



DIVINE MERCY

or
The Temporal Advantages
of the Sabbath

GEORGE BRYAN

THE
Chelsea Working-Man's Sabbath Essay.

DIVINE MERCY

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Towards the termination of the year 1847, J. Henderson, Esq., of Park, near Glasgow, a gentleman distinguished for his piety and universal benevolence, offered prizes for the three best Essays on “the Temporal Advantages of the Sabbath, and the consequent necessity of preserving its rest from all the encroachments of unnecessary labour.” In the short space of three months 1045 Essays were forwarded by Working-Men to the Adjudicators. Some time afterwards, ten additional prizes were munificently given by His Royal Highness Prince Albert, in addition to many others which had been previously announced.

One month had elapsed before I was informed of the original intention, and at that period the health of my wife was in a very precarious state, besides which I was myself labouring under great distress of mind. Notwithstanding these evident disadvantages, the subject being congenial to my feelings, I resolved on making an effort to express my individual views respecting the temporal value and importance of the Sabbath-day.

Although unsuccessful in obtaining a prize, there were reasons which induced me to conclude that my Essay, in its original state, maintained a most favourable position amidst the host of its competitors. Since its return to me I have made several material amendments—which I deem it right to acknowledge in justice to the arduous duties of the Adjudicators. Several Inhabitants of Chelsea, who had perused my amended Essay, expressed a desire that it should be printed; and, having since received increased encouragement, I have been induced respectfully to submit it to the ordeal of Christian opinion. It is entirely my own composition, even to its final revision for the press.

It may be necessary for me to inform your Lordship, in order to remove any doubts as to my being a working-man, that I was apprenticed to the late Messrs. Tilling and Hughes, Printers, then of Grosvenor Row, Pimlico; the latter gentleman was a son of the Rev. J. Hughes, M.A., one of the Founders of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Permit me, my Lord, to express now my heartfelt gratitude for the prompt and kind permission to dedicate the following feeble production to your Lordship. I am aware that it must be very imperfect, but I know that God can impart a blessing even to the most apparently futile means to promote His glory.

I have the honor to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship’s obliged and humble Servant,
GEORGE BRYAN.

6, *Little Camera Street, King’s Road,*
Chelsea, Oct. 1849.

DIVINE MERCY; &c.

“God blessed the seventh-day, and SANCTIFIED it.”—GEN. ii. 2.

“Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it HOLY.”—EXODUS xx. 8.

“If keeping holy the seventh-day were only an human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilization of mankind.”—ADDISON.

Barren and debased must be that man who is insensible to the lovely character and genial influences of the Sabbath-day! It is a day on which the heart, if only susceptible of the ordinary feelings of conviction, must ever beat with the sweetest emotions of gratitude for the many blessings which it confers; for, in whatever condition we contemplate the varied members of society, whether individually or collectively, it is alike beneficial and indispensable. Hence the first dawn of the Sabbath beams with sympathy towards every human creature. To despise such an invaluable boon—by a wilful violation of the beneficent but absolute law of God—is to be utterly regardless of life in this world, and to exhibit no desire to participate hereafter in the blissful joys of heaven!

But we have to consider more especially the temporal advantages to be derived from the Divine institution of the Sabbath. It having been stated, however, that the working classes were willing to be employed on this sacred day for the benefit of themselves and families, and that they were indifferent to the agitation of our question, a few preliminary remarks cannot be considered as irrelevant; but, on the contrary, may fairly be admitted as introductory or collateral arguments in support of our general proposition. We need not enter into any lengthened controversy to prove that the first statement is a mere subterfuge to evade the responsibility of Sabbath desecration, nor do we intend to refer to any speculative opinions as to the causes of the asserted declension, as implied in the second declaration. It will be sufficient to confine ourselves here, as we shall occasionally do throughout our observations, to undeniable facts—not offered in extenuation, but simply to account, if true, for such flagrant and sinful anomalies.

During the last comparatively few years, in consequence of the vast increase in the population, and a more universal extension of knowledge, many great and salutary improvements have been adopted in this country. But notwithstanding this, and all the continued indications of progression, there is much over which the Christian must necessarily deplore. If the once quiet village has now become a populous town, and the busy town a mighty city, it must be admitted, that, while these changes are evidences of the magnitude of our trade, &c., they have also been accompanied by an immense amount of poverty, immorality, and irreligion. ▣ It is true also that the swampy level has been elevated and magnificent buildings now occupy its place, still the streams of iniquity flow around them with almost irresistible rapidity. The blessings of education have likewise been very properly diffused—and it is to be hoped that they will be far more extended, and based on a recognition of Christian

principles—yet who will deny that there is much in our literature, and more particularly in our minor publications, which subvert the minds of youth, and too often lead them ultimately to entertain sentiments averse to religion, and detrimental to the general interests of society? Utilitarianism is not always associated with Christianity. Again, the Beer Act Bill must ever be regarded as having had a very injurious tendency on the morals of the rural and suburban populations, while the costly edifices in our large towns and cities, for the retail sale of ardent spirits, which have been so unaccountably tolerated and sanctioned by the Legislature, have most direfully increased pauperism and crime. Lastly, the labour performed by a large portion of the working classes has either been oppressive or altogether inadequate to their necessities. Impelled by the current of trade on some days with an impetuosity unknown to former ages, and soon afterwards standing idle for many others on the bleak shore soliciting freight for their fragile vessels of industry—if not carried away by the boisterous waves of intemperance, or rendered incapacitated by previous merciless lengthened hours of labour—the natural sensibilities of many among them even to appreciate the temporal advantages of the Sabbath very often become chilled, and when that blest morn arrives they are frequently enduring the greatest possible privations, or else secretly if not openly working with an activity surpassing the legally appointed days for labour. Exposed to such temptations, or placed in such an uncertain condition, uninfluenced by the rays of heavenly light, they consent to the avaricious demands of their employers, fearful of dismissal from their ordinary toil as a consequence of their refusal,^[8] and not unfrequently too become the deluded followers of men who are avowed disbelievers in the truths of Christianity—the blind adherents of what is falsely called Socialism! If, therefore, we have advanced in many respects, it is equally evident that stagnant and putrifying waters are still to be seen, in every direction, which emit a deadly influence over nearly the whole surface of the nation.

It must be obvious then, avoiding all remarks of a political nature, that the present period is well-suited for the consideration of the temporal importance of the Sabbath. Without a *fixed* Sabbath we should be reduced to a state of imbecility or else inflamed by unnatural excitement, and the greatest disorder would prevail throughout society,^[9] which would render us unable to devise means to remove acknowledged evils, and to maintain those laws which are truly valuable and essential. The Sabbath affords a day for entire repose from all worldly cares, so that we may be in a better state, at other times, to devise such beneficial measures as cool deliberation might suggest. The following well-known lines, with the slight alteration of a word, may here be profitably applied:—

“Would you then taste the tranquil scene?
Be sure your SABBATHS are serene;
Devoid of hate, devoid of strife,
And free from all that poisons life.”

