

A
PLEA FOR CHILDREN,
AND THE
CHRISTIAN SABBATH,
IN
NEW YORK.

BY GEO. B. CHEEVER, D. D.

The avails of this tract after paying expenses are pledged by the author and publisher to the establishment of a church for children in the city of New York.

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For

Chap.

A

PLEA FOR CHILDREN.

“Thus saith the Lord; I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls, playing in the streets thereof.”—ZECH. viii. 3, 5.

THIS text is exceedingly beautiful and striking, as conveying at once the principles of every true social reformation, and the blessedness of the organization of society according to God's will, in truth, innocence, and love. But is there, in this fallen world of ours, a single city, in which, if the boys and girls were left without restraint at play in the streets of it, it would be safe to bring up a family? Would not the things learned from such society be inevitably the things of evil? Would not, in many cases, the habits formed be most assuredly habits of profaneness and wickedness?

But why? Because God is not there, as the object of universal reverence and love; and Divine Truth is not there, as the atmosphere, light, food, and life of the soul. Because there are other influences, principles, and examples, inconsistent with God's law, and under which men are trained in practical disobedience of it. But so soon as the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light of the city, and just in proportion as it is a

city of truth and righteousness, one place is as safe and sacred as another. Your children are as safe at their sports in the streets with other children, as if they were playing by your own fireside. The gates of the city need not be shut by day, for the night of sin is not there, nor the hiding-places of evil under the veil of darkness. Nothing but the glory and honor of the nations flow thither, and there doth in nowise enter therein anything that defileth or worketh abomination, nor whatsoever loveth or maketh a lie. The pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flows there, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb; and the trees of life, with cool and fragrant shade, reveal their never-ceasing blossoms and fruits, without mixture of evil.

But you will say that this is heaven itself, and we are upon the earth; and who dreams of such a state as this in a world of sin and darkness? Ay; but let the prediction of the text be in any good measure realized—let the city be a city of truth, and let God in very truth dwell in any city, according to the meaning of the indwelling of God in men's souls, and let the city be a city of righteous principle—and will not the state of that city be very like heaven? Would gates of pearl, or streets of solid gold, add much to the glory and blessedness of such a city? Would you need to shut its gates? Would there be any night there? Would your children be unsafe in the streets of such a city? The secret of the whole of this glory, the fountain of it all, the light of it all, is divine truth and the presence of the Lord God of truth and righteousness.

And now we wish to show that this is the only way in which this kind of blessedness is possible on this earth; the only way in which there can be any approximation toward the order and beauty that reign in heaven; the only way in which evils like those revealed in the reports

of our police can be prevented, and our towns and cities cleansed so as to be safely inhabited. Neither law, nor science, nor philosophy, can do anything without this. Your scientific inventions and appliances may be increased and perfected, till literally there shall be no night in your cities, and the streets, wherever you tread, shall be a mart of luxuries. But if you could discover an application of creative law, by which not only there should be trees of life at every door, but by which the very stones in the street might be ground into food for the poor in their own dwellings, and the very breathings of the ocean in repose might be made to give you a perpetual motion of power for all imaginable uses, still, without Divine Truth as the regulator and element of principle and life, depraved passion would triumph over all this — would apply all this to its own purposes; and just in proportion as you raised man to the possession of angelic power, you would provoke him to the practice of fallen angelic wickedness. It is useless to deny this, for the experiment has been tried. There were giants on the earth in those days; and living to the prodigious space of nearly a thousand years, as the span of individual life, they doubtless, with their great intellectual faculties, carried science to a height, and all practical, social, philosophic plans and discoveries to a perfection, of which perhaps we have but just begun to see the new dawning. But they had not made the world waterproof; and their wickedness was such that God had to destroy them.

Now, in this work of prevention and cure, you must begin where character begins; for character, and not science, nor philosophy, nor circumstance, is the mover of this world. You must begin with the children, and with the children of the poor and vicious. You must not wait till the alligator has broken out of the shell,

and shows himself in all the strength of his frame and propensities. You must take the future snag out of the river while it is among the floating drift-wood, and before it is anchored in the mud, for society to run against. You must begin with the children; and you have no other way of beginning with them, but by the truth; nor any completely effective way, but by religious truth above all other; nor any way so easy, so applicable, so practical, so immediately fruitful in results.

The truth must be applied to their hearts and consciences.—nay, must be got *within* the heart and conscience, as an element of *life*. It is in vain that truth is in the city, if it lies in a stratum above men's heads, or if there be only a stratum where one class can reach it, while others grovel below, in bad air and darkness. It is a fact that crime is working upward. Some time ago we had occasion to describe society in this country as a spiral screw, in which things go from the bottom to the top; and we said that, if you do not wake from your carelessness, and apply the remedies in your power to existing social evils, and put the proper influences at the bottom of the screw, it will carry up evil into all society. But all over the world crime is working upward. And it must be so, just in proportion as light and knowledge come to the mind, if divine truth is not put as a life in the heart and conscience of those that are downward. And it is plain to see that an element of infidel, atheistic, pantheistic, nature-worshipping idolatry of the human reason and will is preparing for such minds to shoot into; one of the principles of this school being, that religion itself is just a free and earnest faith in the affirmations of a man's own soul—and whether those go against the common or scriptural ideas of God and truth and religious responsibility or not, it is all one, provided a man is earnest in them, and carried away by them;

and if this be the case, he is himself an inspired being, more of the universal deity being enshrined and developed in him than in others, so that he rises as a teacher, and may judge or set aside all previous revelations. If you do not get the fixtures of divine truth in the mind before it rises into this atmosphere—before it inhales this exhilarating gas of infidelity and destructiveness—in vain will you apply divine truth afterward, or even human authority, to guide or restrict men's energies. A great part of society may thus become poison-mad, and realize, what Bishop Butler once trembled to think of, the possibility of a literal national insanity.

