

was on the Sabbath. They had grown up in a hard school under the mailed hand of persecution. They had need to be men of stern mould to resist oppression and assert their liberty. It was little wonder they were intensely serious and even fanatical. Ascetic in all else, they could not well escape being so here.

4. Furthermore, if it be in order to judge of the soundness of a principle by the results to which it leads when adopted by the bulk of the people, the present condition of those countries which have the continental Sunday may well make us pause before following their example. It has been found practically impossible to keep recreation and amusement within anything like reasonable limits. They may have begun by seeking relaxation in simple and natural ways that were comparatively harmless, but they soon demanded that larger facilities be afforded them for amusement on a large scale; and, so, conveyances had to be run to the points where amusement and relaxation were readily to be had. They may have begun by amusing themselves, but they soon demanded that they should be amused, and so bands had to play in the squares, concert halls and theatres had to be opened, horse races and bull fights had to be arranged that they might make mad holiday on the Sabbath. They may have begun by spending a part of the day in religious services and only a part in enjoyment, but they soon found the latter the more agreeable and the whole day was absorbed in folly or sheer idleness. They may have had no thought of injuring any one in his rights, but every service rendered, whether in transporting or amusing them, robbed some one of the rest of the day, until they have become a great army who cater to the public pleasure at their souls' expense. And if these plied their calling why not others too? When the Sabbath is not held sacred from pleasure it will not be held sacred from gain. Greed seized upon it and set the people to work as on other days. In all countries where the Continental Sunday prevails a large proportion of the working classes know almost no cessation of toil from one year's end to the other. It is little wonder that the working men of England have time and again petitioned against the apparently harmless measure of opening picture galleries, museums, and libraries on the Lord's day. They see in it but the beginning of their own enslavement.

Let us now return to the consideration of the arguments.

1. First, it is said to be practically impossible to spend the whole available day in religious exercises, and it is urged that for children especially, such exercises must become intolerably wearisome. But the whole force of this argument lies in the fact, that the idea of religious exercises is made to include only those which are solemn and formal. They of course become wearisome if too long continued, and there is no doubt they have often been made so by the indiscretion of church authorities and parents.