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THE DAY OF REST.

BY

W. McDONNELL,

AUTHOR OF "EXETER HALL," "THE HEATHENS OF
THE HEATH," ETC.

"If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake, if anywhere anyone sets up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to do anything that will reprove this encroachment on Christian spirit and liberty."
—Martin Luther.

(First published in The Canadian Monthly.)

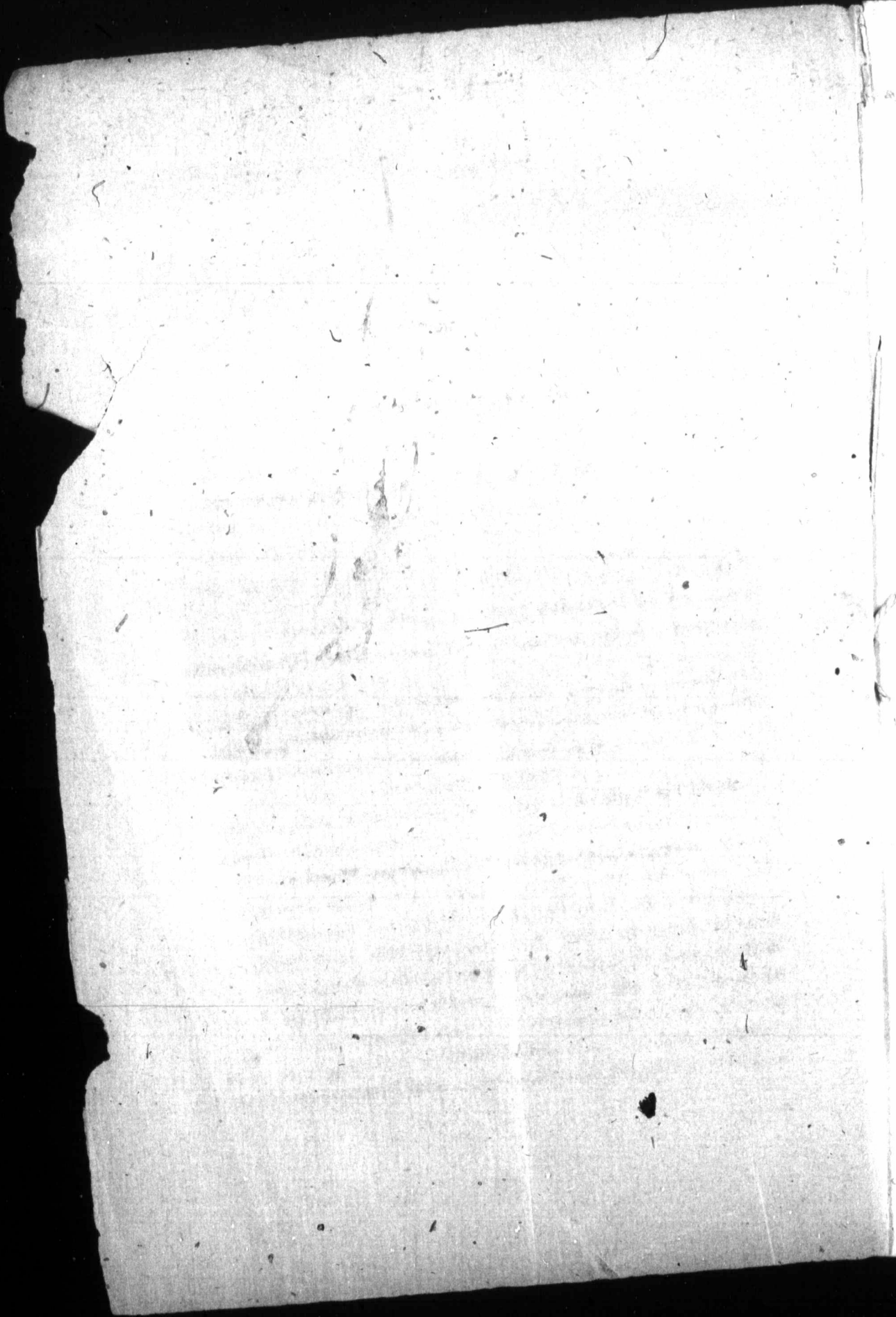
LINDSAY:

THE CANADIAN POST PRINTING AND PUBLISHING HOUSE.

1877.

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TO THE READER.

The greater portion of the subject of the following pages entitled, "The Day of Rest," was first published in *The Canadian Monthly and National Review* for June, 1876. It is now published by particular request. What has been herein added will, it is considered, greatly strengthen the argument against the enforcement of a Puritanic Sabbath in Canada.

THE AUTHOR.

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THE DAY OF REST.

SWEET day of rest! be it Sabbath, or Sunday, or Lord's day, of heathen or Jewish origin, it should be the same to all—a day of rest. Come in what guise it will, its hours are sacred, and we should be prepared to accept it as being a special blessing to the human family. Oh! what a dreary world this would be without such a benign period for rest and relaxation; and the man who would attempt to abolish such a day would give evidence neither of his wisdom nor of the possession of a feeling heart that could urge him to a humane consideration for others. He who has wealth can retire when he chooses from the turmoil of busy life, and select his own time and place for recreation; but to the poor struggling toiler, a seventh day of rest should, at least, ever be secured as an undoubted and inalienable right.

Much has been said, and sung, and written, as to the dignity of labor. Proper industry is most commendable, for it promotes morality and independence; and reasonable exertion may be actual recreation. But who can say that there is any dignity in that almost enforced and involuntary labor which falls to the lot of the poor; or in that excessive, continuous, and prostrating drudgery to which the vast majority of the human family are subjected in order to earn even a precarious livelihood? Such labor is but a heritage of woe. If it was indeed a punishment which followed the fall of our great progenitor, Adam, it is apparent that his posterity have not been equally afflicted. There is far too much overwork imposed on some; there is far too much of it in the world. Even volun-

tary labor has been run to excess, by many; it has become one of the vices of selfishness, and has shortened the lives of thousands. That man will therefore be a true philanthropist who will endeavor to lessen such toil, and make the day of rest a day acceptable to rich and to poor alike, and one which can be truly cheering and beneficial to all.

