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Toronto, July 13, 1893.

Sunday Street Cars.

SHALL the Street Car Company of Toronto be allowed to run their cars on the Lord's Day? This question was submitted to vote in Toronto and answered in the negative about a year and a half ago; it seems, therefore, unfortunate that, by provision in the charter of the Company, it should be possible after so short a period to put the city to the trouble of voting again. Had the majority against running the cars been a narrow one there might have been excuse for demanding a new decision of the question; but the vote stood, as will be remembered, about 10,000 for running on Sabbath and 14,000 against. It is alleged, however, that the introduction of the electric car on part of the street system is a good reason for change of mind on the part of voters. Were horses alone entitled to a day of weekly rest this reason might have some weight, but the citizens of Toronto, we trust, do not so regard the matter; and their vote, we sincerely trust, will be as unambiguous as before. But great exertions must be made by all friends of the Sabbath in the few weeks before the vote is taken and unless they bestir themselves a decision may be recorded which pious men and friends of labour may have cause to regret.

This question of Sunday street cars—indeed of Sunday labour in general—has been so often and so thoroughly discussed, that nothing new can be said upon it. Previous to the vote at the end of 1891 in this city almost everything that can be said on both sides was vigorously urged.

It has been contended in favour of running Sunday cars that a city of the extent of Toronto required this convenience; that cars would be highly useful to those who attended distant churches; that labouring people, especially in the central parts of the city would be enabled to breathe the fresh air of the parks and suburbs, that friends in localities remote from each other could exchange visits; that mourners and others could reach the cemeteries. It was even urged that the need of employing more labour would give a chance to men who could not now obtain employment. Much was said of the unreasonableness and inhumanity of those who can keep carriages or hire cabs denying cheap transit to the labouring man, and of the pharisaism of ministers and others who use cabs in connection with religious services objecting to the use of street cars.

The friends of a quiet Sabbath opposed the running of cars on grounds of religion and humanity, and on economi-

cal grounds. A day of weekly rest was ordained by divine authority at the beginning, and the fourth commandment said "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." The Sabbath could not, therefore, be regarded as a part of the Judaism which had passed away; it was perpetuated in the Lord's Day of the New Testament. But even should lower ground be taken, the whole Christian world had agreed to cease from ordinary labour, and to give a special religious character to the day which commemorates the Lord's resurrection. That there might be opportunity for public worship and religious duties of a personal and family kind the rest of the Lord's Day must be guarded and protected. The experience of all lands and of all the centuries was decisive as to this point.

The allowing of street cars on the Lord's day, logically, made legitimate a great many other species of Sunday labour. It is impossible, indeed, to say where a limit could be placed. There is hardly any description of labour that might not ask to be allowed, on the ground that it is useful or convenient to classes of the community. Thus the character of the Sabbath might be entirely changed and the day become a purely secular day.

The use of private carriages by those who kept them was no reason why a public service should be established. It was not purposed to prevent any man, rich or poor, from using on the streets any conveyance which he had; but that some wealthy men took out their horses, whether right or wrong, could not lay the community under obligation to provide a general system of conveyance throughout the city. In like manner it was absurd to argue that because ministers occasionally used cabs in fulfilling distant appointments, provision of travel should be made for all indiscriminately. The plea of "necessity and mercy" had always been valid in regard to work on the Sabbath.

Then, again, it was amply demonstrated that the true friends of labour had every reason for maintaining the Sabbath rest. To the generation of men, wearied with toil, the weekly Sabbath is an inestimable boon, and no apparent, immediate advantage could ever compensate the labouring man for taking away or impairing his right to one day of entire cessation from toil. Man is not made to work seven days in the week; neither his physical nor intellectual nature can stand it. If he attempts it with energy he breaks down prematurely; if he works with less energy the result, as abundant evidence shows, is six days' pay for seven days' work.

As to getting fresh air in the parks and the country, those who are pent up during the week in close places are entitled to all consideration, but it does not follow that the Sabbath is the day specially to be used for that purpose, either by the rich or the poor. Why should not grasping labour allow some other time? Indeed, even as it is, there are very few in Toronto who have not opportunities every week of recuperation in the purest atmosphere, if they are disposed to take advantage of them. We do not like to accuse any large section of the community of insincerity, but we must say that this solicitude for the welfare of the working man comes in very suspiciously in the present connection. Those who have proved themselves the friends of the labouring classes and of the poor are, as a rule, on the other side of this question.

Surely Toronto will not prove unfaithful to its record! Surely our churches will defend an institution which is essential to their well-being. Those who believe that the God of heaven and earth has spoken will not refuse to hearken to His voice. The intelligent friends of the labour-