Happy would it be for each of us if we possessed more of this necessary serenity of mind, and if all our efforts, whether in connection with politics, science, social improvement, or our daily pursuits, were conducted in strict accordance with the revealed will of God! The latter is an essential without which we can neither enjoy individual happiness or experience national mercies. Past and present events most painfully demonstrate that a country may abound with wealth; that it may be fertile in its productions and possess great resources, and that the philanthropist may gaze with delight on its many noble Institutions; still, if its inhabitants daringly attempt to abrogate the Divine law of the Sabbath, a dark cloud will assuredly be seen that will cast a fearful gloom over the most highly-favoured land. "There is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations! for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee." Jer. x. 6, 7.

We will now proceed more in order with our subject, and, in doing so, it is necessary we should remember that we intend to confine ourselves almost exclusively to "the temporal advantages of the Sabbath to the labouring classes, and the consequent necessity of preserving its rest from all the encroachments of unnecessary labour." This mode of procedure is in agreement with the contemplated object, viz. to procure from the sons of toil themselves an evidence of the mercy and love of God in commanding one *special* day in seven to be devoted for rest from labour. To contemplate and enforce the importance of the Sabbath, in a spiritual view, is a duty which is being continually discharged by the Ministers of religion.

1. The Sabbath is indispensable, as a day of rest, both to body and mind; without it neither could be exerted with natural vigour.

The BODY of man, although admirably adapted to perform the varied and arduous duties of life, is nevertheless compared in Scripture to the fading flower and the withering blade of grass. The material from which the Creator formed us, in his infinite wisdom, seems at once to convey an idea of its frailty and tendency to bend downwards, when overcome by excessive fatigue, to its separated component part. This is confirmed by experience, for we know that long continuous labour, without adequate rest, is certain to impair health, and to destroy the body before the allotted period for human existence. The usual hours for repose, excluding the Sabbath, are not sufficient to re-invigorate nature. We need not only to rest on our beds at night, but it is necessary that we should rest at suitable short intervals for an entire day. In thus reasoning, however, let it not be considered as encouraging slothfulness or inactivity in business. Honest labour is an essential duty, the proper discharge of which is incumbent on us as members of the community, in order that we may supply our absolute necessities and procure the conveniences and comforts of life, by doing which we promote the general happiness of mankind. Religion and reason equally enforce it. But slothfulness, or habitual idleness, is not justly attributable to the

working classes. True, the number of those who are addicted to intemperance is very great, and it may be said of such that they are indolent men; yet, taking another view of them, they are the most slavish—and they endure more bodily and mental fatigue than any others of the human race—

“Labour dire it is, and weary woe;”

but our remarks have reference only to the excessive labour of the steady, industrious, and persevering man.

This leads us to notice the close connection between the LATE HOUR SYSTEM and SABBATH DESECRATION—a system which has been justly denounced as “reducing man to a state little short of slavery.” When God divided “the light from darkness,” there can be no doubt that one of His merciful objects was to give us an opportunity to obtain suitable repose. Indeed, this is quite evident from many passages of Scripture which we might quote. We will merely select one single sentence from the Psalms, to shew that night work is contrary to the general tenor of the Word of God—“Man goeth forth unto his work, and to his labour, *until the evening.*” Here we see a clear and defined limitation to the hours of labour. To this it may be replied that the altered state of society renders it necessary that men should toil much longer now than in more primitive days. We are perfectly aware that there may be occasional periods, under peculiar circumstances, when this suggestion might be considered conclusive. It is not, however, to the *occasional* or *accidental* infringement on an extra hour or two that we object—it is to the *system* of compelling men, almost habitually, to labour far beyond the period which DIVINE MERCY has evidently intended. Is not this the course pursued in many of our workshops and in various retail trades? It is a well-known fact, as regards the former, that it is a common practice for the same men who have been toiling all the day to continue their labour until a very late hour, if not throughout the whole night, and not unfrequently during the entire Sabbath-day! What must be the melancholy condition of the men and boys employed in such places? The Sabbath is awfully desecrated; the doctrines and precepts of religion are rendered nugatory; public morals are totally disregarded; and the bodies and souls of youth and age are alike sacrificed as victims to the idol of the world—WEALTH! Let us now refer to the indisputable testimony of Dr. James COPLAND, who may be considered as one of the most eminent physicians of the present day, in reference to the latter class:—“It is well-known to medical men that the labour in shops, which extends to fourteen or fifteen hours a day, is the most fruitful source of disease which is furnished in the Metropolis. We are sure to see induced more or less slowly those insidious diseases which undermine the constitution, and which perpetuate themselves to the third or fourth generation. I believe that no less than three-fourths of the diseases to which human life is liable in the Metropolis actually arise from this cause.” What an awful subject does this afford for the serious consideration of masters, parents, and especially the Christian

community! Nor is the magnitude of this source of sickness, sorrow, and death, attested and deplored alone by the Medical Profession.

Lord John RUSSELL says, "It is, I think, one of the greatest evils of this country that toil has become so excessive, that all considerations of health—all attention to intellectual improvement, and even all that time which ought to be devoted to spiritual worship—is lost in that excess of labour which the people of this country are compelled to undergo." Lord ASHLEY, in commending the efforts of "The Metropolitan Early-Closing Association," ^[14] likewise most justly asserts, that "the struggle which is taking place at the present time is neither more nor less than a great conflict between materialism and spirituality. It is a struggle between things temporal and things eternal—it is a struggle between the creation of wealth and the objects for which wealth should be created."

But let us briefly reflect on the melancholy ⁵statement made by Dr. Copland, and we shall see that late hours of business inevitably destroy the sacred character of the Sabbath, and cause many to spend it in some of those modes of desecration for which the facilities are now so numerous and so seductive. The Writer of this Essay has two sons who have been brought up to respectable retail trades; the youngest was compelled, some short time since, to attend a shop from seven in the morning until eleven at night, and on Saturday it extended frequently to one, making it nearly two o'clock before he could possibly retire to rest. When he came home, on the Sabbath, instead of being enabled to attend a Church or Chapel, it became absolutely necessary that he should again obtain additional sleep during the greater part of the day, thus completely depriving him of the opportunity to be present in the sanctuary of God. This youth formerly attended the Park Chapel Sabbath School, at Chelsea, and the conviction naturally is that to this iniquitous and baneful cause may be attributed much of the demoralization which is so painfully apparent in many of those who have been similarly instructed.

