

But so would anything else become wearisome under similar conditions. The remedy may be found in substituting one kind of religious exercise for another as well as by taking refuge in amusement. We have simply to enlarge the idea, so as to embrace greater variety and the difficulty at once disappears. With a little honest endeavor to make instruction interesting, and a little sanctified ingenuity, the day, instead of being the longest and dreariest, may be made the very happiest of all the week, even for those of tender years and fugitive minds, as can be testified by thousands who have found it so. Reverence and solemnity are becoming in distinct acts of worship, but gloom is no more necessary in connection with the family intercourse on the subject of religion, than in connection with any other matter affecting life.

2. The next argument, that recreation is in harmony with the idea of the day as a day of rest, seems at first sight to be very plausible. But a little consideration makes it clear that it is very superficial. For to say that the Sabbath is meant as a day of rest, is to tell us only half the truth. It is a day of rest for a religious purpose, and not for the purpose of recreation. And the whole of that day is not too much to give to that purpose. To substitute recreation is to misuse it, and more or less to defeat its chief end. No one denies the value of recreation, within due bounds, for the toiler. But no one would suggest that he should take recreation instead of his daily meals or his nightly sleep. That would be manifest folly. Equally foolish it is to urge that he may substitute it for his weekly religious privileges. Experience shows that those who spend the day in pleasure seeking, or even any considerable portion of it, are on the average less fitted for work on Monday morning than those who have employed it as a day sacred to religious uses. If it be urged that this is the only time the toiler can get to make his way to the park or the country for fresh air, we reply that this is only a reason why we should endeavor to find a time for him to do so without trespassing upon his highest interests. Better that it should be taken from his six day's work than from his one day's rest. Nor when the attempt has been honestly made, has there been found any practical difficulty in doing so.

3. The remaining argument is that this freer kind of Sabbath is more in harmony with the spirit of the New Testament, that we have no right to import into it the stern prohibitive spirit of the Mosaic law, which hedged men about with restrictions now no longer needful. It is argued, moreover, that the Apostles evidently held this view of the day. Paul especially refused to bind the Church with any burdensome law on the matter, repudiating such as being inconsistent with and subversive of Gospel liberty. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." (Rom. 14, 5.) "Ye observe days and months and seasons and years,