

SPECIAL  
ARTICLES

## Our Contributors

BOOK  
REVIEWS

## MOVING FORWARD.

The observant student of the world's news can hardly fail to note that two great questions of a moral and social character are claiming and receiving increasing importance at the hands of the people on both sides of the Atlantic. These questions are: the Christian Sabbath—shall it be maintained against the increasing inroads of modern commercialism; and the saloon danger—shall it be permitted any longer to menace the welfare of the people of civilized nations. These are two serious problems and they must be met and dealt with by every lover of the national, social and moral welfare of his country. Practically the two questions are one—or rather they are two branches of one question—mammomism—the underlying principle of which is that neither the integrity of the Christian Sabbath nor the social and moral welfare of the people shall stand in the way of those whose lust for wealth overshadows all moral considerations.

With regard to the Sabbath question it is an exceedingly encouraging sign of the times that in many countries the people are being aroused to the importance and necessity of protecting the Christian Sabbath against the inroads of corporate greed and vulgar commercialism, and maintaining the right of every toiler to enjoy his Sabbath rest and the privileges it was designed to afford him.

In the neighboring republic many of the states have enacted Sabbath laws or have strengthened existing laws. At the present moment, we believe, there are only two states of the Union devoid of such laws. And here it is worth while noting that the saloon element stands in league with the disciples of mammon in striving to destroy the Sabbath. And is that not precisely the situation in Canada?

Spain, Belgium and France have enacted the "Rest Day" law. Switzerland, five years ago, was the first to initiate the rest-day movement. Japan is now moving for a rest day, and, strangest of all, China, now awakening from her long sleep to behold the light of a new day, was moved recently by an edict from the Emperor to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest. And Great Britain has been awakened as never before in the call by the Lord Mayor of London for a great mass meeting. Special measures were provided to secure legislation for the better observance of the Sabbath. "A World's Rest Day" seems to be the united cry in every direction. With this as a rallying cry the nations are moving into line.

This world-wide campaign in support of the Christian Sabbath should be encouraging to our people. But the Christian men and women of Canada must not lay on their oars. We have an admirable Sabbath law on the whole, though it has some weak points. There are indications that an effort may be made to modify and to lessen the restrictions which it imposes on the railway corporations. Our people and our legislators must be on the watch against any unwise tampering with its provisions.

With regard to the saloon evil it is only necessary to point out that on this continent, and notably in the United States, an aggressive campaign is being waged against the liquor traffic. "The saloon must go" is the rallying cry in many places. In the neighboring republic the area of prohibition is being steadily widened, by direct prohibition

enactments in some states, but mainly by local option laws. In Ontario the local option policy is being vigorously pressed. Last year Nova Scotia made her provincial license law more effective than ever, and New Brunswick will probably take a forward step at the next session of the legislature. In Prince Edward Island, as noted in these columns recently, the prohibition law enacted a few years ago, is proving a great blessing to the people of that province. The liquor vendors have discovered that "prohibition does prohibit."

On the continent of Europe there is a steadily widening and strengthening sentiment against the evils of the liquor traffic. In Germany and France the best men of these nations are being thoroughly aroused against its dangers, and they in turn are educating the masses of the people. And in our own motherland the people are demanding effective restrictions upon the traffic.

Christian people everywhere must stand by the Sabbath and against the whiskey shop.

