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REV. A. A. CHERRIER,  
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**Northwest Review.**

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 1898.

**CURRENT COMMENT.**

The most able and complete report of  
the meeting of last Wednesday evening  
against excessive Sabbatarianism was  
printed the following morning by the  
*Nor' Wester*. Unfortunately it is too  
long for our limited space; so we re-  
print the *Tribune's* report which,  
though comparatively brief, brings out  
the more salient features of the meeting.  
We have made a few additions here  
and there, borrowed from the *Nor' Wester*,  
which also published an excellent  
editorial, showing how moderate and  
good-natured was the tone of this re-  
presentative gathering.

During this Holy Week fervent  
Catholics will dwell with reverent  
meditation on the Passion of Our  
Blessed Lord. Those who have suitable  
prayer-books and who will hear Mass  
each day will read the "story that  
converted the world" in the four evan-  
gelists. Four times they will rehearse  
that sublime tragedy of heroic suffering  
and immeasurable love. Therein is  
found the quintessence of the New  
Testament and the New Testam-  
ent is, for true Christians, the  
rich, ripe fruit of which the germ only  
appears in the Old Testament. It is  
the marvellous realization of that which  
the Law and the prophets foreshadowed.  
It tells of the central event in the his-  
tory of all mankind. Thus it happens  
every year that the average Catholic  
church-goer during Holy Week gets at  
the heart of the Christians dispensation  
more fully than the average non-Cath-  
olic Bible reader who so often seems to  
fight shy of the Passion of the God-Man.

The importance of the subject at the  
present moment in this province must  
be our excuse for the large space we  
this week devote to the Sunday ques-  
tion. Sundry well-meaning but unprac-  
tical gentlemen are striving to force  
upon the Legislature of Manitoba a  
Lord's Day Observance bill which  
would be a tyrannical interference with  
the liberty of our fellow citizens. It is  
doubtless highly probable that, if this  
bill was passed, it would become, as a  
similar though less stringent law has  
become in Ontario, a dead letter. But  
the almost certain nullification of a  
measure is no excuse for adopting it.  
On the contrary, making laws that no  
one will enforce is one of the surest  
ways of demoralizing the public con-  
science. It amounts to saying: "See how  
good I am on paper, though I may be  
naughty enough in action". It is turn-  
ing the legislature into a training  
school of hypocrisy. We have already  
far too many of these crank statutes  
grinning at us from the pages of what  
ought to be a serious record of parlia-  
mentary wisdom. So far at least as  
Catholic communities are concerned,  
the Lord's day Observance bill, unless  
vigorously amended in the direction of  
common sense, will be practically a  
dead letter. In the French parishes,  
where sanity on religious matters pre-  
vails, it will be received with a shrug of  
compassionate ridicule. Now the best  
interests of our legislators should warn  
them against making themselves a  
laughing-stock for the enlightened por-  
tion of the community which holds an  
historical brief for the defence of the

Christian's liberty on the day which  
the first followers of Christ set apart  
for joyous worship. We sincerely  
trust that our able and broad-minded  
Attorney-General will not allow him-  
self to be hoodwinked by mistaken in-  
terpreters of the Christian religion,  
and that his moral courage in the face  
of transient obloquy will rise to the  
level of his legal acumen.

**The Meeting to Protest against  
excessive Sabbatarianism.**

The meeting held on Wednes-  
day evening last in the old Y.  
M. C. A. lecture Hall, corner  
Alexander and Main streets,  
Winnipeg, to protest against the  
proposed "Lord's Day Observ-  
ance act" was a notable one in  
its way inasmuch as it demon-  
strated the fact that at last a con-  
siderable and an influential  
portion of the community has  
decided that the time has arriv-  
ed when a determined stand  
must be taken to check the con-  
trol which a certain section of  
the people who hold peculiar  
and narrow views on many  
matters of vital importance have  
in the past exercised over the  
course of legislation in the local  
Parliament. This control has not  
only resulted in the passage of  
many "cranky" and unnecessary  
acts, but it has now reached  
such proportions that, if success-  
ful, it will deal a serious blow  
at personal and individual liber-  
ty.

