

"open" on Sunday is the great question. Even the Church papers have something to say "pro" as well as "con," and the question is subsiding into the general form, "what is the Christian Sabbath proper?"

**MUCH BETTER WHERE YOU ARE.**—The absurdity of the extravagant lamentations over the dead which some mourners indulge in is well illustrated by a case where "A.K.H.B." is said to have been comforting a widow upon the loss of a husband—presumably "no great loss." Her wailing reached its climax and received "estoppel" from the pastor when she exclaimed in frantic grief, "Oh, that I were with him!" Her visitor's response was, "Be quiet, my good woman, you are much better where you are!"

**RE-ACTIONARY SOCIALISM** is the title of a leading article in the English *Guardian* on the subject of Mr. Herbert Spencer's introduction to a book on the subject. The gist of the *Guardian's* article, in approval of Mr. Spencer's theory, is that the tendency—the ultimate result—of the present movement of Socialism is to revert to a form of *bureaucratic tyranny*, the very counterpart of the Feudal System. It is very evident that the "crux" of the Bellamy idea in "Looking Backward" is the factor of a regulating censorship. "Quis custodiet—?"

**AFFLICTED WITH LONG SIGHT.**—While Arch-deacon Farrar of Westminster Abbey is patting "Gen." Booth on the back and lamenting eloquently how much the Church of England has "lost touch" (?) with the masses, there exists right under his nose, at St. Stephen's, Westminster, one of the most apt illustrations of the contrary—the Church's sympathy and success among the masses—that could well be imagined. Like a good many parsons of wealthy parishes elsewhere, he needs to look *nearer home* for facts.

**CHURCHMEN BOYCOTTED.**—The suicidal policy of not helping one another in business matters, so long characteristic of Churchmen, is beginning to tell seriously in various towns and cities throughout the Dominion. Time was when nearly all the prominent and responsible public positions were naturally filled by Churchmen. As these positions have fallen vacant, by death or otherwise, some Roman Catholic, Methodist or Presbyterian applicant has been pushed forward with accumulated influence at his back. Now, practically, "no Churchman need apply."

**MCQUEARY LOGIC.**—This gentleman's contention is that "Scripture is his creed"—that is, the notions that he extracts from certain passages in Scripture is his creed. But then, he is also the judge as to what part of the Bible is or is not "Scripture": so he selects the ground-work of his creed for himself—rejecting that of the Church—and then wonders why the Church wants him to keep within her lines. Mr. Wade's position and line are precisely parallel with this, as to discipline and ordinance, and his defence is similarly illogical.

**WHITECHAPEL** has gained an unsavory reputation of late, but dark as it is, there are some bright stars shining there. St. Mary's, Whitechapel, has lately had published, through its Vicar, Rev. A. W. Robinson, *A Ten Years' Retrospect of Work*. The details of Mr. Robinson's mission work there would open "Gen." Booth's eyes—if they could be made to see beyond his own nose! One notable feature revealed is that St. Mary's is

practically "affiliated" with St. Jude's, Kensington, which furnishes \$1,000 per annum, and much personal service besides, to its poorer sister parish.

#### LENT.

The period of the fast before Easter was a subject—not exactly of controversy—but of difference, among the Christian Churches for seven centuries. That some sort of fast, and of some considerable duration, was proper, no one ever questioned; but how to fix the number of hours or days, or to arrange them, was no easy matter. Some would prefer a brief period very strictly kept, others would prefer a more lengthened period, less strictly kept.

#### FESTAL DAYS

formed one element of uncertainty and cause of variation. Certain days in every week were considered as bearing a festal character, more or less; not only the Sundays, but Thursdays and Saturdays. Should any or all of these be excluded from the list of proper days for fasting? Sunday, of course, was the weekly festival of Christ's Resurrection; no one questioned the impropriety of fasting on such a day as that. Then there was Saturday, the immemorial Sabbath Day or day of weekly religious and joyous rest; many shrank from fasting on that. As to Thursday, that was Christ's last day with His disciples in unbroken peace, the day of the "new commandment of Love," the day of farewell words and of the last Passover Feast, closed ere the dawn of another by the new sacrament of the Eucharist. The more punctilious would except such a day as that.

