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SEVENTY-SEVEN YEARS IN ADVANCE.

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SABBATH DESECRATION ON THE ISLAND.

WE have noticed in another part of this week's issue what we regard as a grave mistake on the part of some well-meaning friends of the Sabbath and the working man in their starting an afternoon religious service on the Island, and thereby sanctioning the regular running of the ferry-boats during the Lord's day. The natural and necessary result of such an arrangement is already becoming clearly manifest in that service being made a convenient excuse for every kind and degree of Sabbath breaking. We do not at present propose to discuss at length the question of the reasonableness and necessity of the Sabbath rest. All we say is that on the principle avowed and acted upon in the case referred to, the whole thing is given away, and the Sabbath laws of the country are declared to be at once unjust and impracticable. The poor excuse of going to church has often been urged in favour both of Sunday steamers and Sunday trains. If the argument is valid in favour of our Island ferries being open because there is something called a religious service to which all passengers may say they are going, then, *a fortiori*, street cars and railway trains should also be in full blast. The plea of "necessity and mercy," in short, is always open to those who find themselves sore pressed for an argument, while "bigot" and "bigotry" do yeoman service as of old, against all who take an opposite view at once of the reason and the law in the case.

SEDUCTION—A CRIME.

WE are pleased to see the discussion again raised over the necessity for making seduction a criminal offence. That it ought to be appears to us so evident that any lengthened argument on the subject, in our opinion, is perfectly unnecessary. So far as the discussion has gone the argument lies all on one side, for the considerations which have been urged in opposition, if of any real cogency whatever, would equally strike at almost all criminal legislation that could be mentioned, and would certainly leave the iniquity in question untouched even by civil process. Sir Arthur Helps has said somewhere that apart from its terrible consequences, the seduction of a girl is as contemptible a proceeding as cheating a child at cards. But cheating or swindling of any kind is surely a justly punishable offence even though the injured party voluntarily consented to being robbed. He or she believed a false representation, lost his or her money, and then "society" stepped in and sent the deceiver in the case to meditate over the vanity of human wishes behind a prison's bars. But it seems that while one man, who by a plausible story and the due modicum of promises and lies, gets a foolish girl to give him five or ten dollars is justly punishable with a felon's doom, it would be monstrous to treat another after a similar fashion, who has, by equally false promises, swindled that same poor, ignorant, foolish girl out of the priceless jewel of her virtue, has done all in his power to make her a social pest, has covered her father's head with unmentionable dishonour, and has brought her mother's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Oh dear no! She was a "consenting party," and that balances and excuses all! Such arguments are not worth answering. Every man that is swindled by false pretences, or robbed without violence is so far a "consenting party" to his own injury, but does the law recognize that fact as a sufficient set off against all the wrong he has suffered?

Till some adequate punishment, in short, is provided for this, which is one of the gravest personal wrongs and one of the most injurious of public offences against the commonwealth, the wild law of revenge must and will ever and anon have force, unless in

countries where personal honour has become utterly obsolete and female virtue is looked upon as a figment and a fraud.

The practical difficulty lies not in proving to a demonstration the reasonableness and propriety of such legislation. Where the pinch is likely to be felt, as was clearly made manifest the last time something of the kind was proposed, is in the fact that the professional and amateur seducers among our legislators may be too numerous and too powerful to allow the proposition even the semblance of a chance. Perhaps things are better now than formerly, though we greatly doubt if they are.

GUZZLING AND "GOODFELLOWSHIP."

IN our issue of the 18th of June we entered a very mild protest against the offensive and vulgar debauch which under the pretence of "culture" and "goodfellowship" is annually enacted in connection with the close of the educational year in our Provincial University and other kindred institutions. The only thing remarkable about the few sentences we then wrote was the deferential hesitancy with which the whole subject was approached, combined it may be with a considerate vagueness of reference sufficient to convey a friendly hint though not definite enough to proclaim and denounce a crying evil. That evil has been sufficiently well known and deplored for many years past by not a few of the University's best friends, and has been used by some of its strongest opponents as a proof of the want of moral discipline prevailing in the institution, and of the consequent danger to the highest interests of the youth frequenting its halls. Perhaps the utter want of discipline and the consequent scenes of offensive debauchery which were notorious during last session were more marked than usual, but if so it was merely because they were the culmination of what has been gradually gathering headway for years past under the frivolous pretence of "goodfellowship" and from an abject desire to imitate the "cultivated" riot supposed to be characteristic of older and more aristocratic institutions of a similar description, "in England" of course. Of the fact that at the late dinner there were some of those present drunk before the close of the proceedings, and these not by any means all students, there can be no doubt whatever. Far from denying this, some of the University authorities have deplored the disgrace and given solemn assurances that such a thing would never occur again if they could prevent it. In these circumstances the whole matter would have passed out of notice, and the friendly hint would have remained in its original vagueness and fully served its friendly purpose, had not a monthly contemporary—which has graciously taken the manners and the morals, the politics and the piety, the literature and the learning, the "culture" and the clergy, of Canada under its considerate and most condescending patronage, and has proposed in a comparatively short series of lessons to lick every thing and person provincial into decent shape and make all passably presentable "in good society"—chosen in the abundance of its magnificence to deny the fact, while reading us at the same time the inevitable lecture on the "usages" of "good" English "society" which a certain well known "parasitical" tendency has made as whimsically ludicrous and well known on this side of the Atlantic as it used to be on the other. Our contemporary, it seems, was there and knows. There was wine, we are assured, on the tables and that was the one simple fact that gave rise to our solemnly idiotic and uncharitable idea that there was intemperance! We shall not discuss the matter. The man who had to struggle home at two o'clock in the morning, as this Admirable Crichton seems to acknowledge he is in the habit of doing on such occasions, weighted down with the memory of many dull speeches listened to, and perhaps of one duller still personally spoken, and with the fumes of not such good wine as he was, of course, in the habit of drinking with the country "gentry," and other members of the "good society in England," of which we have all heard so frequently and with such impressive solemnity, not quite dispelled by the freshness of the early morning, is not to be expected to have recognized anything amiss in his brother believers in "good fellowship" and academic "culture." At least we don't expect such a thing. Indeed we should be sorry to press so indecorous a question on one necessarily unfitted for work, for perhaps even a longer period than "next day," or to have the

