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Charlotte Elizabeth, 1790-
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The sabbath question
illustrated




THE SABBATH QUESTION
ILLUSTRATED :

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH. pseud

Mrs Charlotte Elizabeth (rowie) Phelps Tompa

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CHAPTER I.

RENDERING A REASON.

“Do nothing for which you cannot render a reason,” said an old gentleman of few words to a giddy young fellow who asked him for a short, practical rule to set out with. The aphorism was received with a smile, a shrug, and the remark, ‘Then I must be content to do very little.’ ‘Or, *per contra*, to think a great deal,’ was the rejoinder.

Abstractedly, the rule was little worth: rendering a reason, according to his own estimate of the fitness of things, is an exercise, if not of the reflective faculties, yet certainly of the speaking organs, perfectly congenial to man. Were it other-

wise, how many a silent vote would stand recorded on our parliamentary divisions, where now the closely-printed column teems with matter over which an impatient house has yawned, or a drowsy one dosed, through the nights of needlessly protracted debate. Happily for the young man alluded to, he took the suggestion in the spirit of its originator. It fastened, perhaps, on his memory as being the conceit of a noted humorist; and prepared him, imperceptibly, for habits of investigation that touched with a new, and unexpected tint, the character of the man—the course of his after-life. In fact, the old man's precept had been addressed to supply the principal desideratum in our friend's case. Reasoning faculties of no contemptible order he possessed, but he retained them too much in the ingot form, intrinsically valuable, yet inapplicable to every day uses; thus necessitating him to avail himself of the small coin that other men carried loose in their pockets. Metaphor apart, he was willing to adopt such sentiments and usages as obtained among his ordinary associates, rather than incur the trouble of bringing his investigating powers to bear on the multifarious trifles of daily and hourly recurrence, where every man must pursue some line of action, whether or not he may have

prescribed to himself any governing rule of conduct.

Thus, when a conversation took place in his hearing between two members of the House of Commons, who seemed intent each to strengthen himself and to encourage his friend in a course of active opposition to a measure which they denounced as a mischievous and foolish innovation—an attempt to legislate for other men where they ought to be left free each to follow the convictions of his own mind, and when all present agreed in characterizing that measure as an unwarrantable interference with the earnings of one class, the profit of others, the harmless recreations of many more ; on what ground could Philander dissent from them ? Personally, he was not concerned ; patriotically, he desired the good of his country ; benevolently, the happiness of his fellow-creatures ; and habitually he adopted the sentiments of his daily associates, where no moral principle appeared to be endangered by them.

But there are two sides to every question ; and many hours had not elapsed before he found his opinion canvassed, and his support solicited in the matter of petitioning in favour of this very proceeding. Disinclined to debate a point where he

felt no interest, he evaded the appeal by laughingly citing the aphorism on which he had been counselled to commence his public life, and remarking that he was unable to render any reason for attaching his name to such documents. 'Then you have probably never sought for one,' was the reply. 'Admitted: and it would puzzle me to discover where to begin such a search.'

'Sir,' resumed the inquirer, a thoughtful man whose age nearly doubled his own, 'there are few subjects better worth investigating than this. I heard you speak of a projected excursion, for health and amusement only. What say you to adding utility to these primary motives, and so shaping your course as to render it a journey in quest of a reason for keeping holy the seventh day?'

'Your idea is a novel one: but "though reasons," to borrow a phrase from Falstaff, "were plenty as blackberries," I could scarcely expect to find them growing on the hedges, ready to be plucked as I rode by.'

'Possibly you might glean a more plentiful crop than you anticipate. Mark me, Sir: the gist of this question, sooner or later to be solved, lies here: God was pleased to deliver a law to one particular people, spoken by His own mouth,

graven with His own finger, confirmed by signs and wonders of such terrific grandeur that even they who lived in the hourly contemplation of miraculous manifestations, were unable to endure the overpowering majesty of the transaction. You and I, at our respective baptisms, entered into a covenant to receive that law as a rule of life to the end of our days ; but we were then infants, incapable of judging or acting for ourselves : and now that we are perpetually called upon either to ratify or to disclaim the part that we then performed by proxy, and while in our outward profession we certainly do ratify it ; inasmuch as we should regard it as a dereliction of duty to omit the introduction of our own children into the bonds of the same solemn obligation, does it not behove us to have our minds so far grounded and settled on this point as to preclude the grave charge of being found to palter with the acknowledged laws of our Creator ? ’

‘ In part, I admit the force of your argument ; but this question arises, whether a law which as we all know, was given to the people of Israel, forming a part of the peculiar dispensation under which they were placed, retains its obligatory power under the milder reign of what some call the gospel grace ; so as to involve in a necessary

obedience those who never belonged to the nation of Israel. You will not contend that any such commandment existed previous to the giving of the Mosaic law ?’

‘ Pardon me, I do contend for it as having been in force from the creation of the world ; as constituting, in fact, a primal law of nature itself, clearly deducible from what we see around, from what we experience within us. This, my dear Sir, is the point that I desire to see resolved, in your case as it has been in my own, by sober, dispassionate investigation. I know you to be one who reverences the Bible as the revealed will of God ; and who would not set in array against it the presumptuous oppositions of science ; falsely so called, in that it would falsify the declarations of Him who cannot lie. I would give you, as a starting point, that comprehensive declaration, Genesis ii. 2, 3. “ And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made : and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Leaving you to trace throughout the brief, the exceeding brief record of the Patriarchial dispensation occasional indications of its observance, by

the division of time into weeks ; with an especial note on the undeniable testimony afforded in the incident of the sixth day's double portion, and the seventh day's total cessation of the falling manna ; I will then direct you to the fourth commandment as a divine explanation of, and commentary upon, an established law of the Creator : and placing wholly apart those peculiar enactments which clearly appertained to Israel alone, I would commend you to the interesting, the important occupation of collecting and arranging such testimony as would force itself upon you, in confirmation of the revealed axiom, that all animal nature calls for a seventh day's respite from bodily toil : all intellectual nature for a similar suspension of the world's distracting care : all spiritual nature for a stated season of consecrated leisure, and public, no less than private communion with God. Here I take my leave.'

'No ; you have awakened a new train of thought which I should like to pursue a little further, under your direction.'

'Pursue it : but under the direction of your own reasoning powers, placed in teachable submission to the Book that I know you honour, and to the wisdom concerning which it is promised, that to him that asketh it shall be given, and

liberally too. There is a wide field before you ; explore it. Go through the length and breadth of the land, not skimming the surface of society, but diving into its recesses. Go with a definite object, and be not diverted from it in any other track. Ascertain in what sense, and to what intent, the Sabbath was made for man ; contemplate him under the varied circumstances in which you find him placed, as regards its wilful rejection, its compulsory privation, its right enjoyment, and its wanton abuse. Overlook not the inferior creatures ; for He who made them overlooks them not. Farewell : when next we meet, I trust our present brief interview will prove to have been productive of some more permanent advantage than the mere acquisition of a name to the document that I hold.'

Henceforward we must regard our friend as a tourist, pursuing an object well worthy of attainment. What his projected route might be, is of small moment to the reader : suffice it that he set out, in sincere earnest, with a cheerful temper, an unprejudiced mind, a benevolent heart, and a purpose that it is to be wished more of his class were willing to engage in. He went forth as a rational man in search of a reason.

CHAPTER II.

SCRIPTURAL SUGGESTIONS.

THAT “the Sabbath was made” by Him by whom also the worlds were made; and that it was made “for man” generally, not for any nation or denomination of men in particular, is a point contested on various grounds, not one of which will bear exploring on simple scriptural principles; nor can the fact, that so it is, be overthrown without also casting down the authority of God’s word. Passing by that rank of opponents whose assaults on this or any other divinely-instituted ordinance are but covert advances against the Bible itself, we meet with another, and a very different class, who, in their eagerness to resolve every thing of Old Testament origin into a mere type of some gospel blessing, would contend that the Sabbath

also was of that description, and that, having been fulfilled with others, its obligatory requirements have passed away. Another section of antagonist forces take up a position which they seem to occupy in common with the Jews of our day; considering that to Israel alone was the commandment sent; and that we, as Gentiles, have never been brought within its scope. They argue that the world was, in a manner, created over again after the deluge; an entirely new dispensation introduced, and the moral laws by which it pleased the Most High that the universe should be governed, apart from the peculiar mission of the seed of Abraham, were then delivered to Noah; the rainbow being set in the cloud as a lasting token of that covenant. They further assume that the Christian dispensation wrought no material difference on this point, the memorable ordinance issued by the Apostolic Council at Jerusalem touching Gentiles who believed, being in fact a confirmation of that early post-deluvian enactment, exclusive of any reference to a Sabbath, or day of rest.

To the latter, as the more popular line of argument, we would first address a few brief remarks. Lamech, the father of Noah, lived in the days of Adam, and Noah himself was born not long after

the death of our first parent. Now, the character of Noah in the sight of God was comparative righteousness : he shines as a distinguished example of faith and obedience, and to this fact is expressly attributed the favour shown to him. "The Lord said to Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark ; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." According to this gracious word, he and his family were preserved, when all the rest of Adam's race perished by water ; and we find Noah, so far from awaiting any new revelation of the divine will on points already made known, proceeding immediately on his leaving the ark to build an altar unto the Lord, and, like Abel, thereon to offer animal sacrifices. The acceptability of this act is beautifully expressed : "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour, (or, as the margin has it, a savour of rest) and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake." At the same time, permission was first accorded to man to feed upon the flesh of animals ; dominion over them was given to him ; not as primævally by the law of love, but by means of a fear and a dread that he should be permitted to inspire in creatures stronger than himself : and a solemn prohibition was uttered both against

shedding the blood of man, and against eating the blood of any creature given for meat. The Lord, on His part, graciously covenanted to destroy the earth no more by a flood of waters; and in token thereof he appointed the magnificent bow, which never appears but when a cloud is brought over the earth. Such is the tenor of what the Jewish Rabbies term the Noachic precepts, by the observance of which, the more charitable among them judge, that God-fearing Gentiles are saved: and on which many Christians stumble in a manner not so easily to be accounted for.

Now, together with sacrifices, which we cannot doubt were instituted as a typical ordinance at the time of the first great promise made to fallen man, Noah certainly observed every commandment of God, as known and practicable among the Antediluvian family of Adam—the pious race of Seth, including his own great grandfather Enoch, whose translation to heaven was a recent event at the period of his birth. Among other things, it is quite certain that he divided time by periods of seven days; and equally certain that no possible cause can be assigned for his so doing, unless it were that grand division of six day's labour and a seventh day's rest, so emphatically

announced by the Great Maker of all things, concerning whom it is declared, as if in elucidation of this very point, “Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?” No need had He, the Eternal, the Almighty One, of rest; but that which by a single word He could, in a single moment, have brought forth in full perfection, He was pleased to protract for the space of six days, in order to bless with a peculiar sanctity of rest, and consecration to heavenly things, the seventh day—the Sabbath that He made for man, no less than for man he had made the beauteous habitation prepared to receive him as its tenant and its sovereign-vicegerent of the King of kings.

Abram was the ninth from Shem, one of those saved in the ark: how much was lost, and how much had been retained of the knowledge possessed by his ancestor Noah, we cannot say; but we find Abram building an altar unto the Lord on the plain of Moreh, where first the promise was expressly made, that to him and to his seed that land should be given. With this ordinance of sacrifice, whether it had been all along kept up, or whether it was anew prescribed to him, we may be assured that the ordinance of the

Sabbath was also perpetuated ; and hence we find it mentioned as an existing, known, recognized observance previous to the giving of the law on Sinai : when the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses that the people had gathered twice as much manna on the sixth as on any preceding day, his reply was not in the language of a man who has just promulgated a new decree, but of one who calls to mind an existing fact. “Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the LORD.” It is not to be supposed that their Egyptian task-masters had permitted them to enjoy a seventh day’s exemption from the hard bondage under which they were made to serve ; and they were not prepared for so signal an instance of the Lord’s gracious provision for the hallowing of his day of rest, now that they were no longer Pharaoh’s bondmen, but his own freed people : nevertheless Moses had fully understood and explained to them that thus it would be ; and now his first words were—“This is that which the Lord hath said”—said not only when He promised the miraculous food, but also when He rested from the work of creation, and blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.

We, therefore, decline to accept the exemption accorded to us by our Jewish brethren, and too

precipitately grasped at by many, who reckon little of the precepts given to Noah ; and who possess small individual knowledge of that obedience of faith which gave the patriarch favour in the sight of God.

In reference to the first-named class of theoretical (they are not always practical) sabbath-breakers, we consider their error as one among many by which good men often suffer themselves to be deluded. Pursuing too eagerly the chase after types and shadows, they not unfrequently confound with them some of the most substantial of the divine enactments ; and where there results a foreshowing of heavenly things, of that kingdom for the still future coming of which we daily pray, they jump to a hasty conclusion that the antitype is found in the New Testament dispensation, rendering superfluous what they pronounce to have become of no force. And among the "old things" thus "passed away," they venture to include the Sabbath.

But the kingdom of God is not yet come ; "holiness to the Lord" is not yet engraven on the bells of our horses, neither have men ceased to hurt and to destroy, even in that which this class of interpreters love to call the holy mountain—the Christian Church. Enormous wealth

still revels in wanton profusion, and abject poverty groans under the burden of almost insupportable toil. From this we cannot but draw the inference that the Sabbath continues to be a necessary adjunct no less of the present than of any preceding dispensation ; for one of its uses is thus distinctly specified, "That thy servant and thy cattle may rest as well as thou." The man in easy circumstances might argue, ' I, for one, however willing I may be to concur in the generally expedient custom of meeting my fellow-worshippers on an appointed day, for praise and prayer, do not feel any existing necessity for this ceremonial observance, this total abstinence from wonted employment during the remaining hours of the day. I may as well entertain a few friends at my table ; or take an excursion by means of my own carriage, or such conveyance as I can hire ; and this, in the enjoyment of Christian liberty, I can do without any qualm of conscience.' Nay, saith the Lord, " The seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God : in it, thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates ; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as

thou." "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest; *that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid and the stranger may be refreshed.*"

Why, what manner of Christian privilege is this, so manfully contended for, to deprive the weary cattle of that rest, the servant and the labourer of that refreshment, which the Lord God of the whole earth hath provided for them? Provided, not at our expence, but by a happy co-operation in the scheme of blissful repose, of private and social communion with the spiritual world, of abstractedness from the cares, and suspension of the turmoil of mere animal existence, which often savours as a foretaste of heaven to those who are hastening thitherward.

Were this a human invention, were it an emanation of the highest legislative wisdom and authority that man may attain to, we should concede to it the merit that we are not slow to associate with the worldly-wise decisions of a Solon or Lycurgus: and that, perhaps, the more readily because conscience would whisper no keen rebuke, would tell no tale of coming judgment in a future state, when we claimed a personal exemption from its obligatory demands. A custom does indeed prevail of citing the law of Moses as though it

owed its origin to him, who is called the lawgiver of Israel. But whatsoever Moses in that character spake was spoken by direct inspiration of God ; and let it be remembered that the intermediate position in which Moses was placed arose entirely from the inability of the people to endure the terrible majesty of the voice of the Eternal. The ten commandments were spoken, in audible tones, by that awful voice ; and in consequence of the overpowering terror endured by guilty man in the hearing of it a medium of communication for further laws was graciously appointed. “ And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking : and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear ; but let not God speak with us lest we die.” After this, Moses received the peculiar laws, the perfect code of divine legislation ; and he wrote them, as directed, for a perpetual statute-book through all their generations : but not to his hand was committed the task of recording those ten commandments : by the finger of Omnipotence they were deeply graven on tablets of hewn stone ; and when in the strong excitement of holy indignation Moses, on beholding the idolatrous revolt

of his people, brake into fragments the precious freight that he bore—the tables of a covenant the first and greatest clause of which they had already set at nought, the same Almighty, all-merciful hand directed the miraculous impression on similar slabs of the like material, without the variation of a word: and that law, holy and just and good, familiar to our ears from childhood, and so commending itself to every man's conscience that, do what he may, he cannot shake off the strong grasp in which it holds him, whether of love or of fear; that law remains, not made void through faith, but through faith's loving acceptance of the righteous rule, transferred from tables of stone to the fleshly table of the heart: a substance more impervious to such an impress than an adamant block, until thus touched by an omnipotent graver, even the finger of the living God.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRAVELLER'S FIRST STAGE.

ENGLAND is not unlikely to become, ere long, in great measure a terra incognita to her native race. The singular facilities of transit, increasing beyond computation the amount of travel, by the same process renders travelling a flight over, not a passage through the country. As the intersecting lines multiply, and the frequent train glances by, traced for a minute or two by the plume-like penon of white mist that waves above its indistinguishable compartments, in like proportion the way-faring man may be said to cease ; for who, in this age of excited hurry, with gain or pleasure beckoning him from a distant spot, will betake himself to the plodding pace of an antique stage coach, on some circuitous highway, when the

magic power of steam can realize the fairy-tale of his nursery days, and transport him in all the dreamy quietude that a well-cushioned arm-chair may afford, to the goal of his wishes, with a rapidity out-speeding the flight of birds.

A few years will exhibit striking effects, the consequence of this revolution in our locomotive practices. Whether advantageous or not, it is not our province to examine ; nor would it avail to decide where the thing itself is inevitable.

Our tourist, however, having no distant point of attraction to expedite his course, merely took advantage of the railway to transport himself and a favourite horse some thirty miles from town, to a station whence he might turn off at once into a perfectly rural district, there to look about him, and to shape his course as circumstances might direct. A small market town, ten miles from the station, invited him to a halt : the next day was Saturday, and he resolved to remain there, watchful for any solution that might offer, touching the great question that had been presented to his mind. The long, straggling street, crowded with shops—of which the greater number seemed from the heterogenous character of their stores to have been engaged in plundering their various neighbours—was early alive with an influx of visitants

from the scattered villages around, intent on bartering the produce of their week's industry, or expending their week's earnings, to the best advantage. Eggs, butter and bacon ; delicate fat pork, with poultry in abundance, both living and dead ; roots, vegetables, grain and flour, came in plentifully from every quarter ; while an answerable proportion of butcher's meat, quartern loaves, groceries, hosiery, cotton and hardware goods, went out. The scene was animated, the occasional colloquies amusing, and to a looker-on from town there was novelty enough to render it attractive for a few hours. Towards sunset, the traffic, which had previously seemed on the wane, received a new stimulus : labouring men, and some dozen of anxious, weary-looking women, came trudging in, not with wares but small sums of money, which they laid out charily and to the best advantage that a market might afford, from which all the preferable articles had disappeared ; while not a few grumbling notes of dissatisfied comment on what they were obliged to purchase—in fact the refuse of all—reached his ears. 'They are rightly served,' thought the looker-on ; 'why did they not come, with their more diligent neighbours, at early day ?'

As if he had overheard Philander's mental re-

mark, an elderly farmer of respectable appearance, just then said to his young son, ' You here see the bad effects of the system that I warn you against. All these poor creatures have been kept waiting till now for their wages ; and, hasten as they could, they have only come in for the odds and ends, where they might have had the pick, if it had depended on themselves. Follow my example, Tom, when you stand in my shoes : pay your fellows on the Friday night ; its often worth twice the money to their families.' Then catching the stranger's eye fixed on him with the expression of a man who has heard for the first time a truth so palpable that he wonders how it had so long escaped his penetration, the frank farmer continued, addressing himself to him ; ' You see, Sir, the advantages of my plan are many : paid overnight, my labourers send off their wives to early market, when the best is placed foremost, and priced moderately : they themselves being at work the while, and so escaping the temptation that others are exposed to, of getting drunk with the money overnight on the strength of not having to get up and work next dawn.'

' And the disadvantage, if they do spend their wages properly, of having to content themselves

with such leavings as those poor women are now selecting from.'

'Which leavings, Sir, I am sorry to say, are charged as high, or higher than the prime goods. These shopkeepers, like the rest of us, will turn a penny when they can; and knowing that the poor belated purchasers must needs take home a supply, too many of them make an advantageous bargain, by putting their own price on what they sell.'

'The shops, I suppose then, are all closed on Sunday morning?'

'Outwardly they are; but I fear some trading is privately carried on to accommodate customers either too late or too lazy for Saturday evening. That, Sir, is the worst part of the business.'

The traveller did not altogether think it the worst part; it seemed better than that the labouring poor should go without their Sunday dinner: and again, as if reading his thoughts the farmer met it by a remark addressed to his son: 'always remember, Tom, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."' To do that rightly, my boy, you must take care that nobody else is profaning it through your fault or forgetfulness. Many a man goes to church in his own person, while in the persons of his dependents he is toiling, buy-

ing and selling, getting drunk, and committing all sorts of wickedness.'

A strange notion that! Ay but it was a just one : and so Philander's better sense told him, as musingly he pursued his walk. He had taken part in an argument where a so-called fanatic was talked down by force of numbers, for presuming to enter a caveat against the family practice of driving to Church, and leaving the servants to account for their care of the horses to them ; for their care of themselves to another Master. The point had been ably and scripturally maintained, in language suited to the polite society around him, but without producing any impression. The blunt farmer's homely phraseology was startling, and rude ; but it was less easily warded off.

Advancing night bore tokens of such debauchery as he had been led to expect among one class of rustics. Drinking and smoking, singing, cursing, and quarrelling over dirty cards, continued till midnight in the various public houses ; and Philander taking an early stroll in one of the cross roads, fell in here and there with some person conveying his Sunday purchases homeward, with evident traces of having passed time enough at the ale-house to diminish greatly the amount of his wages. Tempted by a lovely

morn, the traveller resolved on an excursion among the surrounding villages, and ordered out his horse just as the pleasant chimes of the little church commenced their first peal. He spent half an hour in examining some tumuli, described as bearing marks of considerable interest, and found his expectations fully realized. He then took a round, among deserted fields; traced the course of an intricate little stream; satisfied himself that it abounded with trout; and finally cantered his horse over a smooth, fine track of upland and vale, till a sharp turning brought him full in view of a romantic old village church, mantled in ivy, shaded by enormous yew-trees, and at that moment sending forth its rustic congregation from the picturesque porch and doorways. The horse was reined in, and walked at a quiet pace, while an undefined feeling of self-reproach disturbed his rider, who could not help contrasting his own appearance with that of the simple company before him.

There were old men in smock-frocks as white as the venerable locks that fell over their shoulders; with stooping yet sturdy gait, plodding beside their tidy dames, attired in the fashion of a by-gone generation. There were comely matrons in the bloom of life, and young children in

its earliest blossom ; with men of all ages—seemingly of all tempers too : yet over the whole concourse of humanity there was shed an influence, and a halo was spread around them, bespeaking something that could not have pervaded an assembly met together for the revel or the idle lounge. A reflected Sabbath sometimes strikes the careless beholder where the Sabbath itself fails of impressing him ; and as the rambler still checked his horse's pace, and fell back into the rear of the main body, perchance the dust on his garments, and the smoking flanks of his panting beast were felt as a jarring note amid the harmony of consecrated repose, where all besides was tuned in excellent unison.

