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REVEREND THEODORE E. DOWLING,
September 1, 1881. Carleton, St. John.

Following the example of the Church Press in other places, we feel justified, after a continuous and unbroken service of nearly three years, in taking a few holidays. There will not, therefore, be any issue of the GUARDIAN next week.

THE SUNDAY QUESTION.

A CORRESPONDENT has drawn attention to the fact that there is going on around us, although not making itself heard or felt to any very great extent, perhaps, at present, a steady and persevering effort to rob man of his day of Rest. Here and there, we regret to say, we see and hear signs which tell us that even in this enlightened period of the Christian era, some men, and we fear their number is on the increase, do not set a high value on God's day of rest—the Sunday or Lord's Day of the Christian. In some quarters we find the question being discussed simply as to whether the IVth Commandment has any reference to our Sunday, whether there is any command of God to honor the first day of the week. By others, it is asserted that the Apostle Paul denounced the keeping of a Sabbath, and that before his time, the Saviour Himself had condemned the Jews for their observance of such days. In other directions, it is admitted that a day of rest is a necessity for man's physical condition, that without such a day his life must be shortened, but that it has been given him as a day of relaxation and recreation, and not necessarily to be observed by attendance upon religious services; that Public Bathing, Excursions and Amusements of various kinds are quite compatible with the intention of the observance. But the growing disposition to make Sunday no longer a holy day, must surely result in making the condition of the men of toil and of business, much worse than it otherwise would be. And it would be well for the working man who seeks thus to secularize the day by amusements, etc., to note this other side to the question. If Sunday is but like every other day—if men may spend the day without any regard to religious duties, why can it not be used for purposes of business as well as pleasure? And, indeed, we find already the feeling being developed in an increase of unnecessary work on Railroads, in Steamboats, in Mines, in Factories, and in other public and private works. Depend upon it, unless Sunday is preserved as a day of sacred rest, the working man will be the first to discover that he has been preparing for himself the chains of a galling servitude.

In order to guard against the possibility of such a terrible condition of things in the future, we must at once meet and overcome the beginnings of the

evil; we must cultivate a more determinedly hostile public opinion; and we must educate the rising generation in fixed principles with regard to the sacredness and religious obligations of the day.

In discussing this question from the Christian's standpoint, no attempt, of course, is made to undervalue the importance of cleanliness, or fresh air, or recreation and amusement; it would be equally absurd and foreign to our purpose to do so. All these things, in their proper time and place, are most needful, and therefore not to be condemned. But to admit this in no way weakens the position of those who insist upon a religious observance of God's Holy Day. The day is to be kept "holy unto the Lord," that is the plain command, and it follows that only works of necessity are to be performed, and such recreation permitted as will in no way compromise due regard to the sanctity of the day.

It will not be amiss to point out the grounds on which, as Christians, we claim that one-seventh part of our time should be kept holy unto the Lord. And 1st—The Sabbath Day is a Divine Institution, never annulled, never in any way weakened of its full force and meaning. Some suppose that the IVth Commandment was a strictly Jewish Law, not to be continued, but to pass away when Christ came, as a shadow typical and fulfilled in Him. But the observance of a day of rest was established long before the call of Abraham, or the choosing of one nation to be God's people. The 20th chapter of Exodus, it is true, proclaimed for Sinai, with thunderings and lightnings, the command; but long before that time, from the very first, immediately after the six days of Creation, a day of rest was enjoined. We are told in the 2nd chapter of Genesis: "He rested on the seventh day from all His works which He had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it He rested from all His work which God created and made."

"We find, then, embodied in the very heart of the Decalogue, a Commandment which formulates a rule existing from the completion of the so-called Mosaic Creation—which takes the Divine example recorded in the history of the creation, and imposes it as a rule for the creature—which basis the rest of one day in seven, and the separation of that rest unto Jehovah, on events which have equal interest and importance for all men, Jew and Gentile,—which has no mark to separate it from the canons of immutable Godliness which precede it, or from the laws of universal morality and humanity which succeed it.—which is most clearly where it is by a fixed purpose of the Lawgiver, inasmuch as it stands between the section of the law which deals with God only, and the other section which deals only with our neighbour, and standing there, it looks back to God alone for sanction and authority, for motive and example; and, for the appreciation of its rules, looks on to the neighbor—the fellowman whose case alone is regarded in the remaining six words of the ten. It links God and man in happy association, and if wrested from its place would leave to God no security of honour, and to man no certainty of morality.