How, then, will you get the light and life of divine truth into the hearts of those that are downward? How can you reach these thousands of vagrant, ignorant, abandoned youths with this element of heaven? One thing is very certain—that you can not do this directly by legislative enactments, however much good such enactments, wisely made and vigorously executed, may help you to do, by putting down or throttling particular evils, that otherwise would prevent you. And another thing is very certain: if you make use of God's truth, you have got to do it through God's appointed agencies, you have got to make use of God's sabbath. And this is no otherwise an arbitrary spiritual necessity, than the agencies in nature, to which you are obliged to submit if you will get any good out of natural philosophy, are an arbitrary natural necessity. You can not *eat* electricity, but you must put yourself in connection with an electrical machine, if you will get any good from that element. The oxygen of the air can do you no good, except you breathe it through your lungs; you can not drink it in water or wine, however much you might desire so to do; and if you refuse the use of your lungs for it, you die, however much respect you may profess to pay it as an

agency of life, or however firm your belief in it as necessary to sustain life. And just so, you can not make any living use of God's truth, and yet break and dishonor God's sabbath. The sabbath is not only an agency of divine truth, but a part of it, and you must use the truth through the sabbath, and the sabbath for the truth, or the truth itself condemns you, and you die by it, instead of living on it. And God will never suffer such an anomaly as a nation fattening on his truth, and rejecting his ordinances. And God himself says, in a most remarkable passage, "Because ye have forgotten the law of your God, therefore I will forget your children." Let the sabbath go, and you can not reach these children. There never was yet, and there never will be, a nation that does or can take care of its children without the sabbath. But in the right faithful, earnest, persevering use of God's sabbath, you have the lever with which you can pry up any mountain of wickedness that ever existed. In the right use of the sabbath, you can master the world, and make every city a place in which the boys and girls may almost as safely and happily play in the streets thereof as if it were paradise itself. But can you do this, if at every corner of the streets you license a grog-shop, kept open on the sabbath, and at every church-door permit your boys to be employed in crying and selling the immoral literature of sabbath newspapers?

But again, a third thing is equally certain—that if you will make use of divine truth and of the Christian sabbath to elevate society, you will have to do it through the medium of the Christian church, whose energies must be applied in this direction. By this I mean that the ministry of experimental Christians is needed, for that divine truth can be effectively used only by Christian faith and principle. For your sabbath-schools you want teachers of experimental piety; for your preachers

of the gospel you demand Christian ministers who have, by the teachings of the Holy Spirit, experienced the power of the truths they are appointed to proclaim. And just so, the religious care and instruction of children devolves upon Christians; and whatever other teaching may be good for them, their religious care and instruction is the only thing that is effective to keep them from habits of sin. "Suffer the little children to come unto me," said our blessed Lord, "and forbid them not."—"To come unto me." Not to philosophy, nor science, nor associations for overcoming the difficulties in the way of earthly prosperity, but to Christ; to him who is the way, the truth, and the life; to him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; to him in whom the soul is complete, without whom it is lost for ever. Here you have not merely the only foundation of an eternal prosperity, but the most available, the least costly, the most appropriate, the most effectual security of the best temporal good. It is nothing but the gospel of Christ in the world, and the imperfect bent of the world already toward a religious education under its influences, that has secured to the world so large a measure of earthly prosperity as even now it enjoys. "It is only by celestial observations," a very profound writer of England once remarked, "that terrestrial charts can be constructed." Celestial observations are the highest prudential wisdom; and with the benevolent wisdom of the gospel completely fulfilled, this world would be an anticipated heaven.

Christianity hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. You secure a good man for this life, if you aim to make a good man for that; but, on the contrary, if you aim no higher than this life, you are not likely to accomplish your purpose, even here. Just so, in all our aims, our pursuits, our attainments, the

greater includes the less, but the less falls continually short, even of itself. Your enterprising merchants in this city would never have had their river railroad to Poughkeepsie, if they had not resolved to build a road even to Buffalo; it would not have been thought expedient or profitable. And yet it is found that the unfinished part pays for itself. Just so with all our heavenly enterprises, all things having their terminus no lower than heaven. No part of the way would ever have been constructed, had not heaven itself been intended; but being constructed with this end in view, every unfinished part of the way more than pays for itself. You can not lose for society anything in education which you lay out for God: everything does man good which you do with God in view; but when you have man only in view, you fall continually short of both man and God.