What appeared the season in his eyes ? he surely might define it ; but somewhat seemed to tell of a meeting-point between God and man, or, at least, a drawing-off on the creature's part, from the turmoil of mere earthly pursuits, the enjoyment of a breathing-time that he could call his own, available for any purpose agreeable to himself. In the present instance each individual had seen good to apply it in the act of public worship ; and not one among them appeared to regret having done so. There rested a cheerful calm upon the landscape, and its counterpart was

clearly traceable in the little groups that took their various ways up the slope, down by the mill-stream, across the field, through the winding lane, or towards the few scattered cottages that lay full in view. The very pace of the labouring people bespoke a certain luxury of leisure following on a night's refreshing sleep, that supplanted their stiff joints, relaxed their careful brows, and gave a play to features and to faculties, incompatible with a season of bodily toil; or even, perhaps, with the presence of their week-day implements in working order. Then, the husbandman's eye took in, not only the thriving growth but the beauty of the crop that he had toiled to rear on ground broken up by the strength of his arm: then, the village sempstress, and the village laundress, might contemplate with honest pride the goodly-effect of their respective handy-works on the persons for whom they had wrought them. It seemed as though the humblest might claim a proprietorship in something, resulting from the great Creator's proprietorship in them.

All had dispersed to their early dinners, and still Philander loitered, musing as he passed along. A mansion was near, about a mile from the church, and in a paddock were several fine horses, enjoying with exquisite zest the free

range of its limits. Emerging from another path, he saw the family party followed by two or three livery servants, approaching the house. That they had walked to and from the church was evident; and equally so was the fact that their cattle were permitted also to rest—to enjoy a rest according to God's appointment, who ordained the Sabbath not merely for an observance, but for a delight.

Not far beyond, he passed a modest-looking building, with rustic porch pleasantly shaded. Here were assembled children of various ages, awaiting the arrival of some one to unlock the door; and in the hum of happy voices were distinguishable texts of scripture and snatches of hymns, conned for repetition, and thus kept in mind. They were like bees at the entrance of a hive; equally busy, equally cheerful. Philander loved children: he paused, and asked a pretty little girl whose house it was.

‘If you please, Sir, ’tis the Sunday School.’

‘Don't you think it rather hard to be shut up in school on a fine Sunday?’ This query seemed to occasion some demur among the children: they whispered together; and the traveller, desirous of an honest answer, repeated it; he saw no cause for confining these blithesome creatures

while horses were left to luxuriate in Sabbath freedom. At length a spokeswoman was found. 'Please, Sir, we have time enough for play: we like coming to school, to learn about God and Jesus Christ. Some of us can't be spared on week-days, because we are wanted to mind the babies, or to earn a little help. We are poor children; and if it wasn't for the Sunday School, we must be ignorant too.'

'But babies want minding on Sundays as well as other days.'

'Oh, mother's not at work then;' and 'father's at home then;' and 'there's plenty at home to mind them on Sundays;' came in a chorus that satisfied the querist, who rode on.

"The Sabbath was made for man:" for all men, and certainly not least for the poor man. Rob these villagers of their Sabbath, and what compensation can you render? The very cleansing of their persons, and thorough change of garments must be medicinal surely to them. So thought our friend as he pursued his way: he had already got hold of something available for the manufacture of a sound reason on the point at issue, though on lower grounds than he might yet discover; and as he rode back, the quiet state of the suburbs of that little town harmo-

nized better with his newly-awakened feeling than the noisy bustle of its central point, where stood his inn, and where a gaping company of idlers had assembled round a handsome carriage, laden with a good deal of heavy luggage, waiting for four fresh horses in place of the miserably jaded, distressed animals that stood panting and smoking by the road-side. Within was a gentleman, intent on a newspaper ; and a lady with a pamphlet, the illustrated green wrapper of which certainly bespoke nothing of a scriptural character : while in the dicky behind rode a footman and maidservant, laughing with responsive levity, at the jokes that some standers-by passed on their sociable appearance. The postillion was not easily pleased : in an under tone he cursed the bony animals that were led forth ; and vowed he would get such work out of them as both they and their owner should remember. Hurry and confusion reigned in all departments of the little inn, under a hope that these grand visitors might yet decide on alighting : and though in the whole scene there was nothing with which the habits of the tourist had not long familiarized him, it scarcely needed the significant remembrance of those church-bells chiming for afternoon service to render it worse than unseemly in his eyes.

In every man's breast there dwells a witness-bearer who may be silenced, may be almost slain, but no more. Accusing, or else excusing, that voice demands a hearing, sometimes in the persuasive whisper, at other times in the deep, stern menace, but always in accordance with the will of God, when that will is known, unless it be so polluted by allowed sin, or hardened in obstinate error as to lose for the time its very nature. This must be borne in mind: a defiled conscience and a seared conscience are among the judgments that perverse transgressors call down on themselves; and then the warnings of that inward monitor, like those of an inaccurate clock, may lead the listener wrong. We hear in our youth instruction that causeth to err; for who does not know the dangerous stanza,

What conscience dictates to be done
Or warns me not to do;
This teach me more than hell to shun
That more than heaven pursue.

This is, to be sure, stark nonsense at best; and the poem exhibits a compound of fallacy and impiety not often compressed within an equal space; but public opinion has given a currency to the thing, and woe to that man who suffers his deceived conscience to usurp the judgment-seat

of Christ ! An agent, not a principal,—an effect, not a cause,—the natural conscience can suggest nothing original ; it must be acted on, ere it can act ; and he who has surrendered himself to the service of mammon will often find even conscience made the mouthpiece of his chosen ruler. This being borne in mind, and the written law recognized as that from whence is no appeal whatever, conscience assumes the office appointed of God ; and as a faithful remembrancer speaks that which has been imbibed at the fountain of truth. Speaks authoritatively, continuously ; uttering the promised direction, “ This is the way, walk ye in it,” when man turns to the right hand or to the left. Then, a witness is borne, truly and consistently, only to be silenced by drowning it in the encouraged din of passions and lusts, and prejudices that cannot longer break the cords and bonds of divine authority ; only to be stifled by the overpowering rush of corruptions breaking loose from all restraint ; and never to be finally got rid of. The gentle guide who was rudely repulsed for a time must become a stern upbraider through eternity. So hath God decreed : memory and conscience are immortal. The rich man in torment forgot neither his purple and fine linen, his sumptuous fare, or the name and condition of the fel-

low-being who perished at his gate. Even the anguish of hell could not obliterate sentiments and feelings that are inherent in us; or, if selfishness had prevailed to drown the pleadings of nature in the day of prosperity, conscience now told of evil example afforded to those who no doubt inherited the sinner's wealth, and who were likely to spend it in the purchase of such a lodging as he at last occupied. How agonized was the petition, how awful the repulse! "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Thus, by His authority, to whom all power is committed in heaven and on earth, we are referred to the existing standard of right—to the Scriptures alone, by which even the fidelity of conscience itself must be tested; the fountain of knowledge where it must learn ere it can teach.

To the absence of a right understanding on this point must be referred the perplexity of Philander's cogitations, as, seated in the recess of a deep, antiquated bow window, he looked down on the fashionable travelling equipage, the bustling assistants, and idle standers-by. 'These people,' thought he, 'may be doing wrong, but if their own conscience condemns them not, why should I censure their proceedings? They are not an-

swerable to me for the employment of time and money placed at their own disposal. Legislation might interpose, unwarrantably I must think ; for it is a matter where man cannot fairly be accountable to any but God, nor dictated to by aught save his own conscience. They please themselves ; no one has any business to interfere—it is wholly their own concern.’—At that moment the vehicle rattled off at a round pace, over the uneven pavement—for the postillion, true to his threat, had at once applied whip and spur with barbarous severity to the poor worn-out horses, putting them to the utmost speed that his command over the rein would allow them to exert. Resentment on the part of their owner and his hostler vented itself on the animals that still drooped by the way side, reeking and raw. A kick under the belly of one, a stroke across the face of another, sent them trembling and starting into the stable ; and Philander bit his lip, for he was generous ; he loved the noble horse, and resented gross outrages on humanity, like this. In the next moment, the sharp, shrill voice of a scolding landlady reached his ear from the stair head. ‘Go to church indeed ! If those folks had’nt kept us expecting them to ’light, and so put every thing at sixes and sevens, one of you might have gone. As it

is, I wonder you aint ashamed to ask. Then there's the gentleman's dinner to see to'— the remainder he did not catch. Some of the loungers attracted by the travellers' stoppage, now called for a pipe and a pot of beer: the boys formed in a ring for a game of pitch and toss; and while the last, soft tinkle of the bell that had altered its chime preparatory to the commencement of prayer in the church, fell persuasively on the ear, sounds of active, laborious employment within the house, mingled with alternate burst of rude laughter and ruder altercation, bespoke that the service of a different master was carried on beneath the inn roof from that which was rendered to Him who appointed the Sabbath, at once for a covenant and a point of communion between Himself and the souls whom he had made.

Philander felt unusually gloomy, and attributed it to the loneliness of his position. 'This will never do: I must have a companion, or society of some kind.' He mused, but could not determine on any course. If he got into thoughtless company, the object of his tour will be defeated at once: and a solemn prosing fellow would to him be ten times worse than solitude: he took his silent meal, and inquired if there was an evening

service at the church, to which the attendant answered that there was none ; but that the clergyman held a meeting at a place duly licensed some five miles off, on the outskirts of the parish, where the farming people and some of the gentry attended. This being in a direction opposite to his morning stroll, he resolved to walk thither ; instructions being given as to the route, which seemed to be altogether through fields, meadows, and narrow lanes. It was at any rate, a better way of finishing his Sunday than that in which he had begun it ; and he started off in tolerably good humour with himself. In truth he had not been so since he stumbled on the village congregation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE YEOMAN'S FIRESIDE.

THE moon was bright when the party issued from their place of meeting ; and while the tourist stood in momentary hesitation as to which of the numerous little paths he should take to regain his homeward road, he heard himself accosted in frank tones that seemed familiar. ‘ I beg pardon Sir, but seeing you a stranger here, afoot, and alone, might I offer my service in the way of direction ? the place is rather puzzling to newcomers.’

Philander recognised the honest farmer, with his son Tom a little in the rear. He told the place of his abode, and his wish to find the shortest cut homewards. To this the farmer rejoined with a hearty invitation to partake of his evening

meal, after which he would accompany him to the high road leading direct to his inn. Philander assented: 'I am to penetrate the depths of society,' thought he; 'and a little insight into the yeomanry class will be no unpleasant beginning.'

Behold, then, the polished gentleman from town forming one in a party where unsophisticated simplicity reigned as now it rarely does in any circle. There were all the recommendations that extreme neatness, cleanliness in a high degree, good, though coarse cheer, a hearty welcome, and a very rational tone of cheerfulness could afford. On one subject each had a word of affectionate commendation to utter: and that was, the discourse of their minister. Philander was surprised to observe how attentively the youngest of the children must have listened to it; and even the servant girl, as she placed another brown loaf on the board, smiled a most intelligent assent to an observation made by her mistress on the good advice given to the young. 'Do you know him, Sir?' was the next enquiry addressed to the stranger. 'No, I am sorry to say I do not.' 'I am thankful to say, I do:' exclaimed the farmer, leaning back in his chair, and surveying his domestic group. 'Yes, Sir, and all about me, and others belonging to me whom you dont see, may

be thankful that I know the good man. He has taught me my duty Sir ; he has, by God's blessing, put a root to the dry stick that I wanted to grow without one.'

' I don't quite comprehend your metaphor.'

' Why, Sir, I was one who wanted to do well in the world in other ways besides making money : a moral man, a charitable man, and all that. I wanted to be a good husband, a wise father, a kind master and neighbour, but I thought the very determination to be so was enough to ensure it ; and so I went on, mighty well pleased with myself, and in my heart despising others, like the Pharisee of old, boasting of himself over the poor Publican. I need not tell you that my goodness was like the morning cloud, driven about and away by any sudden puff of temptation or provocation ; in short, I had no root in myself ; and any good that I did to others, went no further than their present circumstances, nor, indeed, so far, if you view them rightly. I loved to notice how matters went on around me ; to censure what I knew was not right, and to lay better plans of my own ; but, Sir, I did not begin my improvements in the right quarter : I did not first examine how I myself stood with God ; I did not seek to be conformed to the image of

Christ, before I set up as a standard for others. Nay, I did not even make the Bible my rule of judging myself or any body else. Need I tell you what a blessing it was to me when that wise teacher came to explain how I must make the tree good before it could bear good fruit? I was like a dry stick stuck in the ground, and plentifully watered, and looked after, but as to bearing any thing, how should it? The root was wanting, Sir: the many little fibres, all diving deep into the soil and sucking up the moisture, and making sap, and causing fruit to grow. Poor, scanty, and oft times sour it is indeed, and not worthy to be gathered by my blessed Master; but it is something—may His grace make it more and better!’

There was a silence broken by a half sob from a delicate-looking girl. The farmer's eye followed his guest's towards her, and he resumed, ‘Ay, poor lassie, she is a proof of the good-for-nothingness of what I thought goodness. My brother's orphan, I bound her to a dress-maker in town, and when I heard of their wicked Sabbath-breaking, I passed it over as a necessary evil, not to be helped. My first lesson, almost, was on the sacredness of the Lord's day; and that was why I fetched her back instantly. I

did not know till I saw her how the poor thing's health had suffered by over-work ; nor did I think how surely God vindicates his own law, sooner or later, on them that break it. There isn't a plainer truth, though, than that ; as the very beasts in the stable would tell you if they could speak. Nay, they do tell us so, by their sleek coats, and plump sides, and the hearty strength they show on the working days.'

' I dont dispute the excellent principle on which you act,' said Philander ; ' but, practically do you really find a material difference in the condition of your cattle, when allowed a seventh day's rest ? I ask this, because it is a point on which I am interested.'

' Sir, I am not a scholar, but I have sense enough to understand what a learned physician has said, and upon oath too : and I give you my full testimony that every word you'll find there is correct, and proved by facts under my own eye.' He took down a small, thin pamphlet, and pointed out the following passage.

“ I have been in the habit during a great many years of considering the *uses* of the Sabbath, and of observing its *abuses*. The abuses are chiefly manifested in labour and dissipation. The use, medically speaking, is that of a day of rest. In

a theological sense it is a holy rest, providing for the introduction of new and sublimer ideas into the mind of man, preparing him for his future state. As a day of rest, I view it as a day of compensation for the inadequate restorative power of the body under continued labour and excitement. A physician always has respect to the preservation of the restorative power, because if once this be lost, his healing office is at an end. If I shew you, from the physiological view of the question, that there are provisions in the laws of nature which correspond with the Divine commandment, you will see from the analogy that "the Sabbath was made for man" as a necessary appointment. A physician is anxious to preserve the balance of circulation, as necessary to the restorative power of the body. The ordinary exertions of man *run down* the circulation every day of his life ; and the first general law of nature by which God (who is not only the giver, but also the preserver and sustainer of life) prevents man from destroying himself, is the alternating of day with night, that repose may succeed action. But although the night apparently equalizes the circulation well, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life. Hence, one day in seven, by the bounty of

Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation, to perfect by its repose the animal system. You may easily determine this question as a matter of fact, by trying it on beasts of burden. Take that fine animal, the horse, and work him to the full extent of his powers every day in the week, or give him rest one day in seven, and you will soon perceive, by the superior vigour with which he performs his functions on the other six days, that this rest is necessary to his well-being. Man, possessing a superior nature, is borne along by the very vigour of his mind, so that the injury of *continual* diurnal exertion and excitement on his animal system is not so immediately apparent as it is in the brute ; but in the long run he breaks down more suddenly : it abridges the length of his life and that vigour of his old age, which (as to mere animal power) ought to be the object of his preservation. I consider therefore that in the bountiful provision of Providence for the preservation of human life, the sabbatical appointment is not, as it has sometimes been theologially viewed, simply a precept partaking of the nature of a political institution, but that it is to be numbered amongst the natural duties, if the preservation of life be admitted to be a duty, and the premature destruction of it a suicidal act.

This is said simply as a physician, and without reference at all to the theological question ; but if you consider further the proper effect of real Christianity, namely, peace of mind, confiding trust in God, and good-will to man, you will perceive in this source of renewed vigour to the mind, and through the mind to the body, an additional spring of life imparted from this higher use of the Sabbath as a holy rest. Were I to pursue this part of the question, I should be touching on the duties committed to the clergy ; but this I will say, that researches in physiology, by the analogy of the workings of Providence in nature, will establish the truth of Revelation, and consequently shew that the Divine commandment is not to be considered as an arbitrary enactment, but as an appointment necessary to man. This is the position in which I would place it, as contradistinguished from precept and legislation ; I would point out the Sabbatical rest as necessary to man, and that the great enemies of the Sabbath, and consequently the enemies of man, are all laborious exercises of the body or mind, and dissipation, which force the circulation on that day in which it should repose ; whilst relaxation from the ordinary cares of life, the enjoyment of this repose in the bosom of one's family

with the religious studies and duties which the day enjoins, not one of which, if rightly exercised, tends to abridge life, constitute the beneficial and appropriate service of the day. The student of nature, in becoming the student of Christ, will find in the principles of his doctrine and law, and in the practical application of them, the only and perfect science which prolongs the present, and perfects the future life."

'Well Sir, how do you like it? you have read it with great attention.'

'And, with your leave, I must read it again, for it is altogether new, strikingly, startlingly new to me.'

'Put it in your pocket, Sir, 'twill bear more than two or three readings, I promise you. Pray don't hesitate; I have another copy. You see there is more of it, and every word carries weight enough to make it important. That little tract, Sir, containing the evidence of an eminent doctor before the House of Commons, has conferred greater benefits on me and mine, including the poor beasts in the stable, than any book I know—always excepting the blessed Bible. I hope you may one day say the same.'

'If I cannot say quite so much, my good Sir, it will at least be of considerable use to me; and

not the less valuable as calling to mind your kind hospitality, for which I am greatly indebted.'

'Not more to us than we to you, Sir: it is not often that a man of fashion sits down to a poor farmer's table so contented and friendly as you have done. We don't receive Sunday visitors, Sir, nor pay Sunday visits: but this was not a breach of the rule, I trust. Not yet,' he added, as Philander rose to take leave: 'you won't refuse to join us in giving thanks for the day's mercies, Sir; and after that I will attend you towards your quarters.'

The servants were summoned; a chapter was read, and a very simple, hearty, thankful prayer put up by the good man of the house, after which, the traveller took a cordial leave of his hostess and her family, and set off, beneath a magnificent moon, accompanied by the farmer and Tom. On gaining the high road, he refused to take them further from their home; and with a warmth not usual to him, repeated his acknowledgments. 'God bless you, Sir,' said the worthy yeoman, as with one hand he heartily shook that of his new friend, and with the other respectfully lifted his hat from his head. 'Perhaps we shall never meet again in this life: I will venture to give you

a parting word for a token between us: "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy."

'Reasons by the road-side!' said Philander to himself, as he pursued his way: 'I little expected to gather such a pocket full, when I strolled out this morning. How comes it that I never before considered the appointment in this light, as a day of compensation for exhausted powers? Possibly, because I have never given it any consideration at all, worth mentioning. My first dip into society has been singularly successful, having brought up this curious document, together with a very pleasing illustration of my subject. But, after all, if those strict Sabbatarians are right, how tremendously wrong is the world in general! In my present mood, the Parks would possess little attraction, in all the pride and glitter of their Sunday display. Yet, those well-fed beasts rarely, if ever, doing a good day's work in the six, can scarcely want a compensation day; and if they did, it would be easy to afford it in the course of the week, so as not to debar their owners from the innocent enjoyment of a Sunday drive. I presume it matters little or nothing to a horse whether he takes a leisure day on the seventh, or the first, or the third of the week.' Thus soliloquized the young man; struggling, as

man naturally does, against a conviction that jarred with his pre-conceived habits and opinions: but the main question was considerably affected by the coarse contrast presented in the inn-yard, where carriers had now halted, and more travellers arrived. The condition of some horses close to which he must squeeze a passage, was really deplorable, and roused his indignation, no less than the oaths and obscene discourse of their human tyrants, half-drunk as they were, excited his disgust. After personally investigating the accommodations of his own steed, he entered the house, from the rear, and witnessed the full state of bustling employment in which the establishment was kept, and likely to continue during the night, as it had been since early morning; though the front wore a less business-like aspect, owing to the vigilant care of parish authorities, who, directed by an excellent clergyman, suppressed, as far as they could, the open breach of Sabbath propriety. Their power, however, was exceedingly limited, and their remonstrances were laughed to scorn. Our traveller felt little disposition to prolong his stay in such an abode: he had done very well for a first stage; and in the hope of occasionally falling in with characters whom he might best read alone, the project of

seeking a *compagnon de voyage* was held in abeyance. He resolved to pass on, overlooking no probable source of information ; and we shall come across his path at a future stage.

Had he made any considerable progress in his especial mission ? In one sense he had. Trying revealed truth by the standard of human reason is vain and presumptuous ; but when in the fair exercise of his reasoning powers, man discovers somewhat more of the fitness, aptness, beauty, and beneficence of certain divinely-appointed institutions, it savours neither of presumption or of folly to acknowledge a strengthening of the conviction already formed. True it is, that now we must walk by faith, not by sight : our course is to be regulated not by what we see, but by what we believe ; still, such an exercise of sight is frequently permitted as tends greatly to confirm and establish faith ; and this too is a legitimate use and conclusion. God hath said, seed-time and harvest shall not fail : this is believed by the bulk of mankind without any reference to the promise : they take it as a matter of course ; a thing that will be because it has been ; or they draw a right conclusion from wrong premises, arguing an immutability that no where exists in the laws of nature, a nonentity which they en-

throne in the Great Creator's and Preserver's place. But those who credit the assurance simply as a gracious declaration of the Most High, gather from each punctual return of either season a new and a sweet lesson of confidence and of thankfulness in Him by whose appointment the alternation is secured. Here, sight strengthens faith ; a thousand encouraging influences and illustrations are drawn from contemplating the even work of God which never occur to the man who forgets Him ; and reason stands on elevated ground, exercising functions, enjoying privileges, by no other means attainable.

So with the hallowing of the seventh day. He who receives the commandment simply as such, and as such habitually obeys it, is blessed in his deed. He who, already obedient, also examines deeply into the subject, tracing link by link the long bright chain of temporal and spiritual benefits by this one ordinance conferred on the whole animated creation, is, inasmuch as he finds more abundant matter for trustful thanksgiving, possessed of a richer blessing. Acknowledging the supreme right of the universal Lord to his time, himself, and all that belongs to him, he is cheerfully willing to subtract a seventh, or any other portion that God might have seen

good to demand, from the days, months, years, that he devotes to provision for the body, or to any mere earthly pursuits: but when he finds that the fraction so set apart is returned to him with rich interest, including with lengthened life a store of mental and corporeal refreshment, renewal of healthful vigor in himself, and increased serviceableness in all that appertains to him, can he fail more feelingly to adore the goodness that has interwoven a blessing even in the most restraining enactments—can he refuse a heart-warm acquiescence in the Psalmist's wise conclusion, that "In keeping His commandments there is great reward." *In* keeping them there *is*, not *for* keeping them there *shall be*. The reward is present, substantial, enjoyable; co-existent with the act of obedience.