As there has been a great deal of discussion with regard to the establishment of the Christian Sabbath, much doubt as to its required observance, and much intolerance, as to its enforcement, something of the history of that day may be acceptable to many whose impressions concerning it have almost entirely been formed from what they have read of it in the Scriptures, or from what they may have derived from only that source.

Authorities are greatly divided as to where, and when, and how a septenary observance was originated. Some assert that a seventh-day festival had its origin in India, a land which many of the learned consider as the most primitive of all nations; and a writer says that the "hebdomadal period had clearly an *astronomical*, and not, as is generally supposed, a *theological* derivation," and that "as the result of the most diligent investigation no trace of the 'week' is to be found among the Greeks, the Romans, the Chinese, or any of the northern races of Europe and Asia." Furthermore, "everywhere has been found a calendar of months commencing with the first visible 'new moon,' but *nowhere* the Hindoo and modern European week of seven days," and that "when we pass the Himalayan range, or in proportion as we recede in any direction from India and Egypt, and the countries lying between them, we lose all traces of Sabbaths."* Dion Cassius, the ancient Roman historian, states that in his time the custom of designating every recurring seven days by the names of planets was practised everywhere; and attributes its origin, not to the Jews, but to the Egyptians.† When he

* See *Westminster Review* for October, 1850.

† Roman History, B, xxxvii.

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* Proctor on
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wrote, neither the Greeks nor the Romans used the week ; the latter adopted it only at the time of Theodosius, near the end of the fourth century.

A recent writer says : "The observance [of a Sabbath] was derived from an Egyptian, and primarily from a Chaldean source ; rest being enjoined by Egyptian priests on the seventh day, simply because they regarded that day as a *dies infaustus* when it was unlucky to undertake any work." "We have also historical evidence as to the non-Jewish origin of the observance of the seventh day, as decisive as the arguments I have been considering. For Philo Judæus, Josephus, Clement of Alexandria, and others, speak plainly of the week as not of Jewish origin, but common to all the Oriental nations."*

The learned Spencer states that "from many evidences, the nations of the earth observed the new moon as a sacred festival long before the time of Moses."

It is known that while the "month" itself was an almost universal measure of time, nations of different origins, it is said, have made different subdivisions of the "new moon." Thus, oriental nations generally into quarterings (or weeks of seven days); the ancient Greeks into thirds (*dechemera* of ten days), which was modified by the Romans ; the Chinese into sixths, of five days ; and the aborigines of America into the same ; and it is further said that "the Oriental week (of seven days) is *unknown* and *untraced* where the division of the crescent and waning moon (each into two parts) has not formed the basis of computation."

Professor Fiske says : "The ancient Greeks and Romans had no division properly answering to our weeks ; although the former had their decade of days, and the latter their *nundinæ* or market days, occurring every ninth day. But the Egyptians and Orientals had a week of seven days.† Proctor, the astronomer, writes : "Beyond all doubt, the week is

* Proctor on "Saturn and the Sabbath of the Jews."

† Eschenburg's *Manual of Classical Literature*. Ed. by Prof. Fiske.

an astronomical period, and that in a two-fold sense ; it is first a rough subdivision of the lunar month, and, in the second place, it is a period derived directly from the number of celestial bodies known to ancient astronomers as *moving* upon the sphere of the fixed stars." Tacitus suggested that the observance of the seventh day by the Jews was in honor of Saturn, by whose name that day was generally known, as it is at present. And Proctor also states : " That the Egyptians dedicated the seventh day of the week to the outermost or highest planet, Saturn, is certain ; and it is presumable that this was a day of rest in Egypt."*

We have, however, *two* distinct reasons given in the Old Testament why the Jews were commanded to keep the seventh-day—reasons which, it seems, are satisfactory both to Jews and Christians. The first command is found in the 20th chapter of Exodus, the 8th verse of which says : " Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," and the reason for this is given in the 11th verse : " For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." The next command is recorded in the 5th chapter of Deuteronomy, commencing at the 12th verse, and is almost a reiteration of the previous one, being the same, word for word, except the change of place in the sentence of the pronoun " thou." The reason for the command is found in the 15th verse : " And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm ; *therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." According to this latter command then, the day was to be kept holy as a memorial of their national emancipation.

On this point Proctor remarks : It is indeed somewhat

* " Saturn and the Sabbath of the Jews."

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singular that the observance of the Sabbath should be derived from far remoter times by those who insist on the literal exactness of the Bible record, seeing that the Bible distinctly assigns the exodus from Egypt as the epoch when the observance had its origin."

"It needs no very elaborate reasoning to prove that the Jewish observance of the Sabbath began during the sojourn in Egypt."

"Assigning the origin of the first Jewish observance of the Sabbath to the time of the exodus, we are forced to the conclusion that the custom of keeping each seventh day as a day of rest was derived from the people amongst whom the Jews had been sojourning more than two hundred years."*

Though a violation of the commands concerning the Sabbath involved, as we are told in the 31st chapter of Exodus, the penalty of death: "Whosoever doeth *any* work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death;" this dreadful forfeiture, according to the 15th chapter of Numbers, having been exacted from a man who was stoned to death for gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, still we have undoubted authority for asserting that while many of the Jews kept the seventh day with austerity, even considering that it would be a violation of the Sabbath to resist an attack made on their city during that day, yet there were many others who regarded the Sabbath as a "feast of the Lord." The Jews as a nation, even Judaism itself, encouraged the seventh day to be held as a high festival as well as a day of joy and delight. A writer says: "It was to be honoured by the wearing of finer garments, by three special meals of the best cheer the house could afford. Wine, if the means of the individual would anyhow allow it, was to crown the repast. Fasting, mourning, mortification of all and every kind, even special supplicatory prayers, are strictly prohibited; but, on the contrary, the number of a 'hundred benedictions,' said at all

