

## GOING WITHOUT RELIGION.

By James Russell Lowell.

Young men should carefully read the following, from that poet statesman, who was not long since United States Ambassador to Britain. At a public meeting where some of the speakers had spoken slightly of religion, he said:

"I do not think it safe. I am formulating no creed of my own; I have always been a liberal thinker, and have, therefore, allowed others, who differed from me, to think also as they liked, but at the same time I fear that when we indulge ourselves in the amusement of going without a religion, we are not, perhaps, aware how much we are sustained at present by an enormous mass all about us, of religious feeling and religious conviction; so that, whatever it may be safe for us to think—for us who have had great advantages and have been brought up in such a way that a certain moral direction has been given to our character—I do not know what would become of the less favored classes of mankind if they undertook to play the same game.

"Whatever defects and imperfections may attach to a few points of the doctrinal system of Calvin—the bulk of which is simply what all Christians believe—it will be found that Calvinism, or any other ism which claims an open Bible and proclaims a crucified and risen Christ, is infinitely preferable to any form of polite and polished skepticism, which gathers as its votaries the degenerate sons of heroic ancestors, who, having been trained in a society and educated in schools; the foundations of which were laid by men of faith and piety, now turn and kick down the ladder by which they have climbed up and persuade men to live without God, and leave them to die without hope.

"The worst kind of religion is no religion at all; and these men, living in ease and luxury, indulging themselves in the amusement of going without religion, may be thankful that they live in lands where the gospel they neglect has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of man, who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their carcasses, like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads and tanned their hides like the monsters of the French revolution.

"When the microscopic search of skepticism, which has hunted the heavens and sounded the seas to disprove the existence of a Creator, has turned its attention to human society and has found on this planet a place ten miles square where a decent man can live in decency, comfort and security, supporting and educating his children unspoiled and unpolluted; a place where age is revered, infancy protected, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard—when skeptics can find

such a place ten miles square on this globe, where the gospel of Christ has not gone and cleared the way and laid the foundations, and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the skeptical literati to move thither, and there ventilate their views.

"But so long as these very men are dependent upon the religion which they discard, for every privilege they enjoy, they may well hesitate a little before they seek to rob the Christian of his hope and humanity of its faith in that Saviour who alone has given that hope of eternal life which makes life tolerable and society possible, and robs death of its terrors and the grave of its gloom."

## A STATESMAN'S SABBATH.

When John Quincy Adams was minister to the court of Holland, he joined a society of learned men, who met once a week for mutual improvement. Mr. Adams, though one of the youngest members, soon became a great favorite; his finely trained mind and delightful conversation won him many friends and, receiving as much as he gave, he was always punctually present.

On one occasion, however, as the story runs, the meeting was adjourned to Sunday evening. Mr. Adams was not there. It was appointed on the next Sunday evening. Mr. Adams was not there. His fellow members noticed and regretted his absence. On the third Sunday evening it met. Mr. Adams' chair was still vacant. Many were surprised that he who formerly was so prompt and punctual should thus suddenly break off. How did it happen? The press of business, it was supposed, kept him away.

At last the meetings were returned to a week-day evening, and lo! there was Mr. Adams in his place, brilliant and as delightful as ever. The members welcomed him back and expressed their sorrow that press of business, or the duties of his office should so long have deprived them of his company. Did he let that go as the reason?

"No business engagements hindered me," replied he; "you met on the Lord's day; that is a day devoted to religious uses by me."

He told them he had been brought up in a land where the Sabbath was strictly observed; and from all that he had felt and seen he was convinced of the unspeakable advantages arising from a faithful observance of it.

John Quincy Adams' example of moral courage is a safe one to follow. How many youths, going from pious homes to the cities, to the far West, on the sea and land, are thrown among Sabbath-breakers—reckless Sabbath-breakers and respectable Sabbath-breakers—before whom they fail to stand up for their Sabbath education.—Richmond Advocate.