But among men and also among the beasts that serve man, there are instances where no exacted labour during the six days can be supposed to call for a stated term of perfect rest. Confining ourselves to the lower ground here assumed, that of selfish advantage, we may concede some weight to the objection; but of how trifling a degree will soon appear if we consider that mental excitement produces as exhausting an effect on the circulation as bodily toil; and also that the frame

enervated by a life of luxurious indulgence becomes incomparably more accessible to injury from this very point. What, in fact, is the life to which our objectors attach the character of ease and luxury? Is it not the most laborious of all occupations to be engaged in a perpetual warfare upon time? Is not man's physical constitution fearfully taxed by such demands on its powers of endurance as are the usual accompaniments of affluence? He loses the most bracing and vivifying cordial provided in advance for each day's supply—the healthful morning air: he excites his digestive organs, ere yet they are roused into a natural craving, by hot stimulating beverage, and dainty morsels adapted to please the palate, not to build up the robust frame, and nourish the blood: or if early abroad, does he not purchase a wholesome appetite at the cost of such premature excitement as the morning chace supplies? Not to follow him through the day—a day for the stewardship of which he must give account, though not to us—let us but glance at the evening scene, in its most unblameable aspect, the late hour at which the stomach receives its principal supply in a heterogenous mass of artificial compounds, highly spiced dishes, rich wines, and luscious fruits, concerning which our long-lived

forefathers propounded the homely aphorism that they were gold in the morning, silver at noon, and lead at night. Let us pause to compare the amount of compensation afforded by the heated atmosphere of rooms illuminated by man's device, for the breeze and the sunlight excluded from the morning chamber. Let us remember the violence done to that universal craving of nature for rest in sleep, even earlier than the evening of fashionable life commences, and the pernicious character of that despotism which the will of man establishes over what he loves to call a law of nature; never to be violated with impunity, for it is a law of God. Surely this sketch, which is so drawn as to include both sexes, and to suppose no vicious excess of profligate dissipation, exhibits a case where the balance of circulation must in no slight degree be disturbed; and where one day's interruption of the unhealthful career is a boon that no sensible person would reject.

But view it otherwise, and admit that the enui of remaining quiet would be to such a class a burden more intolerable than any that is laid upon them by custom, and welcomed by inclination, we must remind them that such is not the case with their servants. Their unbroken leisure is purchased by the price which they pay

to others for a life of unbroken labour ; and though the duties of each servant in a large establishment may be and are greatly lightened by subdivision, still the work done by them is work, and as such requires the interval of rest appointed by divine authority. No station whatever is more ensnaring than that of servants in great houses : example above and around, temptations, opportunities, and snares of every description combine to lead them into evil paths ; and Oh how precious to such, ere they be hardened in sin, is the privilege, the duty, of drawing near on one stated day, together with those whom they serve, and those who serve with them, to God, who is no respecter of persons. The Sabbath opens a well of refreshment to both parties : they are then invited practically to remember, the one, that they are continually watched by Him who has commanded them to be faithful and obedient to their employers, the other, that they also have a Master in heaven, who requires that they render to their servants that which is just and equal. The house of prayer is the appointed meeting place on earth for those who, do what they may to evade it, must and shall meet at the judgment-seat of Christ. Our common nature, sufficiently hardened as it is by sin, un-

dergoes further a perpetual process of induration through the usages of society, tending to beget a total oblivion of the mortifying fact that the master was born into the world not one whit less naked, helpless and miserable than his serving man ; and the no less positive truth, that though the one may be coffined in lead and mahogany, the other in plain deal, corruption will achieve its ghastly conquest alike over the flesh of one as of the other. This leads to another and a more injurious act of forgetfulness, when the superior remembers not that the soul of his attendant is precisely as his own soul, utterly defiled by sin, sold under natural corruption, into the hand of Satan ; to be redeemed at no less a price than the sacrifice of the Son of God ; to be cleansed in no meaner a fountain than the blood of incarnate Deity ; to be kept clean, and safe, and steadfast in well-doing by no lower means than the indwelling of the Eternal Spirit. Now, no man can accomplish on behalf of his servant or of his brother, or of himself, any, the smallest part of this great work ; but he may in each case afford many facilities, or oppose many obstacles ; and in none so effectually as in that of the hired menial whose time is at his disposal, and who, in the discharge of a peculiarly difficult and en-

snaring line of duties, needs more than any other the encouragement that by a due exercise of authority in these matters it is his to bestow.

Here, again, we see the condescending wisdom and beauty of the assigned reason vouchsafed by the glorious Lawgiver: "that thy servants and thy cattle may rest as well as thou." Unless the master rests from his routine of worldliness, the servant cannot rest from his routine of labour. Be it heavy or light, it is his daily task; as such he regards it, and as such he is entitled to an exemption, so far as to leave him free in following the dictates of his own conscience. If withheld from his share in the privileges of Sabbath leisure for the public and private service of God, he will, perhaps, willingly avail himself of the excuse, and charge the sin on his master. A common and a perilous delusion among that and similar classes, which no man who feels his own responsibility to the Lord of all would willingly be found guilty of encouraging.

CHAPTER V.

PEDESTRIAN GLEANINGS.

OUR travelling friend has partially changed his plan. Although in many respects pleasanter, journeying on horseback does not answer so well the purpose that he is more than ever bent on accomplishing, and he has adopted the pedestrian style, with such occasional recurrence to public conveyances as circumstances may point out. Equipped as a way-faring man, with nothing to denote the assumption of a higher rank in society than that of some respectable yeoman, or trader in a small way, with a wallet on his back, a good club-stick in his hand, and in his pocket the little pamphlet presented by the farmer, he has already gained access to the confidential opinions of several who would have carefully locked them up

from the fashionably dressed horseman of a former week. In point of amusement the exchange has been advantageous; for almost every day brings him into contact with some odd character; or rather with some odd variation of what he finds to be the universal character of the present race—money-getters, where money is to be got; and money-hunters whether it is to be had or no.

Until now, Philander was not aware to how great an extent gain had become the god of his countrymen. Educated among a class whose incomes are principally derived from the hoards of a former generation, or from landed property, with the management of which nobody has less to do than the actual proprietors; and placed among official men, in a government department, not so much for emolument as for the insight that he would thereby acquire into affairs where he might ere long assume an active part, the young man had as much to learn as though he had lately arrived from some foreign shore, where Englishmen were strangers; with the exception only of his own especial class. This is not unfrequently the case: indeed the contrary is rather the exception than the rule; for just as eagerly as the many pursue gain, do the few follow amusement;

and should the two paths happen at some point to cross each other, the junction is momentary ; the divergence immediate, wide, and lasting. In fact, a prospect of being ultimately and abidingly enrolled among the few, is the principle on which the many keep themselves so perseveringly apart. There is, to be sure, a middle path, once much frequented, and by perhaps a happier branch of the great national family than either of the other two ; but it is of late years well nigh deserted ; travellers on the speculating line of road are better pleased to toil and bustle there until they have realized means to leap at once into the glittering path that accommodates only affluent loungers.

We are now to rejoin our tourist, and find him pursuing his way, in conversation with one whose rude exterior, loud rough voice, and swaggering gait bespeak little attractive in the man ; but Philander has an object in view, and neglects nothing that may aid him in acquiring information : he had given a trifle to the fellow, who pleaded loss of work, and poverty resulting from it ; and then ascertained that he was one of a large body of excavators on a railroad, who had turned out for higher wages ; and assaulted those who engaged in their stead, for which several of

them, among whom Philander had no doubt was his companion, had been committed to gaol for some weeks. Here was a case of illegal combination, with its natural consequences ; and he wished to discover whether it had any connexion with the disregard of the Sabbath. ‘ You tell me,’ said he, ‘ that you worked from day-break on Monday morning till late on Saturday night, with little intermission. Separated as you must have been on the line, how did you find time to arrange your plans for the strike ?’

‘ Why, sir, where there’s a will there’s a way. We had meal times, and night time, and all Sunday.’

‘ Then the day that was given you for rest, you used for a different purpose ?’

‘ Oh, we took plenty of rest, and had our pot of porter at the skittle ground, over a good game. We wouldn’t have worked on Sunday.’

Here was a point unexpectedly mooted, the importance of which our friend clearly comprehended, but where he by no means so clearly saw his way. The principle seemed to be fully recognized by his companion, that labour was to cease on the Sabbath ; and how stoutly he was prepared to maintain that principle, both his look and tone indicated. But again, it was clear

that the only servitude from which he claimed exemption, was that imposed by his fellow-man ; he had served a worse master for a worse purpose, by gambling, by debauchery, and by arranging the details of a violent outrage afterwards committed. In short, he had remembered the Sabbath-day, but not to keep it holy. After walking silently for a minute or two, Philander, who would not willingly have committed himself so far where he was known, assumed the monitor, and said, ‘ You must be aware, my man, that God did not set apart the seventh day for such purposes as you describe.’ A sullen glance of suspicion was the only answer ; and he continued, ‘ Do you always pass the day in that way ?’

‘ I do as my betters do ; that is to say, I please myself.’

‘ It pleases many among your betters and among your equals too, to worship God, and to be quiet on the Sabbath.’

‘ May be : every one to his taste, and so they still please themselves, you see. But as to my betters, were you ever in London, Sir ?’

‘ Yes, I have been there.’

‘ If all that wear better clothes are my betters,’ said the man bitterly, ‘ you may see how they are employed, by taking a trip to Battersea, or to

Greenwich, or White Conduit, or any where at all where boats, horses, steam, or their own legs can carry them. Why, I've worked on the railroads about London, and I know pretty well how merry they make themselves on Sundays. But, mayhap, you are thinking of the fine folks that spend more in lace for a lazy footman's coat than would keep an honest family from starving. Well, at any rate you hav'nt been in the Parks on Sundays, or you would have another story to tell.' Then, raising his voice, he added, 'I know the commandment, and I know that nobody keeps it.'

The man was evidently losing his temper, and Philander knew that nothing would be gained by irritating him: he therefore forbore to press the matter, but said, 'Will you answer one question? I ask it for information only, and not to carry on an argument. Rest from labour, you insist on as a right, and so it is: but opinions differ among learned men on the subject of resting—in what it consists; and my own mind is not quite made up on the matter. What do you call resting?'

'Leaving off work.'

'What I want to know is this: you go to bed on Saturday night, and other nights, tired enough no doubt, having spent your strength in

a laborious employment, from early day. On Sunday night you have not been at work, you have had twenty-four hours' respite, and certainly on Monday morning you ought to feel greatly refreshed, quite a new man, full of strength and cheerfulness for the work before you. I would know whether this is the case with you ?'

The fellow again looked at him suspiciously, and was silent. Philander took out his pamphlet : ' Now here is something said by a clever physician, the truth of which I have had no opportunity of testing ; for mine is not a life of labour. I'll read you what he says, and you may answer me or not, as you like.' He then read a few sentences, bearing on the waste and supply of physical power ; explaining it in simple language to the labourer ; whose curiosity being excited, he listened with attention and interest. ' I see what he means, sir, well enough ; and to my mind he is in the right. The difference between spending a day as I'm spending this, walking quietly along, and talking at my ease, or spending it like our Sundays, is just the same difference as there is between taking a nap and taking a dram.'

' You have described it well ; and no doubt a man feels more rested after a nap.'

' But he feels jollier after a dram.'

‘ That is what the doctor calls excitement, and he thinks it injurious. You see, mind and body both require rest in order to restore the wasted circulation here spoken of : now man is composed of two parts, body and mind ; if you work the body hard all the week, and then for a day leave off to do so, but work the mind to the utmost, and keep the blood at a fever height, there is no real rest for the man. Besides, what tires the body, tires the mind too, as you must often have experienced ; and in like manner, what tires the mind tires the body.’

‘ Well, after all you’re contriving to preach me a sermon.’

‘ No, for I have spoken as if we were composed of perishable things only : body and mind will both fail ; and I have not said one word about the soul, which must live for ever. I am not a minister ; but I begin to think that if I were so I should not allow any sabbath-breaking among my people.’

‘ You could’nt help it, sir ; all the parsons that ever lived can’t hinder men from pleasing themselves. That law that you talk of was not made by the parsons, was it ? it was made by God Himself, and yet you see nobody keeps it. Are you more powerful than He ? No, no : you must

make the world over again before you can make it what you'd like it to be. For my part, I shall do as the rest do, and at the worst I can't fare much harder than I see hundreds more do.'

'Not here, perhaps; but there is another life.'

'May be so, sir, and the same thing holds good; I am no worse than my neighbours now; no nor than my betters; and we shall go together, wherever we go. Sir, your little book is right, as to the want of rest; I feel it sorely when I am in work; but just now I have enough of it to last me a good while. My service to you, Sir, and thanks for your charity; and I wish you success in mending the world, for it wants it enough.' This was spoken with a levity that seemed rather forced: the poor fellow's heart, or conscience, had been touched, and he was fighting down better feelings. He sprang over a stile by the roadside, leaving Philander not only puzzled, but depressed.

The broad fact so roughly stated, that a law known and admitted to be promulgated by the Lord of heaven and earth was systematically set at defiance by the great bulk of all classes, in a country where the Bible was recognized as the supreme source and standard of civil legislation, had struck him with a force unfelt before. It

was indeed so: it could not be denied by one whose personal observation bore testimony to the justice of a charge to which also his own conscience pleaded guilty. London, the resort of his daily steps, rose before his mind's eye in all the gigantic enormity of its sabbath desecration, with this aggravating feature, that above each scene of whirling restlessness seemed stamped in characters of fire the accusing words, "Defiance of the Most High." This one idea superseded all others, as in truth it ought to do; for the whole question lies compressed in it. God hath said, "Do this:" man replies, "I will not do it."

'To make the world over again,' thought he, 'would not avail; for that in effect was done at the time of the deluge, when only one family was spared, and that because the head of it was a just man, a preacher of righteousness. There is something in human nature that *will* go wrong; and unless we could take them one by one, and implant a right principle in each, men will still corrupt themselves and each other. Yet surely God would not enact a law, without also providing means for enforcing its observance among such at least as profess to obey Him. Every child who learns the catechism is taught

to repeat it as a binding rule of life : every individual who goes to church must hear it recited, and be, seemingly at any rate, a party to the response that contains a prayer for help to keep the law. All this involves us in the heavy guilt of most wilful rebellion. I see no way out of the maze.' His eye fell on the pamphlet, still open in his hand, and he read with new interest the question and reply :—" As a friend to humanity you would desire some legislative protection to be given to the people of the country in regard to the observance of the Sabbath ?—In all that I have said, I have reference, in my views of the Sabbath, to it as a sustaining, repairing, and healing power : and I should rejoice if all of every rank in this country could be protected on this day of rest from over-excitement of body and mind, by which even its medical purpose of repose is defeated."

At the week's end the traveller found himself quietly settled down for two or three days in a respectable private lodging, the landlady's deportment, and the care with which she watched and ordered her young family, impressing him favorably as to her principles. Here he resolved to pass one Lord's day in retirement, attending public worship morning and evening, and secretly

hoping that he might meet with as eloquent a preacher as on the last occasion. He was, however, in many ways disappointed, at once to the hindrance and the furtherance of his purpose. He saw more of the evil, and caught a clearer sight of the remedy.

His parlour window, being low, afforded him an unavoidable view of the street ; a broad clean thoroughfare, wearing the aspect of Sabbath observance ; every shop closed, and few vehicles abroad. However, a group of children, some of them well-grown, gradually collected near the house, and commenced playing at various games, accompanied by language so outrageously offensive that he was provoked at length to throw open his window, and reprove them. This only elicited a burst of laughter, followed by louder and more disgusting discourse. The house was small, and in every room their observations must be heard. Meanwhile the widow had hurried off her children from the adjoining parlour, to read with her in another apartment : and welcome indeed was the sound of the Church bell, summoning them to public worship. On their return, the morning nuisance had grown to a more intolerable height : men and loose girls were lounging about ; and it was plain that preconcerted annoy-

ances from without were practised against the peaceable inmates of the house. The landlady coming in with some proffer of attendance, exhibited on her countenance evident tokens of mingled anxiety and mortification : and Philander at once enquired why she did not take means to rid herself of such disagreeable invaders of her domestic comfort.

‘ I cannot, sir : no breach of the peace is committed, to ground a complaint upon, and the street is as free to them as to me.’

‘ But so far as the children are concerned, whose example is more likely to injure your own, why not remonstrate with their parents ?’

‘ Those who do not fear God, sir, seldom honour father or mother. In this case I am sorry to say the parents encourage their children. They know that I try to train up mine in the way they should go, and especially to teach them to keep holy this sacred day. Not being able to tempt my little ones into disobedience and sin, they delight to come and contaminate their minds with talk that I cannot wholly prevent their hearing : and when I am trying to instruct them out of the Scriptures they often have their attention divided, and are even made to laugh outright by ridiculous jests, and comic songs, uttered for that very purpose.

They will go on so all day, one party or another ; and get worse as night approaches. I am sorry to say my next door neighbour always has Sunday visitors, of a noisy description ; and they will sit at the open door in the evening, drinking, smoking, singing and talking in a way not at all calculated to discourage the rude persons now lingering about. ’

‘ But this is downright persecution : why don’t you remove ? ’

‘ I have a lease, Sir, which I could not dispose of ; and I cannot be sure of escaping these troubles, go where I will. I am not the only sufferer : it is quite a common case, where a family wishes to serve God. I know that He will over-rule it for good ; and indeed I see something of that in the disgust that my children cannot but feel against sin, which, if it came in a more disguised form might allure them. However, it is extremely painful as you may believe, sir, to a lone woman whose helplessness is taken advantage of. ’

‘ It is too bad ; and I cannot believe that the arm of the law would not reach it. ’

The widow shook her head : ‘ I should be glad to find any law that, without hurting them, would restrain those sinful children from such bad words and ways. It is only on Sundays we are thus

annoyed all day : and the three or four hours that we pass in church are doubly precious to us. At one time they used to disturb the congregation by playing in the church-yard during divine service, but that was put a stop to. We sometimes hear of laws about to be made for keeping the Sabbath more holy, and a great boon such a law would be to many. But it is not made yet.'

Every succeeding hour increased the indignation of the lodger, not so much on his own account, though it greatly disturbed him, as on that of the good woman ; more particularly as he heard sounds occasionally that convinced him she had some difficulty in preserving order among a household so incessantly invaded by unseemly noises. If one of her boys approached a window he was sure to hear some scoffing allusion to leading-strings, apron-strings, and petticoat government ; themes very irritating to young lads ; and two or three ebullitions of impatience took place. The case itself was rather an aggravated specimen, but still it was a specimen of what a large, and certainly the very best class among the inhabitants of that and other towns are perpetually exposed to ; and the nature of what Philander did not until then rightly understand the meaning of,

“legeslative PROTECTION,” became as apparent to him as its desirableness was unquestionable.

It is indeed, an unavoidable inference from the plain word of revelation that the Magistrate, being God’s minister, using His authority for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well, is as much bound to guard the house of the virtuous and peaceable inhabitant from the forcible entry of moral as of physical outrage: as much bound to protect them in the discharge of their parental and religious duties as in the safe keeping of their worldly goods.

CHAPTER VI.

A RAILWAY DISCUSSION.

SEATED in the comfortable corner of a first class carriage, Philander again found himself in society better suited to his habits and tastes than any that he had lately mixed in. His object had been honestly pursued so far, and to one conviction his mind had given free entrance—that enormous evils existed, affecting the well-being of classes if not the most conspicuous, still the most numerous, and by no means the least important of the community ; evils resulting from an abuse or neglect of Sabbath privileges. But where to find, or how to apply an adequate remedy was a question beyond his power to solve. He had nearly made up his mind to abandon the original purpose of his tour, and after devoting the re-

maining weeks to the gratification of his taste only, to commence a sober investigation of those theories in which his petitioning friend appeared so well versed. On this point he was ruminating, when two out of his three fellow passengers commenced, or rather resumed a conversation, interrupted it would seem, by their stoppage at the station where he had just joined the train. Both were men of gentlemanly exterior, ; one, the younger of the two, appeared peculiarly earnest and energetic ; the other more cool and deliberate. The fourth party was a quiet gentleman in black, wholly absorbed in the contents of a volume of sermons. Philander's attention was first roused by a remark having reference to something which he had not heard : it was made by the elder of the two. ' Your admission that the Sabbath was made for man concedes all that I require. Whatever is made for man is intended for his use ; therefore the Sabbath among other things.'

' Granted : and if man were an animal only, the admission might serve your purpose to a certain extent, though even in that case I should contend that its legitimate use was for rest and refreshment to the weary beast ; not merely to this or that individual of the species, but to the whole race. I should maintain that the fact of your

horse having thereby a claim to a day's respite from toil, did not entitle him to be drawn about in a carriage by one of mine. If made for any, it is made for all, and that precludes the exaction of labour altogether. Narrowing therefore, the question within the scantiest bounds, viewing it apart from the intellectual and spiritual branches of the subject, I see not what you would gain by the assertion of an indisputable truth.'

'Men, not horses, were the theme. The Sabbath was made for man; for man's use and benefit. A poor man whose daily support is earned by the day's labour, prefers making use of it to furnish him with the means, we will say, of giving his family a good Sunday dinner, and sending them properly dressed to church. His thoughts, meanwhile, are free; and if he likes to say his prayers, or to con over texts of Scripture, or to recal the last sermon he heard, while guiding or feeding the engine, patrolling the line, or otherwise performing his due part in the railway business, who shall judge him—who begrudge the well-spent remuneration that he earns?'

'Then it is optional with those under your direction to work or to rest on the Lord's day? A man who refused to do so, and absented him-

self from Saturday night to Monday morning, would then be allowed to resume his post without loss, or prejudice to his standing in your service?’

‘That is not the point.’

‘Pardon me, it is a very material point, vitally affecting the whole question. Still, for argument’s sake, admitting that the day was given to man to use according to his own unbiassed will and judgment, if you so fetter a man’s will that by pursuing a certain line of conduct he must necessarily exclude himself altogether from the service on which his daily bread depends, or engage in it at a grievous disadvantage, you rob him of his property in the general gift : you assume that the Sabbath was not made for him, but for you : not ordained for the refreshment of his body and soul, but for the replenishment of your purse. Your position is untenable, my good sir : to establish your point you must alter what God hath spoken : you must render it, “The Sabbath was made for some men, and other men for the Sabbath.”’

The railway director did not seem to relish his antagonist’s line of argument : he dryly said, ‘You take a very one-sided, and remarkably speculative view of the matter : you assume what

is notoriously opposed to fact; that were it left to their choice, the men would prefer six day's wages to seven. On the contrary, those who would do so are idle, drunken fellows, for whom you must look, not in the church but the tap-room; while those who really love their homes and families, would eagerly catch, as indeed they do, at the advantage of an extra day's pay to increase their comforts.'

'I admit that such a bait will take many who would not for their own selfish advantage do violence to the dictates of conscience. It was so with our first father, who, as Scripture tells us, was not like Eve, deceived, and who must therefore have partaken in the transgression through the force of some temptation to which even his yet unfallen nature was accessible: probably, that very same principle of conjugal attachment out of which you weave a snare for his unhappy descendants.'

'I weave a snare, Sir!'