The present century has unquestionably presented some of the most mournful and singular anomalies which it is possible to conceive. We have seen the rich Indian Proprietor expending large sums of money in this country for general charitable purposes, and devoting his most powerful energies to obtain justice for every British subject, while, at the same time, the winds that howled ⁶around him, as he softly reposed on his luxurious couch, echoed an appeal from his more distant fellow-man to be emancipated from the chains of slavery! Nor has the conduct of *some* employers towards their workmen been less paradoxical, although the nature of their oppression has been of a widely different character. They seem not to understand that there are relative essentials, secondary only to the payment of wages, which it is their duty to encourage and not to oppose. As we shall, however, have occasion to refer to such instances, as we proceed, it is unnecessary now to dilate on them. It will be seen that the inconsistencies to which we allude are subversive to the best interests of masters, and are still more injurious to those they employ—they excite more debasing desires,

which unfit them for labour, and they snap asunder the link of confidence and kindly feeling which ought ever to unite them. Alas! how many seem to consider the poor labouring man almost as a mere machine, without a frame susceptible of fatigue, destitute of the least intelligence, and without a soul to be saved!

It appears quite unnecessary further to prove that the seventh-day is absolutely requisite for bodily rest, even were the hours for labour limited universally to a just and natural period. Ask the poor factory children, the domestic servant, the apprentice boy, the mechanic, the men who work in pits and mines, the ill-paid but industrious needlewomen, the tradesman and the shopman, the merchant, the man of literature and science, ⁷the senator—nay, ask our august and beloved QUEEN and her ROYAL CONSORT—each will readily acknowledge the vast utility of the Sabbath as an indispensable means to maintain their bodily strength.

“Rest! without thee what strength can long survive,
What spirit keep the flame of Hope alive?”—BLOOMFIELD.

All nature is loud in its cries for rest. The powerful horse becomes weary, and treads instinctively into his stable, and the little birds are glad to rest on the slender branches of a tree. It is the universal requirement of all animated creatures.

The MIND, if it is possible to consider it as distinct from the body, equally demands the preservation of the Sabbath. The entire separation of them, however, is impracticable. We all know that it is impossible to proceed advantageously with our daily employment if the mind is not intently fixed on the object of labour. When oppressed, by unremitting exertion, it is deprived of its influence, and cannot effectually govern the actions of the body. It would be, indeed, as absurd to suppose a man could perform his work, under such circumstances, as it would be for him to expect the corn to ripen without the genial influence of the rays of the sun. The supposition is not tenable. Whenever the mind appears to triumph over the body it is caused by violent excitement, passion, or powerful stimulants, which operate on the brain, the organ of the mind, so as to effect temporarily the mechanism of the ⁸body, as with those who resort to spirituous liquors, ¹⁸ after a hard day’s work, to deaden the depressive sensations produced by subsequent prostration of strength. But this instantaneous relief is only of short duration—it is, in fact, the brain and mind operating conjointly on the body in the same manner, only *at first* in a less degree, as it does on the maniac! The ultimate effect of a stimulated brain is to corrode and weaken the mind, and, when this is the case, the brightness of its comprehension is at once darkened. We will endeavour to proceed a little further with this very important part of our subject, as drunkenness, by producing a temporary aberration of the mind, is one of the principal causes of the desecration of the Sabbath.

The clouds are generally said to be formed of the vapours and moisture of the earth, and the body of man was created from the dust of the earth. There is here something like an analogy, viewing the body previous to life being imparted, which, although it may appear in some respects not quite parallel, we will admit to be so.

The beauty of an evening cloud is caused by the reflection of the sun, which gives to it various bright hues and colours. Without such an agency it would impart no pleasure whatever to the eye of the beholder. The body of man, too, became appreciated only when it received vitality from the Creator. We here perceive two evident influences—a lesser and a much greater—the brilliancy of the rays of the sun on the otherwise darksome cloud, and the pure breath of the Almighty infused into worthless dust! Let the splendid sun withdraw, by the power of Omnipotence, and the cloud immediately loses its attraction—it is then simply the vapours and the moisture of the earth. Now, the mind—which may be considered as the intellectual luminary—gives value to the body, and excites likewise terrene attraction, in the same manner, although in a far more important sense. But if the mind is obscured, the capabilities of the body are deteriorated, while the cloud, notwithstanding the absence of its beauteous influence, retains its original ordained utility. Rain descends from it, which refreshes the inhabitants of the earth, and makes all nature smile. Man, when his body is greatly depressed, although the mind is partially operating on it, becomes an abject mass—of no benefit to his fellow-creatures. Still, let it not be forgotten, that the mind is the *expression* of the soul, and that the soul will exist when all clouds and this earth shall have passed away for ever! How important is it, then, to preserve the mind, seeing that it governs the body, the actions of which, if not directed by the Spirit of God, decide the eternal destiny of the soul! What, we ask, can possibly more effectually maintain both body and mind in their primitive vigour—so as to enable us not only to discharge satisfactorily our relative duties in this world, but to share that sweet and eternal ‘rest which remaineth for the people of God’—than the strictest adherence to the Divine commandment, “Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy?”

2. The Sabbath is necessary for the preservation of health, on account of the impurities of the atmosphere, arising from a variety of pernicious causes.

The unwholesome impregnations of the atmosphere, in densely populated cities and towns, afford another reason for strictly enforcing the Divine law as regards working on the Sabbath. The great amount of mortality, attributable to this cause, has of late happily excited the most intense interest. It appears that many thousands of the labouring classes are annually consigned to the grave through inhaling obnoxious air. If we required proof of this fact we need only observe the pallid cheeks and sunken eyes of too many working-men—not those who are unemployed, and are in a destitute condition, but those who labour daily in places and situations where the refreshing breeze never scarcely penetrates. We may attribute much of this to the erection of Gas Works, Varnish and other Manufactories, which emit their abominable and destructive effluvia in the very centre of our large cities and towns. To the men employed in such places, and to the inhabitants who dwell around them, how peculiarly beneficial must be the return of the Sabbath! Again, fully admitting the undeniable fact that gas is an incalculable benefit, we know that to toil throughout six evenings in the week, and occasionally whole days at particular seasons of the year, in

addition to the oppression arising from breath and the frequent want of proper ventilation, particularly where there are many men employed in the same room, too often terminates in Consumption, [21](#) or some other fatal disease. Gas is of great utility; but if, for illustration, the sun reflected equal intensity of heat *every day* alike, it would not only destroy all vegetation but every human creature—withholding its influence at intervals, when it shines forth with meridian splendour, it makes the seed prosperous, the vine fruitful, and imparts cheerfulness to man. Thus it is as respects gas, the Sabbath is a grateful relief, and affords a highly necessary cessation to re-supply the waste of strength which is incurred by it.