No more are the "cranks" to  
be allowed to have it all their  
own way, and future genera-  
tions will have cause to be  
grateful to the promoters of the  
meeting to which we have refer-  
red for the movement they  
thereby inaugurated in favor of  
the introduction of common  
sense and fair-play and equal  
treatment all round into the  
laws passed for the government  
of the people of this Province.  
Anyone who was present at the  
meeting must be pretty well  
satisfied that at any rate "the  
Lord's Day Observance Act," as  
at present proposed, will never  
become the law of the land; for  
it may reasonably be hoped that  
from this beginning the  
people as a whole will be so  
brought to a sense of their dan-  
ger and their duty in the cir-  
cumstance that our rulers will be  
convinced that after all it will  
pay them best to give the med-  
dlesome "Lord's Day Alliance  
people" and their fanatical fol-  
lowers the cold shoulder, and  
allow all sections of the commu-  
nity at least as much liberty to  
follow the dictates of their con-  
science in the future as in the  
past. We thoroughly believe the  
meeting will have this effect  
and our reason for believing so  
is that the gathering made it  
plain, as we have said, that a  
very large percentage of citizens  
of all creeds and of every shade  
of politics are determined to  
leave no stone unturned to  
secure the defeat of the measure;  
and in face of this opposition it  
is hardly possible that even the  
Manitoban Legislature will dare  
to place on the statute books a  
law which was clearly shown to  
be not only ridiculous in its  
details and absolutely uncalled  
for, but which would introduce  
into the Province a system of  
interference with the liberty of  
the subject absolutely foreign to  
British sentiment and British  
institutions.

Our readers will gather from  
this that the meeting was, from  
the point of view of its promo-  
ters, a most successful one. The  
chair was occupied by the popu-  
lar representative of ward 6 in  
the council, Ald. H. Wilson,  
who, it may be remarked, never  
pleased the bulk of his consti-  
tuents more than he has done  
in taking so prominent a part in  
this movement. He was support-  
ed on the platform by Mr. J. S.  
Ewart, Q. C., Mr. F. W. Stobart,  
and Rev. Father Drummond, S. J.  
Many other prominent and well  
known men of the city would  
have been on the platform had  
there been room for them there,  
but, as there was not, they had  
to remain on the floor of the

hall. A series of resolutions was  
passed condemnatory of the pro-  
posed legislation in all its details,  
declaring that there is no neces-  
sity for any change in the  
present law, and committees  
were appointed to wait on the  
legislature and present the  
views of the meeting, and also  
to consider the advisability of  
forming a permanent organiza-  
tion. Several excellent speeches  
were made, those by the follow-  
ing gentlemen being especially  
forcible and eliciting loud ap-  
plause: Father Drummond, Mr.  
Ewart, Mr. Perdue, Mr. Stobart,  
Mr. Scott, Mr. Raitt, Mr. Olsen,  
Rev. Mr. Lucas and Mr. Cowan.

Most of the speakers spoke of  
the gravity of the situation,  
showing the importance of the  
issues involved, and whilst  
there was an air of serious deter-  
mination to take a decided stand,  
there were many touches of hu-  
mor in the proceedings. For in-  
stance, when Mr. Ewart, with  
his rare analytical skill, dissected  
the measure clause by clause,  
the audience listened with de-  
light to his polished sarcasm and  
cutting illustrations. No less en-  
joyable was Mr. Perdue's ex-  
posure of "crank" legislation in  
this Province and the quarters  
from which we derive some of  
the wonderful and fearful speci-  
mens of legislation which adorn  
the statute books of the Province.  
He especially raised the enthus-  
iasm of the audience when he de-  
clared that the laws of old  
England should be good enough  
for Manitoba and that we did  
not need to borrow from the  
"blue laws" of Connecticut. Mr.  
Scott, who represented the labor  
party, kept the hall in roars of  
laughter whilst he related some  
incidents of his boyhood days in  
Scotland; one Sunday he could  
remember on which he eluded  
the paternal watchfulness and  
escaped for the day to a neigh-  
boring seaport being the happiest  
of the lot in his recollection, not-  
withstanding that on his return  
home his father had a good rope's  
end awaiting him. Mr. Raitt also  
spoke for the Labor party, and  
made the point that the advocates  
of this measure had no right to  
claim, as they presumed to do,  
they were acting in the interests  
of the workingman, inasmuch as  
the workingman was able to  
think for himself on this matter  
and had long ago decided that he  
must be allowed to spend the  
Sunday as he pleased without  
the interference of the civil au-  
thorities, so long as he did not  
interfere with the rights or pri-  
vileges of his neighbors. Mr. Stobart  
also made a practical address.  
Throughout all these speeches  
there ran a strong expression of  
opinion that the ministers who  
are at the bottom of the proposed  
legislation are seriously weaken-  
ing their position by taking  
such a step and that they are do-  
ing the cause which they profess  
to have at heart a great deal of  
harm.