We have no quarrel with those workmen of social progress who are laboring away solely for and upon this life, this world, provided they do not deny another; but we must ourselves go farther, and they must give us scope to go farther. They look to earthly results, but we to heavenly and divine. They look to the comfort and glory of an earthly day, we to the salvation of an eternal blessedness. They are training plants to provide for your tables, or to adorn your conservatories, your parlor-windows, or to afford fragrant nosegays, and bridal ornaments, the symbols of a pale bridal loveliness; and when those uses are accomplished, they look no farther—their work is done. We are training plants, not only to shed their fragrance upon earth, but to grow to the perfection of an eternal glory beneath the eye of God in heaven. Now, admitting the truth of heaven, and the necessary exclusion of all souls from it that are not prepared for it, that have not its elements developed in them beforehand—the training of one soul thus is worth more

than all the other training of all other souls on the whole globe. "I do not think that all a man's time should be employed in digging wealth from the soil. There is a treasure far more valuable than that, to be dug out of his own mind. If this is to be neglected, if we are only to improve and cherish that gross existence which we have in common with the brute, perish the race!" This is from what is called a land-reformer, a gentleman whom we know only by name (Mr. Dwyer), but in this sentiment we heartily concur. We go for heaven in our education; we aim at nothing lower than that. But in aiming at that, we are sure of accomplishing all the rest that is worth accomplishing. According to your object will be your result. The greater certainly includes the less, but the less does not necessarily lead to the greater, but may perhaps necessarily exclude it. Begin with eternity, and you are sure of time; that is but one form of our blessed Lord's maxim, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all else shall be added unto you." But if you begin with all the other things, and hold there, then you will lose God and his righteousness; and in such a case, though you gained the whole world, it is of no profit.

A florist will tell you that if you paint the flower-pot that contains a favorite, beautiful, fragrant flower, the plant will wither, and perhaps its blossom will die. You shut out the air and moisture from passing through the earth to the roots, and your paint itself is poisonous. Just so, mere external cultivation, superficial, worldly accomplishment, or a too exclusive anxiety and regard for that, injures the soul. The vase may be ever so beautifully ornamented, but if you deny the water of life to the flower, it must die. And there are kinds of ornamental accomplishment, the very process of which is as deleterious to the life of the soul, as the paint upon the

flower-pot is pernicious to the plant; whose delicate leaves not only inhale a poisonous atmosphere during your very process of rendering the exterior more tasteful, but the whole earth is dried and devoid of nourishment. Nature never paints, but all her forms of loveliness are a growth, a native character, possession, and development, from the beginning. If the sun can ever be called a painter, it is only because the plants absorb his rays, and receive them into the very texture and life of their vegetation. So, whatever is real knowledge, wisdom, principle, character, and life, in education, is a process of the absorption and development of truth, and is not mere painting. It is as different from external accomplishments merely, as the healthful glow of life called forth upon the cheeks, in exercise, is different from the colors on the canvass. External accomplishments are for the most part mere painting in education, and a painted education, alas! is all that a great many persons ever receive. But we should imitate nature, and not merely *paint* the truth *upon* a character, mixing it up with our own fantastic imagery of gold-leaf and tinsel, but *set it growing within* the character, to be developed *as* character, to come out as life, both in color and in fruit. Nothing but divine truth and religious principle will lastingly accomplish this. It is not by building a city with costly streets of gold, or palaces of silver, or walls of precious stones, or gates of pearl, that you can provide a place and state of society so blessed, that angelic boys and girls might safely play in the streets thereof; but it is by filling the city with truth, and by making it the dwelling of the God of truth and righteousness. Then street-boys or street-children would no longer be a term of reproach and misery, but heaven itself might look down upon their manners, their sports, and their happiness, with a divine complacency.

Now let us apply these principles. We provide at an enormous expense for criminals; *that* is fixed upon us; but the children, whose evil training *forms* the criminals, we neglect. Now if there be power to punish, there is power to prevent. If the legislature can rightfully give to any town the authority to shut up evil-minded men in jail when they commit depredations on society, so it can bestow the right to take children, wherever it finds them in permitted beggary or vagrancy, and put them safely at work and under instruction. And in order not to be dependent on the droppings of individual benevolence, nor to be running about to beg situations, you should have a city workhouse of both work and education. Call it, if you please, a "City Work-Association and Academy," if you like not the term "workhouse;" but for a city of five hundred thousand inhabitants to be without such an institution at this day, is a great reproach. And most happy are we to learn that even now such a juvenile asylum on a large scale is about to be established; a work of benevolence which can not but commend itself to the cheerful, hearty support of every patriotic citizen. This ought to be accomplished; all this it is our interest and our duty to do. When this is effectually done, a great part of the crime and misery in our city will be prevented. The stream of guilt and wretchedness at this early period is as a rill which a child can step across, compared with the deep, broad, roaring torrent of criminal indulgence and habit in maturer life. You can do almost anything you please with it, if you manage it aright; but you can do nothing with the torrent, when it sweeps into eternity deep and irresistible. As a city and community, we incur great and positive guilt in permitting children to grow up in habits of evil which we might prevent.

But the class of children called street-children and

habitual vagrants, though large, is yet small in comparison with a larger number, who have parents and homes, such as they are, but who do not go to school, and who spend the sabbath especially in strolling about and seeking amusement, in habits of ignorance, idleness, and profaneness. It is infinitely important to reach and reclaim such as these, and to organize a network of heavenly influences into which they shall be caught up as it were out of the grasp of temptation, and put under a good training before such disastrous habits of evil are formed. If any one class of children can be benefited in this way, so can all; the thing is, to throw these good influences around them. And you would be amazed at the perfect isolation of many children from all knowledge and light!