We might proceed to a very considerable length with this part of the division of our subject, but it really would appear superfluous. The following startling and melancholy facts must be considered conclusive. In a late Return of the Registrar-General, it is stated, that the average life of a gentleman in London is 43, while that of the artizan, &c., is but 22 years! The same official document informs us that the chances of dying among men above 35 years, in London, is to that in the country as three to two! With such statements before us, is it not a duty we owe to ourselves and families to maintain inviolably the Sabbath? It was ordained by the Creator in mercy to man, and shall we daringly reject and despise such a gracious boon?

Some latitudinarian and impious persons have boldly asserted that the labouring classes have no desire for religious instruction—on what positive evidence this general accusation is made it is impossible to conceive—and that therefore the Sabbath may as well be considered as an ordinary day. This idea is as unjust as it is monstrous. Because the Sabbath is not by the majority esteemed as a sacred day, is that a sufficient reason why it should be desecrated by labour? Many do exhibit an utter indifference to its lovely character and genial influences, but are others in consequence to be deprived of its inestimable blessings, and are the great mass of the people tacitly to bow with submission at the shrine of infidelity? Because many descend into the dark abyss, are none to take their flight to heaven? It has been said, likewise, that many young men, not so utterly debased, make our foregoing argument a pretext for resorting to distant places where the Sabbath is most daringly profaned, and where maddening pleasure is the sole inducement, and that the occasional restriction of employment is of no importance. To admit the soundness of this expedient defence would be to destroy all religious and moral obligations. The *natural* inclinations of youth are thoughtless and volatile, and it is the duty of the more reflecting portion of the community to check their vicious career, by portraying the inevitable fatal consequences which must ultimately attend them. Perhaps the following beautiful lines, which convey a just and stern reproof, may possibly attract the attention of some among the number:—

“Thy thoughts are vagabond; all outward bound;
'Midst sands, and rocks, and storms, to cruise for pleasure;

* * * * *

Fancy and sense, from an infected shore,
Thy cargo brings, and pestilence the prize.”—YOUNG.

But, happily, there are multitudes of working-men and youths who “call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable,” and who look forward to its return, in order to enjoy its spiritual as well as temporal advantages, with almost more anxiety than the husbandman, in anticipation of his gains, to the produce of a bountiful harvest. Without a Sabbath man would become puerile, sickly, and spiritually dead.

3. The Sabbath affords an opportunity to the labouring classes to attend to one of the greatest social duties—CLEANLINESS.

If there is any truth in the preceding remarks, the necessity for keeping the body properly cleansed, and changing every seventh day our habiliments, is so palpable that any arguments to enforce either the one or the other would almost appear unnecessary. Let us reflect, however, for a short time on this part of our subject. The injurious properties mixed up in the materials used by many trades are of a nature that require more than customary slight ablutions to prevent them from penetrating into the system. When the working-man returns to his home, at night, he is generally so exhausted that he finds scarcely the least disposition to undergo the process of “a thorough good wash;” and, in truth, although in no respect regardless of becoming decency, or ignorant of the benefits which it would confer on his health, he rests satisfied, *for this once*, with a slight rince of the hands and face, if he does not yield to the suggestion that it may be dispensed with altogether—but “this once” has sometimes no defined period for termination, at least not until the Sabbath morning arrives. In such cases, considering the short time allotted for social and other purposes, and the great depression of body and mind, the evil is more the result of uncontrollable causes than of wilful disinclination to perform a salutary duty. There is, however, no palliation for an habitual daily deviation from a procedure which is so highly beneficial to health and comfort. But, observe this toil-worn labourer on the Sabbath, and then there will be seen a man whose general appearance denotes that he is fully sensible of the advantages to be derived from cleanliness. It is, nevertheless, much to be regretted that any portion of the working classes should be so much harassed, when in employment, as to render it justifiable that a considerable portion of the early part of the Sabbath should be devoted to such necessary purposes, in order thoroughly to purify themselves for another week. Still, in a temporal view, how salutary is the seventh-day to these individuals! There are others for whom we can offer no such excuse—who seem to place no value whatever on propriety of appearance, and who display no outward respect for a proper observance of the Sabbath. The characters to whom we here allude may be seen standing at the corners of our streets, or strolling along the public pathways, covered with the dirt of their weekly occupation on the Sabbath morning. These men altogether reject the implantation of wholesome and necessary duties. The orderly and cleanly apartment

of an industrious wife affords them no delight. They can witness, unmoved by shame, their neighbours dressed in their best attire, and many of them repairing, with cheerful hearts, to the house of God. These latter partake even now in part of the eternal rest of heaven!

“The Sabbath gathers to their common home.”

But it may be truly said of the former that they have not yet learnt “what is their chief business upon earth, and what is the reckoning that awaits them at the Divine Tribunal.”

Another class of working-men habituate themselves to a custom, in some trades more prevalent than in others, which is particularly censurable, and the impropriety of which deserves their most serious consideration. We refer to the practice of wearing an apron on the morning of the Sabbath. Surely the journeyman and the labourer behold the emblem of toil sufficiently during the six days without unnecessarily exposing it to public gaze on the Sabbath-day! It is a usage which is generally condemned. The worldling objects to the practice, because it does not harmonize with the fashions and gaieties of life; the moralist disapproves of it as not consonant with secular polity; but the Christian condemns it, from a pure and holy motive, as giving countenance to a breach of the law of God!