'I speak of classes, not of individuals: if those, be they many or few, who hold the remunerating price of the poor man's toil at their disposal tender it, I will not say exclusively but even preferably to such as are willing to cast God's word behind their back in a matter of

worldly profit—to him the purchase-money of his daily bread—they lay before him a temptation to sin, powerful in proportion as the claims on his earnings are numerous and urgent; and often rendered irresistible by the natural cravings of an aged parent, a sick wife, a family of helpless children.’

‘Robbing on the highway, housebreaking, murder, these I can understand to be sins; and to entice a man into their commission is doubtless a high crime: but really when you dignify with the name of sin the railway trip of a few harmless mechanics with their wives and little ones, on a fine Sunday, to enjoy a change of air and scene otherwise beyond their reach from one year’s end to another, I am at a loss to answer charges founded on such mere phantoms of an enthusiastic brain.’

‘Now you shift your ground again; but I am willing to meet you wherever you choose. Leaving the case of those employed on the line, your hired servants, the engineers, stokers, conductors, guards, porters; together with the book-keepers, waiters, and innumerable attendants at the various stations; leaving them, I say, to the hard choice of working on the Sabbath, or starving all the week, I turn to the travellers, whom you describe,

merely premising a query whether your Sunday trains are exclusively appropriated to such, or whether you afford facilities of transit to men of business and of pleasure ; persons whose time is at their own disposal, and who, if you did not offer to convey them on that day would select another day for the trip ?’

‘Or more probably post it, or stage it, as in former times.’

‘No, because your rapidity would more than overtake them, without encroaching on the Sabbath day. I, for one, should number it among the highest advantages conferred by this mode of transit, that if I was absolutely obliged to accomplish a distance of fifty miles between Saturday night and Monday morning, I could, by starting after midnight, arrive at my destination, and that too by the easiest and pleasantest mode of travelling, in ample time for my purpose. However, I will not press my query, well knowing what must be the answer ; but proceed to enquire into the amount of benefit conferred on the class to which you have alluded as availing themselves of the Sunday train for holiday purposes. Take any three hundred heads of families from among these humble citizens, prepared to avail themselves of your line, and tell me, first, how many, on an

average do you suppose are both able and willing to take their wives and children with them : secondly, of those who do, how many have friends to receive them into their houses at the place of destination, and of the immense majority who have not, what number escape the notorious profligacy of tea-gardens, houses of entertainment, and other gatherings of a like character : thirdly, of the men who go singly, how many avoid the temptations of drink, bad company, and the squandering of what their families will want for the next week's support ?'

'And fourthly,' exclaimed the gentleman in black, with an energy that, while it lighted up his features into an expression wholly new, startled all his companions—'And, fourthly, how many, among those immortal, responsible beings, remember the account that they must give to the Judge of all the earth for that Sabbath day's work ?'

No reply was given : the director leaned back with folded arms, and looked through the side glass : the others listened eagerly ; and the clergyman resumed. 'We have a guide, which we are commanded to follow in all our ways ; an arbitrator of every difficult question, to whose decision we must of necessity bow. Bearing on the subject generally of Sabbath observance or Sab-

bath desecration, we cannot if we would escape meeting in almost every page with something applicable to it; and in the matter of individual duty who shall evade the plain rule laid down for all, "that no man put a stumbling-block nor an occasion to fall in his brother's way:" or who shall escape the force of that searching declaration, "It must needs be that offences will come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"'

'By your leave, sir,' said the director, 'the principle for which you contend is not carried to its legitimate extent. I perfectly well remember that the command given to the Israelites was, "Let no man stir from his place on the Sabbath day." To be consistent, you should lock the poor man's door upon him altogether, and forbid even a walk.'

'That command referred to the disposition of the people to go forth and search for the manna: an act of disbelief, as all disobedience is. A sabbath-day's journey was defined, and therefore permitted among the Jews; on Gentiles no further prohibition was ever laid than that implied in the fourth commandment; the breach of which at railway stations, posting-houses, and piers, leads tens of thousands into the way of those multiplied

transgressions which are even now drawing together the thunder-clouds of God's wrath, prepared to burst in a storm that shall scatter us each to his own hiding-place.'

'To my view the sky is clear enough,' said the director, glancing upwards with a derisive smile.

'"The Lord seeth not as man seeth," was the quiet rejoinder. 'Believe me, sir, of those whom you, kindly we will hope, though mistakingly, assist to pollute the Sabbaths of the Lord, there is not one who does not require all its restraining and hallowing influences to arm him against the evil men and seducers now abroad, working mischief in the heart of our unsettled community. This, I say, and I say it not on slight grounds, or without a settled conviction resulting from close, unprejudiced, personal enquiry into the existing state of things, that her Sabbaths, her Sabbaths ALONE now stand between England and destruction.'

'At any rate you are no party man,' again said the director, in the same ironical tone. 'The trifling distinctions of Popery and Protestantism, Tractarianism and Dissent, are nothing in your eyes. Let men but agree to set the seventh day apart for religious purposes, shutting their eyes

on all the things of this world, and no harm can come, let what doctrine there may be uppermost.'

' Pardon me, sir, He who instituted the day of rest has not left us in such darkness as to the way in which we should observe it. Holy ; holy unto the LORD, is its character ; and whatsoever militates against any one of the attributes that He has been pleased to reveal as belonging to himself, is inconsistent with the due observance of the day. Examine in detail the precepts and practices of any false system of religion, and you will assuredly find involved in it a disregard of that sanctity with which the Lord has invested his day of rest. Need I refer you on this head to the " Book of sports," as a manual of Sabbath desecration, stamping as abhorrent to the will of God any system capable of sanctioning it ? Our way-marks are so clear, so conspicuous, that nothing short of wilfully closing our eyes, can shut them out from view : and as if to leave us wholly inexcusable under any such delusion as you advert to, the sister island has exhibited recently such a flagrant instance of systematic sabbath-pollution, and in the very buildings set apart for public worship according to the faith of Rome, that any such amalgamation of the character suggested by you, on the ground of Sabbath observance, is a sheer

impossibility. Darkness and light are not more irreconcilable ; I, therefore, without surrendering one iota of my scriptural protest against error in every shape, repeat that the Sabbath is England's only remaining shield against impending ruin.'

'Of course you mean a Sabbath rightly kept : ' observed the younger traveller.

'I do; because if not rightly kept it is no Sabbath at all. I know no Sabbath but of God's appointing; and what harmonizes not with his appointment is foreign from his Sabbath. Call it Sunday if you will, to distinguish it as coming between Saturday and Monday; but call it not the Sabbath, unless you hallow it as such : call it not the Lord's day, unless you therein honour Him, not speaking your own words, nor doing your own pleasure, nor seeking you own ways.'

'We agree then, to differ there,' said the director : ' I am content to call it Sunday, and to treat it as a day of pleasant relaxation and refreshment.'

Philander smiled : he thought of the price at which a poor stoker, or other servant of the line must purchase his share in the boon thus claimed.

'But God has given you no such day,' said the Clergyman in reply to the last speaker, ' Nay he has expressly reserved that intermediate day

to Himself, bidding you then draw nigh unto Him for a renewal of spiritual life ; for a fresh supply of the grace by which alone you can serve Him acceptably through the approaching six—if six more days be found in that number which is known but to Him, as your allotted portion of human life. Ah, my friend, many a warning have my lips been opened to speak, to my fellow sinners, as strong in life's promise as you now are, who, before the measure of seven days had been again filled, were beyond the reach of human admonition. Pardon me, then, if as a stranger I have overstepped the bounds of conventional propriety, in freely reprovng. As a minister of the Gospel, I must be faithful : as an Ambassador from Christ, I must do my Master's bidding : knowing the terrors of the Lord, I must persuade men to flee from the wrath to come.'

It seemed to Philander as if he had not before really entered on the subject. Such language as this was new to him, and in a measure strange. He was not sorry when, at the next station the director left them ; and feeling the value of his opportunity, he at once opened to the two remaining travellers the purpose (so nearly abandoned) of his journey ; with a brief sketch of its progress thitherto. They both entered warmly into the

matter, and the Clergyman said, 'Take up your abode with me for a day or two, and I will point out such a track as your feet never yet trod.'

'The Boatmen?' said the other enquiringly, the clergyman assented: 'then go, Sir, by all means with our reverend friend, and you will witness more, as regards this important subject, than you can now form any conception of. Your past steps have been merely preliminary: the gist of the matter lies before you.'

CHAPTER VII.

A DAY ON THE CANAL.

THE point of view at which every question may be taken is twofold : lines of approach, each by itself distinct, yet harmonizing one with the other, converge from different starting points to arrive at the same conclusion. Philosophizing infidels may trace out an imaginary connection between private vices and public benefits, and unphilosophical simpletons may echo their jargon ; but God's ways exhibit no inequality : taken singly or in the mass, it is a fact demonstrable from all past history, all present experience, that righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people. Hence we repeat the assertion that any two honest-hearted men fixing their regard on a point in Christian

ethics, the one only as affecting man's welfare, the other exclusively in reference to God's glory, will find themselves proceeding step by step to one and the same conclusion.

To conceive the possibility of a different result is an act of greater iniquity than at first blush may appear. It is to arraign the consistent wisdom and goodness of divine legislation ; to infer that man may with advantage to society oppose by his own wilfulness the will of his Creator. He thus arrogates to himself certain attributes of which his vain presumption would divest the Almighty, and builds up theories that serve no purpose but to bar his own way to happiness and to heaven. What is it to the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, how the earth-born creature of a day expends a minute fraction of his uncertain span? Must silence reign in the courts of heaven if the puny tones of man's voice fail to penetrate their walls? or do the untold myriads of cherubim and seraphim pause till we lead the song of praise, " Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts!" No, it is in tender compassion to the exiled ones below that the Lord appoints one day of especial training for the blessedness of which He wills them to partake, if they thwart not His

gracious designs ; one short respite from the toilsome cares of life, the penalty of rebellious sin, granted for the purpose of familiarizing them with the ground-plan and various inspiring details of the purchased inheritance reserved for them, if they despise not the good gift, nor barter the birthright.

And such disparagement, such barter, men will be tempted to contemplate, just in proportion as they neglect the invitation to acquaint themselves with what is so far their own that every man has it in his power to cast it from him. When man glorifies God, he benefits himself : when he departs from the Most High he forsakes his own mercies. It must be marvellous in the sight of angels to behold how the felon man hugs his fetters, glories in his dungeon walls, and struts proudly under the brand of ignominious punishment : it must be terrible to see him striking a pardon from the lacerated hand that bled on the cross to obtain it from offended Justice, and trampling it under his feet as a worthless thing. Yet this is the every-day spectacle outspread before them ; thus, daily, is God provoked ; and His most overpowering mercies made the occasion of aggravated sin.

Hitherto our enquirer had confined himself to

that single view of the subject in hand which concerns the temporal welfare of our race : but in the acquaintance last found he had discovered one who regarded it in what appeared a different light. At first, it seemed fitting, and a matter of course, that a clergyman should regard the matter theologically : but after a while, Philander became conscious of standing at a relative disadvantage : inasmuch as his friend's view necessarily embraced the other also, whereas his own stood apart, narrow and incomplete. This led to a deeper reflection, in the progress of which he found himself continually humbled, while in a like ratio his standard of right was elevated, and the importance of the subject became increasingly pressing, tending to the absorption of all others. He had imperceptibly learned to look on human beings as they crossed his path in the light of pilgrims and sojourners, some seeking a better country, others bound, though they heeded it not, for one terrifically worse ; but in either case, to find their future habitation a place of lasting abode. The prolongation of mortal life became a matter of greater moment, as affording in the one case extended opportunities of spreading light, and in the other a lengthened opportunity of escaping from darkness. And thus he found

his little pamphlet * of augmented value, because it bore on the physiological branch of a subject that, affecting as it does the twofold nature of man, cannot be adequately dealt with by a partial or exclusive line of argument.

‘Now, Sir,’ said his clerical friend, after the lapse of a few days which Philander rightly esteemed among the most important of his life, ‘You have seen among my little flock some fruit of a blessing regularly insured—I use the word advisedly—for each successive six days by the right employment of one. You have also, alas! beheld some painful instances of the contrast, in cases where persuasion and rebuke have hitherto alike failed to enforce the duty and privilege of following those examples: but still a certain measure of decent restraint is maintained, repressive of any flagrant outrage against the good order that may be and will be enforced in a place where the magistrate, the weekly employer, and the spiritual guide are cordially united in a resolution to maintain good order, even where nothing more can be done. Tomorrow you will find yourself among a class of persons wholly abandoned to what visionaries call the light of nature. Be

* Dr. Farre’s Evidence before the House of Commons.

not discouraged, nor repelled. Remember that the examination of this rankling sore, however harrowing to your own feelings, will, under the divine blessing, tend to promote a curative system. Two days among the Boatmen will suffice; and be careful not to remain on board during the night. Be as homely as you can in language and manner, only taking heed not to afford the encouragement of even a smile to the evil that you must see and hear: for, believe me, the end of that mirth which is excited by the sinful folly of others is a heaviness able to weigh down the stoutest heart when the day of remembrance arrives. You will pardon this remark: I have traced lamentable effects produced on the feelings and characters of the young and ignorant by the laugh of those who should have been better on their guard; as the staggering gait of the drunkard, the wild vociferations of the furious man, the vain and wicked pretence of the gypsy-fortune-teller, or the antics of some wretched girl, tricked out for street theatricals, awoke their risibility. On such occasions, those of better knowledge are closely watched by the illiterate: oh, beware of speech, or look, or gesture that may tend to harden them in familiarity with sin—the abominable thing which God hates.’

Thus counselled, thus cautioned, and so habited as to excite no suspicion of his rank in life, Philander pursued his way to the canal, which he reached after some hours' brisk walking, and more leisurely proceeded, following the course of its stiff, close cut, uninteresting banks. On the opposite side was the towing-path, trodden by many a weary-footed, ill-fed, and too generally ill-used beast. He had of course, often seen the luggage-boats gliding along near London; but they had never attracted his notice. What were they to him, or what the freight, human or otherwise, which they bore? No doubt, his eye had fallen on hundreds, for his daily ride lay across a canal; but he could not, if asked, have described the external appearance of such a vessel. We acquire a strange power of obliterating from the face of visible nature, objects that it does not suit us to look upon: more especially when their tendency is to excite emotions uncongenial to the selfish principle within; and no where is this faculty more promptly called into being, or more habitually exercised than in London, where sights and sounds abound, sufficient to deaden the keenest appetite for wanton luxury and selfish gratification, had we not each at command an auxiliary though intangible Police force, capable of remov-

ing from our presence the host of ungainly obstructions.

It proved, therefore, a novel contemplation to Philander, when his eye rested observingly on a luggage-boat, emblazoned as it was with the familiar name of Pickford. A long, narrow, heavy-looking vessel, with as little as might be of a boat's graceful curve upon its outline : a roof-like excrescence occupying so much of the deck as to leave but an edge, dizzily narrow, and scarcely elevated above the level of the water. Over the greater part of it was drawn a coarse, dusky, patched, and much be-grimed tarpaulin, and stretched at his length upon this, his face downwards, vacantly staring over his folded arms at the boat's stern, lay as rugged a specimen of the human race as Philander remembered to have seen. A rope dragged heavily over the water, frequently dipping with a sullen splash, the other end of which was attached to a lean animal, scarcely to be called a horse, whatever he might have been in better days : and close at his heels followed a child, a girl, clad in shreds so various and so detached, that as her rags fluttered in the wind they seemed intended rather for ornament than use. The only serviceable article in her possession was a stout horsewhip, with which she

incessantly belaboured the poor horse ; the slightest movement of whose heel in a retaliating mood must have sent her headlong into the water.

They passed on, sluggishly, notwithstanding occasional starts of activity on the part of the horse : and soon another came, and another, varying in detail as to the quality of the beast, the sex and age of his driver, and sometimes the number of faces appearing on deck : but one monotonous sameness of character invested the whole concern : without even the chance admixture of a single attractive feature. Crossing a bridge, Philander now made his way through a meadow, by a well trodden path, that, as he expected, brought him to a cluster of houses, among which was a *depôt* for parcels, rendering it a stopping place for boats. Here the canal, having made a bend, again met him, and as a number of boats were shortly expected, an air of business prevailed. A relay of horses partially refreshed, also stood awaiting the next arrivals.

To mingle among the Boatmen was his object ; easily accomplished, for they flocked to the porch of the inn, near which he placed himself. Men so lawless-looking he had not before seen ; but their ferocity, so to call it, was less wild than sullen. The absence of intellectual development

formed a striking peculiarity among them : low narrow foreheads, heavy eyes, and a taciturn disposition, seemed to regulate their classification. Here and there, might be seen a countenance indicating some openness of character : but these were overcast with melancholy, or fired with a restless activity that seemed to prey on itself for lack of other food. Their conversation, if such it might be called, admits of no description : the lowest of the low could not have found a farther depth to grovel in ; yet in this point the boys greatly outvied the men, simply because they were by so much the more talkative. Execrations, blasphemy and indecency poured from their lips : and whenever a combatant could be found preparations for a fight commenced. They were evidently watched with no little circumspection by the more decent inhabitants of the spot ; and other boys, issuing from a school hard by, were withheld from mixing among them. None staid beyond a few minutes ; but a succession arrived, so perfectly uniform in aspect, deportment, and language, that Philander scarcely noticed the substitution of different individuals : the species was one.

Addressing himself to an agricultural labourer, who was smoking a short pipe a little aloof from

the rest, our traveller remarked that the Boatmen seemed to have a dull life, and a troublesome set of boys to manage.

‘As to managing the boys, nobody thinks of it; they are shut up in their boats like wild beasts in cages; and the comfort is they can do little harm there.’

‘But as they grow older, and are placed out to different lines of business’——

‘Bless your heart,’ interrupted the other, ‘they never go to another business. Boatmen they will all be, to their lives’ end. What else can they be good for?’

‘A little instruction might improve them, and the hope of bettering their condition would encourage them to make the most of it.’

‘True, Sir,’ said the landlord, who had drawn near in the hope of a customer: ‘but they can get none. All day and all night they are on the water, as you see. Many of them are not to be trusted even to leave the boats while the horse is tackled: and altogether they turn out so bad that when we have a boy among us that nobody can manage or get any good out of, the plan is to send him to the boats.’

‘But how do you account for this? Their way of life is dull, and comfortless enough; yet

I cannot see how it produces such hopeless ruffianism. I should rather suppose them more out of harm's-way than lads ashore.'

'I can't tell : I only know 'tis the fact.'

In every quarter confirming testimony was yielded to the fact so stated : and Philander, more desirous than before to investigate the phenomenon, little as he relished a sojourn in their society, made choice of a boat, where he was the only passenger, and the appearance of which bespoke nothing above the most ordinary class, taking his place for a town that they were to reach late in the evening. He embarked after an early breakfast, and found himself squeezed into a narrow space, amongst a good deal of luggage, and seemingly as little regarded as though he had himself been a barrel of meal. The 'Captain,' a stout, determined-looking fellow, was issuing his orders with as much brevity as might be : two men and a boy formed his crew ; a woman with a child at her breast was preparing to broil some bacon on the cabin fire, and a little girl, bare-legged and disgustingly dirty, sat on the floor, amusing herself with the torn fragments of what had been a pack of cards. No conversation occurred ; all was dull and dreary as the sluggish water around

them ; all was mechanically conducted, with the heavy monotony of a slow pendulum, measured by the patter of the horse's hoofs on a stony soil, and the grating of the towing-rope against the boat's side. An hour thus passed, with no prospect of variety, led Philander to apprehend that he had adopted a wrong plan for investigating the subject before him, when the stoppage at a lock introduced a trifling change. The horse with a nosebag thrown over his head, stood eating, while the gates were thrown open, the water rushed down, and having found its level, permitted the boat to pass. A question or two was put and answered ; a glass of spirits tossed off by one of the men, to whom an acquaintance on shore handed it, and an altercation commenced between him and the captain as soon as they were again in motion, from which the passenger learned that the habitual drunkenness of this man had, not long before, nearly occasioned the loss of a boat in passing a heavy lock. On one side a stretch of authority, on the other an utter contempt for it, and among the rest an evident enjoyment of the bad language that passed, marked the quarrel as one of frequent occurrence. It produced just the effect on the prevailing monotony that a sudden stir produces on a stagnant pool. Much of an offensive cast

was brought to the surface, and then all settled again into its original inactivity.

Philander tried to draw the captain into conversation, but in vain: and two more locks were passed without an incident or a remark. 'This, in itself,' thought he, is sufficient to predispose men for any excitement, however evil. Such a life might do, where the mind has a store, however scanty, to draw upon: contemplation, or the interchange of thought, no matter how homely, on any subject calculated to raise man towards his proper level above the brutes, would really work a change in these automata. As it is, I don't see how their ideas can reach beyond the range of mere animal perception in its grossest forms. I'll make one more trial. He addressed the captain; 'Do you ever see a newspaper?' 'I see the Dispatch, and sometimes a country paper.' 'Have you any books on board?' 'There's none but myself able to read, and I've enough to do to mind the boat.' 'Whose is the horse?' 'Mine.' 'Do you take him much further?' 'To the end.' 'Indeed! that's a long stage.' No reply. 'How many hours may he work in a day?' 'Fourteen.' 'Without resting, or feeding?' 'He stops at the locks, and eats out of his nose-bag.' 'And works all the week round, Sundays

and all?' 'Yes.' Philander gave up in despair: the immobility of feature, the gruff, unsociable tone, the evident wish to discourage his inquisitiveness, all tended to weary him of a bootless effort; and he remained silent. To his surprise, however, the other presently volunteered a remark which, of all others, he would have preferred. The captain did not raise his chin from the tarpaulin that supported it, nor change the direction of his eyes, from the distant line of horizon, where no object appeared save the junction of a brown moor with a cloudy sky; but there was an approach to earnestness in his tone, as he said, 'They've no right, though, to keep us working on Sundays.' 'I agree with you there: God gave the seventh day for rest, and not for labour.' 'I don't care who gave it, but I know it's an Englishman's right to have a day to spend as he likes.' This was the extent of his feeling in the matter; he claimed it as a legal right, denounced the withholding of it as an act of oppression; and wished he could see a spirit among the poor to take by force what belonged to them. By degrees, the boatmen joined in the discourse; two boasted of having set their mark to a petition; and all were evidently of one mind as to the value of such a holiday; but for any better purpose

than idleness and debauchery they did not seem to be aware of its use. The boy, who had been driving the horse, now came on board, tired, and threw himself down on the roof: the captain remarked that the lad's elder brother belonged to a firm on another canal who never allowed their boats to go on Sundays. 'What sort of a chap is your brother, my boy?' said Philander. 'All one as a parson, I think: he talks mortal fine, and can read you off without spelling a whole book, and has a mighty conceit of himself.' 'A canting methody of a fellow,' said one of the boatmen; 'a regular psalm-singer.' 'One that would n't get drunk,' added the captain, with a significant glance at the last speaker, and 'therefore in your bad books; but I know there is n't a handier lad nor a more willing; and I only wish he was in my boat.'

