

L
BY 107. K5
no 9, 1858

DAILY NEWS EXTRA.

Ninth Report of the Kingston Sabbath Reformation Society.

Read at the Anniversary Meeting held in the City Hall on Tuesday Evening, the 18th January, 1859.

During the past year this Society has endeavored, through its Committee, President, and Secretary, to maintain its ground as an efficient witness for the integrity and sanctity of the Sabbath in this Province. The Sabbath Alliance of Toronto was revived in May last, and, it is hoped, will continue to labor in the noble cause with unflinching energy. No good has been done in compliance with the petitions sent in by this and other cities to the Legislature for the correction of the habitual public acts of Sabbath desecration, although at one time a hope was entertained that the Bill of the Hon. P. B. DeBlaquiere, providing for the closing of all the canals, interdicting the sailing of vessels on the Sabbath, and effecting a sweeping reform in the post-office and railways, might become law. Disappointment followed. The Bill was submitted to a select committee, in which it was rifled of its power for good—the integrity of the Sabbath was lamentably encroached upon—and joy instead of sorrow stirred the hearts of the friends of the Lord's Day that, in this falsely termed "amended" state, it was lost at the third reading.

The Bill of Mr Brown, introduced into the Lower House, met with a similar fate. It was not so comprehensive as that of Mr DeBlaquiere, having no reference to the sailing of vessels from the lake harbors or the dispatch of locomotive engines and trains on railways, but if made law and carried out, it would have effected the great object of closing the post-offices on the Sabbath. Your committee (in a document published and circulated widely, signed by the President and Secretary, in which many glaring and gross inconsistencies and encroachments upon the sacredness of Sabbath time in Mr DeBlaquiere's Bill as amended by the select committee were pointed out,) congratulated the public that that Bill had not become law, as instead of a blessing, it would have been a curse, and the poor clerks under unscrupulous masters might not only have been deprived of the right of attending the house of God by day, but also had their night's rest filched from them.

Would that there were so much sterling piety in the land, and so many God-fearing, Sabbath-loving men, that not one could be found to perform unlawful, sacrilegious work in the post-office or other public department

chester, state that they ascertained that nearly half the shops of London are open for traffic after ten o'clock on Sunday morning; that Sunday trading is generally on the increase; that the shops most generally open during the whole day are not those in which perishable articles are sold; and that the disposition of the trading classes is generally favorable to Sunday closing. Numbers have subscribed towards a fund to obtain a legislative enactment for the suppression of this odious traffic. "They feel the bondage of their present condition; which, even worse than slavery, deprives them of the day of rest, throughout the year, and involves their families, shopmen, and apprentices, (many thousands,) in the same unhappy deprivation."

An important decision has issued from the Court of Chancery, which, it is hoped, will tend to paralyse the wicked endeavors of the enemies of the Sabbath to throw open places of amusement on the Lord's Day. "Vice-Chancellor Page Wood, after hearing all that could be urged in favor of the legality of opening the Crystal Palace on the day of rest, regarded the arguments as so utterly unsound that he spared counsel on the other side the trouble of a reply, and pronounced judgment in the most decided terms against the proposed innovation."

A Sabbath observance movement is on foot in North Germany. The labor in the post-office on the Sabbath has been materially abridged; on some railways the luggage trains have been stopped; with more or less success efforts have been made to prevent auctions being held, harvest work done, and factories carrying on their usual work. Complaints are made that the public houses are more frequented on the Sabbath than all the other days of the week together; but though attempts have been made to limit "the Sunday dances" to "once a month," no general movement is made to stop them altogether, and not even a protest is offered against the theatres being all open on the evening of the Lord's Day. In Prussia many military reviews and the exercising of the militia have been transferred to a "week day."

An interesting document has lately emanated from the press—the production of the corresponding Secretary of the New York Sabbath Committee, who was requested by that Committee on his departure for Europe, on domestic affairs, to inquire into the influence of a holiday Sunday on the social, moral, and religious condition of the continental nations. The results of his investigations in 1853, '56 and '57, are presented to the public in this pamphlet, from which we shall now make a few extracts. It is entitled "The Sabbath in Europe." "A

to the streets and places of amusements, and the city is converted in a "pandemonium" of folly, and of genteel or gross dissipation."