Still, notwithstanding, how delightful it is to observe the universal appearance of cleanliness on the Sabbath-day! In whatever house we enter, with few exceptions, we see on this special day every thing in comparative order; the inmates neatly attired, and the furniture cleansed and placed in its proper position. If we look at the exterior of our dwellings, we see a public evidence of the value of female industry. Without a stated Sabbath this could not be the case. One family would select a different day to another, while the sloven, not being forced by general example, would certainly pay far less attention to the discharge of these salutary duties. Indeed, it is very doubtful, under such altered circumstances, whether contagious or other diseases would not depopulate, to a most awful extent, the inhabitants of our crowded cities and towns. Thus we again see the importance of the Sabbath, as regards cleanliness, both to individuals and the nation. ^[27]

4. The Sabbath is essential for the preservation of SIGHT.

Much as we are impressed with the wonderful construction of the various parts of the human frame, in respect to their applicability to perform the respective functions assigned to them, the eye unquestionably creates the greatest interest, on account of its vast utility, the Divine ingenuity of its mechanism, and its liability to receive injury from the slightest accidental cause. The sight is one of the most invaluable blessings. The rich who are deprived of the faculty of vision, although they may possess extensive domains in a country whose vallies are as Eschol, whose forests are as Carmel, and whose hills are as Lebanon, cannot enjoy the magnificence and beauty of the scenery which surrounds them; but they can listen with almost unalloyed pleasure to the melodious notes of the warbling bird, or to the sweet and

powerful intonations of musical sounds, and their wealth supplies every other earthly luxury and enjoyment, which tends materially to lessen the otherwise severe poignancy of their deprivation. How widely different is the melancholy situation of the labouring man, when his eyes are impaired by weakness or disease, or when he is totally deprived of sight! At once he is reduced to abject poverty, and becomes either the recipient of private charity, or the inmate of a workhouse. The fine landscape, much as he too may desire to gaze on it, is to him of trifling or no consideration—it will not satisfy the hungry stomach, nor shelter the body from the midnight blast! Such is the mournful effect of the loss of sight to the labouring classes. How important is it, then, that they should avail themselves of every established right to abstain from work, in order that this susceptible and essential faculty may receive additional strength?

We have previously shown that the prolonged hours of labour are incompatible with bodily health and mental vigour, and that the Sabbath is absolutely requisite to enable man to perform his accustomed employment—so it is with regard to the eye. The vision is affected by lengthened intensity of observation on any one particular object. It requires variety and relief, both of which the Creator has abundantly provided. The variegated flowers, the different shades of colour in minerals, the lofty trees and the little plants, the mountainous districts and the level plains, the brilliant and diversified hues that frequently decorate the heavens, all combine to testify that the eye cannot retain its perfection, if it is continually fixed on the same scene. The poor needlewomen, who sit the entire day, and sometimes do not cease from their tedious and spirit-subduing work until the light dawns on the following morning, afford a very striking exemplification of the great and unspeakable advantages of the Sabbath. What would be their sad condition—wretched and deplorable even as it is now—were it not that on the seventh day the eye was relieved of its monotonous and weary application? Alas! many of these pitiable females, even with this gracious opportunity to repair the injury inflicted by almost incessant toil, are often at an early age incapacitated, by defective vision, from pursuing their ill-paid occupations, and are then left destitute of their former scanty pittance to procure even sufficient sustenance to preserve life. Take, also, the men who work in pits and mines—where the glimmering lamp is the only source of light, and where all else around is chaotic darkness—how essential and benignant must be the Sabbath to them! Defective vision would completely prevent such men from pursuing their hazardous employment. Thus we once more prove the temporal advantages of the Sabbath to the labouring population.

Having directed our attention to these four important divisions of our subject, we will now proceed to make some promiscuous observations in connection with them. Reckless competition, in order to acquire wealth at all hazards in an unusually short period—not the competition which emanates from a natural and laudable desire to increase trade by equitable and just efforts—and the secret influence of infidel

impressions, may generally be considered as the two primary causes of “Sunday labour.” The plea of necessity cannot be admitted. We often hear it asserted, however, especially in reference to the periodical press, that there exists this ‘necessity,’ in order that the public may not be disappointed in receiving on a precise day their publications. But surely the page of classic lore, or the Magazine of Literature, Arts, and Sciences—the bright gems of civilization—need not the foul impress of Sabbath labour! A very little judicious extra arrangement would render it entirely unnecessary, and the same remark is applicable to every other description of work on the seventh-day. Is it not a most humiliating and distressing fact, that, on some of the most interesting and valuable literary and scientific productions of the present age, there are thousands employed on the Sabbath-day? It is impossible to contemplate the probable baneful effects, which are almost certain to be produced on the minds and bodies of those industrious young females who on that day fold and stitch the sheets, without apprehending the most fearful consequences, even as regards their temporal welfare. The statistics of Police Courts disclose many melancholy facts in corroboration of this almost general result. Now, will any reflecting practical man justify the word ‘necessity’ as applied to this description of Sabbath desecration? None whatever. Then there can be no vindication for an unnecessary act which is so injurious to morality, and which induces so frightfully to the commission of sin. It is quite clear, as regards the general performance of trade labour, that, if consistency of moral principle—we say nothing of religious conviction—was duly appreciated, a most cheerful negative would be given to all such propositions, the result of which would be far more satisfactory at the termination of the year.

We must not pass over the sad condition of many of the journeyman tailors. Here is a trade where it may be truly said that ‘reckless competition has destroyed by want, or excessive labour, hundreds of its members,’ and has undoubtedly led them to disregard the Divine origin and temporal advantages of the Sabbath. We will prove our assertion. Many of the fashionable master tailors, as well as the large establishments which continually advertise cheap clothing, allow the work to be taken by the journeymen to their own lodgings, or some hired room for the purpose, where, according to one of their statements, “the families of those unfortunate men are in a great measure totally neglected, their wives become careless and void of all cleanliness, and often contaminated by the obscene language of the men, even while at work frequently during the Sunday.” If we look at the splendid shops of their employers on the Sabbath, we see every outward indication of a strict observance of it—but turn to the above demoralized neighbourhood, glance at the filthy garret, and what a wretched and revolting scene is exhibited! The heart sickens with disgust, pity is mingled with abhorrence. What can such masters offer in extenuation for such wilful neglect of the religious, moral, and social happiness of those they employ?

In speaking to a very poor journeyman tailor, some short time since, he said it was not an unusual circumstance for him to be employed on the Sunday in making a

suit of mourning—a very frequent but reprehensible practice which prevails amongst dress-makers, &c.—and that often they were the garments intended to be worn by those he esteemed as Christian individuals, who, if they had thought that such must have been the case, would most assuredly not have permitted it. The Christian community must be held responsible for ³much of this species of Sabbath labour. We do not expect the worldly-minded would forego any desired request, but the members of a Christian church—those who profess to love God—we have a right to conclude would delay for a short time, by making some temporary substitution, what otherwise must be considered as one of the last manifestations of mournful respect to a deceased friend or relative. It would be well if Ministers of religion would occasionally impress on their congregations the possibility of their becoming, through an inconsiderate desire to have their orders completed at a certain unreasonably short period, the unintentional instruments of sin in this way. In most cases the ‘necessity’ might be easily removed. Let the tradesman frankly state that Sabbath labour must be the consequence of compliance, and that the command of God is clear and imperative: “Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work.” There can be no doubt that the effect of such a reply would be, as an especial mark of approbation for his pure and conscientious motives, the recommendation of many additional customers. But the truth is that many employers are apprehensive that they may disoblige their patrons, and to secure their support, as they think, they sacrifice the health and happiness of their workmen, and destroy any latent inclination to the formation of religious habits.