* "Saturn and the Sabbath of the Jews."

varieties of enjoyment of the senses, are to be completed on the Sabbath, were it even by eating different kinds of fruit, smelling different spices, &c." And again: "The same character of cheerfulness; of happy rest from the toil and turmoil of this world's business; of quiet and peaceful return into one's self; of joyous communication with friends and kindred over good cheer; in, short, of mental and bodily relaxation and recreation that strengthens, braces, pacifies, and maketh the heart glad, while the sublime ideas which it symbolizes are recalled to the memory at every step and turn, seems to have prevailed in all times down to our own among the Jews."

Suffice it to reiterate, that in every class, every age, and every variety of Jews, from first to last, the Sabbath has been absolutely a day of joy and happiness, nay, of dancing, of singing, of eating and drinking, and of luxury."

"A dark, fanatical, self-torturing spirit is as foreign to the Jewish Sabbath (which is prolonged as far as possible) as it is foreign to the Mosaic and post-Mosaic legislation, its written and oral laws in general."*

Though the Jews still keep Saturday as their day of rest and enjoyment, the Christian Church has changed the septenary period, and for many centuries the Lord's day, or the Sabbath, has been observed on Sunday. No definite information, it seems, can be given either in the New Testament, or in the writings of the Fathers of the Church as to the date of this change. It is asserted that "by none of the Fathers before the fourth century is it [Sunday] identified with the Sabbath, nor is the duty of observing it grounded by them either on the fourth commandment or on the precept or example of Jesus or His Apostles." And the question is asked, "On what grounds, then, did the Christian observe the first day of the week as a time for religious assemblies, and how and when did the custom of so distinguishing it begin?"† To

* Chambers's Encyclopædia, Art. "Sabbath."

† Chambers's Encyclopædia, Art. "Sabbath."

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this question different answers have been given. Some assert that it was because the resurrection of Christ took place on Sunday; others say that it was according to apostolic precept and example. Justin, in his "Apology," gives several reasons for the Sunday observance. He says: "We all of us assemble together on Sunday because it is the first day in which God changed darkness and matter, and made the world. On the same day, also, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, rose from the dead, for He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn, and on the day after that of Saturn, which is that of the Sun, He appeared to His apostles and disciples, and taught them what we now submit to your consideration." And Origen adds another reason: "that manna was first given to the Israelites on a Sunday."

With regard to the manner of keeping the Sunday, Justin, in his "Apology to the Emperor Antonius," gives no intimation that rest from labour was followed except during Divine service, for "the Christians in this Father's age thought it lawful to follow, and actually did follow, their worldly pursuits on the Sunday." But no matter what the practice of the early Christians might have been in this respect, the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, relative to a cessation from labour on the Sunday, is that contained in the edict of Constantine, A. D. 321, which says: "Let all judges and people of the towns (or cities) rest, and all the various trades be suspended on the venerable day of the Sun (*venerabile die Solis*). Those who live in the country, however, may freely and without fault attend to the cultivation of their fields (since it often happens that no other day may be so suitable for sowing grain and planting the vine), lest, with the loss of favourable opportunity, the commodities offered by Divine Providence should be destroyed."

It was not, however, until long after the promulgation of this edict that "tendencies towards Sabbatarianism, or a confusion of the Christian with the Jewish institution, began to

manifest themselves," and it was not until the year 538 A. D. that ecclesiastical authority (the third Council of Orleans) recommended, rather than enjoined, abstinence from agricultural labour on Sunday, in order, it is said, "that the people might have more leisure to go to church and say their prayers." The theory of the holiness of the Sabbath, and of its binding force, had its advocates and opponents down to the period of the Reformation. Luther and many of the Reformers, followed by numbers of the most eminent prelates and preachers even to the present time, have strongly objected to a Mosaic, or an austere, or which might be called a puritanic observance of the Christian Sabbath. Luther says: "As regards the Sabbath or Sunday, there is no necessity for keeping it; but if we do, it ought not to be on account of Moses' commandment, but because nature teaches us from time to time to take a day of rest"* And again: "If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake, if anywhere any one sets up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to do anything that will improve this encroachment on the Christian spirit and liberty."†

Melancthon says: "They who think that, by the authority of the Church, the observance of the Lord's day was appointed instead of the Sabbath, as if necessary, are greatly deceived."‡

Erasmus, Tyndale, Calvin, Grotius, Neander, Milton, Baxter, and Bunyan also express themselves against the enforcement of any Sabbath obligation. And a writer on the views of the celebrated John Knox regarding the Sabbath, says: "It is a mistake to suppose that either Sabbatarianism or asceticism was recommended by Knox. Agreeing with the other Reformers, Knox, in setting forth in his Confession of Faith, 1560, 'The works of the First Table,' says not a word about the Sabbath."§

* Michelet's Life, B. iv. chap. 2.
 † Coleridge's Table Talk, Vol. ii.
 ‡ Augsburg Confession of Faith.
 § Chambers's Encyclopædia.