We have brought forward, as given into our hands for the good of this world, God's three agencies, divine truth, the Christian sabbath, and the Christian church. By the skilful combination of these agencies, you can do almost anything. But is there a church for these vagrant children? Is there a pastor for them? Is there a sabbath for them? There is not. They are left to wander on out of the pale of all these influences, and very little attempt has ever been made to bring them in. And what we now propose is, to provide all these agencies for them, and by the system of highway-and-hedge labor, suggested by our blessed Lord, to bring them under these influences. It is found in experience that boys of the worst class can be gathered together on the sabbath to listen with respect and interest to divine truth. Experiments of this nature are even now going on in this city, most gratifying in their results; and it is out of such experiments that we think a plan of permanent importance and usefulness can be devised. It is found that all the good produced in these ragged schools or churches on the sabbath is transitory, because the boys, in nine

cases out of ten, have no instruction at home, if they have a home, do not attend school during the week, have no guardian to look after them, and are therefore growing up uneducated, except in habits of ignorance and sin. The number of such children in many of the wards is astounding. And now what is needed is, in fact, not only a preacher to talk to them on the sabbath, wherever they can be gathered, but a pastor to look after them through the week, to visit them, to see that they be got into the public schools, to get places of steady industry for them when they are so disposed and prepared, and to persuade them to present themselves as regular attendants upon their own church, the children's church, on the sabbath. The preaching needed is peculiar, and it may be difficult to find many men with the readiness, the tact, the earnestness, and the fervent love to Christ and to this particular work, which would be essential to success. Nevertheless, there can be some such found, and more would be raised up, if this system of instrumentalities for the neglected children of the city were once entered into with persevering energy and love by a few benevolent men and churches. In this way an organization might soon be effected in every ward where the number of neglected children demands it, which would in reality provide them with a pastor, a church, a sabbath, and divine truth, and bring them under the influence of a pastoral supervision through the week. Of every one of these agencies and influences they are now destitute, and what wonder if they grow up in crime? Such a vagrant children's pastor and preacher would be a kind of city missionary; but his department would be somewhat distinct from that, and his labors must be almost exclusively with the children: it must be their church, their pastor, their preaching, their sabbath. We suppose that the cost of sustaining every such laborer, to-

gether with the provision of a room or hall for their church, would be about one thousand dollars—perhaps something more; and certainly in some cases there ought to be one such laborer and one such church in every ward; and we may hope that, this system being once understood and in operation, all the churches in every ward, without a thought of any distinction as to sect, would unite in the support of such a children's church and pastor. And we do believe that such an organization is required, and ought to be sustained, as a permanent Christian fixture of labor and of power in the city. It ought to be supported with the utmost liberality, and borne also upon the prayers of all Christians. And while one stated pastor is maintained in every such organization, he might be assisted, through the week especially, by the voluntary efforts of members of the churches, willing to engage in turn as visitors to help look up and look after the homeless or neglected children, to scour about the docks for them on the sabbath, and to bind them to the sabbath and its influences. Personal labor of this kind is just what is needed by the members of our churches, to keep their own piety from dying out; and here is a great and most important field of missionary labor, where the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers, as yet, are almost none at all. The whole thing must be an effort of Christians, sustained by the offerings of all the charitable; it is just the remedy which God has provided in the gospel, for the prevention and cure of that youthful depravity which, without the influences of the gospel, becomes so astounding.

We have met recently with an interesting instance of the kind of benevolent watchfulness and effort requisite in carrying out such a plan. It is the experience of a philanthropic individual in Boston, to which we recur for an illustration. This gentleman, upon one of his

visits to the police court one morning, noticed among the prisoners a youth, who was poorly clad, and for some cause was weeping. "Mr. S—— sat down by his side, and the following conversation ensued: 'Why are you here, my son?' — 'I am accused of selling newspapers, sir, without a license.' — 'Are you guilty?' — 'Yes, sir.' — 'Have you been arrested before?' — 'Yes, twice.' — 'Why do you persist in doing it?' — 'Because I don't know what else to do to get a living.' — 'Have you a father?' — 'No, sir, my father is dead.' — 'Is your mother living?' — 'My mother is a drunkard; she does not take any care of me; I don't know where she is now.' As he uttered these last words, the deep waters of the little fellow's soul burst afresh, and he expressed his grief aloud. 'Where do you lodge?' continued the philanthropist. 'Near Union street, sir; I pay a shilling a night for my lodging in advance, and I buy two plates of beans in the course of the day, for which I pay as much more.' — 'How do you spend your evenings?' — 'I walk about the streets, or go into the auction-rooms.' — 'Why don't you sit down, in the house where you lodge, by the fire, and read?' — 'Because the woman of the house is poor. She has no room for me at her fire.' — 'Would you like to go into the country and work, if a place could be obtained for you?' — 'Yes, sir, I would be glad to go and work for my living. I don't want to stay in Boston; but I have nobody to get a place for me. I don't want to go down to the jail again.'

"Mr. S—— now spoke to the judge respecting the prisoner. The clerk of the court said it would be of no use to try to do anything for that boy, because he had been twice sent to the jail for the same thing before, and it did him no good. 'That is a good and sufficient reason,' was the calm and determined reply of Mr. S——, 'why he should not be sent there again.'

“After some conversation, the judge reduced the fine to one cent and cost, which the philanthropist paid, and then, taking the boy by the hand, they both left the court. Mr. S—— took the boy to his own house, and supplied him with food and clothing, and then obtained a good place for him in the country, at nine dollars a month.”