Much of the discontent and bad feeling, which ⁴at present exists between working-men and their employers, might be removed if the Apostle’s injunction was more mutually respected:—“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” Is this the principle manifested in the present day? We admit our many delinquencies, but are not many masters equally culpable? It has been already proved. If employers evince no sympathy for the steady and attentive workman—if they view him as a mere inanimate instrument to be used only as occasion requires, without the least knowledge of his social condition, and utterly regardless of his happiness, what otherwise can naturally be expected than that he should be indifferent to the promotion of their interests? The subject is a serious one, and it is to be hoped that these observations will tend to check a continuance of such unquestionable evils, and to create a more reciprocal feeling of good-will between them. The situation of the working population is at present most painful, and we unhesitatingly affirm that Sabbath desecration renders it still more so. Man in general, by strictly adhering to an observance of this sacred day, would possess not only great temporal advantages, but enjoy an inward peace the value of which the wealth of this world cannot purchase.

It will be well here to remember that it is the *universal* observance of the Sabbath which is commanded. The day was made for man—not for a portion of the

human race—and it is consequently a general law, which, as regards at least public labour, ^[55] cannot be accommodated to suit the circumstances or peculiar dispositions of any class of individuals. This remark is extremely applicable to railway and other excursions on the Sabbath. We are fully aware that the above mode of reasoning is not congenial to the natural inclinations of man, and that some very apparently plausible objections are frequently urged to prove its fallacy. The only course, however, which the Christian can take to decide the question is by a direct reference to the Word of God. There is nothing contained in the Bible which is inimical to the welfare of mankind. The restraints which it imposes are in reality the most evident proofs of the love of God. Whatever He has commanded, we may rest assured is for the universal benefit of His creatures. The believer is experimentally acquainted with this fact, and he therefore considers a cheerful and strict obedience to the laws of God both a duty and a delight. Now, in reference to the great national and social importance of railways, it must be admitted that the most evident general beneficial proposition may be alloyed with objectionable considerations, the dismemberment of which is a positive duty. Such is the view which the Christian takes of railway and steam-boat excursions on the 6Sabbath. But it is said that they are indispensable for the preservation of the health of the labouring population. It is true that rational recreation and diversified scenes are essential to them, still, we must repeat the question, Why should the hours for labour be so protracted that the Sabbath must be almost exclusively devoted to temporal enjoyments? The poor man has no just right to work in this way until his strength is so completely exhausted that it becomes a ‘necessity’—in order to preserve his very existence—that he should violate the command of his merciful Creator. Is the Sabbath the only day when the labourer is to partake of the sweet fruits of his industry? Are all the endearments of life, the caresses of his children, and the comforts of the domestic circle, to be only enjoyed by him on the Sabbath? Is his little garden, should he happily possess one, to exhibit nothing but wild weeds throughout the year unless he cultivates it on the Sabbath? The evergreen and the beauteous flower would equally as well thrive in the soil that is attached to the humble abodes of the mechanic and labourer, provided they had time to attend to this elevating source of delight, ^[56] as they do in the ornamental parterres of the rich in this world. Again, we ask, why should every moral, intellectual, and social 7duty be reserved for performance on the Sabbath? Those who advance such false sympathy for the working classes are themselves supporting a system which perpetuates injustice and deprives the poor of true earthly happiness. Let the advocates of Sabbath railway and steam-boat excursions apply their minds more closely to the consideration of our social condition, and they will learn that the ‘necessity’ is to be solely attributed to the avaricious or thoughtless disposition of man, in despite of the intervention of a merciful Creator. The defence is a most wilful imputation on the wisdom and universal beneficence of God. A strict compliance

with the Divine law, in any state of society, infuses peace and joy into the dwellings of the poor, and sheds a bright beam of hope across the rugged path they tread!

We cannot avoid here referring to a reply, and to a certain extent a just one, which is almost invariably made whenever any remark is offered respecting the desecration of the Sabbath either by labour, railway and steam-boat excursions, or by journeys taken in vehicles. Not to do so would be partial and unjust. The reference is to the number of carriages, belonging to the wealthy, which are seen in the metropolis on that sacred day. It is easy to understand the motives which govern the fashionable *élite*, who exhibit their splendid equipages in our beautiful national Parks on the Sabbath, but it appears and is altogether contradictory when we see the more reflecting and domestic portion of the Nobility and Gentry pursuing the same gay and sinful practice, and thus setting a baneful example to those around them who occupy a more humble position in life. “*They* have,” it is said, “six other days in the week when they can take their salutary ‘carriage-airings’—it is not so with the poor mechanic.” Nor can we pass unnoticed the number of carriages which are seen every Sabbath at the entrances to our Churches and Chapels—even while some faithful Minister of Christ is sounding the trumpet of alarm to impenitent sinners—with the servants waiting outside, unconscious of the awful warnings which are being uttered within those sacred edifices. Can it be said, in all such cases, that bodily infirmity, age, distance, or even the state of the weather, renders it necessary? Does it not more resemble the boisterous and imperious swellings of the reckless wave than the gentle flowings of the calm waters? While such inconsistencies prevail, the infidel will exult for a time over his supposed triumph, the ribaldist will continue to sneer at the efforts of Christians, and the more cautious worldling will not fail to advance it as a justification for Sabbath desecration.

Let us now make a few consecutive observations on the religious, moral, and social divisions of our subject. At the commencement nearly of this Essay, we observed that it was the temporal advantages of the Sabbath to which our especial attention was to be directed; but true morality, social happiness, and even intellectual attainments, are all so closely blended with religion, or ought to be, that they cannot properly be separated. “It would be absurd,” says a popular author, “to treat first of the advantages of virtue, and next of those of justice or temperance, because the first head evidently comprehends the second.” So it would be if we were to attempt to exclude religion from the consideration of moral and social principles. Religion is the parent, and the others are the legitimate offspring. This has been most eloquently enforced by a writer well-known for his piety:—“Every thing which wants religion wants vitality. Philosophy without religion is crippled and impotent; poetry without religion has no heart-stirring powers; life without religion is a complex and unsatisfactory riddle: the very arts which address themselves to the senses, never proceed so far towards perfection as when employed on religious subjects.” May we not, then, fairly attribute the failure of many schemes, intended to improve the

condition of the working population, to the entire absence of religious considerations? Such propositions may be congenial to the thoughtless multitude and the infidel, but they invariably terminate in disappointment—because the overruling providence of God is not acknowledged, nor are His daily mercies at all recognised.

