

Renewed attention has been attracted to this question by the action of a popular meeting held in Chicago to discuss in advance the question of the opening of the Columbian Exposition, that is to be, on Sunday. Sunday observance in western cities has not usually been considered a strong point in the ordering of those cities, and it is therefore a pleasant surprise to read of this strong movement in the right direction, especially as it anticipates any direct action on the part of the managers of the fair. Along with this comes the intelligence that at Rochester base ball games on Sunday were stopped by the arrest of the players. These are good signs, protests as they are against the rapid growth in this country of the continental Sunday idea. We contend that the Master's dictum 'The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath' contains a seed thought that will grow, slowly as all divine truth grows in human soil, but surely, until it at last shall commend itself to the common sense of all thinking people as the best thing for the well-being of mankind. Then it will be accepted, and the Master is content to take such an acceptance for His words, even though reached through lower trains of reasoning than He Himself used. His Sabbath rule, it will be found, covers the whole ground, and disposes at once of the specious arguments of the Sabbath-keepers. It is based upon the whole duty of man and the whole privilege of man. It recognizes in him a being of the many sided order, classed for identification under the heads of body; soul and spirit; and claims that development of each of these, in the order and proportion of its value to man himself, is the duty and privilege of every one of the race. It claims that no man can afford to dwarf or hinder the growth of any part of his being, and also that no ordinance of God and no law of God is receiving its true interpretation when it is made to wear the appearance of hindering this all around healthful growth of the whole manhood. If a man's body is tired, he has a right to look for rest for his body on the Lord's Day; if his mind is worried and worn with every day cares, he has an equal right to seek for that so to change of scene which will bring new and restful thoughts to his mind and restore its healthful balance. If his spiritual faculties have suffered under the demands of necessary week day labors, the Lord's Day is given him, first of all because this is the highest and most essential demand of his being, that he may commune with God and receive grace to help him in time of need. And a thoughtful consideration of this wise saying of Christ will tell any sensible right minded man who has a sense of duty, even though he may not be a professing Christian, what he may and may not do on this one day in seven, for his own highest good, to develop and maintain his stature, strength and character as a man.

APPLICATION OF CHRIST'S RULE.

He may not sleep all day Sunday to rest his body, because then his mind and spirit suffer. He may not play or amuse himself all day by rule under the presence of a so called religious theory, if his body and his mind need rest or change. He ought to put the spiritual first, because God has made it first and highest with him, and he knows it to be so. This done, he ought not to neglect the other real and conscious needs of his nature. He ought not to have so taxed himself by the week's work as to have unlawful needs and unnatural exhaustion to make demands upon this day of rest. He ought not to call things recreations, and make himself think they are needful, while they are simply exhausting amusements, with no help and no recuperative power in them. He ought not to make the day help him to be

more of an animal, or more of a thoughtless child, or more of a one-sided man, by its recurrence. He is using the day to his own best advantage, and according to the divine law of its establishment, only when he comes, after its observance, to his Monday's work a better and stronger man every way, with a quiet conscience, with a clear mind, with warmed affections, and with a rested body, as the results of his God-given day of rest. Now let all Sunday regulations come under this rule, taken even as a selfish rule, if it must be so taken; and concerts, and world's fairs, and picture galleries, and base ball games will fall, by the judgment of the popular common sense, into the classes of unlawful or lawful to which they really belong, and man guided by the consciously or unconsciously, by the Spirit of God, will so choose his means of grace of all sorts that the day will be to him and do for him in his whole being what God intended it to be and do when he made the day for man.—*The Churchman, N. Y.*

SURPLICED CHOIRS.