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Erasmus says : " He that ordained the Sabbath ordained it for man's sake, and not contrariwise—man because of the Sabbath day. It is meet, therefore, that the keeping of the Sabbath day give place to the commodity and profit of man."*

" As for the Sabbath," says Tyndale, the martyr, " we be lordes over the Saboth, find may yet change it into the Monday or any other day as we see neede ; or we may make two every weeke, if it were expedient, and one not enough to teach the people. Neither needed we any holy day at all, if the people myght be taught without it."†

With regard to the " Lord's Day," Calvin observes that it was used " *only* as a remedy necessary to the preservation of order in the Church, neither do I so regard the septenary number that I would bind the church to its observance." And referring to those who hold a " Judaic opinion " respecting the fourth commandment, he continues : " And truly we see what such a doctrine has profited ; for those who adopt it far exceed the Jews in a gross, carnal and superstitious observance of the Sabbath ; so that the reproofs which we read in Isaiah are no less applicable to them at the present day than to those whom the prophet rebuked in his time."‡

Grotius, in his comment on the fourth commandment, after alluding to the sentiments of the Fathers, and the enactments of Constantine, concludes : " These things refute those who suppose that the first day of the week (that is, the Lord's day) was substituted in place of the Sabbath, for no mention is ever made of such a thing by Christ or the Apostles.

The day of the Lord's resurrection was not observed by Christians from any precept of God, or of the Apostles, but by voluntary agreement of the liberty which had been given them."§

Neander says : " The festival of Sunday was always only

* Paraphrase on Mark, ii.

† Tyndale's Works, B. i., cap. 25.

‡ Institutes, B. ii., cap. 8.

§ Annotations on Exodus.

a human ordinance, and it was far from the intention of the Apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect."*

Milton argues: "The law of the Sabbath being thus repealed, that no particular day of worship has been appointed in its place is evident."†

Baxter writes: "The Decalogue was but part of the Jewish law, and the Jewish law was given to no other people but to them. So that in Moses day it bound no other nation in the world. Therefore it needed not any abrogation of the Gentiles, but a declaration that it did not bind them."‡

And Bunyan, in his essay on the Sabbath day, says: "This caution, in conclusion, I would give to put a stop to the Jewish ceremony, to wit, that a seventh-day Sabbath, pursued according to its imposition by law (and I know not that it is imposed by the Apostles), leads to blood and stoning to death those who do but gather sticks thereon, a thing which no way becomes the Gospel." He declares that "the old seventh-day Sabbath is abolished and done away with, and that it has nothing to do with the Churches of the Gentiles." And again: "As for the seventh day, that is gone to its grave with the signs and shadows of the Old Testament."

Following these, down to the present day, there are other testimonies against an enforced observance of the Sabbath, from distinguished churchmen and divines such as Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Dr. Barrow, Bishop Warburton, Dr. McNight, Dr. Paley, Bishop Horsley and Archbishop Whately.

Bishop Taylor says: "That we are free from the observance of the Sabbath, St. Paul expressly affirms in Colossians."§

Bishop Warburton states that "the observance of the Sabbath is no more a natural duty than circumcision."||

Dr. McNight says: "The whole law of Moses being abro-

* History of the Christian Church, sec. iii.

† Christian Doctrine, B. ii., cap. 7.

‡ Baxter on the Lord's Day, Vol. iii., cap. 7.

§ Ductor Dubitantium, B. ii., cap. 2.

|| Divine Legation, B. iv., sec. 6.

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gated by Christ, Christians are under no obligation to observe any of the Jewish holidays—not even the Sabbath.”*

Dr. Paley asserts that “St. Paul evidently appears to have considered the Sabbath as part of the Jewish ritual, and not obligatory upon Christians.” . . . “The celebration of divine service never occupied the whole day. What remains, therefore, of Sunday, must be considered as a mere rest from the ordinary occupations of civil life. If the command by which the Sabbath was instituted be binding on Christians, it must be binding as to the day, the duties, and the penalty; in none of which it is received. The observance of the Sabbath was not one of the articles enjoined by the Apostles. The practice of holding religious assemblies on one day of the week *may* have originated from some precept of Christ or His Apostles, though *none such* now be extant.” . . . “A cessation upon that day from labour, beyond the time of attendance upon public worship *is not intimated* in any passage of the New Testament; neither did Christ or His Apostles deliver, that we know of, any command to their disciples for a discontinuance upon that day of the common affairs of their professions. The resting on that day from our employments, longer than we are detained from them by attendance upon these assemblies, is, to Christians, an ordinance of human institution.”†

And Archbishop Whately, in his essay on Paul, says: “It cannot be denied that he [Paul] does speak frequently and strongly of the termination of the Mosaic law, and of the exemptions of Christians from its obligations without ever limiting or qualifying the assertion.” And he further adds: “The fourth commandment is evidently not a ‘moral’ but a ‘positive’ precept. It will be plainly seen on a careful examination of the accounts given by the evangelists, that Jesus did decidedly and avowedly *violate the Sabbath*; on purpose it would seem to assert in this way his divine authority.” . . . “The dogma

* Com. on Epistles, Col.

† Moral Philosophy, B. v., c. 7.

of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, that the observance of the Sabbath is a part of the moral law, is to me utterly unintelligible.*

Sir Wm. Domville, in his "Six Texts," p. 241, says: "Centuries of the christian era passed away before the Sunday was observed by the Christian church as a Sabbath. History does not furnish us with a single proof or indication that it was at any time so observed previous to the Sabbatical edict of Constantine in A. D. 321."

A list of the names of many other eminent bishops and clergymen could be added who are in agreement with the sentiments of the prominent authorities already given, and it is truly a wonder that where so much doubt and denial exists as to the subjection of the Christian Church to a Jewish enactment regarding the keeping of the Sabbath, there should be found so many of the clergy clamorous for the rigorous enforcement of a law which, to say the least, is so questionable an authority.

It seems that for a long period after the Reformation there was much indifference among Christian people in England, as well as among those in other parts of Europe, as to the manner of keeping the Sabbath. The English reformers having abolished many of the festivals or ordinary holidays which had been kept previous to the English Reformation, the observance of Sunday and of the few holidays still retained was placed "much on the same footing." "No work except for good cause was to be performed, the service of the church was to be attended," and afterwards, "any lawful amusement might be indulged in." About this time, therefore, as a general rule, after the hours of Divine service, or after a man had been to church, he might enjoy himself with sports, games, and other lawful amusements as he thought proper.