We will now first notice the origin of the Divine obligation for ceasing from labour on the Sabbath. It is not essential that we should here discuss the question respecting the Christian or Jewish observance of it, nor is it absolutely material whether it is designated the Lord's-Day, the Sabbath, or Sunday, although the two former appear to be the most appropriate. ^[40] There can be no doubt, notwithstanding all that may be advanced to the contrary, that the Sabbath was instituted by God at the creation of the world. "The heavens and the earth were finished, and on the seventh-day God ended his work which he had made; and God blessed the seventh-day and SANCTIFIED it." If there is any intelligible inference to be drawn from this simple narration, it must be plain that it was the Divine intention to separate one day from the other six for sacred and devotional purposes, and to afford man an opportunity to obtain repose from labour. God not only blessed this day, but he *sanctified* it, thereby imparting to it a peculiar heavenly and hallowed influence. We will pass over any intermediate passage in the Old Testament which might be brought forward to prove our conclusion, and quote the positive command given by God on Mount Sinai—"Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it HOLY." Here is a plain and indisputable enforcement of the original obligation, laid on man, to preserve the Sabbath as a previously *sanctified* day. The same injunction, in a variety of ways, is enforced throughout the entire Word of God. If, in the New Testament, it is not so explicitly commanded, there are abundant instances where Christ himself inculcated and respected a proper observance of the Sabbath. The early Christians universally considered it as a sacred day, and nearly all the ancient writers testify to its being a day set apart for at least outward recognition. Josephus asserts, "There is no city or nation, Greek or Barbarian, in which the custom of resting on the seventh-day is not preserved." Philo Judæus declares, "It is a festival celebrated not only in one city, but throughout the whole world." Justin Martyr also says, "We all meet together on Sunday (*diem Solis*), on which God having changed Darkness and Matter, created the world; and on this day Jesus Christ our Saviour arose from the dead." This last record particularly confirms our previous assertion respecting the origin of the Sabbath. These questions now naturally arise:—Shall the present generation impiously attempt to disannul the primæval law of God, which all ages have formally respected? Is the power of wealth to bid defiance to the eternal law of God? Are the pleasures and luxuries of this world to be held in higher estimation than the undescribable joys of heaven? Is infidelity, in a word, to triumph over Christianity? The Writer must here pause and seriously reflect, and he entreats the reader to do so likewise, on the melancholy if not awful consequences that have befallen individuals, even in this world, who have wilfully violated the Sabbath-day. TRUTH MAY WHISPER DIVINE

MERCY RESCUED THEE. * * * If we have done so in an humble and contrite spirit, we ought at once to exclaim, with the penitent Psalmist, “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.”

The adoption of this course will assuredly lead to a great improvement in our present temporal condition. The testimony of Judge Hale, although so frequently adduced, seems to force itself on the memory:—“I have found,” said he, “that a due observing of the duty of the Lord’s-day hath ever joined to it a blessing upon the rest of my time; and the week that hath been so begun, hath been blessed and prosperous to me; and, on the other side, when I have been negligent of the duties ³of that day, the rest of the week hath been unsuccessful, and unhappy to my secular employments.” But what is the assurance and the promise contained in the Word of God? “Blessed is the man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it.” Isaiah lvi. 2. “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, *not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words*; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.” Isaiah lviii. 3. God will bless us in this world, and we shall enjoy hereafter an eternal Sabbath in the Celestial City, where we ‘shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and shall lead us unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.’ Rev. vii. 16, 17.

These are, however, truths which but few seem to believe. No doubt the willing compliance of masters to make their men work on the Sabbath has created much scepticism. It conveys to the unenlightened mind an idea that religion is a mere speculative theory, and hence that day is treated with but little veneration, if not with perfect indifference. When such individuals are told, in justification, that “little differences about religion may occasionally be waived when business requires their attendance,” the effect must be, in a greater ⁴or less degree, to create a dislike for all subjects which have a religious reference. Do we not observe this in many working-men, who decry everything which relates to religion? Honesty and general morality they can clearly understand; but their souls are too barren and unproductive to appreciate the loveliness of those things which relate to another and a better world, and are consequently unable to discern the unsullied purity of the Divine character. Hence it is that we so frequently hear it asserted in the workshop that the Bible contains a strange admixture of virtuous principles and gross immorality. The best reply to such wicked and depraved assertions may be found in the words of a most distinguished Minister of the Church of Scotland, whose writings in defence of Christianity, together with the force and beauty of his compositions, have gained for him universal celebrity amongst Christians of every denomination:—“The Scripture is an exact portrait of man; if it shews the bright in his character, it also records the

black; if it proclaims that which ennobles and exalts him, it discloses that which tends to depress and humble him. There is also, in the present day, what is thought delicacy of language, which was unknown even two or three centuries ago, and still more so when the Bible was written.” ^[44] To this we may add, that the Christian reads every sentence in the Word of God with the simplicity which denotes his profession, being too much influenced by the many precious promises which it contains to cavil about the expediency of accommodating the ancient custom of phraseology to suit that of modern times. It is the sceptic and the sensual who alone raise the objections. We may remark, as regards the Bible containing the details of the depravity of man, that they were placed there in order to warn us, and to remind us of the justice as well as the unbounded love of God. Let us illustrate our meaning by a reference to fading creation. How often do we view with ecstasy some lovely garden, admire its varied compartments, and gaze with pleasure on the choice flowers which adorn it, yet, at the same time, see many obtrusive blades of grass, or straggling weeds, which are intended to convey a silent but serious reproof to us? The scattered blades of grass, if united in close compact, would excite our admiration. Who can behold the simple but beautiful appearance of a lawn, or the grass that covers the distant hill, and not feel emotions of delight? It is their isolated and estranged position that creates our censure. Just so it is as regards the Bible. The sinner, while living apart from God, is compared to the weeds and stubble, and is threatened, unless he repents and believes in the Saviour, as ‘willing and able to save all that come unto Him,’ to be also condemned and to receive that awful sentence which awaits the impenitent. When pardoned, however, he is brought into close communion with God, and, being united, becomes a lovely plant in the garden of the Lord. If our hearts were more fixed on the entire purity of God, we should peruse the Scriptures with an emphatic earnestness which would elevate us far above sensual and infidel conclusions.

The real character of many of the declaimers against the Bible is thus portrayed:—“In the middle classes, among the half-thinking, half-instructed young men, a sort of infidelity is not unfrequent, which, after deducting something for the influence of worse motives, is attributable to affectation more than to any other cause. It is a mere impertinence, and indicates a want of sense, or profligacy of manners.” ^[45] And, now, what says the late eloquent and pious Robert Hall? “Settle it in your minds, as a maxim never to be effaced or forgotten, that infidelity is an inhuman and bloody system, equally hostile to every human restraint and to every virtuous affection—that, leaving nothing above us to create awe, nor round us to waken tenderness, it wages war with heaven and earth; its first object is to dethrone God; its next to destroy man.” Would that these sentiments, so forcibly expressed, could be engraven on the hearts of the rising generation throughout the world!