#### FORTY DAYS

came to be regarded, however distributed, as the proper number of days, because it commemorated not only Christ's own great fast, but the period of His absence in hours from the earth, the exact period between Resurrection and Ascension—"when the Bridegroom should be taken away from them, then should they fast in those days"—and marked by other scriptural incidents. Variety arose, however, in the distribution of these 40 days, for the reasons already stated. Those who paid most attention to festivals—as Brothers in Monasteries—excepted every Sunday, Thursday and Saturday, beginning their 40 days about Septuagesima Sunday. Those less particular on this point excepted only Sunday and Thursday, or Sunday and Saturday, beginning their fast about Sexagesima Sunday. Finally, however, about the end of the sixth century our present custom came generally into vogue, beginning the fast on the Wednesday after Quinquagesima Sunday. Even yet there is, in the Eastern Churches, some variation from this: as they begin their fast on Monday before ours, relaxing its rigour somewhat on Sundays and Saturdays. There is much very interesting information in the history of Lent in the writings of Irenæus, Victor, Eusebius, Tertullian and Origen.

#### THE METHOD

also varied a great deal at first, while traditions were being formed. St. Chrysostom (in Hom. IV. on the Statues) says: "There are those who rival one another in fasting, and show a marvellous emulation in it; some, indeed, who spend the whole day without food, and others who, rejecting from their tables not only the use of wine, and of oil, but of every dish, and taking only bread and water, persevere in this practice during the whole of Lent. If, however, setting aside individual peculiarities, we seek for the general consensus as

to method, we find the general practice to have been to abstain from all food until 3 p.m., or even 6 p.m.—and even then, not to indulge in the pleasanter kinds of food and drink, such as flesh and wine. Everything depends really on the amount of work, especially physical exertion, which the body has to do. A person perfectly at rest has little appetite, that is, little call from nature for recuperation: such an one can fast without danger or difficulty for a long period—indeed, needs to pamper his fancies by delicacies, in order to coax himself to eat at all. On the other hand, a man who spends from 8 to 12 hours in continuous hard labour, finds in his members a loud outcry of nature for "repairs" to the wasted tissues—a call which he will neglect only at the peril of his health. Even the priest on duty—especially in rough missions—however abstemious he may be inclined to be, cannot neglect such calls of nature without doing injustice to his sacred functions, by lessening his power of performing them rightly. Many learn this to their cost!

#### LIBERALITY.

This is an age when the cry of "liberality" in religion is proclaimed everywhere, as it were, from the house tops. Men pride themselves upon their liberality, or what they call "breadth," and woe betide the man who does not exactly hit his neighbour's ideal in this respect. Every one has his ideal of what true liberality and breadth are, but he draws the line along different points from his neighbour. If one falls short of the standard of the other he is considered narrow and illiberal; if he goes beyond, he is altogether too latitudinarian; but for all that we hear on every hand the mighty chorus raised, "The Spirit of the age demands liberality and breadth." The words are words to conjure with. If a man is to be praised and placed upon a lofty pedestal, the most worthy thing to attribute to him is his "liberality and breadth." The boundary lines of these attributes, in his own private belief or misbelief, need not be too closely scanned, whether they exclude the true or include the false, so long as he can hold out the right hand of fellowship to all conflicting forms of doctrine with equal generosity; for indeed, they too claim the indulgence of not being too closely scanned as to the grounds of their belief, on the score of their overpowering liberality. Hence the cry of liberality has become the most convenient and effectual cloak for many serious shortcomings; and the cry of "illiberality" is the universal "squelcher" of all open honesty of teaching, especially as to the maintenance of the force and tenor of the recognized standards of the Church of England, in their literal and grammatical sense. If we exclude what they exclude, or include what they include, as in duty bound, the magic word "illiberal" is hurled at us with great vigour, but happily with little force. We are pecked at for being too *technical*, forsooth, as though the essence of belief were not enshrined in the most careful technical language of the Church. If a strange thing comes to pass, and having regard for the laws and traditions of our Church, we exclaim with the Apostle, "we have no such custom, neither the churches of God," they fling at us the cry of "illiberal!" Then unlearned and weak-kneed Churchmen, saturated with the loose theological notions which they have imbibed from the many "winds of doctrine" blowing about them from their childhood, shudder and quake as though the grand old historic Church were about