Another lock broke up the party; but Philander soon contrived to ask the boy whether his brother had been long on the water. 'We were all born in a boat, and never followed any other business.' Here was some information gained: scanty indeed, but bearing on the main question. Nothing more passed; and, at the close of the most disagreeable day he had ever yawned through, our traveller left the boat, confident

that nothing was to be gained there beyond an insight into the wretched sameness of so low a scale of animal existence. He went to a respectable inn, improved his personal appearance, and sat down to a general table, where the conversation turned on a trial just over, implicating a party of boatmen in a very aggravated case, where two or three were convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life.

‘They are altogether incorrigible,’ observed one of the company: ‘talk to them of moral responsibility, it matters not what language you make choice of—the plainest English from a dame school, or classic Greek, you are just as comprehensible one way as the other. Talk of instruction! they are incapable of receiving it.’

‘My experience tells a different tale,’ said a lively-looking little man who sat by. ‘I have been on board the boats hundreds of times, for the purpose of awakening them to a sense of their actual wants, and to the enormity of their vices: and though often repulsed, I can on the whole say that my mission was acceptable, my person respected, and a fair measure of gratitude excited for services that they knew were disinterested.’

‘Oh, you agents of religious societies have a

way with these people that keeps them decent in your presence ; but your back once turned, there is an end to their reformation.'

' In too many instances, I admit ; but to what is it owing ? The meal that replenishes your stomach to-day will not yield prolonged sustenance : you must have a fresh supply to meet the abiding demand. So it is with the mind and spirit : each requires day by day its portion of daily bread, whether material or spiritual. You may set a person going in the world when you have placed the means of subsistence within his reach, and taught him how to use them : you may expect a permanent continuance in the paths of rectitude when you have in like manner trained the mind to draw continual help from a source open to all who repair to it for direction how to walk, and grace to persevere.'

' You must then take those fellows from their boats, and collect them in training schools, upon one of the wildest speculations ever hatched in mortal brain—that of making them moral and religious.'

' The scheme is impracticable, even were it desirable : six days are allotted to man to labour and to do all that he has to do ; and I only stip-

ulate for the seventh, to be applied as God has appointed it.'

' You don't mean to say, that a few hours so spent out of a week would counteract all the evil accumulated during the long interval?'

' I do ; because He who hallowed the seventh day also blessed it. Look how far the light of that single lamp prevails to banish darkness : much more effectual, much more extensive is the enlightening power of the word that by its entrance giveth understanding to the simple.'

' Well, I cannot debate that point with you. I only know that you certainly cannot accomplish the object for which you are collecting signatures. Sunday trading on canals may be, and probably is, a great evil : but it is one of the class called necessary evils, and therefore not to be remedied.'

' I protest against that phrase : I deny that in a world made and governed by the Lord God Almighty, any evil is necessary in the sense implied—that is to say, that man lies under the necessity of committing any act contradictory of the law of God. I deny that the breach of the fourth commandment is more unavoidable than the breach of the sixth, or seventh, or eighth, or any other : I challenge you to the proof.'

This gauntlet was not taken up : the person addressed looked at his watch, called the waiter, paid his reckoning and departed. The little man inwardly chuckled, with an amiable sort of triumph ; and, casting his vivacious eyes around, said, as plainly as looks could express it, ‘ I challenge you all to the proof.’

One of the company, as it may be surmised was loth to let the subject drop : he leaned across two empty chairs intervening between himself and the last speaker, and observed, ‘ I have been all this day in company with some of the class referred to, and I must say that extreme dulness and stupidity appear to me to characterize them, rather than the vicious enormities that you seem to take for granted.’

‘ You have seen them in a quiescent state, sir, I presume : not as they appeared to-day in court under strong excitement, and exhibiting enough of sympathy with the worst of criminals to prove their light estimate of crime. Or, perhaps, you have fallen in with some of the privileged class, condemned to suffer no greater disadvantages than fall to the lot of every labouring man. I know of one firm who afford a practical demonstration that the commission of evil is *not* necessary.’ ‘ I heard of such a firm ; but my companions were

of the unprivileged mass. 'The fact is,' he added as they were left nearly alone, 'I am an enquirer on the very subject with which you seem to identify yourself, and any assistance that you can afford I shall be thankful for.'

With much cordiality of manner, the stranger immediately commenced explaining to him his own mission, its origin and results. He was collecting particulars on which to ground an appeal for increased facilities of spiritual instruction for this neglected class of men, without any direct reference to Sabbath observance, but he had found the crying evil of a desecrated Lord's day meeting him at every step, and forcing on his mind the conviction that all efforts would be vain until it was done away with. It was no part of his instructions to propose an appeal to the legislature on this point ; but he had done so, and his suggestion had been met in a way that surprised him. Philander mentioned the grounds on which they seemed to crave it, partly as a matter of right, and partly as an occasion for sensual indulgence. This was admitted ; but the plain fact was also pointed out that in their present state they were wholly debarred from any possible participation in the instruction sought to be provided. Theirs was the case of a man heavily ironed, who if at

liberty, might not choose to walk in the direction you wished ; but who, whatever his will might be, was physically incapable of so doing until the manacles should be knocked off. ‘Meet me to-morrow, and I will bring you among some who shall explain in their own way, far better than I can do, the detail of what you have this day seen in dim and dubious outline.’

CHAPTER VIII.

GLEANINGS AMONG THE BOATMEN.

CRIME has gradations : they lead like the rounds of a ladder, by easy, imperceptible progress from the solid ground below to the height whence man, being disappointed in his purpose of a safe descent by the late discovery that its summit rests on no adequate support, falls headlong. Having placed his foot on the lowest round, he feels an unaccountable, and ere long an irresistible propensity to go further. In the boy, true miniature of man, you may detect this tendency whenever he is placed within reach of a material ladder ; strengthening too in proportion to the urgency of the prohibition received, for sin takes occasion by the commandment ; and what the Apostle Paul feelingly describes touching the

evil that wrought within him in reference to the tenth, holds good of all the rest. Of none more than the fourth. To keep *holy* the seventh day is what God enjoins : to pollute it more than any of the remaining six is what man delights in. Why should it be so ? In the case of benefactions conferred by some high potentate of earth, we do not find this backwardness to mingle at court with the favoured few, to renew the pledge of loyal attachment, and to be in the way of any new honours the royal patron may from time to time be pleased to confer. This line of conduct is certainly the rule ; its reverse the exception, all the world over : therefore we conclude that some powerful impulsive enmity against God and his service resides in the depths of man's heart, outweighing what, in all other instances are the dictates alike of natural feeling and of self interest, rendering the general rule the exception here, and *vice versa*.

The graduating scale is brought into practice chiefly where education has introduced, if not the principle yet the habit of decently observing the Sabbath's rest : there almost every round of the ladder has its occupant, each measuring his progress, not by the number of steps already taken, but by those which he flatters himself he never

shall be induced to take. Happily, the extreme is unattainable in England: no theatres are open, no public assemblies held, nor games and sports and shows legalized, as in the continental lands; and if there be some who would openly run to such excess, and who in their private houses proceed as far as existing laws permit, the bulk of well-ordered society stands plainly opposed to such glaring desecration, gathering also food for self-applause from the more forward zeal of their neighbours in casting down the way-marks that God hath set up. Still, it cannot be denied that the tendency of men's minds is removed further from, not to return towards the starting point; and the principle seeks to make its way covertly under the guise of a benevolent concern for the less affluent classes; a desire to render the season of rest and devotion what they call, the working-man's holiday: the phrase being indeed perverted from its correct signification, and invested with a conventional meaning sufficiently removed from every exercise of body or mind that can be termed holy. This spurious philanthropy is much on the increase among us; to such an extent that we may as a matter of calculation look for enactments the very reverse of what the occasion calls for. The portion of need-

ful rest that should recruit the exhausted bodies and refresh the worn out faculties of weak women and young children is withheld, because such concession might endanger the loss of a fraction of the employer's profits : it is contrary to the laws set up on behalf of our great national idol, accumulation, and can in no wise be permitted : yet, many who start back from this proposition are ready to entertain favourably another, of which the object is to rob not man of his wealth, but merely to rob God of his glory ; by stretching to the utmost point of licentiousness the liberty which cannot safely be invaded, and atoning for six days' merciless extortion of unremitted toil by a seventh day's carnival that should drown the sullen reminiscences of a week's suffering in a general whirl of exciting dissipation. At such a point of self-deception do men arrive, when substituting the theories of blinking expediency for the sure oracles of God !

But we are forestalling a branch of the subject not yet under review : it is an abstract in brief of remarks dropped by Philander's new guide in the course of a conversation as desultory as the ramble which they took on the morning following their first meeting. The little man was in quest of a particular personage, a boatman of the hum-

ble class, whose testimony he considered more valuable than his own, in directing the traveller's mind to the root of the evil. At length they found him, and the subject was at once introduced. 'This gentleman came from ——, in one of the boats : he had heard much of your disadvantages and the mischiefs accruing from them ; but seeing only the quiet, droning sort of life led on the canal, he does not comprehend how a great amount of positive evil can arise from what seems merely negative.'

'What does the fellow know of positive and negative?' thought Philander, as he looked at the coarse features and coarser habiliments of the bargeman. He had miscalculated : the reply surprised him.

'Has the gentleman, sir, never happened to see a fallow field, grown and flourishing with a full crop of weeds, just because nothing good was sown in it?'

'That, if applicable at all, applies to men in general ; not more to yours than to any other class. But I meet on all sides with complaints of certain special ills belonging to your craft, and these I would investigate root and branch : I saw nothing but listless inactivity, varied occasionally with a passing indication that passions natural to

mankind were not lacking among them—fuel capable of being roused into a flame; but not particularly inclined to spontaneous combustion. They were rather wanting than otherwise in the vivacity that usually indicates a turbulent disposition.’

No, sir, they are not turbulent: a duller set of people you cannot meet. It is not that they are naturally different from others, but their habits — may I ask, did not you find the time hang heavy on your hands, sir, if you were alone?’

‘To say truth, I did, in an extraordinary degree: I could not rouse the people about me into conversation: as to books, there were none. However it was not a regular passage boat: no accommodation could be expected.’

‘One day, sir, proved fatiguing to your mind, because you found nothing to rouse or entertain it. Now will you picture to yourself a being born into the world with the same faculties and perceptions as yours, from his earliest age obliged to pass every day, month, and year of his life, just as you saw them yesterday; brought up by persons who had themselves been brought up in the same manner; surrounded by companions reared as they were; never having their thoughts directed to any higher object than what can gratify their

bodily senses ; never tempted to any thing good, and prepared to yield without a struggle to any evil propensity that they have an opportunity of gratifying :—I say, sir, what sort of an existence do you call this ? Is it a preparation for eternity or not ?’ Struck by the man’s impassioned tone and manner Philander felt he must make some reply : he stammered, a common-place remark about God’s mercy, in making allowances, and accepting according to that which a man hath—not that which he hath not. ‘ Nay, sir, the most ignorant among us, if he thinks at all of another life, trembles and desponds, and drives it from his thoughts as fast as he may. He feels no fitness for God’s presence, no desire to behold Him. A load of guilt is on his conscience, he cannot shake it thence ; and the way of deliverance he does not know. While life and strength remain, he fights off the convictions of his mind, and when these fail, when eternity is at the door—oh, sir, you should learn the rest at the bedside of the dying Boatman.’

‘ Still I cannot think that in a Christian country any class of persons must necessarily remain in ignorance so deplorable as you describe. Surely, in some way, every man must hear of his duty to God.’

‘In a country consistently Christian he must,’ said the agent: ‘but here, for all practical uses, the Sabbath is abolished, and with it the appointed means of man’s approach to his Creator. Recollect, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” How is the written word to reach those who cannot read it? how the preached word. those who must not pause to listen to it?’

The boatman added, ‘The word does reach many a one of them in the time of sickness, or from some teacher who gets among them as this gentleman did yesterday: but the more effect it takes, the more do they feel the cruel compulsion of flying in the face of God’s commandment by breaking every Sabbath; and then, Sir, consider how a soul must droop when its hunger and thirst after spiritual things are baulked, and the means of grace taken away without which no soul can thrive. You must remember, Sir, that learning to love the word of life does not enable a man to read it, nor bring him a bit the more into the way of hearing it.’

‘And are there no schools, to teach your children when young? or do you never receive into the boats boys who have had those advantages?’

‘As to our own sons, we bring them up to our

own craft, where no learning is thought needful ; and where any attempt is made to teach them, they are found, like their unhappy parents, so dull as to give ten times more trouble than other children. This is a fact known to all who have tried : and it is known also to themselves ; so that in many instances, where the opportunity is given, they refuse to go, because they don't choose to have their stupidity laughed at by the rest. And these are the very children who would like best to learn, and make the most of it—they have feelings ; soon crushed or turned into the worst channel. Then as to other boys, none are sent to the boats that are likely to be good for any thing : we keep the business chiefly in our own families, and what few strangers enter it are of a sort to introduce more mischief, not to confer a benefit.'

' This is a bad case,' observed Philander, turning to his companion : ' so bad, that the mere concession of one day in seven would do little or nothing in palliation.'

' Every thing,' answers the other ; and the boatman echoed it. ' Every thing, Sir, if the same advantages were given to us as to others. We should tie our boats up on Saturday nights ; and Christian men would take advantage of it to come to our stopping places, and teach us. I

don't say that all, or half our people would receive them willingly, or listen to their words—we are too demoralized for that, through being left so long in heathen darkness; no doubt many of us would use the Sabbath as a day of idleness and sin; but even among these, good would work; for they must feel the shame of their children's disadvantages compared with those about them, and would make them learn something at the Sunday schools. You cannot calculate on the good this would lead to: the Bible would be on board many a poor man's boat; and out of the mouths of their ragged babes and sucklings God would perfect praise.'

Here the little man turned his quick eye on our traveller. 'Don't you catch a gleam of light breaking in on the thick darkness?'

'I do: faint, and probably slow in progress, but a new element altogether. Now, my honest friend, go on: you have an attentive listener, and learner.'

'I have spoken of the children, Sir, as regards their better teaching: now, as to the men, it is, as I have told you, the case with hundreds that the light of their natural conscience serves to show them what black darkness overhangs their path, and its dreadful ending; so that a vast

number make it their business to quench this troublesome light, because they can see no way open to leave the road of destruction. These men are prepared to listen to such a one as should point out a better and brighter way: they would come to the true light, and having kindled their own dark torch at it, consider how they would spread it; both by their own right walk and conversation, and also by persuading others to listen to truths that had been blessed to themselves. You may say that such an improvement is not often seen among other working-classes where the Sabbath is left free, and they profane it from choice; but I should expect more good from perhaps a worse class of men than they: these last are sabbath-breakers now against their will; and if the choice was to make, the blessing and the curse being plainly set before them, I believe, Sir, a vast number would be found willing to hallow the day by attending a place of worship. The very novelty of the thing would draw others there, to satisfy a natural curiosity: then would come a time of refreshing—God would send the word with power to their poor dark souls; and for His own Name's sake He would show what a train of blessings follow when man obeys that command, "Hallow my Sabbaths."

‘ It is your own history,’ observed the little man.

‘ It is, Sir. I was one of that unhappy class who know their responsibility, feel that they cannot fulfil it, and see no escape from judgment. Many a quart of ale I tossed off to drown thought : many a filthy song I roared out to stifle the still small voice within ; many a fearful curse I uttered against others in the bitterness of temper caused by the sense of being myself under a curse. I wished for the Sunday privileges of the pot-house and bowling-green, and few rejoiced more than I when my employers, won by the persuasions of a godly minister, decided on stopping their boats, and braving the consequences. I thought as others did, ruin would soon stare them in the face, and compel them to run again as before ; but we resolved to make the most of our time, and laid many plans for dissipation and sin. Through mercy, my boat was tied up not far from the parish church where our principal master attends : he met a party of us early that Sunday morning, on our way to a place of public resort—“ Well my lads, we have run a risk, that you may have a share in our advantages : I hope to see a good number of you at church, as a proof that you feel their value.” He walked on,

and our party divided ; some from policy, others from gratitude, wished to please him ; the rest would not be put off from their plans. I wavered long, but went at last with the former, calculating that we should gain more by it. My gain that day was an arrow in my conscience, so sharp that I never rested till it was removed, and I found peace in believing that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin—such peace as I had never dreamed of ; such joy as changed my whole existence into another state of being. I had scoffed at learning, as a useless incumbrance to a boatman : now I devoted every spare minute to it, that I might read on week days the glorious things that I could at last hear freely on the Sabbath. I can speak for myself, that I was a brutified being, made wretched by feeling that I was so ; but having neither power nor will to raise myself from that degraded state. Sir, the gospel opens the blind eyes, enlightens the dark mind, sharpens the blunted wits, shows a man the way he should go, and gives him strength to walk in it, and grace to continue therein unto the end.’

That a person capable of expressing himself so correctly, sometimes in choice language, should have commenced learning the Alphabet after coming to man’s estate among the degraded class

of Canal navigators, was a matter of wonder to our traveller; until his companion reminded him that the many tedious hours of inaction inseparable from their calling, became mighty auxiliaries in a pursuit after such attainments as these. 'He has read the Bible through and through, I know not how oft; with a considerable number of our good old books on divinity; and some volumes of history, and works of general information. All have not the like thirst for knowledge, but there are few who do not listen with interest when a book is read in their hearing, after the habitual torpor of the mind has been shaken off, and their attention directed to matters that concern their eternal welfare. Now, permit me to ask, have you made any sensible progress in this quest since we started?'

'Very great, indeed. I recognize in the Sabbath observance the foundation of a fabric that every man who loves his country and his species must long to see firmly established. It does not follow that where this foundation is laid, the building must necessarily rise, and progress to perfection; but it is quite clear that without it no such fabric can be erected. Therefore I say, lay it down, as a necessary preliminary; and for the rest do what you can.'

‘ Always remembering that the foundation has been laid by the hand of God Himself ; that, impiously and presumptuously, man has dared to remove it ; and that our work is one of restoration in a case of sacrilegious theft. We have no more right to wrest away the poor man’s Sabbath than we have to extinguish the sun that lights and warms him : but the latter we cannot reach : the former we can, and at our peril we do, to answer for the deed to Him whose law we defy, whose mercy we frustrate, whose best blessing we change into a direful curse.’

‘ Now you speak too strongly : men may hold mistaken views, and act their theories out ; honest in error, and not chargeable to the extent you would imply. Surely there is such a thing as being very sincerely and conscientiously in the wrong, and therefore quite pardonably.’

‘ Sir, if the Almighty had given to each man *a carte blanche*, to fill up after his own taste or convictions, or what you will, and then to adopt it as his golden rule, your plan might be admissible ; but is it so ? You know the contrary. Divine legislation is carried to a certain point, within which and in subservience to what is written, man may amplify, divide, and apply, as occasion demands and as experience directs :

but virtually to cancel one word of the inspired code, or daringly to forge an additional clause, are offences that no earthly legislator would tolerate. Will the King and Governor of the whole earth endure it ?’

‘Still I cannot divest myself of the opinion that a certain discretionary power is left in each man’s hands, with regard to the observance of that day.’

‘Do you mean that man is free to choose whether he shall keep the Sabbath holy or not ?’ Philander made no reply : he was not prepared to assert so much, neither to yield altogether the unlimited submission that he felt must be due when the decree was clearly and peremptorily of God. ‘Why do you hesitate ? either the Sabbath is set apart, blessed, and hallowed, by the Lord himself, and enjoined on man as a perpetual observance, or it is not. If the latter, no special blessing can be connected with it ; no peculiar sanctity invests it ; no stain of disobedience cleaves to its profanation—in fact, it cannot be profaned, not being a holy thing. Are you prepared to go to this length ?’

‘No.’

‘Then I profess myself unable to discover the bearings of your course. In the present instance,

the case of the boatmen, the Sabbath is so utterly done away with that you cannot palliate the deed unless by a broad assent to what you have just negatived. Perhaps you would imply that although we, as two individuals, hold the contrary opinion, still there may be others, practical men, who are sincerely persuaded that no such obligation exists : and that they violate no law of God, commit no wrong against their fellow men, nor strain a point of conscience, when thus quietly removing the fourth commandment from the decalogue.'

'That is what, in charity, I must believe ; for, hard as is the case in other quarters, this of the poor boatmen imprisoned in their floating dungeons, and absolutely shut out from the possibility of any religious instruction whatever, while denied a respite from their dreary, monotonous irksome toil, is so much worse in all its features that I am at a loss to conceive any justification for their employers' conduct, short of a complete disavowal of the law itself.'

'A perilous justification that ! You had better accompany me on my present expedition. I am bound for the residence of an extensive carrier, as we call them : a gentleman who has some fifty or a hundred boats on the line, and with whom, or

one of his principal managers, I have to argue this point. Will you go ?'

'Gladly.'

'I have another commission to execute on the way thither ; to collect signatures for a petition on this subject from the men themselves. Thus you will be brought into contact with both parties.'

'I envy your work, and the spirit in which you do it.'

'The work, my good friend, is uphill work enough : for the powers around and beneath are arrayed in a compact body of opposition. The spirit, I humbly hope, is from above ; and I counsel you to seek large supplies of that grace no less needful in coming to a right understanding of the matter than in prosecuting the work. I know of no single point on which men's minds are so beclouded, their feet so entangled, as on this. If I lacked evidence of its being the cause of truth, I should find it in the desperate hostility of the god of this world who stirs up all his forces to resist it at every step. Men, unconscious whose agents they are, receive the suggestions of Satan as the sage inductions of their own minds from a train of reasoning independent of God and his laws, from which no sane man, acting under the dictates of natural conscience

and sound philosophy, would dream of dissevering any subject bearing on the welfare and happiness of mankind : and thus divorced from the only true good, thus led by the concealed spirit of all evil and mischief, our system-mongers in every department, high or low, bring forth such monstrous births, or rather abortions, that he who would encounter one of them really knows not to what weapons the anomalous deformity may be pervious. Few have courage to draw at once and unreservedly the sword of the Spirit, encountering all opponents with "Thus saith the Lord," for they who do, must count on a storm no less of derision than of opposition. Truth against expediency ! it is a substance encountering a shadow. The glittering blade meets no real obstacle ; it passes through and through, exhibiting its brightness on every side, in unobstructed freedom of action ; but the thing is intangible, therefore indivisible ; and repeat the dissecting process as oft as you will, there stands the mocking phantom in all its dull and dreamy immobility, facing you as at the first. A something, an anything, a nothing, so it smack exclusively of man's wisdom and have no savour of life about it, will serve the purposes of our theorists to supplant what they may indeed pull down, but can never rebuild—to

supplant it with a Babel that will speedily issue in confusion, division, dispersion, and the wreck of every thing but their own disgrace.'

This was uttered in soliloquy, calling for no reply. The speaker was one evidently inured to 'uphill work,' disgusted but not discouraged, and now preparing for a fresh engagement with the pertinacious shadows that, insubstantial as he pronounced them to be, impeded his path. Our traveller was gradually obtaining a juster view of many actual obstructions placed in the way of obedience to God's command; but he had not acquired the spiritual discernment indispensable for a right investigation of motives and principles, and springs of action yet deeper than either; a spirit working in the children of disobedience from the beginning, and never more intent than now on defeating the beneficent purposes of the world's Creator.

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUESTION DEBATED.