Now this was genuine benevolence—neither priestism, nor Levitism, nor Saduceeism, nor Phariseeism, but *good Samaritanism*, the only *ism* to which a man of Paul's genuine charity would be willing to belong. And what can be done in one instance can certainly be done by all. If one benevolent individual can do such a world of good by his personal efforts perseveringly continued, what could not the organized, systematic energies of our churches and of the whole community accomplish? Why, let there be union, and heart, and earnestness, and perseverance, in the effort, and not one of all these thousands of degraded, wretched boys now training up for the prison or the dram-shop, need be left or lost amid these pernicious influences. We say, if one can be saved, snatched from the jail itself, and the jaws of a life of fixed and branded infamy, so can all. It needs but union, energy, heart, perseverance, and life.

You see, now, our plan is, to bring the truth to bear upon youthful hearts and consciences, before they have grown into the searedness and immutability of criminal indulgence. It is to bring the children of the poor, the ignorant, and the vicious, to Christ, and to put a garrison in their hearts for him, before they are entirely taken possession of by Satan. We propose to do this, by giving them a sabbath of their own, a preacher of their own, and a church of their own; and by vigilant, permanent endeavors, not only on the sabbath, but through the week, to keep them under all these influences, and by these means to prepare them for suitable places of indus-

try, or of higher and more extended education. There is nothing in the plan exaggerated, nothing fanciful, nothing impracticable; but it is just as feasible as the establishment of a church for grown people, and, permit me to add, it is in some respects much more important. You perceive that it is and must be mainly a work of the church of Christ, and it is just *the* work which Christ has appointed the church to do, and which will be certainly left undone if the church of Christ perform it not. Her great work is, to be holding forth the word of life, to be bringing the world to the Bethesda of divine truth, to be pouring divine truth into immortal minds, and by missionary effort, where such is requisite, to be preaching the gospel especially to children and to the poor.

But now, if you expect the church to do her duty to the children of your city, you must not throw obstacles in her way, nor suffer them. You must, above all, help the church in the protection of the sabbath. What can ever *be* done, if this be *not* done? Just suppose that this city should make a contract with a gas-company, to supply the city with light; and suppose at the same time that a company determined to keep up a monopoly of selling oil or ardent spirit for this purpose should be permitted, undisturbed and unpunished, to break up the gas-company's fixtures as fast as they were laid, or to break holes in the gas-pipes, so that their material of light should be most materially wasted. Would it be possible, under those circumstances, for the company to proceed, or to accomplish their undertaking? Must they not justly demand your protection, and would you not be bound to protect their works and fixtures from the injury of marauders? Just so, what can the church do toward supplying the city with the light and life of truth divine, if you suffer the sabbath, which is their main conveyance-pipe, to be broken down, holes made in it, and

grog-sabbaths laid as fixtures by the side of it? Why! there never was a more glaring inconsistency in the world, than to see the energetic chief of your police at one end of your sanitary cordon of law and influence calling upon you to look at and prevent the annual sacrifice of thousands of children in vice and ignorance, and at the other to see the city authorities permitting the statutes framed for protecting the sabbath from the desecration of the sale of ardent spirits, to be broken through with the most perfect impunity! Your police, with their engines, are turning water on the fire of crime to extinguish it: your authorities, that should execute the laws, are permitting men in multitudes to pour in oil and ardent spirit from their four or five thousand engines to increase it! Now, the genius of the gospel thus outraged, and the energies of the church thus baffled and crippled, if they were constituted a grand jury, to indict the main authors and supplies of boyish vagrancy and crime, would most certainly present, *must* present, the sabbath liquor-shops, and other similar nuisances, by your permission maintained, as the grand sources of the evil. There is no more doubt that they are such, than there is that alcohol itself has been discovered. They not only offer the places and the causes of temptation to children, but they minister to the degradation of parents in such wise that the children are brought up in evil from the outset.

But again: if you expect Christianity to help you to redeem your city from the shame and curse of such a state of youthful depravity and misery as has been unveiled before you, you must protect the boys themselves from the nuisance, the injury, the profligacy, of being employed to outrage the sabbath by the sale of Sunday newspapers. Here, again, while you suffer this pestiferous and growing evil, you are just pouring oil on the

fire of crime, and directly preparing the way for such an annual report from the police as has been laid before you, while you are crying out to heaven and earth to stop the conflagration!

And very likely there are some who make this benevolent outcry, and wonder where the energy of the Christian church lies dormant, that it does not put a stop to such evils; who themselves are directly feeding those evils, by buying on the sabbath their newspapers from the boys! Now they can not possibly be ignorant that in doing this, they are most directly feeding and fanning this fire of sin and misery. They buy the newspapers of these ragged boys, and then forsooth are exercised with great pity for their destitute, desperate, depraved condition! They would not *give* them a single sixpence on the week-day or the sabbath-day, if they came begging. Oh no! that would encourage vagrancy and crime. But to the vagrancy and crime of newspaper-mongering on the sabbath they have no objection, and will give the sixpence for the newspapers, though knowing the great probability that it will carry the poor boy to the next grog-shop. I am reminded of Mr. Coleridge's keen satire upon those persons of sensibility without benevolence, who are prompted to remove those evils alone which are present to their senses, or disturb their selfish enjoyments. "Provided the dunghill is not before their parlor-window, they are well contented to know that it exists, and perhaps as the hotbed on which their own luxuries are raised!"

