

ten to one that before night he will yield to the old traditional or family law and repent in sack-cloth and ashes, as many others have done, including the writer.

Now, if our friend were only acquainted with the "Lord of the Sabbath," through the Holy Spirit, the only way by which He can be known, for "No man can say that Jesus is Lord (of the Sabbath and act his faith) but by the Holy Ghost," he would refer the matter to Him in confidence, and the Spirit not forbidding, he would feel perfectly free to use his common sense in the matter, and thus neither make himself ridiculous nor deprive himself of a privilege and a benefit. Or suppose the case of a minister who has been advised and almost commanded by John Wesley or some other human authority to pray in every home he enters. Now, this rule may work well in many cases, but like all such rules, the time will come when it will fail, for our pastor will surely visit a house on such a day and at such an hour and under such circumstances, that it would be utter folly for him to attempt to pray. It is near dinner time; the minister has promised to go to the next house for dinner. The good-wife expects five hungry men in from the field in a few minutes. Pies are in the oven, meat ready to turn, the potatoes just ready to drain—if left they will be sodden. Three children squalling in chorus. What is to be done? Now, if he would listen to common sense and not to what somebody has said, he would shake hands, speak a pleasant word, pat the baby on the head, and pass on. But no; the rule is to pray. So the poor woman who, for the life of her, can think of nothing but burnt pumpkin pies and sodden potatoes, is commanded to kneel down (the children still crying) while the minister grinds out his prayer. What else can he do? If he breaks his rule once the door will be open for still greater laxity, and besides it would be presumption on his part to break a rule made by men presumably wiser and better than himself. And so for want of confidence in the Holy Spirit, he must (at times at least) make himself a mere machine grinding out prayers in people's houses,

as the hand-organ grinds out music under the windows. Or again, as the minister entered the house just mentioned, he might get the conviction that he ought to stay for dinner on the kind invitation of the hostess. But common sense says go where you promised, they are expecting you. Still the Holy Spirit says stay here—excuse yourself at the other house, they know you well and will not take offence. But it is not convenient for the horse here and not nearly so pleasant for myself. No matter, the conviction sticks—stay. Now, if one has confidence in the Holy Spirit he will have no hesitancy in staying for dinner under these circumstances though it would *appear* to be going flat against common sense. But in reality it is not. It is certainly good common sense in a man to obey the voice of God rather than his own failing, short-sighted wisdom. God may easily see that some member of that household is just ready now to receive a message which will prove to be the savor of life to his soul, and the only way in which God can make it known to His servant is by His Holy Spirit. Happy is the man who obeys the Holy Spirit, for he, and he only, can truly and with safety obey his common sense.

KING SAUL.

FIRST PAPER.

The career of Saul, the first king of the nation of Israel, given in the First Book of Samuel, furnishes interesting developments of the relation of the Spirit of God to human character, success and destiny. In the eighth chapter is the account of Israel's demand or request to Samuel that he should provide a king for them. If they could be assured of a succession of such men as Samuel was, to be their prophet, priest and general dictator, it is probable that the need of a king would not have been felt as it was. But a king they must have, and, for wise reasons of His own, God consents to their desire, and thus emerges an epoch in the history of His people. And as when a deliverer was