Father Drummond on rising to  
speak met with a particularly  
hearty reception. Just before his  
turn came, an individual at the  
back of the hall, who seemed to  
be the only person present not  
in harmony with the proceedings,  
had been called to order by the  
chairman for making some very  
impertinent remarks regarding  
the presence on such a platform  
of a priest of the Roman Catholic  
Church. It was evident that this  
poor man was a worthy represen-  
tative of that much to be pitied  
class who honestly fancy them-  
selves the only true interpreters  
of the Divine will, and it was  
pretty evident also that whilst  
he was burning with indignation  
that any body of citizens should  
hold views contrary to his own  
and dare to express them in pub-  
lic, the fact that a Catholic priest,  
was present raised his fury to  
white heat. Several times during  
the evening he had caused great  
amusement by bursting out  
into fiery denunciation  
of the promoters of the meet-  
ing and their objects and it was  
with difficulty that he was indu-  
ced to keep order, which he

would do only on the assurance  
that he would be allowed to  
speak after Fr. Drummond had  
addressed the meeting. This  
little incident, no doubt, had  
something to do with the extreme  
heartiness of Fr. Drummond's  
reception for the audience greeted  
him with a burst of applause  
which plainly proved that they  
in no way sympathized with the  
misguided individual who had  
just been suppressed.

The very greatest attention  
was paid to the Rev. Father's  
utterances, and one might have  
heard a pin drop as he eloquent-  
ly explained the teaching of the  
Catholic Church regarding Sun-  
day, the silence being broken  
only by hearty cheers as he pro-  
ceeded to illustrate how this  
teaching was put into practice  
by giving a description of the  
way in which the Lord's Day  
is spent at St. Boniface College.  
It was noticed that even the dis-  
turber, to whom Father Drum-  
mond did not even allude,  
seemed spell-bound and carried  
away by the persuasive eloquence  
of the silver-tongued orator; for,  
although he had not allowed  
a single previous speaker to fin-  
ish without interruption, not a  
sign of dissent did he now make  
even when Father Drummond ad-  
vanced the horrible suggestion  
that people should be allowed to  
enjoy on the Sunday any inno-  
cent form of amusement or re-  
creation which they practised on  
the other days of the week. And  
not only did he refrain from in-  
terruption, but, although he had  
from the beginning of the meet-  
ing been consumed with an ar-  
dent desire to make a speech, he  
actually passed over the oppor-  
tunity which was offered him to  
take the platform at the close of  
Father Drummond's address. It  
was probably the first time in  
his life that she had ever had  
the privilege of hearing an ex-  
position of Catholic doctrine and  
practice by a Catholic priest and  
the experience seemed to over-  
whelm him.

Following Father Drummond,  
speeches were made by Rev. Mr.  
Lucas and a Mr. Olsen, who  
seemed to be Seventh Day Ad-  
ventists, and who objected to  
legislation regarding the "Sab-  
bath" on general principles. The  
meeting closed about 10.20, and  
those present dispersed with the  
feeling that they had done a good  
evening's work which is destined  
to have a beneficial influence on  
the future well-being of the citi-  
zens of Manitoba.

**OPPOSING THE LORD'S DAY BILL**

A Large and Orderly Meeting  
Wants Sunday Rest,

BUT NOT BLUE LAWS.

Speeches by J. S. Ewart, Q. C., Rev.  
Father Drummond, W. E. Perdue  
and others.

Winnipeg Tribune, March 31.