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a party known as the Sabbatarians insisted that, according to the fourth command-

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ment, the seventh day, Saturday, and not the first day, Sunday, should be kept as the proper Sabbath period, and that it was obligatory on the Christian Church to observe that day and a strict bodily rest thereon as a "service then due to God;" while another party, the Puritans, much more numerous, "though convinced that the day had been altered by Divine authority, took up the same opinion as to the Scriptural obligation to refrain from work." Gradually, however, the stronger and "more scrupulous" party, while they slighted holidays and church festivals—which they considered as only of "human appointment"—advocated a stricter observance of the Lord's day, and about the year 1595 "they began to place it nearly on the footing of the Jewish Sabbath, interdicting not only the slightest action of worldly business, but even every sort of pastime and recreation," and, as long as their influence continued, they gave to Sunday-keeping for many years an "austerity by which neither it nor the Sabbath-keeping of the Jews had ever before been marked."

The Puritans, when predominant for a time in the reign of Charles I., and taking advantage of the necessities of the King, succeeded in obliging him, much against his will, to comply with their desires, and about 1621 they introduced a bill in the House of Commons "for the better observance of the Sabbath, usually called Sunday." This met with scarcely any opposition in the Lower House; "yet when the Upper House sent down the bill with the 'Lord's Day' substituted for the 'Sabbath,' observing 'that people do now much incline to words of Judaism,' the Commons took no exception. The use of the word Sabbath instead of Sunday became in that age a distinctive mark of the Puritan party."* Strange to say, though the Act was passed to satisfy the "atrabillious humour" of the strict Sabbatarian party, "this statute permits

* Hallam, Constitutional History.

the people lawful sports and pastimes on Sunday within their own parishes."*

In 1633, however, King Charles I., either actuated by the Episcopal party, which was always bitterly opposed to the Puritans, or believing that the puritanic observance of the Sabbath made Sunday but a day of gloom and depression, revived the declaration of his father, James I., which had not been enforced, as to the lawful sports which might be used on Sundays, and the clergy were required by Archbishop Laud to publish the same from their pulpits. In this declaration the King signified it to be his pleasure that on Sundays, after Divine service, "no lawful recreation should be barred to his good people, which should not tend to a breach of the laws of his kingdom and the canons of his church."† The sports allowed were "dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting, May-games, Whitsunales, Morrice-dances, and the setting up of May-poles;"‡ bear-baiting and other unlawful games being prohibited; but as respects the sports which might be indulged in, "No recusant, or one who had not attended the church service, was entitled to this privilege, which might consequently be regarded as a bounty on devotion."§ This declaration gave great offence at the time to the Puritans, and in 1644 the Long Parliament ordered all copies of it to be burned. Subsequently, notwithstanding this, the Lord's day fell into comparative neglect in England, and in the early part of the reign of George III. efforts were made to make the people better disposed towards it, and less inclined to "viscious unseemly amusements," and a new "Evangelical party" endeavoured to promote the "strict observance of Sunday according to the Puritan model." This dogmatic party must have been led to fresh activity in consequence of the efforts of certain persons "in the ranks of the learned societies" to make the Sabbath a greater benefit

* Note in Hallam's Constitutional History.

† Chambers's Encyclopædia.

‡ Ibid.

§ Hallam.

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to the common people. In 1829, a petition, signed by thousands of persons, was presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Joseph Hume, which set forth that the opening to the public "of the British Museum and other exhibitions of art and nature on Sundays" would do much towards doing away with "the evils of intemperance and dissipation prevailing on the Sabbath," vices which it was alleged existed for "the want of recreation and amusement." After this, eighty-four members of the House voted for a motion in favour of the petition, and the action thus taken led to the opening on Sunday of Hampton Court Palace and Kew Gardens, by Sir William Molesworth. Afterwards, in 1831, societies were formed for "promoting the due observance of the Lord's day," and the subject of strict Sabbath-keeping was agitated in Parliament. Attempts were subsequently made to close the Post Office, to prevent the transmission of mails, and the conveyance of passengers by rail or otherwise. Excursions to the country and Sunday trips by water were to be prohibited; the London parks and public gardens were to be closed to prevent persons from walking therein and listening to music; music itself was to be saddened or solemnized and banished to the churches; desirable and healthful recreation was to be denied the people; and no opportunity was to be afforded them to view the works of nature and art in the national collections.

When fanatical or subservient legislators, who, no doubt, had ample time and opportunity for self-enjoyment, would shut thousands of poor, overworked people from public parks and gardens, would close museums, and art galleries, and libraries, and similar places for rest or intellectual elevation, giving a large majority of the population but the choice of a resort either to the streets or to churches, or to retreats which it would be better to avoid—when men, women, and children were to be thus restrained in order to be brought to show a proper respect for Sunday, it was full time that the unreason-

able zeal of Sabbath advocates, either clerical or official, either in or out of Parliament, should be effectually curbed to prevent threatened popular uprisings and indignation meetings throughout the kingdom. To this end the "National Sunday League" was formed in 1855, under the Presidency of Sir Joshua Walmsley, and active measures were at once taken to have museums and similar institutions opened on Sunday afternoons; and though almost fierce opposition was offered by strict Sabbatarians, a concession was at last made to the persistent demands of the people in 1857. Military bands were placed on Sunday in Regent and Victoria parks, and a greater taste for good music was thereby engendered; for when those bands were subsequently withdrawn other bands were quickly formed to satisfy the public.

The fanatical opponents of Sunday recreation continuing still active, a memorial signed by nine hundred and forty-three gentlemen "connected with literature, science, and the fine arts, Professors of the several universities, &c.," was presented in 1860 to the Queen, requesting her to favour the removal "of all restrictions and impediments so that the national museums, picture galleries, botanical gardens, &c., throughout the United Kingdom may be opened to the public on Sunday afternoon."