WE now meet the two adventurers in a hamlet thickly inhabited for its size, and almost exclusively by one class of people—the families of boatmen. It lay at a short distance from a place of considerable traffic, where great numbers of boats stopped to load or unload: receiving and delivering freight at a point where the land carriers of an extensive district met them. There was bustling activity on the banks of the canal; and a stir also in the heavy little village, betokening expectation; for the hour of arrival was come, and supplies to the extent of their limited means had been prepared for some of the expected navigators. Now, Philander had a fair opportunity for observing the marked separation of one class

from all others: the exclusiveness in aspect, habits, feelings, and interests that plainly distinguished the squalid race before him. The boats arrived; a crowd of men and boys leaped ashore, and while some busied themselves in landing their goods, others betook themselves to their poor huts: and not a few to the alehouse. The land carriers were somewhat behind their time, which seemed to afford satisfaction to the boatmen, and still more to Philander's companion, who, making himself as conspicuous as he could, collected the stragglers around him, and drew forth a long roll of parchment. Very little curiosity, however, was excited among those whom he chiefly desired to attract: the idlers of the place formed his chief auditory, annoying him by their prying or jesting remarks. At length he extricated himself from them, and forced his way into a knot of boatmen, who stood, gloomily impatient, about a pile of luggage destined for the tardy waggons. These he addressed: 'My men, I've got something here that concerns you;' but little notice was taken, until he, in a louder tone, proclaimed that he held a petition for the Sunday stoppage of all boats on the canal. This operated quickly and widely; every man within hearing pressed nearer, and his words being speedily circulated,

a general gathering ensued ; the boatmen pushing aside all intruders into a matter so especially concerning themselves. Philander could not but smile at the elated eagerness with which the little man unrolled his document ; and mounting a heavy trunk obtained sufficient altitude to make the contents audible. It was a brief, sensible, respectful appeal to the legislature for a privilege, the value of which was feelingly set forth, and the hardship of the poor man's privation forcibly represented. Having concluded, he raised his voice, and looking round on the now eager auditory, asked, ' Will any man sign this ? '

' Ay, to be sure : ' ' Right, gladly ; ' ' Thank ye, master, I'll do it ; ' ' I'll sign with both my hands ; ' ' We'll all sign it, every one ; ' these and many similar exclamations responded : and when, by hoisting another box over the first, a table was formed, and the good man had spread the skin, and produced his inkhorn, the scene became most animated. Then was the want of education made manifest : very few could write their names ; and some who did, remarked that for want of time they had never learned to do more, their signature alone being required to receipts, way-bills, and similar documents. So many desired to sign the petition, that not only the agent and Philan-

der but two or three other hands were fully occupied in taking down names, and attesting the marks of the poor petitioners. Meantime, the news had reached the detached little hamlet, whence many men and lads were seen running up to join in the work ; not a few women with children in their arms or at their heels, eagerly pressing into the throng to be satisfied that the report was true. So much dirt, so many rags, and such a mass of stupid, yet momentarily excited faces, Philander had never before encountered ; neither, to say truth, had his heart ever accompanied the movement of a pen as it then did. The emotion—the devotion with which he executed his rapid task was quite new to him ; and his tone of cordial good nature when questioning the applicants as to names that rather puzzled him, elicited many a grateful smile that went to his heart like a sunbeam. The boys were very urgent to be enrolled, and he had some difficulty in repulsing them ; the agent being scrupulously careful to admit no names but those of adults, coming voluntarily forward ; while numbers of the inhabitants, who also requested permission to join, were with no less difficulty convinced that it was not, on the present occasion, allowable. All the boatmen having their

names down, with a detected attempt on the part of two or three to get them inserted twice, for which they were reprimanded, the agent availed himself of the prevalent good feeling, to say a few words on the nature and value of the Christian Sabbath ; and having also distributed some books among those who could read, he rolled up his well-blotted document, and departed. Scarcely were they clear of the crowd, when three hearty cheers assured the travellers how well their work was appreciated ; and after courteously acknowledging the compliment, Philander remarked, ‘ I am not sure that I would exchange it for a vote of thanks from the House of Commons.’ ‘ I fear,’ answered the other, ‘ you must remodel that assembly, before you would earn their thanks for a work of simple philanthropy like this.’

‘ But have you not rather overstated the cases of depravity among yonder men ? I saw much good feeling, and heard remarks that impressed me more favourably than I expected.’

‘ You saw them under circumstances of unfrequent occurrence. They are men and Englishmen : and when two persons of a rank above their own come among them, solely, as they cannot but see, to promote their interests by removing a very cruel burden, in a just, lawful manner, what other re-

sult can you look for but the manifestation of all that is right, all that is manly, all that is generous, in their natural dispositions? At this moment, evil is at work in the very group that we have left: there are some watching an opportunity to dispose of their stolen goods among accomplices, residing on the spot for the purpose of receiving them: others, who will end the evening in various acts of premeditated sin: and not a few who, on the strength of this very petition will presently devise new schemes of mischief, to be carried into effect on the anticipated sabbath of rest.'

'That would seem to furnish an argument against conceding it.'

'Say rather it yields an awful testimony against the guilt of so long withholding it.'

Their destination was soon reached: a substantial range of buildings; warehouses well stored; offices of various kinds, and a large dwelling house. The agent enquired for one of the acting managers, and a very intelligent, gentlemanly man answered the summons. The subject being broached, Philander thought that he looked somewhat less agreeable; but as neither tone nor manner lost any of its suavity, he might be mistaken. The question, he said, was not new to

him ; in fact, the firm had been deliberating upon it for years, and had bestowed on it much attention.

‘ And what, may I ask, is the result of this long consideration ? ’

‘ That, however desirable, it is utterly impracticable.’

‘ Not altogether : I have obtained the assent of two firms on condition of persuading all who traffic on this line to unite with them in a general effort for enforcing the observance of the Sabbath.’

A slight smile curled the lip of the other, as he replied, ‘ I also might safely give in my adhesion on those terms, well assured that such unanimous assent is unattainable ; but, sir, I do not wish to encourage any man in a delusion, and this, particularly, is doing harm by unsettling the minds of Boatmen, rendering them discontented and disobedient, and perhaps paving the way for some dangerous combination. I, therefore, frankly negative your proposition : I do so with regret, for it would afford me pleasure to see the indulgence enjoyed by most other classes extended to our men, little as they are disposed to avail themselves of it for any good purpose : but the thing, I repeat it, is impracticable.’

‘ If you could convince me of that, it would save me some fruitless labour,’ said the little man drily ; ‘ for until I see the impracticability as clearly as you seem to do, I must persevere.’

‘ I have already said that the subject is frequently discussed in our firm : surely you will admit the force of obstacles that we who are well versed in the matter find it impossible to surmount.’

‘ But am I to understand that any of you are really desirous to see the seventh day hallowed ? ’

‘ Of course, all of us : you do not take us for heathens, I hope ? ’

‘ You recognize, as of divine authority, the command to rest from labour on the Sabbath ? ’

‘ Doubtless ; as a general precept ; and we place no bar in the way of its observance where it can be done. The boatmen are a separate class, their work is a peculiar one ; and circumstances over which we have no control preclude the possibility of extending the indulgence to them. Neither, in fact, do they wish it, with the exception of a few of the worst character, who long for a day’s riot, idleness and debauchery on land.’

‘ They must be a depraved set of fellows,’ observed Philander.

‘They are so : a very ignorant and often worthless race ; greatly inferior to others.’

‘That ignorance being at the root of all the evil ;’ interrupted the agent : ‘and therefore pleading with us to afford them advantages, without which they can but go from bad to worse, and perish.’

‘You take an extreme view, sir, there are honest, well-conducted men among them, whose example ought to reform the rest.’

‘Pardon me, it has not room to operate. Good example will often lead men on in pursuit of what is right : for instance, it may engender in others a disposition to attend public worship, to read the word of God, and to refrain from open violations of His holy law : but here, neither your exemplars nor their observers can avail themselves of the ordinary means of grace : nor can they avoid the habitual breach of a commandment more diffuse, more particular, and more frequently insisted on than any of the other nine.’

‘We cannot help it : the fault is not ours.’

‘That is what I want to be convinced of.’

‘Well, sir : in the first place you will allow that a man cannot be fairly called upon to beggar himself, his family and dependents : yet that would be the first result of your visionary re-

forms. Our business is, as you know, to convey goods by water from place to place; and those goods being principally articles of barter, dispatch is a necessary stipulation on the part of the owners. You are not ignorant of the facilities afforded by railway carriage, nor of the rapid increase of railroads, and consequent competition with all other modes of conveyance. Speeding fast as they may, without an interval of rest, our boats can barely maintain their own place as carriers of goods, and if we were credulous enough to try this new scheme, tying them up for twenty-four, or even for twelve hours, with all the attendant consequences of crowding, entangling, and working heavily along an obstructed channel, we should be fairly driven out of the field—competition would be at an end, boatmen and employers must together disappear in one wide mass of pauperism.'

'A part of our plan aims to obviate that difficulty; Sunday trading would be prohibited no less on Railways than on Canals.'

'Your device would fall short of its aim: the superior celerity of the trains would still give them an immense advantage over us, eventually issuing in the same catastrophe.'

'It strikes me,' said Philander, 'that even

now the advantage in point of speed rests so decidedly with the railway, as to prove that other inducements must turn the balance in favour of water carriage ; and I doubt whether the difference of a few hours in a week would suffice to reverse your relative position.'

' I have no doubt at all on the point,' answered the other somewhat pettishly : ' but at all events let your proposed security of a Sabbath enactment precede our movement. Meanwhile, survey a few more insuperable obstacles. If a certain firm, or number of firms, agree thus to deprive themselves of a day, depend on it, rivals less scrupulous will presently start opposition boats, which, gaining such a material advantage in point of speedy delivery, would obtain the preference, and quietly thrust us from our own line.'

' A powerful plea for Sabbath legislation,' exclaimed Philander, to his companion. The speaker resumed:—' Sir, all the Sabbath legislation in the world would not accomplish what you, benevolently but erroneously, expect. Suppose the boats all tied up on Saturday night, and the men taking advantage of their holiday, whether according to your plans or their own, who is to guard the property ? We are accountable to the senders

for every article transmitted ; the men in turn are responsible to us. Now, while your well-disposed class were at Church, and our vagabonds at the Beer-shop, would not pilfering, would not robbery on a large scale, be going on in the forsaken boats ? Who is to make it good ? Will the owners of the cargo be satisfied with the miserable fraction that the boatmen could contribute, or are we to pay at such a rate as this out of our own pockets, the price of their ill-starred holiday ? The men know that they would be obliged to remain in charge of the boats, and this, with the loss of a seventh part of their weekly profits, renders them indifferent if not opposed to the innovations that you desire to make. Their bread depends on the trade ; they are aware what serious stoppages would occur, and how great a loss of time must ensue, not only at starting, but at the locks ; destroying all punctuality in delivering goods, and throwing them out of work altogether. Are you satisfied, gentlemen, or will you hear more ?’

This was spoken with the air of a man who believes what he has said to be unanswerable. The little Agent, who had stood immoveable, his eyes fixed on the well sanded floor, now looked up, and said, ‘ If you have any thing to adduce

grounded on another plea than the hacknied and most unsatisfactory one of expediency against duty, I am ready to hear, to weigh, and to make every fair allowance for it : but with a plain, positive commandment of God before us, and no excuse for evading it but the possibility, say the probability of temporal loss to individuals, you must not expect to work any other conviction in my mind than that of the corrupt state of feeling and society unhappily prevailing, and calling for a prompt remedy.'

'Some such remedy, I presume you have in your pocket,' remarked the other with a short laugh of disdain.

'I have, Sir,' rejoined the agent, drawing forth a small bible, which seemed at once to annoy and to disconcert his opponent, 'and believe me when I say that in the spirit of this blessed book, not in wrath, strife, or debate, I wish to discuss the point with you. Give me your hand, sir, and then listen to me; patiently and courteously, as I think I have listened to you.' This could not be denied: and with a tolerably good grace, though at the same time glancing significantly at the clock over his head, the official man shook hands with one whom he hoped the better to get rid of by humouring him.

‘ I will not detain you long, my good sir, for time with both of us, is precious ; but how much more precious eternity ! Briefly touching on the points advanced by you, I would first say that the very surface of the matter shews at a glance, and deeper investigation confirms, the absolute necessity of protective legislation, embracing all branches of trade and commerce. That one class of men should be allowed to take a worldly advantage of another, because the latter feared God and kept His commandments, is a thing not to be tolerated in a Christian land ; it is contradictory of the assertion that “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” It is therefore the undeniable duty of a government professing to rule according to the divine word, so to provide that no man shall suffer in body, or estate, for squaring his practice by God’s commandments. As well might a premium be put or permitted on theft, murder, or adultery, as on Sabbath-breaking. You will admit this ?’

‘ My admission or demur are alike irrelevant. Facts, not theories are to be dealt with. As the law stands, what you harshly term Sabbath-breaking is not merely at a premium : the first principle of nature, self-preservation, renders it un-

avoidable. Yet do not mistake me ; I am not an innovator ; existing laws satisfy me, and I, for one, in compliance with the old adage, would leave well alone.'

' Ah, my friend, a day is coming when we shall all be compelled to feel that it was not well to trifle with the holy law of our Creator and our Judge ! Consider this point, I pray you ; for it concerns you more nearly than any question of temporal gain or loss. Transfer to the third commandment the argument now pending on the fourth : represent to yourself a direct pecuniary profit placed within the reach of the man who shall boldly, openly and habitually blaspheme God and perjure himself, while an equivalent loss is inflicted on him who hallows God's name and fears to swear falsely, would you not cry out " Blot that impious law from the statute book ; legislate without delay on an amended principle, lest the wrath of God overtake us." Yet of the two commands, one is every whit as imperative as the other : both belong to the first table : both are included in the grand precept, enforced by our Lord Christ, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our mind, and with all our soul, and with all our strength : you cannot separate what he has joined : you cannot bow to

the authority of the one commandment, and evade altogether the force of the other.

‘ These, Sir, are niceties of doctrine into which a plain practical man of business cannot be expected to enter. You came to me, as far as I understood, with a proposition for tying up our boats from Saturday night to Monday morning ; I have represented to you the impracticability of so doing ; and now you seek to place me between two horns of an unreasonable dilemma ; the one mooting a point in theology, the other involving a quarrel with the statute book. Can you favour me with something more tangible, both these being beyond my province ? ’

‘ Perhaps,’ suggested Philander, ‘ you may prefer to deal with the other table of the law, comprised in the short precept, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” ’

‘ All neighbourly duties I am ready to fulfil : none can lay it to my charge that I neglect the golden rule. In what I owe abstractedly to God, I decline the interference of any man. Suppose we return to our starting point, and you confine yourself to invalidating my proofs of the impracticability of your scheme.’

‘ Labour in vain, ’ thought the agent ; ‘ for “ the natural man receiveth not the things of

the Spirit of God," howsoever nearly they may concern himself.' Had he known how deeply those things were taking hold on a third person, he would not have counted his labour vain.

'I take you at your word,' he said to the proprietor, 'and leaving to your private convictions the settlement of the higher, I proceed to the lower ground. Pending the consideration in parliament of what every Christian man is bound to urge upon its gravest attention, and seeing the weight of opposition brought to bear against it, the question of individual responsibility becomes, indeed, more urgent. I ask your co-operation with some other benevolent employers who have agreed, under a certain contingent proviso, to do that for their servants voluntarily which they cannot be compelled to do; and to render back the poor man's sabbath, of which he is now defrauded.'

'I object to that phrase: the men make their terms with us, knowing what is before them, and to tell them that their employers defraud them, is to hold language alike inflammatory and untrue.'

'I neither employ the term in conversing with them, nor do I now use it in an offensive sense; nay, I will retract it, and say deprived'—

'Deprived by circumstances, not by us,' interrupted the other, greatly ruffled.

‘By circumstances then, which it is optional with their employers to ameliorate greatly, if not altogether to do away with.’

‘At the trifling expence of utterly ruining themselves, and, by consequence, these men also, as I have clearly shown you.. Either disprove my words at once, or allow me to attend to my business.’

‘You require too much,’ said Philander. ‘The facts are obvious enough, and no man can dispute them ; you call on us to disprove your inferences, denying us at the same time the use of the only arguments available for our purpose. Hypothetically you place before us a crowded stopping-place, entangled boats, obstructed locks, successful rivals, drunken bargemen, plundered cargoes, with a visionary terminus of bankruptcy and pauperism. Now, all these things exist but in your alarmed mind ; to our apprehension they are optical illusions, that will vanish on a nearer approach. You have advanced in your own way certain reasons for believing them real : we only crave permission to state in our way reasons no less cogent for doubting their existence.’

‘In your own way, then, or in any way that will bring this unprofitable discussion to the speediest end ; for I must positively leave you.’

‘ Briefly then, I ask you for a moment to disentangle yourself from individual interests that connect you with this traffic ; soar for a moment into the regions of sobered imagination, and look down upon a race of fellow-men condemned to endure literally the terms of the primæval sentence, eating bread in the sweat of their face. These men, thus bearing the curse, are they less in need of the remedial blessing, are they in any one clause of God’s word placed further beyond it, than you or I ? As for us, so also for them did not God give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life ? Is there any other name under heaven given among men whereby they, any more than we, may be saved ? Is the world less ensnaring, the flesh less rampant, the devil less active among them than among us ? Will the rest of heaven be less welcome, the flames of hell less torturing to them than to us ? Hath not one God made us, one transgression ruined us, one mighty ransom bought us back,—have we not one battle to fight, one enemy to vanquish, one awful assize to appear at, one unknown, unfathomable, illimitable, unchangeable Eternity to plunge into, naked, helpless, and succourless as when we entered the world ? Oh

with what a grasp we shall then cling to the one forlorn hope of a dying sinner, the mercy of God, revealed in the only way in which He can be both merciful and just, by the offering up on the cross of a sufficient satisfaction for our sins! Now look again, look stedfastly at the race of men whom the providence of God has placed under your control: they must eat, and the bread earned from you is earned on terms of your dictating. Do those terms preclude the setting apart of an adequate portion of time for acquiring a knowledge of their position in reference to eternal things, and of the duties connected with it? Do they involve the necessity of breaking any commandment? You know the sentence annexed to such breach:—"Whosoever," says the Apostle, "shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Your objection that the men do not desire the Sabbath, because it would decrease the amount of their wages one seventh part, only goes to prove how lightly eternity weighs in their balance against the things of earth; yet in that you mistake, for they do earnestly desire it: some, perhaps, for a bad purpose: but to be overruled for good by Him who has blessed that day, and sanctified it, and who both can and will make it a blessing if you restore

it as an act of obedience to His commands. If not, if in a spirit of sordid calculation, and mistrust of His faithfulness you withhold it still, what answer can you return to the Judge's demand, "Shouldst thou not have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?" Pity! compassion! they are words inseparable from the Christian creed. Hear then, the cry of souls, perishing in darkness, ignorance and sin, shut in by lips that refuse to plead for them; dumb, because they are organs only of the will, perverse, corrupt, alienated from God, and stupidly acquiescent in the ruin of the soul. Have compassion on those who, for the very brutish ignorance in which they are kept chained, have none on themselves; and believe that while working for God in the matter where He most emphatically enjoins it, God will cause even temporal things to work well for you—better than while you set at nought His law, and virtually deny his sovereignty.'

The person appealed to remained silent: conscience was at work, and they judged it better to withdraw, leaving him to his reflections.

CHAPTER X.

PEDESTRIAN GLEANINGS.

‘ Now I can render a reason,’ said our friend as he prepared to separate from one whose guidance had been of no small importance in leading him so far. ‘ I can render a valid reason for demanding express enactments on this head ; for it is plain that the risk of loss in conferring a partial boon, will not be incurred by one man in twenty. Unscrupulous competitors must be restrained, on a principle of bare justice between man and man, if they recognize no higher plea. In fact, the passing of such laws will but operate as the repeal of a penal code bearing heavily on men who dare to act up to their honest convictions, and that too, in a matter where they have scripture, and the general spirit of our laws on their side. A

man must now be just and godly at his peril : the sabbath that he sets apart, according to the commandment, is seized by a neighbour, and virtually added to his own seven days. For instance, a daily carrier refuses to ply his van on the Sunday : if the rule were general, people must refrain from transmitting their packages on that day, and he would start on Monday morning, himself and his horse refreshed, and brisk at their work. But another fellow, already in the habit of using the Lord's day as his own, eagerly steps forward, plies the customers of his more upright neighbour, obtains his load, and thus transfers to his own pocket the Monday's surplus that should have belonged to the first.'

' Added to which, there is more of Cain's than of Abel's spirit in the world : not a few look with evil eye on a poor brother more righteous than themselves ; and the transmitters of Sunday parcels will frequently withdraw their week-day custom from a man whose practice silently reproves them, to bestow it on a companion in sin. In the long run, I have never known an instance where the Sabbath-keeper did not obtain a signal advantage over the Sabbath-breaker ; but it is a severe trial of faith, and one where protection ought to be extended and encouragement given.

Men in authority cannot but know that all the insurrectionary plots which harass them and unsettle the country are hatched among Sabbath-breakers. Common policy ought to teach them the necessity of discountenancing what evermore recoils on themselves.'

'But then comes the objection, the more idle men are on Sunday, the more likely to congregate for mischief.'

'Always ready to deny practically God's government of the world; and to disbelieve His own express declaration, "Them that honour me I will honour." We constantly find a temporal blessing annexed to the devout observance of the Sabbath, as a national act; and I challenge the experience alike of nations and of individuals to impugn the faithfulness of that promise. Among those who are in the habit of measuring themselves and reviewing the events of their lives by the standard of God's word, I believe you will find it universally admitted that their week's peace and prosperity are very sensibly affected by the manner in which the opening day of that week has been duly hallowed or its sanctity infringed upon. Worldly minds scoff at this; but their sneer does not invalidate the testimony that conscience bears; and if you look abroad throughout Chris-

tendom, where do you expect to find stability of character, uprightness in dealing, a freedom from turbulence, and the general aspect of tranquillity, in stormy times? The fact of these being ever the distinctive badge of a sabbath-keeping people is acknowledged even by such as never dream of referring it to its legitimate source, the blessing attendant on a fulfilled law of God.'

'And a law that peculiarly honours him, by tacitly admitting his supreme right to dispose of us and of all that he has given us, according to his own good pleasure.'