The old Y. M. C. A. rooms,  
corner of Alexander and Main  
streets, were filled last evening  
on the occasion of a meeting,  
called by those in opposition to  
the act proposed by the Lord's  
Day Alliance for the observance  
of the Lord's Day now pending  
before the legislature. Among  
those present were: Messrs. H.  
Wilson, Rev. Father Drummond,  
J. S. Ewart, Q. C., F. W. Stobart,  
T. D. Robinson, Dr. Patter-  
son, W. E. Perdue, D. E. Sprague,  
W. Georgeson, G. F. Bryan,  
A. Strang, Deputy Attorney Gen-  
eral McLean, D. Smith, E. L.  
Thomas, J. A. McInnis, C. Raitt,  
W. Scott, J. Mortimer, W. E.  
Wellband, E. Kelly, T. D. Deegan,  
F. H. Turnock, Rev. Mr.  
Lucas, Richards, H. Cowan, C.  
C. Stewart and others.

The meeting was a most en-  
thusiastic one, and one strongly  
opposed to the present proposed  
act of the Lord's Day Alliance.

Ald. Wilson occupied the chair  
and Mr. C. C. Stewart was ap-  
pointed secretary of the meeting.  
The chairman in opening the

meeting referred to the bill  
brought before the legislature  
by the Sabbath observance asso-  
ciation and said some of the  
clauses were very objectionable.

Mr. J. S. Ewart was the first  
speaker. He regretted that he  
had to appear in seeming anta-  
gonism to so many good people  
in the city. But these persons  
think us vile fellows; this ex-  
pression was used in one of the  
city pulpits, and they are now  
seeking to coerce our civil liber-  
ty and he objected to being  
coerced. He was in sympathy  
with religious movements, but  
this was not a religious question,  
it was a civil question. We are  
all in favor of a general cessa-  
tion of labor on Sunday, but  
there must be some labor. Large  
labor fields can be legislated on,  
such as having stores open,  
work by laboring men, manual  
labor, etc., on a Sunday. He  
then passed on to deal with the  
bill as proposed by the Lord's  
Day Alliance. In the matter of  
travelling by railway in the  
province on a Sunday, the Al-  
liance allows you to travel as a  
through passenger, through the  
province, but if you were at  
Portage la Prairie on a Sunday,  
you could not come to the city  
under a cost of \$400 or three  
months. He passed on to the  
clause relating to games and  
caused considerable merriment  
by stating that golf and tennis  
being his favorite games, the  
Alliance had offered to strike  
them out. There was one clause  
he strongly objected to and that  
was the one whereby any "thick  
headed dolt of a J. P.," if he saw  
one of his children in the gar-  
den playing ball, could enter  
the garden and take that child  
off to jail. He then moved the  
following resolution:

"Resolved that it is within  
the province of civil govern-  
ment to limit the times within  
which physical labor should be  
performed, and, therefore, to pro-  
hibit labor beyond certain hours  
or on certain days, or under cer-  
tain circumstances. The exercise  
of this function of government  
has no religious sanction; and  
it is subversive of religious li-  
berty to found it upon that ba-  
sis."

W. Scott seconded the motion  
and said that what he objected  
to was a set of rules for his  
Sabbath observance, which were  
only fit for a monastery. He  
thought the action of some of  
the clergy of the city in respect  
to this question will only widen  
the gap between the general  
masses and the churches.

The motion was then put and  
carried unanimously.

Mr. F. W. Stobart then moved,  
seconded by Mr. T. D. Robinson,  
the following resolution:

"Resolved, That from a civil  
point of view it is unnecessary  
to prohibit all labor upon any  
particular day. While a very  
general prohibition may be prac-  
ticable, yet there are many cases  
in which periods of rest may be  
better prescribed by providing  
for a maximum of hours or days  
in the week. Work in connec-  
tion with the postoffice, tele-  
graph, telephone, with railways,  
steamers, cab drivers, church  
services, the work of chemists,  
milkmen, etc., furnish examples  
of such cases."

It was carried unanimously.

Mr. W. E. Perdue, who spoke  
to the next motion, said that he  
thought the proposed act was  
an unnecessary one. Our pre-  
sent laws, which are, he believ-  
ed, the same as in England,  
were quite sufficient. Some  
persons thought this act does  
not go far enough, hence the  
present proposed act. How do  
the promoters of this new act  
propose to run the gas works  
and electric light works, so as  
to supply churches in the even-  
ings? Will they have to go to  
church when the sun shines and  
seek sweet repose at dusk?  
There are some cranks who are  
always seeking legislation for  
something or another, and by  
this act some would legislate us  
all into virtue, and teach us how