The movement for the liberation of Sunday having become so general, the Government decided to withdraw the annual grant to the Royal Dublin Society unless the Botanic Gardens of that city were opened on that day. After this, petition after petition was presented to Parliament, to modify if not to abrogate "the anomalous laws which regulate Sunday observance in England," and whilst the names of the most learned and scientific men in the Kingdom could be readily obtained to such petitions, one also "was signed by two hundred clergymen and ministers of religion," and which had the signatures "of the Rector of Bethnal Green, the Chaplains in Ordi-

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nary to Her Majesty, the Dean of Westminster, and the Master of Balliol College, Oxford."*

Notwithstanding (these proofs of a very popular desire, evangelical narrowness "was still restive and mischievous." Sunday evening lectures, mostly on scientific and literary subjects, were delivered in St. Martin's Hall, London, under the Presidency of Professor Huxley. These lectures became so popular and successful that the latent spirit of intolerance was again aroused, and the proprietor of the hall was prosecuted by the "Lord's Day Observance Society," on "the allegation that the 'Sunday evenings for the people' rendered that place a 'disorderly house.'" The case was taken from the Police Court to a higher tribunal, and though legal ingenuity, and every pious stratagem were used to sustain the absurd charge, when it was heard in the Court of Common Pleas in the Westminster Hall, two Justices of the Court dismissed the case and gave judgment against the prosecution.†

During the agitation of this question, Lord Granville, suspecting that there was a great deal of pharisaism in excluding the general public from the gardens on Sunday, archly drew attention to the fact (as also similarly exhibited at the late Centennial display at Philadelphia) that certain particular friends, as well as certain distinguished visitors, could always get admission on Sunday to the public parks or gardens, and to another garden "upon payment of entrance money," and he further observed—"with regard to the police question the fact of a memorial in favour of opening the gardens being signed by all the police magistrates in Dublin was a greater authority than any argument which he could use. The same objections which were made now were urged against throwing open Kew and Hampton Court, but the result had shown that the majority of the visitors on Sunday were artisans of the metropolis, and that their behaviour was orderly and unex-

* *Westminster Review*.

† Mr. Justice Willes and Mr. Justice Byles, on Nov. 19th, 1868.

ceptionable. Since he had been in the House he had been informed by an Irish peer that when he proposed to throw open his grounds to the public he was warned of the danger of disorder and devastation, but nothing of the sort had happened, and nothing could be more orderly than the conduct of the population so admitted. A deputation, representing as many as fifty-nine Irish constituencies, of all creeds and politics, had pressed on the Government in the strongest manner, the desirability of opening their gardens on Sunday."

The Protestant Bishop of Down and Connor supported the views of Lord Granville, and said: "What could be more becoming than to give the Christian people of a Christian country the innocent recreation on a Sunday which was denied them on every other day in the week. The upper ranks of society were able to take recreation on all days, but the working classes in every large town were immured in close rooms, breathing a polluted atmosphere, with no possible means of enjoyment; and that being so, the upper classes, he thought, could hardly reconcile it to themselves on religious grounds to exclude the poor from enjoying the fresh air and the recreation which such gardens as these naturally afforded. When they considered the many evils to which the populations of large towns were exposed on Sundays, they must admit that it was an advantage to remove them as far as possible from their unholy temptations. He must express a hope that public places of this sort would not be closed on that day."

At the present period the most cultivated in the scientific, literary and artistic circles of Europe and America, are the strongest advocates for Sunday recreation for the people, and numerous instances could be given to prove that the Nobility as well as the Gentry of Great Britain have co-operated to make the seventh day one of greater intellectual enjoyment, "the Queen herself not hesitating to set the example of having a concert on Sunday, which includes in its programme

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operatic selections.* And now, while the "Sunday Society" established in August, 1875, advocates a due regard for what is called the "Lord's Day," its great object appears to be to secure for the people the recreation and the chance of moral and intellectual improvement of which unwise and over zealous Sabbath defenders would deprive them.

As a telling evidence to prove that the liberty gained for the public by the establishment of the National Sunday League has not been abused, a late English paper says: "The 22nd season of the Sunday Bands in the Parks has commenced, and the Chief Commissioner of Works, London, in his late report, has expressed his entire satisfaction with the manner of carrying out the arrangements in the Regent's Park by the Council of the National Sunday League, and in the Victoria Park by a local committee. Not one single police case or disturbance of any kind in connection with the playing of the bands in the parks has occurred during the 21 years that the practice has lasted, and the report of the Chief Commissioner is that not a single complaint from any resident of the district has reached his office, though he has received many expressions of approval."

Strange to say, that, notwithstanding all this, a large ma-

* See *Westminster Review* for July, 1876; Article, "Sunday in England."

As most British clergymen, especially those of the Church of England, are ready to pay an almost obsequious deference to any opinion uttered by Her Majesty, the following account of one of her Sunday visits, communicated to the *Toronto Mail*, of Nov. 15th, 1876, by a correspondent in England, may cause them to modify their opinions as to strict Sabbath keeping:—"The Queen on Sunday Harvesting."—On Sunday, 29th ult., Her Majesty, accompanied by the Princess Beatrice, drove to Lochnagar distillery, and paid a visit to Mr. Begg. From continuous wet, the weather had on the previous day cleared up and changed to bright sunshine. The Queen, after a short stay at Lochnagar Farm, continued her drive by way of Balnacroft, and remained some time beside a field of oats belonging to Mr. Begg, where about fifty men and women were actively at work binding in stooks grain which had been spread out to dry on the Saturday. It was quite dry on Sunday, and the people in the district turned out, and with willing hands had the whole field bound and stooked by evening, part of the operation being conducted by moonlight. Before leaving, Her Majesty signified to Mr. Begg her opinion that the work was one of necessity: In this, says the *Dundee Advertiser*, she differs from some Scotch clergymen, who on Sunday and on the Sunday previous denounced from the pulpit the practice of Sunday harvesting as a violation of the sanctity of the Sabbath."