'Most true: a vast heap of imaginary difficulty is built up by our opponents; but when examined, to what does it amount? They say, One move in the matter must involve you in an endless maze of legislation: you would compel men to be idle one day in seven; you would debar them from modes of passing it the most congenial to their habits: you thereby stop up a great safety valve, and must provide some defence, very difficult to devise, against the natural consequences of a high-pressure state of excitement, deprived of its accustomed vent. Well; all this we admit: the governors and the governed have alike lost sight of the higher purposes of a Sabbath institution, and we fully admit the extent of road to be re-

traced ere we find ourselves again in the good old path originally forsaken. But should this deter us? God forbid! Every step taken in the right direction involves the removal of a positive evil; the superaddition of an undoubted good. Public instruction on a greatly enlarged scale must be provided for the hundreds of thousands now destitute alike of the means and of the will to receive it; and is it not for this very lack of knowledge that our people perish? While with one hand you create this sensible want, and with the other supply it, are you not acting the part of a skilful physician who stimulates the digestive organs of a languishing patient that he may render grateful the nutritious aliment needful to sustain life; at the same time removing beyond his reach the tempting but pernicious trash that ministered to his disease? If the greatest of all legislators; the all-wise, all-powerful, all-merciful Ruler of the universe has given us the clear draft of a law which he deems essential to our well-being, shall earthly politicians hesitate to carry it out, under the assured blessing of His guidance and approval? I much fear that, through the obstinate corruption of our nature, the very fact of being brought into such near communion with the Holy One, in the capacity of administrators where he

vouchsafes to issue laws and to direct their application, is a hindrance where it ought to be the most animating of encouragements. To be fellow-workers together with God is a privilege too high, where conscience murmurs, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

'Such may be the process in many minds that are hardly, if at all, aware of it.'

'At this point, I believe we must separate: I do so with regret, the greater because I see it is mutual; the less, because I am persuaded that from a doubtful enquirer you have already advanced into a determined champion. Go on, my friend; for the path is one of pleasantness, and its end peace. Coming to a right understanding of the law's imperative force, you will be the less likely to rest in the law. It coerces; it cannot justify you. Every attainment in the path of obedience will open to you a clearer view of the impassable gulf that separates you from a holy God—impassable by any effort of your own. The statute-book of God has a terrible summing up: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Under this curse you must lie, all your struggles for deliverance notwithstanding, until you can by faith lay hold on the righteous-

ness of him, even Christ, who "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Set free by his Almighty hand, you will then walk at liberty in the path marked out, accepting as a rule of life that which you never could so perfectly fulfil as to ground a single plea for mercy on your sullied and fitful, and nig-gardly obedience. Tell me, do you comprehend this? But I will not press the enquiry: take, as a parting gift, this compendious yet portable "remedy," the production of which startled our friend yonder. Armed with that, you may enter fearlessly any field of contest; taught by it, you may render a reason for all that you do, and for all that you hope. Farewell: when next we meet it may be to celebrate a Sabbath that shall know no end.'

It appeared strange to Philander, yet it was certain, that he had never in his life parted from a friend so reluctantly as now from a mere stranger. He halted on the highway, following with his eyes the quick short steps of his receding figure, enclosing in its small dimensions a heart of no ordinary bigness. A curve of the road soon shut it out, and our tourist found himself under some embarrassment as to his future route. He had formed no plan; nor could he decide on

the fittest course. Pondering as he slowly walked, he heard himself accosted in a feeble voice, with a piteous appeal to his charity. The man whose tattered fragment of a hat was held towards him wore in every feature the impress of a deadly disease; and the hollow cough that impeded his words bore testimony how far its ravages had spread. Consumption, appearing in the shadowy remains of a strong man, is perhaps more powerfully affecting than when it throws its fearful halo of delicate beauty around the young and lovely. Philander took in at a glance the tale of past suffering and approaching death; and his tone bespoke a more feeling sympathy than usually accompanies an alms, as he said, dropping a liberal gift into the hat, 'My poor man, you are very ill; scarcely fit to be abroad.'

'God bless you, Sir, for putting it in my power to stop under shelter for a day or two. This is a fortune to me,' and he continued to pour forth thanks and blessings till his cough silenced him.

'Have you a family?' said Philander when it subsided.

'No, Sir; but I think of marrying when I get well.'

Strange delusion of a strange malady! to indulge it or to undeceive him appeared to Philan-

der but a choice in cruelty: he therefore only asked, ‘What is your business, when able to work?’

‘A boatman, Sir: I was born in a boat, and have never belonged to any thing else. I’m like a fish on dry land, while sickness keeps me here.’

‘Where do you lodge?’

‘Anywhere I like, *now*,’ said the poor fellow, glancing at the half-crown; ‘last night I slept in a shed, but was turned out of it betimes, and warned against trespassing any more.’

Philander’s hand was again in his pocket; but he checked himself, hoping by little further enquiry to discover a plan more permanently beneficial. Slackening his pace to the slowest rate of progress, he questioned the sick man further, and found him unable to read, and in every respect on a level with the most ignorant of his class. By degrees he approached a higher subject: ‘Sickness like yours makes a man thoughtful sometimes; do you ever remember that there is a world to come?’

‘I drive out melancholy thoughts as well as I can, Sir: to be sure we must all die, some day or other; but my case is not so bad as to make me think about death.’

‘But, even supposing your health were good,

still, as you say, we must all die ; and what do you expect will become of you, when your time arrives ? ’

‘ Well, Sir ; I suppose I shall fare like other people. ’

‘ Other people are divided into two classes, of whom one will go to heaven and one to hell : to which of these do you think you belong ? ’

‘ Why, to be sure, Sir, I havn’t thought much about it : we never dream of such things in the boats. ’

‘ Still you know that there is a God who made you, and who will judge you ; and that he is holy, merciful and just. ’

‘ He may, Sir, for any thing I know. I have nothing to say to the contrary of it. ’

‘ Do you ever pray to Him ? ’

‘ I never learnt any prayers : I should seem foolish like, not knowing what to say. ’

‘ Are you not afraid of his anger ? ’ No answer was given to this.

‘ Did you ever hear the ten commandments ? ’

‘ I heard talk of some, in a place where I slept once ; but I did not give much heed, as it was no business of mine. ’

‘ Now, my good fellow, tell me fairly, have you ever done any action that your conscience told

you was wrong? I will mention a few such matters as I mean; lying, swearing, cheating, thieving, drunkenness, keeping bad company'—

The hollow cough, nervously aggravated, checked him, and he paused; still looking at the flushed face that half shunned his gaze.

'Well, Sir,' answered the boatman, when his cough ceased, 'all these things are bad, I dare say; but every body does them more or less, and I am no worse than the others.'

'Does it never come into your mind that we have all an account to give for what we do?'

'To be plain with you, Sir, it does come up now and then, and fidgets me for the time; but then what good will thinking do? A while ago, I was so bad as to be like to die any hour, and then I got frightened enough, though I hardly knew what at. Now I am better again, and I shall be well as soon as this cough leaves me, and get up a little flesh.'

'And what will you do then?'

'Go back to the boats, Sir.'

'And be as bad as the rest, to lay up fresh cause for future alarm?'

Here the bright, shining eyes of the dying man were turned upon him, and he said with much feeling, 'Sir, if I wanted to get into a

better way, there's nobody to teach me, nor any time to learn. Other people hear their duty by going to church on Sundays and the like ; but all that is out of our reach.'

Silence for a while again ensued : Philander broke it. 'When I gave you alms, you prayed to God to bless me ; I therefore, hoped that you knew both how to pray and also the value of what you asked.'

'Truth is, Sir, I always hear the beggars say it when they get a halfpenny, and I could not do less when you gave me a half-crown ;' and again he looked with delight at the broad piece that glittered in his damp cold palm.

'The money will soon be spent, and carelessly too perhaps,' thought Philander. 'I must not be content to leave him so.' They were near a small church ; beside it stood the parsonage ; and his eager search was rewarded by seeing the Clergyman walking at a short distance from the latter. Bidding the boatman wait, our traveller boldly advanced, and with a brief apology represented the sick man's case, at the same time touching on the wretchedly dark state of his mind. 'Poor fellow !' said the clergyman, 'this two-fold illusion often comes under my notice ; and in no class more frequently than in his. I will see to his

admission into our infirmary ; and will bear to him the message with which I am charged—pardon and peace through the blood of the cross. How exactly,' he continued, does my experience tally with that of the clerical brother whose evidence before the House of Lords I suppose you have seen. He says, "I have found that when the solemn hour of death arrives, and they expect to depart from this world, that their consciences are sometimes oppressed by the thought that they have lived in the violation of the day which has been appointed to be kept holy." He tells of a man who, having been for a short time in an Infirmary, sent for him, and told him that he had often while there shed tears in the night to think how many Sabbaths he had broken, adding, "this Sunday traffic is the first step to destruction ; instead of cleaning ourselves to go to a place of worship, as we know we ought to do, we fly in the face and eyes of the Almighty by going to work, and nothing but bad can come of it." * You remember also the instance that he mentions of a Boatman under sentence of death for murder, who, on hearing the ten commandments read and explained, started up, crying out,

* Evidence of Rev. J. Davies. Report, p. 65.

“ Sir, I have broken every one of those commandments.” Another observed to a clergyman, “ I consider we Bargemen and Boatmen are worse off than the Negroes in the West Indies, because they know no better than to work on Sundays ; but we do know better.” To all this I can add abundant confirmatory testimony ; as also to that touching instance where a dying man eagerly exclaimed, on hearing the gospel, “ You do not mean to say that the Saviour died for poor Bargemen ? ” These last words were uttered as they reached the spot where the sick man had seated himself on a sunny bank, and he heard them. The clergyman proceeded to speak very kindly and pleasantly to him, offering a bed in their little infirmary for some nights : an offer that was gladly accepted. Then taking Philander aside, he remarked that the hand of death was upon the victim, and not a moment must be lost. To Philander’s offer of a sum to meet the probable expence, he replied, ‘ By no means ; we have a little purse for such cases, my dear Sir. Reserve your bounty for similar instances of destitution, beyond our reach ; and forget not that the bread of life is that for which their souls perish.’ When Philander kindly bade farewell to the poor man, at the same time urging him to pay great atten-

tion to what he should hear from that gentlemen, he answered, ‘Well Sir ; mayhap he will teach me some prayers ; and if so, I’ll pray for you ; for you’re the best friend I have met with, and when I get my strength again, I’d be happy to serve you, if a chance turned up to do it.’

Was Philander’s heart lighter after this benevolent action ? No, it felt unusually heavy. A half-crown, and a little consideration had been the means of saving a fellow creature from perishing by the wayside—perhaps of rescuing a soul from eternal death. The sums that he had wasted on sheer vanity, the hundreds of suffering outcasts who had crossed his daily path unrelieved, or with a trifle flung carelessly to them, and not a further thought bestowed on their wants and woes : the days, months, years devoted wholly to self, leaving no record of a deed that sprung from any other than an earthborn motive—all this weighed down his spirits painfully. ‘Surely’ was his mental remark, ‘I was not placed at an elevation above many of my fellow creatures in order to run riot on superfluities that would feed and clothe them : I do not possess opportunities of pleading their cause among the affluent and the powerful without an answerable amount of responsibility, not to be evaded. The Sabbaths

that I am now bent on securing to them, as seasons for bodily rest and for spiritual instruction, how long, how systematically have I been polluting, to mislead those among them with whom the observance is optional, and on whom the example of their superiors operates with powerful influence.'

Thus reflecting he pursued his road, haunted by the hollow, hectic cheek, lustrous eye, and sepulchral cough of the poor Boatman, as fancy pictured his last night's lodging under an open shed, and the rapid strides that disease must have made during those few hours : for he remembered to have been awakened in his comfortable bed by some extremely rough blasts of wind, followed by smart showers which the sun had dried away ere he descended from his chamber. To this was superadded the certain knowledge that thousands among his own countrymen, including women and babes, were no better circumstanced ; nor likely to be so until death put a period to their mortal sufferings, and then—he could not pursue the subject ; for he knew the declaration, “ The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

How many pause, asking whether it is reconcileable with the justice of God that such as have been shut out from the hearing of instruction,

and whose portion in this life has been altogether a bitter one, should be condemned to an hereafter of misery unspeakable and eternal. We are not authorized to arbitrate between the Judge of all the earth and the souls that he hath formed ; but this we know, that by closing against them the door of scriptural knowledge and hope, by leaving them under a seeming temporal necessity of transgressing God's law, or by placing before them an example that helps forward their self-delusion, we cannot escape the charge of being accessories to the crime of their destruction : neither can a quiet neutrality, a complacent looking-on, or a selfish averting of the face while the same process is pursued by other hands, exculpate us from a guilty participation. It were well, if, in place of speculating on the future doom of our ruined millions, we laboured each to free his own soul from the charge of their blood, by throwing each his personal influence into the balance against the weight that overpowers them.

Many miles were traversed by our friend Philander, and in almost as many various forms did the reasons of which he was in quest start up before him. He visited prisons, and heard the same tale from the lips of criminals of every grade, deepening in guilt, from the bricklayer's labourer

whose family were starving while he underwent the punishment of limited incarceration for a drunken riot and assault, to the man of comparative education against whom the awful sentence of blood-guiltiness had gone forth, and whose days were numbered ere yet life had attained its meridian glow. Evil association, connected with Sabbath-breaking, either as resulting from or leading to it, was in all an integral part; of many cases the sole root. He looked into hospitals, and found disease thence as from a starting point dating its wild career. He explored the abodes of poverty, and there the neglected wife, not unfrequently defaced by the savage attacks of unmanly violence, the sickly, frightened, famishing child, the absence of all comfort, and presence of wretchedness in every form, could bear bitter evidence to the natural result of the week-day's wages squandered in the Sunday debauch. A Sabbath withheld or a Sabbath abused through the remissness of the law, seemed to form in the majority of cases the evil genius of the land—the great master curse of its people. There were auxiliaries in abundance: toil so exhaustingly severe, so unmercifully protracted, as to unfit alike the body and the mind for a right employment of the sacred season, prostrating the former

in a listlessness of languor that produced in the latter a craving for stimulants, pernicious in their nature, destructive in their effects. There was also an excess of vicious solicitation on all sides, the inevitable consequence of unbounded licentiousness permitted, if not encouraged among the labouring classes by the notorious laxity of morals prevailing among their superiors. The young female, seduced by some employer's understrapper, becoming in her turn the misleader of her equals, and spreading profligacy without limit on a soil but too well prepared to yield a plentiful harvest of crime. But in all these, and numerous other instances, Philander traced the curse of a broken Sabbath recoiling on the offenders, hardening them in their first guilt, and perpetuating the plague. 'What a field is here,' thought he; 'how great the harvest—the labourers how few! I can well imagine the difficulties of a devoted man, who should set up in one of these demoralized districts the standard of the gospel, and proceed to gather a congregation from among the dissolute, the drunken, the abandoned populace that would surround him and scoff at his invitations. But difficulty is inseparable from great achievements, and surely he who storms the citadel of Satan will count on no feeble opposition.

Conquerors prize their laurels in proportion to the odds against which they fought, and the obstacles surmounted in the campaign, yet they combat to destroy ; we to save. God's hand *may* be with the warrior on his battle field, contending for a kingdom's safety : yet there are occasions where adverse hosts with equal confidence lay claim to it. His hand and his blessing *must* be on their side who wrestle against the powers of darkness, not only for a vital principle, but for immortal souls unnumbered. How is it that our zeal burns so obscurely here ? Why are words of encouragement so much wanting, and helping hands so languidly stretched out, when the battle is the Lord's, and the prize one worthy of being presented to Him !' With such cogitations was the mind of our traveller occupied, as he held his way through the streets of the manufacturing town that presented to his eye one dense mass of poverty, misery, and vice. He pictured to himself the gradual gathering of these wretched beings, first singly, then by tens, and ultimately by hundreds into the folds of a few diligent pastors, whose efforts should be seconded by legislative restrictions on the open market of Sunday vice ; and more than ever convinced that individual exertion could achieve a great deal, he was

doubly confirmed in the assurance that without answerable enactments, duly enforced by the arm of public authority, what might be accomplished would be but as the drop in proportion to the ocean.

CHAPTER XI.

NEW FORMS OF EVIL.

‘FOR Newmarket, sir?’ cried the jolly driver of a stage that seemed already to have exceeded its licensed number of outsides, while the interior exhibited an equally crowded appearance. Philander was quietly walking along, intending to join the village congregation at a church some five or six miles from his present sojourn: he had been advised to do so by a taciturn fellow-passenger on the preceding day, who had fathomed the great object of his journey; but gave no sign of sympathy. To our friend any indication of his short remaining course was welcome; and without further enquiry he had started early from his retired little lodging, to accomplish the distance without hurry. His path had now merged in the

high road, and greatly was he amazed at the display of equipages, principally of a respectable appearance, and some betokening owners of rank and opulence, that rolled along. He now recollected his proximity to Newmarket, and that the great road must lie in the direction of the church named by this taciturn traveller. His first impulse was to strike at once into a different path, but time would not admit of his returning, and he knew of no other place of worship within reach. A little reflection also shewed him that however repulsive, the scene was a part of what he felt bound to explore in its various ramifications; he therefore proceeded, negating the repeated offers of a seat, from drivers who were making up their complement, and at last found himself close indeed to the church gate, but nearly as close to the principal inn, a very extensive one, where business seemed at its height, in such a state of noise, bustle and excitement, that it surprised him. ‘Is this to go on during divine service?’ he angrily asked of the sexton, who loungingly paced before the porch of the modest church.

‘This, sir! why bless your heart, this is nothing. The afternoon is the time for seeing a sight, if you like sight-seeing better than praying; and for wishing yourself further off, if you don’t.’

So great was the annoyance during prayers, occasioned by the rolling of wheels and shouts of postillions, that Philander doubted the likelihood of its being increased at any time: however, when he heard the preacher pointedly allude to expected interruptions, and earnestly entreat his hearers not to be tempted by a scene of ungodly display from the place of worship, but reverently to use such opportunities as would be left to them to unite in public prayer, he was convinced there must be an aggravation, and made up his mind to see the worst features of the case. It surpassed all that he had anticipated: throngs of country people from the surrounding villages, some on foot, others in carts, and every variety of vehicle, assembled; each striving to secure a post as near the inn as possible. They lined the road for a considerable distance, while fumes of tobacco, hot spirits, and the steam from heated animals altogether produced an effect on the fresh atmosphere, rivalling the worst parts of London. A number of labourers were called in, to assist as grooms; the yard was literally crowded with horses; and such a din was kept up, that Philander wondered how the minister could expect to be heard.

The attraction bringing this multitude together

consisted in the passing by of visitors to the great Newmarket meeting to be held on the morrow. Lords and ladies, officers, private gentlemen, and respectable gentlewomen there were in abundance ; but far more numerous was a different class. Gamblers of the lowest grade, with their fraudulent apparatus, pickpockets, and abandoned women in all the wretched stages of degradation, together with hundreds of the destined prey on which these three orders of vicious speculators had calculated, were whirled past in their respective conveyances. There was also a long continuous stream of waggons, vans, and light carts, bearing the poles, canvas, tables, and other requisites for booths : nothing was wanting that might bespeak the minds of a multitude wholly absorbed in schemes of worldly gain or dissipation, and as utterly regardless of Sabbath observance as though no such institution existed. Within the church, a scanty congregation assembled, having with difficulty worked their way thither ; of these the greater number hurried out the instant after the clergyman had pronounced the blessing ; and Philander noticed some of them eagerly elbowing their way, to obtain a good stand among the gazing crowd. An elderly woman of respectable appearance, evidently anxious to pass as quickly

as possible, but not equally able, attracted his notice : she had handed him a hymn-book in the church, and he now returned the civility by proffering his arm to assist her through the crowd. It was gratefully accepted : ‘ Ah, Sir, this is a lamentable sight even to us who are long accustomed to it : in the eyes of a stranger it must be sad indeed.’ Philander expressed his unqualified indignation, observing that there could not but be great remissness in some quarter. She told him that until within the last few years the scene had been incomparably worse : that cards were lying about the road, temporary beer and spirit shops erected for a considerable distance, gambling carried on in the open air ; and all the worst features of a public fair on a week-day exhibited ; * and that principally during the hours of afternoon service. ‘ Those who pass in the morning are chiefly persons who have to do with the horses : noblemen, gentlemen, and others concerned in the race : the crowd you see, and similar crowds on other roads, flock to secure quarters before they are otherwise engaged, or to pitch their tents and booths on the ground. Very few among the lower orders will rest under a roof

* See the Bishop of London’s Evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, Aug. 1832.

to-night: it is fine and warm: there will be a vast encampment; and what with drinking, dancing, gambling, betting on the race, and leading others into mischief, the short night will pass over, and the rising sun find them where he left them at his setting.'

'Many must have been on the road all day.'

'Yes, Sir, and not a few travelled all night, and have been loitering away the first part of the day at public houses on the road. All the way from London this work is going on, more or less; but we being near the place itself have the contributions of several cross-roads poured upon us as you see. 'Tis a bad day for our labouring people: many a simple lad and lass, who never thought of leaving home, gets tempted by the talk and example of strangers to start off at early morning, and see the sport. Such as are in service not unfrequently lose their places by going without leave—they seldom get it, because their employers know that they will probably come back well instructed how to rob them. Thus they are turned adrift; and soon fall into the worst ways, spreading vice through the place. A man was transported last assizes, who, when a decent, quiet, steady youth, was stopped on his way to the church we have just left, and bribed

to lend a hand in the stables of that very inn. There he was persuaded to go off to the race-ground, with what proved a gang of sharpers : he staid as long as it lasted, was turned out of his place in a good farm near me, and having lost his character, he followed his evil teachers to London. He soon became expert in all their arts, and for several years he excited the envy of his former companions by the style in which he dashed through his native village to the race-ground ; not a few of them being induced by his success to try the same path. Last meeting, he came as usual, and set up a splendid booth, or stand, on the course ; but attempting some great fraud, a riot ensued ; one man was killed, and the deed brought so home to him that he had a narrow escape from the gibbet. He is gone, or going, to a penal settlement for the rest of his life.'

' A wholesome warning to others.'

' I fear, Sir, it has taken no effect : I don't miss one face that I have been used to notice at these gatherings, but I see, alas ! many of my young neighbours tempted out for the first time. We talk to them of the sin of sabbath-breaking ; and they reply, " If our betters think it no harm to drive down on a Sunday, there can be none in

our going to look at them.”* There are no less than four meetings in a year, so you may suppose the amount of one year’s mischief is not small: but, in fact, this is only a specimen of what is going on almost every Sunday, in one way or another, throughout the country.’