Our dear friend Mr N. MacLeod, in a letter to the Secretary, dated Paris, Nov. 4th, 1858, touchingly remarks: "It is sad to see the shops of every kind open, and work of every description going on, while passing to and from church. The contrast between the fertility and peacefulness of England, to the general condition of France, is not to be wondered at, seeing that, with all its sins, Britain is still the most religious and Sabbath-keeping country perhaps in the world."

With regard to a Swiss Sabbath, our author marks a somewhat less abandoned state of things, but attendance on public worship is partial—idle sports, bands of music and theatrical amusements are common, and undo the work of the pulpit.

Of Italy he says: "without the Bible, and without a season to study it, if they had it, without Sabbath-schools, and almost without secular instruction, and with Saints' days to strengthen superstition, and Sabbaths mainly for amusement, Italy is made the plaything of foreign despots, and the hunting-ground of a corrupt priesthood."

May we ask the question:—Are you in love with a Continental Sunday, or do you not loathe it with perfect loathing, and turn from it with utter disgust and aversion? Do you not see in it the friend and fosterer of despotism—the deadly enemy of civil and religious liberty—the hot-bed of licentiousness, atheism and vice, the bane of physical, intellectual and moral greatness? "It is a memorable fact, that the only free countries in the world are those in which popular conviction and legal enactment recognise and conserve the Christian Sabbath."

The Chaplain of Clerkenwell states: "I do not recollect a single case of capital offence, where the party has not been a Sabbath-breaker. Indeed I may say in reference to prisoners of all classes, that in 19 cases out of 20, they are persons who have not only neglected the Sabbath, but all religious ordinances."

The author of the document already so freely made use of, says: "Not only the Divine precepts relating to the worship of God, are rendered nugatory by trampling on the Fourth Commandment; but filial disobedience, unchastity, and disregard for the rights of person, property, and reputation, stand intimately connected with the voluntary and habitual violation of this ordinance of Heaven. The condition of the marriage institution on the Continent is a sad commentary on the influence of

the right of attending the house of God by day, but also had their night's rest filched from them.

Would that there were so much sterling piety in the land, and so many God-fearing, Sabbath-loving men, that not one could be found to perform unlawful, sacrilegious work in the post-office or other public department on the Lord's Day,—none but the scurf and scum of society, by no means to be trusted, so that the evil would cure itself, which all who love the Lord now deprecate! But is such a state of things reasonably to be expected when wickedness abounds in high places, and the Government seem indifferent to the Almighty's frown, and not to dread His righteous judgments? O! that we had men at the helm of affairs now-a-days of the spirit which lodged within Daniel, when, according to use and wont, he worshipped with his window open and his face towards Jerusalem, indifferent to the punishment which awaited him for breaking the King's commandment, "seeing Him who is invisible, having respect to the recompense of the reward! not fearing the wrath of the King!" But men composed of such stuff are now very uncommon amongst rulers. "Rara aves in terris nigroque similina cygno." So much the more pity. The same Lord God Omnipotent still reigneth, and He will reward all that put their trust in Him, however their enemies may plot against them, and puff at them. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision."

Let us see what has been doing at home with the Sabbath of our fathers. In Scotland, alas! strong drink made havoc of that holy day for years upon years, as Saul did of the church before his conversion. But Forbes-Mackenzie's anti-liquor law has wrought wonders of outward reformation on the Lord's Day, by shutting all public houses for the sale of poisonous drinks from 11 o'clock on Saturday evening till 8 o'clock on Monday morning.

When will the people of this country be aroused to a sense of their duty and responsibility to God and man in respect to the curse of alcohol and its myriad of evils? When (if ever) will they bestir themselves to cast out from their midst this Moloch of iniquity? Are the church and the world always to patronize and befriend it, with deplorable ignorance of its true nature and effects?