## CHURCH CHOIRS.

Under the caption of "The Tyranny of Church Choirs," the Belfast Witness says: "The fact is indisputable that often in all sections of the Church, the church choir becomes so inflated with its own importance, that it becomes unmanageable; and instead of helping to elevate and spiritualize the worshippers assembled in the sanctuary with its melodious sounds and symphonies of bliss; instead of doing its utmost to stir up every heart and voice to praise the Lord with solemn sounds in grave, sweet melody, it marches on such unapproachable lines that the Psalmody of the congregation is practically nil. And if remonstrance is made by those who have the right to speak, ten to one but there will be a strike as noisy and unmusical as if coal-heavers were the belligerents. We are led to make these criticisms by noticing that the choir at Sattley Church, in England, have recently struck because their vicar would insist on having plain and simple music in which his congregation could join. But this did not commend itself to these self-conceited choristers. And so they struck." Canon Scott Holland, in reviewing the case in the pages of the "Commonwealth," says: "The strike brings up the question of the tyranny of choirs, and the drag they place on any vicar who wants to give his people congregational Gospel service. In this particular instance the vicar has been represented as a Mediaevalist, insisting on the dire necessity of plain song as against the artistic choirmen who want to sing Anglican chants. As a matter of fact, it is the case of a vicar wanting to have a service in which all can join and praise God as against respectable men who want to show off their voices. How long will the Anglican Church allow itself to be pressed down by choristers like a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves?"

## IMAGINE A CHRISTLESS WORLD.

To realize, at Christmastide, what Christ means to the world, says an able writer in the Chicago Interior, let us think of Christ gone, while a sin-bewildered, halting, orphaned world is left to write, in the last light of its perishing hopes, an inventory of its loss, its irreparable loss—to erase from the statutes of Christendom every law which has its basal principle in Christian ethics; to abolish every institution

which ministers to distress and misfortune in the name of him whose sympathy drops down like the tears of music at the cry of need; to lower sense of moral obligation between man and man to the old level of paganism; to rescind every precept which has for its holy office the defense of children and the honor of woman; to reduce the sacred rite of marriage to the commonness of a civil contract; to rob the libraries of their priceless deposit of thought in books; to silence the oratorios which have borrowed their inspiration from the minstrelsy of the skies and made music divine; to take down from the galleries of the world the flaming canvases with which Christian genius has sanctified them; to obliterate the symbolism of a cross of sublime renunciation which has been through the ages the rebuke of selfishness, and leave it again a thing of shame; to disband every organization which makes the ministry of prayer, through the merit of one great name, the hand of man upon the arm of God; to put a cruel seal on the lips that would utter for the sorrow-stricken heart of mankind a "pax vobiscum" with the old-time consolation in it; to give cold silence, instead of "Let not your hearts be troubled;" for the sharp pain of a funeral day; to carry no prophetic immortalities to the tomb-door of our dear dead and engrave upon them only "Vale Eternum—eternal farewell"; to unclasp the little hands that lift for an evening prayer in "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," at a parent's knee; to write again on the world's senseless altars of fate and fetish the dreary pessimism of unfaith, "To an unknown God"; to overturn the tables where love has relighted her lamps for hallowed reunions in which the holly wreath helps to cover up the myrtle; to let the "Gloria in Excelsis" of the angels die away into a requiem; to make the bridge of hope over which the immortal must venture, end over a gulf!

It may be possible to think of an ocean without a harbor, of a sky without a sun, of a garden without a living flower, of a face without a smile; but we are confronted by the unthinkable in this—a world with holiness and happiness left in it and the Christ gone out of it!

Once more with joy we hail His star,  
New glories fling their notes afar;  
Noel! Faith's banner is unfurled,  
Emmanuel now rules the world.

That is a good summary of religion which General Booth, of the Salvation Army, gave in a recent sermon in New York: "There is a religion which is satisfying. I will call your attention to four features of it. First, a sense of the conscious favor of God. You feel that God loves you, that He holds you in His arms. Second, the consciousness that He has made you good. If the world pours into your lap all its wealth and honors you would still be a miserable creature unless you knew that you were good and honest and true and pure. Third, the consciousness that you are doing your duty to the Lord and to those about you. Fourth, the assurance that all is going to be well. There may be difficulties in the way now, but if we have the assurance in our hearts that all will be well in the end it will bring satisfaction. And this satisfying religion you can have without money and without price, on the simple condition that you go right down and submit yourself to Christ, believe in Him and trust in Him."