Our traveller hastened back to his resting-place, and found its quiet character quite changed. Not only had many of the inhabitants flocked during the afternoon to the general rendezvous, but its street was in a state of commotion, through a perpetual succession of vehicles, bearing visitors and trafficking from interior districts towards the great road. This produced a noisy Sabbath evening; greatly disturbing the worshippers at a late service in the church; and increasing as the night wore on. Whatever might be the motive of his adviser, Philander felt that he had gained no trifling accession to his arguments by witnessing this most flagrant violation of the Lord’s day, perpetrated with impunity by all orders of men, from the Peer to the Pickpocket inclusive. He now remembered having admired as a trait of the innate piety of a Prince of the blood royal, long since deceased, the fact narrated by an attached

* Bishop of London’s Evidence.

biographer, that, when going down to Newmarket on the Sunday, as was his custom, His Royal Highness directed a bible and prayer-book to be laid on the cushion of his carriage. Over this circumstance he pondered long : it bespoke a reigning delusion as to the intrinsic evil of the act which he could scarcely hope to see dispelled from the minds of the pleasure-loving great, whose example would always throw a fearful preponderance into the scale of national disobedience. Nor was that all : a survey of the parties hastening to the course, with a thoughtful view of their business there, its nature, end, and consequences, inflicted the pain inseparable from a consciousness of having departed from the path of God's commandments by being frequently a partaker in what he now viewed in its genuine colours. The gigantic proportions of the national transgression that he longed to see put away, still grew in his apprehension, and occasioned a degree of despondency very unusual to him : he desired to meet with encouragement, but found none ; and in this mood he opened the little Bible of the little man, where, after listlessly turning over a few leaves, his eye fell on a very strong marginal mark, in good black ink, drawn over against some verses. He read as follows : " And one of the multitude

answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not. He answereth them and saith, O faithless generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him to me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it since this came unto him? and he said, Of a child; and oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him; but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Here the mark ended, but Philander read on to the happy conclusion, and then marvelled whether the agent had drawn any encouragement for his particular undertaking from the story, so touchingly beautiful. 'Possessed with an evil spirit,' thought he, 'this country must be, so far

as the madness of habitual rebellion against God proceeds ; and the casting out is a work in which all have hitherto failed. Surely that zealous man applied to himself the declaration, often repeated and confirmed, and never, as far as I know, rescinded, that "All things are possible to him that believeth." Perhaps those who are bent on remedying the fearful state of things have not looked high enough for help ; have not regarded it as peculiarly the office of the Lawgiver to vindicate his own laws ; and to give success where the effort to uphold them is honestly made. How seemingly insuperable are the obstacles arising when men endeavour to deal with this deep-seated and enormous evil ! how impossible that God should fail of accomplishing aught that He wills to do ! And it is no trivial matter ; not the concern of a single obscure individual ; it embraces a mighty empire, involving the point of their fearing God or despising him. Neither is it a stationary evil, it progresses daily, spreading temptation commensurately with the increase of locomotive facilities ; widening the field of Sabbath labour and of Sabbath dissipation with every advancing step.'

Is it not so ? We hear on all sides of plans for diminishing the modicum of respect now paid

to the day of God ; the public pulse has been felt in reference to Post-office changes ; and that no responsive throb was perceptible, we cannot attribute to unmixed reverence for a divine institution. It was, however, a powerful testimony yielded to the value of a day's respite from care and toil ; an acknowledgement that the abolition of what, in one sense or the other, is felt to be a privilege, would be held not as an emancipation but a grievance. An idle day, where all concur in making it so, is an admitted boon : a holy day, in the proper acceptance of the term, might be deemed burdensome by nine tenths of its observers ; and to humour this repugnance, to keep as much as may be out of man's sight the embarrassing fact of his immortality, we are urged to extend the range of earthward attractions, to throw open our museums and places of worldly resort, thereby augmenting the amount of labour, exacted from the multitude of subordinate officers and attendants, who would just enjoy the option of relinquishing their Sabbath or forfeiting their means of subsistence. To this alternative, multitudes in other departments are reduced : the boasted liberty of Englishmen is confined, in these instances, to freedom of choice between transgression and starvation. Sons with their

fathers, apprentices with their masters, do indeed act under compulsion ; but the hired servant is left to endure the responsibility of earning his, and perhaps a young family's daily meal at the price of what God made for him—the great channel of temporal and spiritual benefits : the levee-day of heaven, when the King of kings throws wide His palace doors that the poor no less than the rich may draw near, present their petitions, make known their wants, and realize the blessed truth of being under the continued care of One with whom there is no respect of persons : but who hath rather chosen the poor of this world, if rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Of what do we rob our poorer brethren when we bar this approach, and deprive them of the very means by which according to divine appointment, this faith comes—hearing the Word of God? The declaration is express. “ So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,” is the conclusion drawn from those striking premises, “ How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” When, therefore, we lend our aid to place or to perpetuate any hindrance that keeps our poor

neighbour from the worship of God, from the hearing of the gospel, we work against the Highest ; we *walk contrary to him*, to the fullest extent of that alarming phrase ; and are we prepared to abide the consequences ? Can our hearts endure or our hands be strong in the day when he shall deal with us, according as we have dealt with our brethren and with Him ?

Looking abroad, the scene is truly a disheartening one : the disease has assumed a confluent aspect, overspreading the surface where before it was but speckled. What then ? shall we despair ? That were to crown with infidel unbelief the other sins that we deplore. The Lord's arm is not shortened, that he cannot avenge his broken law ; nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear the moan of oppressed nature, the cry of ruined souls pleading against the selfishness that destroys them. Neither is his ear closed against the voice of repentant supplication on our part ; nor will he withhold his powerful arm from achieving a deliverance that shall embrace both us and our victims, if we honestly and with full purpose of heart set about our branch of the work. The descent is easy, rapid, and has proceeded far : to retrace the path may and must be a toilsome effort, not to be accomplished without the putting

forth of every energy, mental and physical, accompanied with inflexible determination to succeed. But, happily, it is a work so subdivided as to throw a comparatively light burden on each, if all will combine in accomplishing it. The only real bar to complete success is the spirit of self-indulgence that cannot brook the sacrifice of a habit, much less of an enjoyment, to the universal good. 'What can *I* do?' is the querulous demand, when a man is hard pressed on the subject: 'if indeed, you could bring a measure into operation where all might work together, I am ready to fulfil my part; but in subtracting my paltry drop from the bucket, I suffer a loss unbalanced by the satisfaction of perceptibly diminishing the aggregate.' Press the matter on individuals, they tell you the initiatory step appertains to the legislature: introduce a bill into the House of Commons, you are assailed, overborne by exclamations on the hardship to be endured by these very individuals. Thus is the law of God set at nought, spurned like a foot-ball from side to side; his beautiful order of government is overthrown; his merciful provision for the needful refreshment of man and beast trampled on; his righteous demand on a limited portion of our time and for the public acknowledgment of our

dependence on Him rudely negatived ; and yet how few among us give heed to, how small a number amongst those few tremblingly appropriate the language of insulted Omnipotence ; “ Shall I not visit for these things, saith the LORD : shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this ? ”

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

SEATED once more with the friend who had sent him forth in quest of reasons, our traveller was better able to measure the distance that he had traversed, in mind far more than in body. ‘Proceed with your summary, my dear Sir,’ said the worthy man; ‘these gleanings by the roadside will furnish a sheaf for the harvest that, by God’s blessing, we shall still reap. What have you seen?’

‘I have seen man, made as he was in the image of God, grovelling in debasement below the beasts that perish, or towering in crime to the standard almost of a fallen angel, through the sin that ruined Israel, the placing of a trampling heel on the Sabbaths of the Lord; but this

I am bound to say, that in almost every case where the lower orders are thus brutalized or deviled, the cause and the cure of the evil were manifestly within the grasp of those above them; influenced as these again undoubtedly often are, and sometimes even coerced, by a higher grade; and these, perhaps again looking beyond their own sphere. I know not whether to commence at the higher or lower extremity of the social framework; but from either to the opposite extreme the evil may be traced with precision and certainty.'

'Take the lowest scale.'

'Passing on the high road, within some thirty or forty miles of town, I have met the drover with his charge. The village bells chimed sweetly for divine worship, the peasant in his Sunday array was leading his family to public prayer; the herds and flocks were peacefully grazing, or reclining within their pleasant hedge-row boundary, and all bespoke, in the rich-toned eloquence that reaches every heart, "It is the Lord's day—the day of rest." But the poor drover, covered with dust, heated and chafed, presenting a pitiable contrast to his more favoured fellow-rustics, still trudged on, urging with the goad some limping animal, scarcely able to drag its limbs along;

dispatching his dog to worry others, that tempted by the verdant ridge of grass, or glistening streamlet, would fain have refreshed their parched mouths with what was spread along their path. I have heard the bitter curse, accompanying a cruel blow, or stab, as he urged on the refractory beasts ; and I knew that through the livelong Sabbath hours he must travel and they must parch, and smart, and bleed, enduring more from his increasing irritation, as fatigue and suffering exhausted, and the near approach to the great Babel of noise and confusion, perplexed and frightened them. The drover, I knew, had no Sabbath : he might pass in succession many churches with their assembling or dispersing congregation, but against his foot every gate was barred, just because on his undivided attention to his mute charge depended his livelihood. They must be in Smithfield on the early morrow ; custom has established the Monday market : and rather than make so trifling a change in an old act of Parliament, the whole body of drovers must be utterly excluded from any participation in the privileges either of a seventh day's rest or a seventh day's sanctification.'

' Add to which, the systematic, and indeed almost necessary opening of every public house

in the neighbourhood of Smithfield for their reception on Sunday Evening : the consequent swarming of bad characters in that direction ; the excess of various kinds for which their long fatigue and privation furnish a plea, while the absence of all restraining principle leaves them a prey to every vice. Add again, the open employment of the salesmen and their dependents, in fixing up and preparing the pens for cattle and sheep during several hours of Sunday ; and the dreadful misery suffered by the poor animals, crowded to suffocation, bruised and crushed, agonized with drought, utterly unable through close wedging to bend a limb for rest after their long hard journey ; and all this because, through the inequality of intervening time, the other market day being Friday, custom has conferred on the Monday the distinction of being by far the more important day : so that on Thursday night the pens are half vacant, which on the Sunday night become so many instruments of unutterable torture to God's poor creatures.'

‘ What is the objection to changing the day ? ’

‘ The butchers demur at it, saying that it is more convenient to them to purchase on Monday ; and the reason given bears strongly on our main subject. Among the middling classes, and

somewhat higher perhaps, Sunday dinners are dressed, probably connected with Sunday visiting, that serve the greater number of them for Monday also. This leads to an extensive demand for fresh meat on Tuesday ; and in order to supply it, the butchers must have their cattle in the market on Monday, at the cost of such sin and wretchedness as we have seen.'

' So that the cure of this evil lies in a general obedience to the commandment, refraining from setting our servants to do any avoidable work on that day.'

' And not servants only : the quantity of meat sent to be baked on that day is prodigious : the journeymen bakers are among the most oppressed of all compulsory sabbath-breakers ; and their complaints have resounded within the walls of parliament. No sooner was a petition proposed, than seven thousand signatures were affixed, from these men alone. Their unlawful Sabbath toil furnishes not only the Sunday but the Monday dinner to a great multitude of consumers ; thereby furnishing a plea to the butchers to perpetuate the wrong inflicted on the drovers, the salesmen's labourers, and the poor beasts : inclusive of the wanton profligacy carried on in the open beer-houses.'

‘ In fact, the entanglement of this vile web has so much method in it, that you cannot cut one mesh without loosing many knots.’

‘ True, and therefore Satan watches every separate thread as a matter of moment in his estimation.’

‘ I wish,’ said Philander, ‘ you had told me to commence at the other extremity ; we should have traced the expansive benefits to be conferred by the adoption of a single rule, accordant with God’s word, among the higher classes.’

‘ But you cannot intrude into their domestic arrangements to enforce the adoption of such a rule ; and this it is which renders legislation indispensable. The highest class will not, it is to be feared, stoop to examine the items of an account that they wish to persuade themselves does not personally concern them. Those in the next remove below them, will follow their track as nearly as possible ; and this again operating on the powerful spring of self-interest among the trading community, must keep in motion every branch of the machinery, allowing no respite whatever. We are therefore compelled to lay a restraining hand on the latter, thus, in a measure, coercing the former ranks into a line of conduct which they will not adopt from choice.’

‘ But, alas! the legislative body to which we look for redress is principally composed of the very individuals whom you thus seek to coerce; and can you hope that they will forge a fetter to bind themselves?’

‘ My dear Sir, the fetter is forged, and by the hand of God Himself; the question proposed to them is whether they will wear it, an easy yoke and light burden when assumed in cheerful obedience; or whether they are content to be numbered among the distinguished band, the kings of the earth and rulers, who are described as making a stand against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, “ Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” ’

‘ They do not wish to be addressed on ground so high as that.’

‘ God forbid that we should take lower ground than He has seen good to mark out for us! If the Sabbath was a human appointment, we have good and sufficient argument to uphold it as a general boon to all animated nature; but being, as it is, a peremptory law of the Eternal Creator, Preserver, and Judge of men, it makes me tremble to hear it bandied about as a debateable thing, to stand or fall as man shall succeed or fail in establishing its supposed expediency.’

‘Confining ourselves, then, to this point, the trifling change of a day in Smithfield market, holding it on Tuesday instead of Monday, what would be the immediate consequence?’

‘The extension of Sabbath privileges, or at least the absence of any breach of them, as regards the the drovers: the cessation of work among the pens on the Lord’s day: the absence of an excuse for opening houses of entertainment throughout a wide district; and finally, the removal of a fearful weight of suffering from the poor beasts, by an equalization of the markets; for this last it is generally admitted would ensue. A much larger supply would be required for the Friday, a more limited number for the alternate sale.’

‘Then the bake-houses?’

‘They would not be dealt with separately: a general restriction laid on Sabbath trading would, by including them, enfranchise in that department, many thousands of slaves in London alone, now forcibly withheld from public worship, and, deprived of that repose in their own homes, which no one—again and again I repeat it—has a right to wrest away. It would in like manner benefit a vast number of servants similarly employed in other branches of trade—the poulterers, fishmongers, and others, whose employers compel them to work, be-

cause by declining to receive and to fulfil orders given on the Lord's day they would lose their wealthy customers; and having no statute to fall back upon, they would see their places instantly occupied by others.'

'Surely it is a grievous stain on the character of such customers that they cannot issue their orders in better season.'

'You must remember that the details of house-keeping fall into inferior hands among our fashionables. The cook, not his Master,—the house-keeper, not her Mistress, issues these orders. A bill of fare is prepared, presented, and decided on: beyond this, all rests with the servants. When, therefore, we hear the principle protested against that would assume to interfere with domestic arrangements, let us bear in mind the extent to which this interference would reach—just to prohibit my lord's French cook, or my lady's upper maid, from trampling alike on the personal freedom and on the consciences of those who cater to the sumptuous table. This matter-of-fact view disposes at once of some unmerited censure, and a great deal of superfluous delicacy, when the higher classes are our theme.'

'Of the higher classes I do not much think; their opportunities are so great, their actions so

free, their responsibilities so well defined, that if they transgress, it is with open eyes and a high hand. My recent walk has been among the simple poor, from whom the very rudiments of instruction are withheld by the operation of these baneful practices : or if, in childhood, some of them may have been partially taught, such good seed is quickly choked and destroyed by the abundance of noxious produce that cannot but follow their introduction upon the stage of active life. For these I feel ; not indeed exclusively, but more keenly than for the better informed. I have weighed the importance of a saying that no Christian should forget, seeing it was one of the last that dropped from the lips of his Divine Master : “The poor ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good.” The want of that will would argue an absence of the spirit most strongly inculcated throughout the Bible ; and as to the nature of the good to be done, the whole man must be included. Neither body nor soul must be defrauded of the gracious provision made for both : the mortal frame must have rest and refreshment ; but shall we stop there ? We are better instructed—“ What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? ” Communion

with God is not less needful for spiritual life than meat and drink, sleep and clothing, for that of the body. Knowing this, can we dare to pause on a track plain as the sunbeam can make it ?’

‘ And this,’ thought his companion, ‘ is the giddy careless, apparently godless young man who would fain have laughed off my first appeal to his better feelings ! This is the result of briefly applying his natural faculties to one of the grand objects to which they were originally adapted.’ Philander, meanwhile, had taken out his note-book, and was turning over its leaves. ‘ You have spoken strongly,’ he said, ‘ on the evils of the Monday Cattle-market : I found in the course of my enquiries that Monday is also the greatest market or show-day of the week in other branches of trade ; necessarily involving a prodigious amount of Sunday travelling, otherwise uncalled-for. Among these I have noted down corn, coals, silk, and a few more, as being notoriously articles of Monday barter : so that what between conveying the goods themselves, and bringing up to town both sellers and buyers, whose time is too precious to be lost, the Lord’s day is made a season of preparation, bustle and business, beyond any other day in the week. This is a point requiring to be strongly pressed on the legis-

lature : men are too much wedded to old customs to combine voluntarily in effecting a change that the greater number would demur at, as probably injurious to their interests, by depriving them of profits now enjoyed at the expence of many a poor man's Sabbath. It is the becoming office of national rulers to remedy these evils, on the broad principle of obedience to the law of God ; to say to the buyers and sellers, " The day is not yours ; it is the Lord's ; " and on that plea to restore what has been wrongfully taken away. Assume lower grounds, and you will find yourself involved in an interminable argument ; one interest clashing against another, and the sympathies of the arbitrators unavoidably enlisted in favour of a class to which not a few among them actually belong. But take the Bible in your hand, announce " Thus saith the Lord," bring forward existing evils only as illustrations of the universal confusion, wretchedness and guilt following upon a departure from those righteous commandments, and though there may and will be found men hardened enough to refuse the voice of Him who speaketh from heaven, I cannot bring myself to believe that such men can form a majority in the senate of my country. If it prove so, then farewell, a long farewell to all her greatness !'

‘ You consider that we have hitherto failed by taking up ground lower than that which the subject can command ?’

‘ I do : you have condescended to argue it as a matter of expediency, yielding a point here, and a point there, where every concession involves a presumptuous lowering of the standard supplied by God himself. Consider, my dear Sir, the terms of that law, announced every Sunday from the communion-rails of every church in England, to a kneeling congregation. “ Remember that thou keep HOLY the Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do ; but the seventh day is THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD. In IT thou shalt do NO MANNER OF WORK, THOU, and thy SON, and thy DAUGHTER, thy MAN-SERVANT and thy MAID-SERVANT, thy CATTLE, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. WHEREFORE, the Lord blessed the seventh day, and HALLOWED it.” Then comes the solemn response ; “ Lord, have mercy upon us, and INCLINE OUR HEARTS TO KEEP THIS LAW.” This law ! Surely, if God is not mocked, the whole proceeding is too awful for words to characterize. The law, set forth in language that no

stretch of human ingenuity can pervert or evade, provided a day's respite from toil for every creature under the control of those who hear it; specifying son, daughter, servants of both sexes, and the very beasts of draught and burden; adding a clause that would effectually restrict us from violating it in deference to the claims of any guest; or encouraging the labours of any individual not coming under the aforementioned heads. We, of course, know that what is necessary for food, and the decencies of life, must be provided; but to what do these amount in the sight of God?—of Him who again and again tells us that he is no respecter of persons; and who knows exactly the limit where necessity ends and luxury begins. Oh what a change would come over the face of society if each one were to resolve that he, at least, would no more dally with the thunderbolt that slumbers but to smite with tenfold terrors the rebel who shall despise the long forbearance that has delayed to launch it! Then, indeed, new churches would be called for, and ample funds supplied to the demand, from what is now the means of a curse, taught to become the vehicle of a blessing that we cannot compute. Hallowed as it ought to be by the highest in the land, even the lowest would shrink from a pollu-

tion that, varnished over as it is in one quarter, and filthily gross in another, forms in the eye of God one undistinguished, overspreading national crime. The deserted Parks, deserted by glittering equipages, and placed under strict superintendence, would then but refresh the tired eye of the six days' labourer amid the dense atmosphere and dreary brickwork of the streets, with their pure green foliage and quiet blue skies, inviting him to bless the Lord who has secured to him the welcome respite, and spread out before him, though on a contracted scale, some of his own bright handywork. The turmoil of the kitchen would subside into the light brief task of preparing such simple fare as comes under the head of necessary refreshment for families whose pleasant duty it would be to impose as little as possible even of this easy work on their menials. The very consciousness of so doing, in simple accordance with their own prayer for the inclination itself, would be the groundwork of a tie, met and cemented by the gratitude of domestics so justly dealt with, which is now the desideratum most loudly complained of when servants become the topic of their employers. What a device of the devil it is to blind our eyes where a blessing so unbounded is set before us ! to tempt our hearts

into such barefaced profanation of the law that we recognize as that which must both rule and judge us !’

‘ You have placed the matter in a startling light : would to God we could convince our countrymen how correct is the view ! ’

‘ Their consciences must convict them. Bring forward a proposition to amend our public service by expunging from the Book of Common Prayer this decalogue ; or call for a vote of the senate that it shall no longer be held binding on the people of the land, and conceive, if you can, its adoption by either House ! Yet every man who scouted that proposition would be bound, on peril of deliberate mockery of God and its fearful consequences, to do his utmost to carry into effect the provisions of any Bill having for its object the due observance of the Sabbath-day ; in other words, obedience to the commandment of God. I know the loopholes by which some would escape ; but I know not of one that can avail when the judgment is set, and the books opened, and the final account must be rendered in. It is easy to talk of obligations binding on the Jew alone : why, there is no other prohibition to be found against idolatry, adultery, theft, perjury, blasphemy, save as they are enumerated in the deca-

logue, placed on a par with the sin of sabbath-breaking ; or, by the voice of the Jewish prophets, set before the Jewish people.'

' In the New Testament.'

' Ay, but the New Testament stamps with an eternal *imprimatur* the law of commandments, holy, just and good, as a rule never to be lost sight of, never to be wilfully transgressed, though as a covenant means of justification it no longer terrifies the conscience of him who believes in the Saviour of Sinners. That it is so, we have the unimpeachable testimony of our own approved formularies of public devotion, which you will find the majority of our legislators as stiffly upholding as any men. Turn where you will, the way is hedged up : and opposers must take refuge in one or the other of these condemned classes : they prefer the service of mammon to that of their Creator ; or they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.'

' You are aware that the strong-hold of our opponents consists of sundry personal inconveniences to which various individuals may be exposed by legislating on this subject ?'

' No man can expect to witness a complete revolution, in a matter affecting, more or less, every limb and fibre of the social frame, without a

measure of embarrassment, of inconvenience, of actual loss in some quarters. It is the penalty incurred by a long continuance in doing evil, but no sound argument against putting away the evil of those doings. A needle buried in your flesh cannot, probably, be extracted without a considerable degree of suffering; but you would not therefore leave it to fester, or to work its way to some vital part. Inconvenience, or temporal loss to some few, is a strange plea to enter against the present and eternal well-being of millions—the vindication of God's sovereignty over a Christian people. The ways of the Lord are always equal; the inequality of ours, perpetually diverging from a straight line, must necessarily involve us in frequent difficulty while we retrace our wayward steps to regain the point whence we last started away, and shape out at our own cost a better path, choked up by rubbish of our own accumulating. We go too tardily, too timidly about our work; where is the zeal of Nehemiah contending with the sabbath-breakers of his day? More energy, determination, impetuosity if you will, is called for: more of the spirit that of old urged on the servants of the Most High to vindicate the honour of His name. Why have we not a body of young men in the higher class,

many of whom must surely be awake to the importance of the thing, coming forward to plead the cause of the poor and friendless, with the fire of youth, never so brightly burning as when touched by a coal from the altar of the Lord of hosts? This little tract, which I may call my horn-book in the study of a subject now so dear to me, this "Evidence of Dr. Farre before the Select Committee," places the subject on a footing to invite the humane consideration of every thinking mind; and, once heartily engaged in the search, reasons will be found for prosecuting it, so abundant, so weighty, so overwhelming both in their interest and importance, embracing in their scope not only time but eternity, that the man whose eyes, like mine, have been unbound to discern them, will deem a long life well spent in labouring to remove the bandage that erring sophistry has drawn across the eyes of his fellow-men.'

' Ay, and such a labourer, if he saw no present fruit of his life's toil, might place his head on a dying pillow, cheered by the testimony of conscience that the cause in which he has been zealous is that of righteousness; that his work is with the Lord, and his reward with his God.'

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