The committee of clergymen appointed last year to examine into the extent of Sunday trading in the metropolis of the British Isles, in their report to the Bishops of London and Win-

chester, to inquire into the influence of a holiday Sunday on the social, moral, and religious condition of the continental nations. The results of his investigations in 1853, '56 and '57, are presented to the public in this pamphlet, from which we shall now make a few extracts. It is entitled "The Sabbath in Europe." "A Paris Sunday has become proverbial for godlessness; passing along its clean and beautiful streets, you find the Cafés and Restaurants crowded with men, taking their morning meal, and reading the newspapers of the day—cries of fruit-dealers and street vendors are every where heard—though the needless abomination of crying newspapers, is not tolerated even in Paris—all kinds of mechanics are engaged in their usual occupations—places of business are universally open till mid-day, as on other days—the whirl of cabs and omnibuses is even more constant than during the six days of the week. I had the curiosity to count the vehicles passing the Industrial Palace, Champs D' Elysées, on the afternoon of the second Sabbath in August—the grand fête day at Cherbourg, when Paris was emptied of the elite of its fashionable society, and found the average to be one thousand six hundred and eighty an hour! The grand water-works at St. Cloud, and Versailles, play only on Sunday; as the day advances, the gardens of the Tuilleries and the Champs D' Elysées, present a scene of unrivalled gaiety and folly—gaudy booths are surrounded with crowds of men, women, and children, absorbed by childish sports. Automata too silly for the amusement of infants, serve to delight groups of soldiers and stragglers. Goat-carriages and whirligigs of wooden horses, or mimic ships, divert the children and nurses. As evening sets in, the out-door concert and drinking saloons flaunt their attractions; brilliant mirrors reflect the fanciful gas-jets—singing-men, and singing-women, accompanied by orchestras below, amuse the multitude with comic, and sometimes immoral songs. Every conceivable device for drawing the people away from God, and from home, is employed. The Cirque de l'Imperatrice furnishes its equestrian attractions, and its mirth-inspiring exhibitions:—operatic and theatrical amusements add their seductive performances. The whole line of the Boulevards is filled with people seated in front of the Cafés, sipping their brandied coffee, playing dominoes, or gazing at the promenaders along the broad pavements; houses and homes (if there be such a thing without the name, in France) seem to be emptied in-

dered nugatory by trampling on the Fourth Commandment; but filial disobedience, unchastity, and disregard for the rights of person, property, and reputation, stand intimately connected with the voluntary and habitual violation of this ordinance of Heaven. The condition of the marriage institution on the Continent, is a sad commentary on the influence of a dissevered decalogue."

"It is in Paris that official records return more than 3,000 foundlings annually in a single hospital. It is on the Continent that marriage is discouraged by law, and prostitution legalized and protected. Still more: it will be found throughout Europe that attendance on the means of grace, the diffusion and study of the scriptures, works of Christian benevolence, all the signs and fruits of a living faith, are graduated and may be determined by the measure in which the Lord's Day is held in sacred esteem."

Since it has graciously pleased the Lord of the Sabbath—the Captain of our salvation—to assign us a place of honor in his army for the defence of His sacred day, and the propagation of sound views respecting it, let us be truly thankful to "the Father of Lights with whom there is no variableness, or shadow of turning;" at the same time let us lament at the foot-stool of mercy, with sincere contrition of heart, our past unfaithfulness, and many short-comings, and ask pardon for the same. Let us buckle on our armor afresh for the combat with the powers of darkness—resolving that "in the name of our God we will set up our banners," determined with more vigor to uphold the Bible doctrine of the Divine authority and perpetual and universal obligation of the Sabbath—more strenuously to oppose the keeping open of the Post-offices, and the transaction of business therein, and in all the public departments, the sailing of vessels on the canals, the running of railway trains, traffic of all kind in shops or other places of business, the sale of poisonous (soul and body-destroying) liquors, the reading of Sunday newspapers, and other irreligious demoralizing publications, and except when unavoidable, the celebration of funerals on that holy day.

In short, let us all be of one accord as to our duty, privilege, and purpose, to pray for, countenance, exemplify, and contend for the right observance of the Lord's Day; and to use all Scriptural means for preventing and counteracting its abuse and desecration; and may the King of Kings crown our labors, and those of kindred institutions, with success.