And here we would ask those professed reformers, some of whom have endeavored to throw upon Christianity itself the blame of all the permitted inequalities and evils in society, why *they* do not lend *their* help in this matter? How is it that they can be making the air ring with their demonstrations about the rights of la-

borers, the provision of work, and the protection of industry, together with the wickedness of permitting the poor, the ignorant, and the depraved, to continue poor and wretched amid the means of wealth and happiness, when they are doing nothing at all to put down the very indisputable causes of nine tenths of the crime, inequality, poverty, and misery, of this city and of all the world? How can they pretend to a disinterested care for laborers, while they look on with comparative indifference and see the laborers, and their hire, and their families, trodden under the hoof of the genius of rumshops and sabbath-breakers?

We have no quarrel with the reformers of any name whatever, for any good they can do in any way—in building lodgings, soup-houses, washing-machines, labor-protecting associations, or what not; we hail all the advancement they can possibly accomplish in society by any right means; we rejoice in it. But we must say, that the professed zeal of any class of men in behalf of laborers is quite open to the charge of hypocrisy, so long as they can look on without interference, and permit the sabbath-breaking rumseller not only to rob them of their wages, but to fasten such direful habits upon them that their power of labor itself is destroyed, and their families and homes converted into scenes of misery, and nurseries of materials for the records of the criminal police. And as to their theories of political economy instead of the gospel, they are about as wholesome and efficacious as the milk-distilleries themselves, instead of our pure country dairies.

But we close with reminding you, that when an evil of such ghastly features has been unveiled before you so clearly as in your police reports, and when your attention has been turned to it so explicitly, the responsibility of the city in regard to it, and our accountability to God

for its existence, can no longer be avoided by the plea of ignorance. We are bound to act energetically, prayerfully, perseveringly, for the redemption of these thousands of helpless children thrown upon our charities. Nay, we will not say charity. The suppression of these evils, or the prevention of them, is demanded by common justice; nay, further, by the bare law of self-preservation. If we let these things go, the stones out of the wall of the edifice of our prosperity will cry out against us, and the beams of society answer to the cry; the very organization of the community being such as to constitute an altar to Moloch in the midst of it, with thousands of youthful sacrifices. Society, in such a case, is like a bloated whale, fattening by the destruction of shoals of young shrimps.

And, moreover, it is bare indifference and neglect, for the most part, by which all this ruin is consummated. By a kind of universal allowance, you have consigned a large proportion of your population to a living moral sepulchre, in the midst of a city that ought to be a metropolis of truth and righteousness for the world. And from the jaws of the sepulchre of such a life, you may trace the fearful funeral array of souls, in long and ceaseless procession, down to the gates of hell. How shall we answer, in the judgment, for the children thus sacrificed? Let them not be sacrificed! Suffer the little children to come unto Christ, and forbid them not. But you do forbid them, if, in the midst of such influences, you barely leave them alone. If you neglect them, you exclude them; and that, too, in the midst of one of the most Christian cities on the face of the globe—in the midst of a city with the light of the gospel blazing, and its comforts abounding, at every step. But this light and these comforts, instead of being as an atmosphere, you convert, by the neglect of these chil-

dren, into a vast curtain, behind which they are shielded from your recognition, and on the bright side of which you can sit and sing, beforehand, of the blessedness of heaven, preserved in happy unconsciousness or forgetfulness that in the dungeon-depths of your own social edifice there are thousands, whom you might rescue, left by you to grope their way to sin and death eternal! We say again, suffer the little children to come unto Christ, and forbid them not. But you do forbid them, if you neglect them. Hear the words of Christ, and ponder upon them, and you can not deny—you will not wish to deny—their solemn application:—