Has this Law ever been repealed? All statements in New Testament Scriptures as to the weakness of law; the inability of law to save; the office of law as bringing us to Christ; the removal of law out of the way, and as to the justification of the believer without deeds of law; every statement, in a word, which seems to find fault with law can no more affect the IVth Commandment than the other nine. They none of them, repeal the moral law as a rule of life; they none of them, warrant either Polytheism or blasphemy, murder or stealing, covetousness or Sabbath-breaking. The IVth Commandment is just as much moral or transitory, just as really strong or weak, just as authoritative or as powerless as the other nine. In whatever sense the other nine remain, as binding the conscience and directing the life, in that sense does the IVth Commandment remain. The breach of this law is as the breach of those, and the blessedness of obedience to this, is as the blessedness which flows from obedience to the other nine.

The change of day predicted in prophecy and accomplished on the morning of the Resurrection, the severe rebukes by our Saviour of the miserable Pharisaic Sabbath tradition of His day, and the stern condemnation of the observance of Jewish Sabbaths by St. Paul, are all outside the question of the permanency and authority of a moral law such as this of the IVth Commandment. The Jewish Sabbaths are dead in the tomb of the dead Jesus, and any recurrence to them among Christians

is a serious approach to apostasy. The Sabbath of Jehovah—the Rest Day or the Decalogue—can never cease till the dawn of that eternal rest—that never-ending Sabbath—of which it is the type and pledge." The change of the Rest Day from the Seventh to the First Day of the week in no wise detracts from the original design of the Creator, but was intended to add enlarged meaning to it. As GOD commemorated His finished work of creation on the seventh day, so the GOD-man, Jesus Christ, on the first day commemorated the finished work of Redemption, after having re-created man in the image of His Maker. And as at the first "the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy," so even more glorious and joyous was the Resurrection of Christ, when He brought "Life and Immortality to light," for not only did the Heavenly Hosts send up their anthems of praise, but the millions of Immortal souls of earth and Hades shouted back their responsive strains of joy for the victory over death and hell. And shall the Redeemed of the Lord now be dumb? shall the Christian forget the day which saw his God and Saviour rise from the grave, and which brought life and salvation to a world groaning under the burden of its sin—see it treated as a common day, and all thoughts of His goodness and love banished from men's thoughts and lives? Surely no! It is to thousands a beacon star of salvation, a sure hope of present and future happiness, rest and peace.

Let us remember God's commands and promises with respect to the day. "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." "Six days shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do; but the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasures, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." "Likewise the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer."

Let Christians ever "remember" the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Let them discountenance and oppose any and all attempts to make it less than God's Day of Rest, the Christians' commemoration of the Resurrection of their Lord, and the assurance of their own resurrection. Let them ever make it a Day of Rest of body, mind and spirit, a day of quietness and peace, in which the heart may be raised to "the Lord of the Sabbath" in anticipation of that eternal Sabbath—that glorious "rest" which remaineth unto the people of God.

BLASPHEMY.

We direct special attention to our correspondent's letter with reference to the blasphemous language said to have been used by the Jesuit preacher at the recent Roman Catholic consecration in Pictou. If the secular papers did not report the preacher's words correctly, the public should be told exactly what he did say. Our correspondent very rightly holds Archbishop Hannan, as head of the Roman Church in these Provinces, responsible for the Jesuit Father's utterances.

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THE CHRISTIAN'S PLACE OF REFUGE, AND TRUE HOME ON EARTH.

SERMON,

Preached at the Anniversary Service of D. C. S., in
Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton,
July 7th, 1881,

BY THE REV. CANON PARTRIDGE, B. D., RECTOR
OF ROTHESEY.

"And there shall be a tabernacle, for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain."—Isaiah iv. 6.