jority of the clergy stubbornly ignore such evidence, or, it must be, are ignorant of its very existence. Puerile tracts are still written and circulated as to the sanctity of the Sabbath, cautions and warnings innumerable are issued against Sabbath breaking, and pulpit explosions against Sabbath desecrations are as loud as ever ; while that which was before overlooked or considered even harmless is now classed by many of the pietists as an offence of this kind. For instance,—a member of the Plymouth Brethren boldly asserted that the ringing of church bells on Sunday was a Sabbath desecration ; a Presbyterian elder said that the assembly of a motley crowd by the bank of a river on Sunday to witness the baptism of adults by immersion was a Sabbath desecration, the practice too often leading to immorality. In a book lately circulated by the authority of the English Church it is pronounced sinful to attend a dissenting place of worship ; therefore attendance at a Methodist chapel, for instance, would be a Sabbath desecration. Of course Monsgr. Bourget, the Catholic bishop, would say—were he to speak his mind freely—that any kind of Protestant worship on Sunday would be a Sabbath desecration. On the 12th of July, 1876, the Rev. Mr. Gaetz preached to the Orangemen of Montreal, and he told them that popish processions through the streets on Sunday were Sabbath desecrations. Processions of Masons, Oddfellows or Orangemen on Sunday have also been pronounced Sabbath desecrations. Lately the Canadian Evangelical Alliance has issued a bull against Sunday funerals as being Sabbath desecrations ; and, lastly, a religious paper in the United States, " The Congregationalist," referring to Methodist camp meetings on Sunday, stated last year that it hoped " it will not be thought unwise, unfraternal or disrespectful to our brethren [the Methodists] if we give some utterance to the deep sorrow which fills the minds of many good people at the way in which the Lord's day is now desecrated in connection with their religious services of that day."

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One of the latest public agitations with reference to strict Sabbath keeping was that which took place in Glasgow, Scotland, about the year 1865, and in which the late Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D., was opposed to the fanatical Sabbatarian party in the Presbyterian Church.

In the Life of the late Rev. Norman Macleod, D. D., by his brother, the Rev. Donald Macleod, reference is made in the 18th Chapter to the "series of public demonstrations" which had taken place [in Glasgow] "against the running of Sunday trains and other forms of Sabbath desecration, and the Presbytery of Glasgow, to give effect to these expressions of popular feeling, prepared a pastoral letter to be read in all the churches within its jurisdiction. As this letter enforced the observance of the Lord's day by arguments directly opposed to the teaching Dr. Macleod had given his congregation for many years, it was impossible for him to read it from the pulpit without expressing his dissent. He therefore felt himself bound to state to his brethren in the Presbytery the grounds on which he differed from their judgment."

"He believed that the authority of the Jewish Sabbath was an insufficient, unscriptural, and therefore perilous basis on which to rest the observance of the Lord's day. . . In proportion to the strict enforcement of Sabbatarianism, there would, in his opinion, be multiplied those practical inconsistencies, dishonesties, and Pharisaic sophistries, which prove, in all ages, supremely detrimental to morality and religion. It was, therefore, with the desire of vindicating the divine sanction of the Lord's day, as distinct from the Sabbath, that he addressed the Presbytery, and in doing so he anticipated, with a deep sense of responsibility, the peril he must incur and the pain his views were certain to inflict on many of his countrymen."

Though Dr. Macleod disbelieved in the alleged Jewish authority for the observance of the "Lord's day," and though his views were on the whole sufficiently accommodating to tolerate on other grounds some such observance, yet Presbyterian

clerical excitement against him became most unreasonable, and his brother thus alludes to it :—

“As it was, the outburst of popular feeling was amazing. His views were not really startling, for they were common to perhaps a majority of the best theologians of the Reformed Churches. Yet if the speaker had renounced Christianity itself he could scarcely have produced a greater sensation. He became not only an object of suspicion and dislike to the unthinking and fanatical, but he was mourned over by many really good men as one who had become an enemy to the truth. His table was loaded with letters remonstrating with him, abusing him, denouncing, cursing him. Ministers of the Gospel passed him without recognition ; one of these more zealous than the rest, hissed him in the street. During the first phase of this agitation he felt acutely the loneliness of his position.”

And then Dr. Macleod's own words are given,—“I felt at first so utterly cut off from every Christian brother that, had a chimney-sweep given me his sooty hand, and smiled on me with his black face, I would have welcomed his salute and blessed him. Men apologized for having been seen in my company. An eminent minister of the Free Church refused to preach in a united Presbyterian pulpit in which I was to preach the same day. Orators harangued against me in the City Hall and Merchants' Hall. The empty drums rattled and the brazen trumpets blew ‘certain sounds’ in every village. ‘Leave the church!’ ‘Libel him!’ were the brotherly advices given. Money was subscribed to build a Free Barony Church ; and a Free Church Mission house was opened beside mine, (‘though having no reference to me,’ as it was said!). Caricatures were displayed in every shop window.”

And again he says,—“But the awful conviction is deeply impressing itself upon me that the gospel is not preached generally in Scotland, that so-called ‘Evangelicalism’ is Judaism.”