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

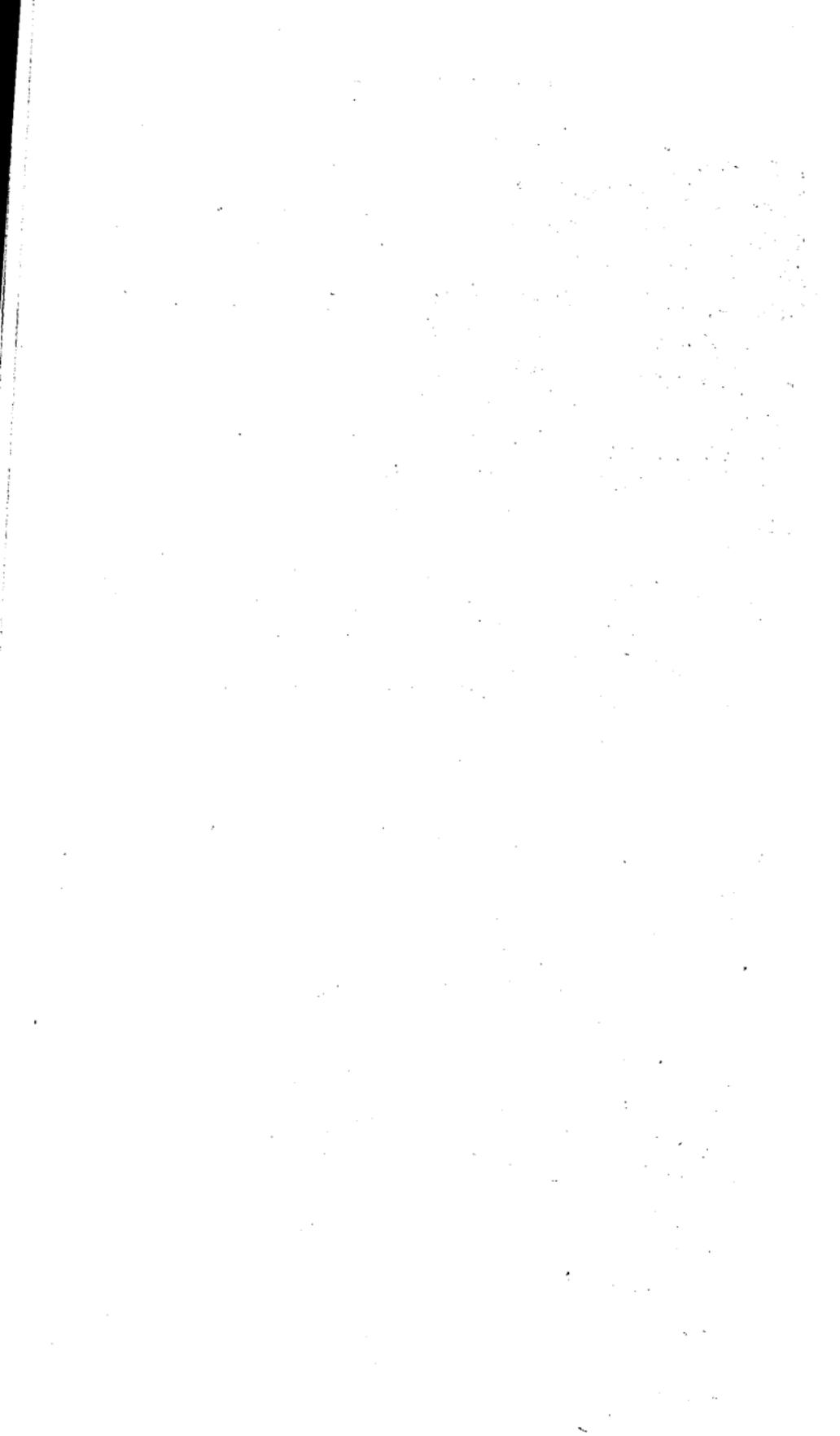
“Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

“Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

“Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.” — *MATT. xxv. : 31-46.*



*The Necessity of Protecting the Sabbath in our Cities
as well as in the Country, from Desecration; and
especially from that Pernicious Form and Cause
of its Profanation:—*

THE SUNDAY LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

By Rev George B. Cheever D.D.

In this plea, we wish first of all to look to His example, who *went about doing good*, and whose will, as the Lord of the Sabbath, we are bound to ascertain and obey. On one memorable occasion, recorded in the sixth chapter of the gospel according to Luke, while our blessed Lord was engaged in one of his miracles of healing mercy on the Sabbath-day, he encountered the jealousy and malignity of the Pharisees, and took the opportunity of showing to the people the true nature and obligation of the Sabbath as a day of piety and love. He said to his carping enemies, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath-day, to do good or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?" He said also to them, on another similar occasion, that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, and that therefore the Son of man, who came into the world to die for man's salvation, to bring man back to God, was Lord also of the Sabbath, for man's good.

After dwelling for a moment on the law of the Sabbath, as expounded by our blessed Lord, and the means of maintaining it, we will look also at the peculiar obligation and necessity laid upon us, by reason of the nature of our institutions, to keep the Sabbath from

desecration, as the only safeguard of our prosperity and happiness, both temporal and spiritual.

The law of the Sabbath was from the first a law of benevolence, a law appointed for doing and getting good; for doing good by getting it, and for getting good by doing it. It was intended to prepare the people, beneath its operation, for a life of active benevolence; and to sustain them, by the fixtures of a life of piety to God, for a daily obedience to God's law through every week. Every violation of the Sabbath was therefore destructive of the law of love. It was a violation to do evil on the Sabbath, most certainly. It was also a violation to tie up the Sabbath in a bag of such human superstitions, to put such a pharisaical interpretation upon it, and to overlay it in such manner with punctilious traditions, treading out the spirit of it by the letter, as to prevent or restrict men from *doing good* on the Sabbath. Our blessed Lord announced himself as the Lord, the interpreter, and owner of the Sabbath; and as on another occasion he cleared the temple of those who bought and sold in it with a scourge of small cords, so, on the occasion mentioned in the sixth of Luke he interposed his Divine authority, and with the scourge of his simple questions to the consciences of his hearers, cleared the Sabbath of its violations, and set it back upon its own high ground of love.

Now, if it is lawful to do evil on the Sabbath, then is it lawful, pre-eminently to make a traffic of ardent spirit on the Sabbath, for that is one of the most gigantic and powerful forms of evil, with which sin has ever cursed the world. If it is lawful to destroy life on the Sabbath, then is it lawful to license and sustain spirit-shops for that day and that work. But if it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, if that, by God's law, is both the object of the day and our duty, then is it lawful to put down by

law and practice the traffic in ardent spirit on that day. It is not only lawful, but a supreme obligation and necessity, both of duty and of life.