The greatest researchers after truth, and the most eminent philosophers, have borne witness to the exalted worth and power of the Holy Scriptures. “I thank God,” says Mr. Locke, “for the light of revelation, which sets my poor reason at rest,

in many things that lay beyond the reach of its discovery.” Lord Bacon observes, “It was only by the light of Scripture, and the exercises of devotion, that I attained to that acquaintance with God, which I had sought for in vain amidst the hurry of secular affairs, or in the course of my philosophical pursuits.” And yet there are some men—possessing very extensive knowledge on nearly all other subjects—who impugn the truths of Christianity without anything like close and serious investigation. They possess a Bible, but, with the exception of a few abstract and familiar sentences, they are entirely ignorant of its contents. Is it surprising that such individuals merely consider the Sabbath as a day for cessation from labour, altogether irrespective of its being first sanctified by God, and afterwards enjoined to be kept as an holy day? Such persons are naturally, when interest or desire prompts them, willing either to labour or to seek worldly pleasure on the Sabbath.

We have made the above somewhat lengthened remarks because the entire question of Sabbath desecration, after all, rests on a firm belief in the Scriptures. The Divine commandment is contained therein, and if the Bible is rejected, or believed only in part, our main argument must fail to produce conviction; but, if implicit credence is given to it, then, we assert, the law of God is absolute and universal.

In order to confine our observations within a limited space, although our subject is as prolific as it is important, we must now shortly bring them to a conclusion. The effect of an abrogation of the Divine law of the Sabbath would be most fatal, as we have already proved, to religion, morals, the advancement of intellectual knowledge, and even the existence of man. Who can depict the horrid condition of the poor factory children if they were deprived of a Sabbath? Why, our manufactories—wherein are produced some of the richest fruits which emanate from refined taste and from rapid progression in the arts and sciences—would then become national nurseries for prostitution and general profligacy, or else the infected receptacles of emaciation and disease! Such a supposition may be ridiculed by the tolerants of infidelity, and even the pure and tender feelings of sympathy may suggest a doubt as to the possibility of such an awful event, but the same iniquitous motive that lately consigned children to twelve and fourteen hours labour each day—until the voice of Christian humanity declared it should no longer be tolerated—is equally likely, if not resisted, to deprive this infantine section of the community of the spiritual and temporal blessings of the Sabbath. Besides, it is just in proportion as we permit the rest of the seventh-day to be taken away from the adult, that we weaken the barrier that protects youth from its encroachments. But we may extend these considerations to the children of the entire population. Were it not for this blest day they would be reduced—in civilized England, with the lull and benign beams of Gospel light shining now in every city, town, and village—to as low a state of degradation and barbarism as the unenlightened savage. The latter are totally uninstructed, (what a powerful incentive is this fact for increased Missionary exertion!) and they therefore roam about in the wildness of their natural state. In this

country crime is progressive. The boy who is a pickpocket to-day may become a burglar to-morrow; the youth who purloins from his master's till not unfrequently commits afterwards a more daring offence; and the once little innocent girl, who was permitted to roam in the streets, becomes too often the future companion of thieves, and herself branded with infamy. It was as remedial measures that Sabbath and Ragged Schools were established; yet, with all these and other Christian efforts, the number of juvenile offenders has immensely increased. What would be the condition of children, and more advanced youth, were it not for the instruction afforded to them on the Sabbath? Every species of crime would be considerably augmented, and life and property still more endangered.

How appropriately might we here dwell on the value and importance of Sabbath Schools! They would afford almost an endless theme for the most consolatory and sublime considerations. But our space will not allow us to enumerate the many temporal advantages which such institutions confer on society, and man can never pourtray the heavenly bliss of the myriads of once otherwise neglected children, who, having been first taught in these Schools to lisp their Saviour's praise, are now singing continually "the song of the Lamb" in the kingdom of their God!

“On harps of gold they praise His name,
 His face they always view;
 Then let us followers be of them,
 That we may praise Him too!”

It is impossible adequately to estimate the temporal advantages of the Sabbath. The opportunity which it affords for parental and social intercourse is most important. The industrious classes have scarcely any time, unless it is on that day, to discharge their responsible duties, and consequently their children are exposed to every species of depravity. It is true that a Christian mother is daily with her children, and, possessing perhaps a greater natural warmth of affection, is more likely to be a blessing to them than the father; still, how very desirable is it that the latter, particularly as they advance in years, should exercise a judicious superintending control, and thus strive to maintain the discipline, and carry out the instructions, which have been so anxiously and affectionately imbued by the mother during the six days? Deprive us of our Sabbath, and fatherly influence is as unproductive as the soil of the desert! We lose one of our greatest privileges—the natural right to assist in the formation of the religious, moral, and intellectual characters of our offspring.

Again, as respects the adult population, has the preaching of God's Word, and the congregating of all grades in society on the Sabbath, no effect on the mass of the people? Does it not, leaving out of consideration the eternal results, create deeds of charity which impart temporal relief to the poor? The Sabbath is the peculiar day when the streams of benevolence flow rapidly through the land. It is principally by the contributions then given that our humane and benevolent Institutions are sustained.

We might also prove that civil governments rise or fall in proportion as the people venerate and observe the Sabbath, but it is assuredly unnecessary. If it is an institution of paramount importance to a family, it must be equally so to a nation.

Working-Men! the subject which we have been discussing demands your most calm and serious consideration. If we tacitly permit the Sabbath to be wrested from us, even in part or whole, we give up the most invaluable right which we possess—a right which the Almighty Creator conferred on man when He first gave him existence, and which no earthly power can justly take from us. Shall we then bear the yoke of continuous labour around our necks? The Sabbath is a fixed and indispensable day of rest, and we should therefore manifest a decided determination to resist all encroachments on it. Let us remember that by working on this sacred day we destroy the universality of it, which is the essence and beauty of the Sabbath. When we are so requested to labour, let us respectfully but resolutely decline it. Considerate employers will respect our motives; and, in order fully to prove that we are sincere, we should evince a full sense of the value of our right by a constant and assiduous attention to our respective duties. May the dawn of a happier day be not far distant, when the dark clouds which now cast such a fearful gloom over our country shall be dispersed, and when both masters and men shall unitedly resolve to obey the law of GOD—“REMEMBER THE SABBATH-DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY!”