In an entry in his journal respecting the “Sabbath question,” he wrote :—“One would have to read the newspapers I have

collected, to every pulpit teeth on me controversy in Scotland.’ more and m pathizing wi ent, bold for long felt une form and pu those who th bath. No v except by sc church pape had it all th themselves v would soon

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collected, to comprehend the fury of the attack. Men from every pulpit and through the daily press seem to gnash their teeth on me." . . . "I am persuaded that the Sabbath controversy will more and more reveal the intense Judaism in Scotland." . . . "The more intelligent of the laity were more and more becoming moderate in their views and sympathizing with me. I had but dared to express in a coherent, bold form, what they had long practically felt. They had long felt uneasy about the universal declamations from platform and pulpit about 'Sabbath desecration,' as it is called by those who themselves employ cabs or milk-carts, &c., on Sabbath. No voice was lifted up in defence of fair christian liberty except by so-called secular papers, *i. e.*, non-sectarian or non-church papers. What could any layman do? The clergy had it all their own way, and woe be to the man who among themselves would dare to 'peep.' If he had no influence he would soon be crushed by the evangelical battering rams." . . . "There is a set of ecclesiastics who will not read a book, a newspaper, or argue with any one who does not reflect their own sentiments. They look into the glass and say, 'I see every time I look there one who always agrees with me.' That is their whole world, and of the rest they are profoundly ignorant."

The *Christian Union*, a religious paper published in New York, expresses its opinion as to what the "current of public thought" will be, even among the pious, regarding the "Puritan fast day of the last century," and says,—

"The Sabbath of the past will not be the Sabbath of the future; indeed it will not be Sabbath at all; it will be the Lord's Day. The current that flows away from the past is unmistakable. Sabbath committees, assemblies, convocations, cannot dam it up. They might better attempt to stop the Mississippi with bulrushes than to stop a current of public thought with sermons, tracts and resolutions. If the Church is wise it will study the Lord's Day of the future rather than

the Sabbath of the past—the christian festival of the next decade, rather than the Puritan fast day of the last century—and seek to guide the ‘current’ which it is, happily, powerless to check. The only effect of endeavouring to shut the doors of the public library and the gates of the public park is to augment the moral power of those who would open the theatre and the beer garden.”

From the evidence presented, we therefore find that at a very early period—some assert “long before the time of Moses”—there was a septenary observance in India and Egypt and among other Oriental nations, and that this was generally for rest and recreation; that the Jews had a seventh-day Sabbath which among that people was almost generally kept as a high festival, a day of joy and delight, “a day of dancing, of singing, of eating and drinking, and of luxury;” that other nations kept similar observances at longer or shorter periods, and that in course of time the septenary festival became almost universal; that by none of the Christian fathers before the fourth century was Sunday identified with the Sabbath, nor was the duty of keeping it grounded on the fourth commandment; that no definite information can be given as to when Sunday was adopted as the Christian Sabbath, various reasons being given for the change; that the early Christians enjoyed themselves on the Sunday much after the manner of the Jews; that there was no law of any kind relating to a cessation from labour on that day before the edict of Constantine; and that for a long period abstinence from labour on the Sunday was recommended only during Divine service; that Luther and many of the Reformers, and a large number of the most prominent Christian ministers, did not consider, and that many do not yet consider, the Jewish Sabbath binding on the Christian Church.

As to how the “Evangelical party” have clung to certain Judaical teachings, and as to the manner in which they have persisted, until Sunday has almost been legislated into a

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"hideous tyranny," Herbert Spencer, in his "Study of Sociology," considers what might be said "by an independent observer living in the far future":—

"In some respects," says the future observer, 'their code of conduct seems not to have advanced beyond, but to have gone back from the code of a still more ancient people, from whom their creed was derived. The relations of their creed to the creed of this ancient people are indeed difficult to understand. . . . Not only did they, in the law of retaliation, outdo the Jews, instead of obeying the quite opposite principle of the teacher they worship as divine, but they obeyed the Jewish law, and disobeyed their divine teacher in other ways—as in the rigid observance of every seventh day, which he has deliberately discountenanced. . . . Their substantial adhesion to the creed they had professedly repudiated was clearly demonstrated by this, that in each of their temples they fixed up in some conspicuous place the Ten Commandments of the Jewish religion, while they rarely, if ever, fixed up the two Christian Commandments given instead of them. And yet,' says the reporter, after dilating on these strange facts, 'though the English were greatly given to missionary enterprises of all kinds, and though I sought diligently among the records of these, I could find no trace of a society for converting the English people from Judaism to Christianity.'"

There is a gleam of hope for the future, for the subject of Sabbath-keeping has been widely discussed, not by wantons who, it is said, would have the day one for the indulgence of licentiousness, but by many who have been forced to admit that Sunday has been so manipulated by our over-zealous or fanatical councils and assemblies as to leave it socially and intellectually the most wearisome day of the week. And though such discussions are rather avoided by religious teachers, and, as a general rule, unnoticed by writers fearful of innovations or of the least interference with the dogmatic claims of a beloved orthodoxy, still the conviction is becoming more

wide-spread that "our Sunday is in fact, if not in origin, the Sabbath of the Jews, not the Lord's day of the Apostles; it is regarded, not as a day set apart to refresh those who toil, but as though man were made for its observance, while the soul-wearying gloom of the day is so ordered as to affect chiefly the poorer classes, who want rest from work and anxiety, not rest from the routine of social amusements, which are unknown to them."*

While efforts are almost continually renewed to demand the interference of the law in order to make the seventh day as rigid and as austere as it was in the time of the Covenanters, one fact is evident, that a puritanic Sabbath will never more be tolerated in Christendom. It has come to this for a certainty. People must not be forced to consider Sunday an infliction—a day for religious or clerical despotism—a day of sternness and gloom—one as it were outside the reach of nature, when the sun should scarcely shine, or the birds sing, or the flowers bloom, or the streamlets flow. No; let no man be forced to feel that Sunday is such a day, or one that must interfere with his personal freedom in the indulgence of rational enjoyment. And it may yet be that, by the exercise of discretion and common sense, the seventh day, or Sunday, or Sabbath, or Lord's day, may be made a period which will be welcomed by all, and recognized both by priest and by people, by young and by old, and by all creeds and classes without distinction, as being, in its truest and most proper sense, a day of liberty and a day of rest.

* Proctor, "Saturn and the Sabbath of the Jews."