slightest discussion with him over the painfully perplexing, though abstract, point as to when a man may be styled "intoxicated." Nevertheless, we reaffirm that there were those present on the occasion referred to, who long before the two o'clock limit were in such a condition that we are tempted to quote about them the very expressive and quite unmistakable language of a very distinguished Canadian statesman when—referring to the very "innocent" exhibitions of "good fellowship" (always reckoned by admiring bystanders as soberness personified, and the very perfection of good manners as recognized in the houses of English "gentry" of "good social position,") which are too frequently made by more than one or two whom their admiring countrymen delight to honour—he is in the habit of saying: "If they were not then drunk I never wish to see them in that condition." The fact is these grandiose, *James-like* airs become slightly tiresome even in the estimation of Provincials, though no doubt we may be pleased once in a while to know how many glasses of wine "good society" people drink in England "every day at dinner" without becoming intoxicated. Suchlike talk is all well enough from a servant man out of livery, or from a domestic or college tutor of specially lowly origin, but from one who professes to be the "guide, philosopher, and friend" to a whole nation, who claims to be the unerring arbiter in all matters of taste and literature—to say nothing of such small matters as Theology and Biblical exegesis—to a continent if not a planet, and who, as everyone knows, was ready to shoot somebody who dared, though only in fiction, to give a sinister squint at "social parasites"—it is a little *de trop*.

PROFESSOR ROBERTSON SMITH.

We have already mentioned the different motions of which notice had been given for the meeting on the 13th ult. of the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh. That meeting was held in due course, and these motions were all duly put and seconded. The motion finally adopted was that of Sir Henry Moncrieff, which was to the following effect:

"The Presbytery having had their attention called to the recent publication of an article in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' by Professor Smith on 'Hebrew Language and Literature,' and finding that some statements in it are causing much disturbance and anxiety in Edinburgh and throughout the Church as to their bearing upon the doctrine of inspiration and otherwise, resolve, without committing themselves as to the character of the article, to memorialize the Commission of the General Assembly on the subject; and in doing so the Presbytery hereby represent to the Commission at its meeting on 11th August next, the importance of taking that article into consideration so far as to adopt such steps as they judge fit to meet the disturbance and anxiety, and to vindicate Scriptural principles."

In seconding this motion, Mr. Addis, of Morning-side, said that in his opinion Professor Smith's statements were incompatible with the laxest views of inspiration, and that if the conclusions that had been published were correct, it came to this, that the Scriptural Books were not worthy or reliable even as human productions. For himself, he solemnly stated it as his conviction that Professor Smith's heresies were of the deepest dye.

In the course of his speech Dr. Begg said that they had been gradually sinking through various processes, and the Church occupied a thoroughly false position in consequence of the decision of last Assembly. A worthy member who sat near him when that extraordinary announcement was made, said to him that he had seen the beginning of the Free Church, and now he thought he saw the beginning of the end; but it must not be so. There was this question also for the Church to consider—Who was to own the property of the Church if she was to abandon her principles so thoroughly? A number had already left the Church; but he did not approve of that. They should stand to their guns as long as they could. They must fight the battle in the Church as long as there was an inch of ground on which to stand, and that battle he had no hesitation in saying was the most serious that had been fought in Scotland since the time of the Reformation.

Dr. Horace Bonar condemned the late decision of the Assembly as "the narrowest and most unsatisfactory" that he had ever heard. He said further that he had read the article of Professor Smith, and had never read anything which was more thoroughly an outrage upon the Christian Church, an outrage upon the Bible, an outrage upon the principles of Christian truth and upon sound Biblical criticism. The article