A BAND of travellers, wending their way across the desert wastes. Fierce beats the orb of day upon their weary heads. Whole weeks have passed

since first they set out on their journey. With many a joyous song they had at first beguiled the length of the road, till the very animals they rode joined in their gladness. But now the sands grow hotter than ever beneath their feet. The overlaid camels have fallen from exhaustion. Every drop of water has been carefully husbanded lest there should be a drought and man and beast should perish together; but the skins have been drained to their last drop. Slowly and painfully they struggle on till hope is well nigh lost. Again and again the deceitful mirage has raised their expectations to the highest point, only to dash them to earth with a deadlier disappointment. They had been told of wells and palm trees lying beyond where thirst should be satisfied and shadow be gained; and the parched feet and aching limbs give way, and faint and fall almost within sight of the haven where they would be. One by one the little band is thinned; they drop upon the blistering sands to die. But stay! right in front before their eyes in the dim distance rise the welcome branches and the green fresh verdure which must betoken the blessed spring of Heaven's pure Fount. Can this be but another illusion? and must we perish here and our bones bleach among the desert sands? Half despairing on they toil, each step bringing them nearer and nearer, till at last in very deed they lay their hands in the life-giving stream, and quench their burning thirst, and renew their exhausted strength, and rest not content, though themselves beneath God's tabernacle, till every straggler has been safely brought to the "place of refuge."

All the world is on its pilgrimage, across the wilderness of life. Heathen devotees falling down before God unknown; cruel cannibals, dusky savages, propitiating by sacrifices a deity they dread; the dreary fatalist, the self-deceived idolater, and the heartless worshipper of his own body—all—are straggling beneath a fiery sun across scorching sands. And if you look within the Christian fold, there are the old, wayworn and feeble, anxiously awaiting their last great change; the vigorous and strong rejoicing in their manhood, caring little for the future; there are the young, just setting out on the journey, all unknowing what lies before them. There are the doubters, perplexed by life's many problems, knowing not how to solve them; the anxious groping, if happily they may feel, after God, and find him; the stricken, who never having been grossly sinful, have yet had blow after blow of severe affliction; the sufferers from misfortune or loss, half defiant, half awed; yet forced to think—these are many classes beside, some in a wild despair, some in satire assumed, are occupied in these questions—Whence came I? Where am I? Whither am I going? Is there a God over all? Is there a refuge from this burning heat, a covert from this storm and rain? Then there are the various sects and divisions of Christendom—body set up against body, and creed against creed; each loudly proclaiming that to it alone belongs the Truth, yet each denying some Truths that the others claimed. There is a difference between Truths and the Truth. A little insignificant twig at the very end of a small branch cries out—"I, and I only, am the tree," not seeing the absurdity, and this is repeated in a hundred instances. What wonder that the untrained, unthinking, half-hearted nominal Christian waits in weary sorrow, or in bitter mockery, and asks—"Where is the refuge, and what the Tabernacle?" "What am I to think? "Where am I to rest?" "Shall I give myself up to a splendid and fascinating materialistic worship which dimly veils with this, its unfaithfulness to the Revelation it professes to hold, and yet denies; or shall I let myself loose from every outward tie of creed or form; shall I cast to the winds all allegiance to ministry and sacrament, and own no sway but that of my own sweet will? Or can it, can it be that the God of Nature, who is there pre-eminently a God of order, working by fixed laws, and with a wonderful precision, has, in the realm of grace, left everything in a blind chaos?" Does he, can he mean, every man to be the architect of his own religion, going no farther for a foundation than the depths of his own ignorance, and rising skyward only to crumble and fall like the weak and unscientific building of the child's house of cards? Or has he given to a fallible man to be, not merely the Trustee, but the very Creator of His Divine Truth? This would be an abrogation of His own Sovereignty which He has nowhere promised. Where, then, am I to find my doubt removed, my perplexities unravelled, and my faith solidified, till I feel and know that I stand upon a Rock that no rains can wash away, and no storms can shatter?

The question is being asked by many a soul, urged by a thousand different reasons, and eager to find an answer that will satisfy. And there is but one answer to the question. The Body of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the Church of the Living God—the pillar and ground of the Truth. She is the Tabernacle which God has erected among men, which the Prophet here foretold; she is the place of refuge—the covert from the storm and from the rain. In her, by God's ordinance, are provided for the souls of the faithful grace and blessing. She holds out a Faith pure as it came from Christ Himself; she points a hope which maketh not ashamed; she inculcates and renders possible a charity, perfect as the love of God, which goes forth with yearning that cannot be sated, towards all others in Christ; she has a Ministry not of man's appointing; she dispenses the Sacrament of the entrance into the Covenant, and the Sacrament of