More and more we incline towards the surpliced choir. Not for musical reasons, for we prefer the voices of women to the voices of boys. Not for economical reasons, for the cost in labor, and in money (when both choirs are paid), is greater in the case of male than of mixed voices. In what, then, lies our preference? In the one and vital point of reverence. Certainly, the choir of men and women can be as reverent as the choir of men and boys, whether it sings in a gallery at one end or a chancel at the other. As a matter of fact, however, it is not. Irreverence is far more frequent in a mixed than in a male choir. And this irreverence is conscious and unconscious. Of knowing and willful irreverence of choirs and choristers we do not care at this time to speak. We say a word, however, as to what we have called unconscious irreverence, the irreverence arising from ignorance on the part of a singer or singers. The precise point which we have in mind has been suggested by a practice, often witnessed in this city and elsewhere, viz: the deliberate turning of the choir or soloist towards the congregation. We have seen this thing carried so far that on occasion a soloist has come or been put deliberately forward out of his or her place in the choir, and taken position in the chancel facing the congregation. The bow of greeting and parting was almost all that was necessary to make the suggestion of the concert much more than a suggestion. The only defense for this abuse is bad acoustics. Well, we would rather have bad acoustics than bad manners in the service of God. The service of God—that is the whole point of it. The singers, the choristers are ministers of God, not ministers of men. Their best of tone and taste should be offered to God, not to the vestry, music committee or congregation. It would be no more inappropriate for the officiant to offer the alms of the congregation to the congregation than for the singer to offer the gold or silver of the voice to the congregation. So let us have no more of this irreverence. In nine cases out of ten,—in more, perhaps—it arises from ignorance. Let the rector and missionaries of the Diocese instruct their singers in this and other like matters, and the service of the sanctuary will no longer be marred by unconscious irreverence.—*Pacific Churchman.*

SEVEN QUESTIONS.

If you meet with an Atheist, do not let him entangle you into the discussion of side issues. As to many points which he raises, you must learn to make the rabbi's answer: "I do not

know." But ask him these seven questions:—

1. Ask him: Where did matter come from? Can a dead thing create itself?
2. Ask him: Where did motion come from?
3. Ask him: Where life came from save the finger-tip of Omnipotence?
4. Ask him: Whence came the exquisite order and design in Nature? If one told you that millions of printers' types should fortuitously shape themselves into the Divine comedy of Dante, or the plays of Shakespeare, would you not think him a madman?
5. Ask him: Whence came consciousness?
6. Ask him: Who gave you free will?
7. Ask him: Whence came conscience?

He who says there is no God, in the face of these questions, talks simply stupendous nonsense. This, then, is one of the foundations, one of things which cannot be shaken, and will remain. From this belief in God follows the belief in God's providence, the belief that we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.—*Archdeacon Farrer.*

NEWS FROM THE HOME FIELD.

DIOCESE OF MONTREAL.

FREELIGHTSBURG.—The Sunday School Scholars Bible Class and Ministering Children's League held a united summer celebration this year on the attractive brink of the locally famed Durham Pond on the 6th of August. The start was effected from the Memorial Church at about 9.30 a. m. in holiday attractive form. On arrival at the Pond, Mr. Wilkin's Boat House was soon emptied and living freight provided, charged with buoyant happy spirits. The surface was not calm but this neither dampened the ardour nor disturbed the equanimity of all bent on pleasing and being pleased. The fears of the most timid vanished as if transformed by magic atmosphere leaving the emancipated free for unalloyed aquatic recreation. Almost rebelliously answer was made to the dinner-bell summoning to Mr. Wilkin's convenient hall where the sharpened appetite of towards 100 was lavishly satisfied by the catering of the skilled fair, culinary artists of St. Armand East. Return was then made to the boats, and sailing pleasures pursued with unabated zest until the final call for a short service of Devotion, of Canticle, Choral Prayer and Creed, gladsome inspiring songs, closed by addresses from the Rector, and the Rev. George Johnson who although late, had added his genial presence, with Mrs. Johnson, to the happiness of the hour. Retreat was then sounded and with regretful glances at the glistening waters, the occupants of twenty teams of divers capacities, wended their way homewards, all effusive in their verdict of "a happy day."

COTE ST. PAUL.—Church of the Redeemer.—

The annual Sunday School picnic took place on Thursday, the 7th August, when there was a full attendance of Scholars and teachers; the parents and friends joining the party in the afternoon. A beautiful spot on the banks of the St. Lawrence, Lower Lachine Road, was the chosen meeting place; and there from 10 a. m. until six in the evening all enjoyed themselves to the full. The ladies of the congregation made ample provision in the way of refreshments for all comers; and under the supervision of Dr. Davidson, Messrs. W. Carver, R. Carver and A. Trotter, the children enjoyed their games and sports. A happy day was spent: and in the evening children and teachers returned to the Parochial Hall, when thanksgiving was made to God for the enjoyments of the day and for His providential care.

PEBONAL.—The Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia and Rev. Canon Partridge, D. D., spent Sunday last in Montreal, on their way to the great Conference in Winnipeg.