

implore His favor and learn His will, if they are to feel, and own the bond of brotherhood, by which they are all linked together as members of a family, and all needing the grace of "Our Father" who is in heaven. Genuine fear of God, and genuine sympathy with our kind have their seat in the heart; but the heart's deep and holy longing must find an outlet and manifest itself in time and place and action. And this inward feeling expressed in appropriate manner, is the substance of all religious service, the foundation of all morality, and the ground in man's nature for the seed of the living word to take root in. So "the Sabbath was made for man" and so necessary for man is the institution of such a day, that if no command had enjoined it, Christian instinct and our nature's need would have suggested its advantages, and led to its establishment.

When any good institution is endangered, the kind of action which menaces it is not in material, nor undeserving of discriminating notice. For there are hurtful agencies to be feared, far more than others on account of their power or subtlety, or by reason of adventitious elements arrayed on either side in certain circumstances. And generally the agency most to be dreaded, likely to subvert any foundation—which for the truth's sake, we would rather see more firmly established, is not that which boldly, and in its own black colors proclaims its purpose, and presses on to the assault. Thus the opposition to the Sabbath law from which the greatest danger is to be apprehended, is not the argument of the Anti-Sabbatarian, nor the derision of the angrily seceder, nor the desecration of the day by the shameful wickedness of those who neither regard God, nor the feelings of their fellow-men. The exhibition of such forms of antagonism has rather the tendency to make the holy day and its associations more honorable and precious in our estimation. We have greater cause for alarm when it is sought, under color of philanthropy, or pleading the exigencies of the public service, or asserting a Christian liberty, to institute in fact a system of aggression, which, advancing step by step, would rob the Sabbath of its sacredness, relax its hold upon the consciences of the people, and end in its virtual abolition. In the mother country, appeals adverse to the religious character and obligations of the Sabbath, have been made on behalf of the working classes. In order, it is alleged, to gratify and elevate them, let the public museums and picture galleries, the crystal palace and the useful exhibitions be opened to them on Sunday. These appeals are interlarded with, or founded upon the customary drivel and cant, grown now well nigh intolerable, about "high art" and "forms of beauty" and their humanizing and refining influence. The fact is overlooked that a certain amount of learned leisure and cultivation of taste, which the circumstances of the great body of the working people utterly preclude, and that the culture of man's nobler faculties which religion precludes, are a prerequisite to a just appreciation and æsthetic enjoyment of the fine arts, as the twaddle of the dilettanti artists and art-critics, under which the world groans, amply testifies. These advocates of elevating Sunday amusements might know that a glaring "Red Lion" and Blue

Dragon" on a tavern sign, or a tawdry banner borne along the street before a deafening band of music, or the splendid glitter of the inevitable gin-palace next door to the "high art" have greater attractions than the creations of Rubens and Raphael for all that kind of working men who require no persuasion, and all that kind who will be persuaded by such inducements, to let go their hold of the Sabbath and cast from their veneration and memory the day which Jehovah claims as His own. The characteristic excellencies of our people—their indomitable energy, industry, and practicalness would prevent them from turning their Sundays into continental holidays. Deprive the Sabbath of its divine sanctions, they would not long continue to divide the time between churches and the promenade and theatre. The instincts and habits of the race impel them to the industrial rather than the playful. With the Fourth Commandment obliterated from their creed and conscience, Sunday would soon be just the first day of the week of ceaseless labor—and then, with the opportunity for holy worship gone, and the gospel message unheard, and even the solemn teaching of the Sabbath's silence, to those who frequent no sanctuary lost—there would be incessant toil, increasing ungodliness and selfishness, conducting to physical, mental and moral degeneracy by a law certain as fate, terminating either by the emergence of our people out of that condition through a baptism of fire, or by their overthrow and absorption by a harder and more virtuous race.

In our province similar reasons and inducements for a relaxation of the Sabbath law have not been, in fact cannot be presented. But here, until quite recently, labor in the Post Office was compulsory on the government employees in that department, and still may be required of his subordinates by the Post Master if he thinks proper. The Rideau and St. Lawrence canals are by order of government kept open on Sabbath, compelling the attendance and labors of the lock masters and their men. And railway and steamboat travelling on the Sabbath is increasing. The wedge is entered, which, driven home, will separate the Sabbath from the commands of God, and from public regard. And, however, we may deplore the existence of such practices, with the consequent hardships they entail on a large body of men, the evil does not come upon us with such galling offensiveness as in some other forms of Sabbath desecration. It is pleasant to see the steamboat gliding over the still waters and the train dashing on with impetuous speed, or gracefully winding in a curve; and then it is placated with an air of self-sacrificing philanthropy, that all is done for the public accommodation, and that no one is forced into what he may regard as a violation of Divine law. But there is the flagrant disregard of Him who said "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" there is the tempting opportunity given to the young, thoughtless, and idle to escape from wholesome restraint and indulge in sinful pleasure; there is the enforced withdrawal of honest men from their families and the sanctuary; there is the government-sanctioned allowance and incitement of disobedience to God day after day, teaching immorality to the whole community, and all for the convenience, and to

increase the gains of a small portion of the general community.

Think of the evil complained of and its issues. We have a Sabbath law, in act and public sentiment, which so many take upon themselves to violate. Consider the tendency of the practice to provoke the like in other quarters and to increase both in extent and evil consequence. If the government may enjoy the opening of the Rideau and St. Lawrence canals on the Lord's day; why not the Lachine canal? Why not the Custom Houses, and Parliament? And why may not the governed engage in their callings on the same plea of public convenience? If the Grand Trunk company may run trains with merchandise for people, why may not common carriers and carriers ply their vehicles too? If steamboat proprietors may sail their vessels for gain, why prevent stage coach proprietors from competing with them for the same prize? If some individuals are permitted to pursue their ordinary business on all days alike, what reason is there in justice to hinder any in any line of business from doing the same? And the evil will increase if measures are not taken to check it at once. The banner of public opinion, yet in favor of the sacred day, is being undermined by the allowed desecration, and if the process continues long enough, it will ultimately oppose no obstacle to the general disregard of Sabbath sanctity.

Think of the welfare of those who suffer from the allowed desecration of the Lord's day. Sunday travellers and pleasure seekers as a class are more objects of pity than of hope. If deprived of the Sunday journey by steamboat or rail, they probably would spend the day no better. This class whether well dressed or in rags—the most insignificant both in character and members of any in the community, is however kept up by continual accessions from a better. The young and thoughtless are tempted by the facilities afforded for Sabbath excursions; and begin, in what they feel at first to be forbidden guilty pleasure, to wound a conscience, to mingle with a class of men they had avoided before, and end their course in disgrace and ruin.

And then there are the government employees and those of the railway and steamboat companies—many of them necessarily educated, trustworthy officers—many skilled working men; as a whole intelligent, frugal, honest—the class which is the bone and sinew of a country—the class which is produced and moulded in all manliness and worth by religious training, by habits of God fearing and Sabbath keeping in which to some extent they were trained. They are compelled to work against their inclination on the Lord's day. Yes, a necessity of a kind is forced upon them. No doubt strong religious principles would prevent their submission to that necessity, but all men have not strong principles, who are yet in the main right principled, and would, if free to choose, shun a direct and habitual violation of a sacred law. They need employment, and such employment as they have been trained to. Themselves and families are dependent on the produce of their toil. And it is heartless, and manly cruelty on the part of their employers to say, that they do not compel them to work on the Sabbath, that if they do not choose to comply