A new and formal gift of the Sabbath to our race was a part of our blessed Savior's charter to mankind. He who went about doing good declared that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; a means, and not an end; it was for man, to bring man in holiness and happiness to God, and not man for itself, to run him in a mere formal mould of its man-prescribed observances. The scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, would cut and square men by and for *their* sabbath, not God's; Christ would prepare men, by the *true* Sabbath, in its purity, for God. He declared that it was God's gift of love and mercy to man, God's and man's property, not Satan's. The example, the spirit, the command and the love of our Savior, bind us to accept and guard his gift, to take it out of Satan's hands, and keep it in Christ's hands, and under the control of good men and communities for Christ's purposes. As the Sabbath was made for man, and given to him, it was so done, that in it he might give himself to God, and by it, in Christ, become a partaker of God's holiness and happiness. It was so done, that in it, by the preaching of the gospel, mankind, believing in Jesus, might be saved. It was so done, that in it man might have leisure and rest from his earthly occupations, and time and opportunity to devote himself to the care of his spiritual interests, and the preparation of his spiritual being for another life. It was given to man, that man might use it, according to God's instructions, for his own good, and that, so using it, the prosperity and happiness of neighborhoods, communities, cities, states, and nations, might be secured, and made permanent and uninterrupted by it.

Now the means of doing this, and of thus maintaining

the Sabbath in its purity and power according to our blessed Lord's gift of it, example in it, and command in regard to it, are to be ascertained both by the nature of the institution, as a religious institution for God's worship, and by the express precepts of God. It is an institution of God's worship for man's good. The interests of society, as well as the personal and spiritual good of men, are therefore concerned in keeping it secure from such violations as would turn it from its appropriate object and use, and convert it into an engine of evil. The foundation and possibility of its power to bless mankind depend solely upon its religious observance; for it was intended to bring men to God, and make them obedient to him; and if it does not accomplish that, if it be turned aside from that purpose, and be made the vehicle of men's worldly gain or pleasure, it is an injury and not a benefit, a curse and not a blessing. All possible efforts should therefore be made to guard the quiet religious observance of the Sabbath-day, to bring its privileges within full scope and reach of all classes, to shut off as far as practicable those influences, which would debar men from its sacred enjoyments, and to restrict and keep down those things which in the shape of businesses or amusements, would desecrate it, and prevent its good intention from being realized.

Let us now turn back to the example of a case in the Old Testament, in which God's servants took hold of this very work of wresting the Sabbath from Satan into whose power it had fallen, and of bringing it back to God, and themselves with it and by it. Ever since the world began there has been this great conflict going on between good and evil for the possession of God's Sabbath. In every form of false religion, and every corruption of the true, the grand point of evil has been the weakening, perversion, or destruction of God's Sabbath;

for if the adversary of God and man can accomplish that, man and man's happiness are wholly in his power. He made the sons of Eli and of Samuel sons of Belial, that knew not God, and the Jewish republic itself was revolutionized, and a kingly government came in its stead, greatly by the desecration of God's Sabbaths. And then again the ruin of the kingly government followed from the same cause; and at the time of Nehemiah, the Jewish capital had been sacked and abandoned, and the Jewish nation carried into captivity, mainly, almost entirely, as God himself declared to them, in consequence of their violation of God's law for the Sabbath; the desecration of which brought in its train every other evil, weakness, and crime. If they had kept that law, they would have kept their own state of prosperity and happiness. Their abandonment of that law was the whole source of their increasing guilt and misery, and of God's abandonment of them to the tender mercies of the heathen which are cruelty, and the Moloch usages, of kings and nations, without a Sabbath and without love.

But now on the occasion to which we refer, recorded in the book of Nehemiah, God called them back; for though his indignation had wasted them, it was for chastisement, not utter destruction, and his tender mercies were again in their power. But their land meanwhile had been filled with emigrants from sabbath-breaking nations, and from a vicious population, that neither knew, nor cared for, nor observed the Sabbath, but bought and sold on that day as on any other. As soon then as the Jews returned from their captivity, their first care under Nehemiah, after they had finished building the walls of Jerusalem, with excessive anxiety and labor, working for months with both trowel and sword in their hands, from the light of the morning till the stars appeared; their first care after these labors, was to rein-

state that law of God, which had been trampled under foot, and to set up again in purity and power those sacred institutions, unrivalled in beauty, and precious beyond all price, upon the keeping of which depended their whole life and prosperity.

They knew that in the preservation and right observance of the sabbath were centred the springs of their whole superiority over the nations round about them, and their whole enjoyment of God's favor. They therefore went to work at once to resuscitate the Sabbath, and to take it out from the power of those hands that had desecrated it. Their first great measure was that glorious covenant of return to God's law, in which, besides the separation of themselves again from the people of the lands unto the law of God, they combined a principle sure to do its work, the principle of abstaining from other men's sins. They needed only to observe God's ordinance themselves, and carry its provisions strictly into exercise, and the violation of it on the part of their enemies, and of the emigrants, would cease in their city. If the people of God in Jerusalem would, one and all, absolutely refuse to have anything to do with the sabbath-breakers, in encouraging their traffic, then they could carry into effect the provisions of God's law against the violation of the Sabbath, and such desecration was sure to cease. But if they did not first abstain themselves from all participation in other men's sins, they could not possibly keep down those sins. So they just entered into an oath to have nothing to do with those that sold aught on the Sabbath, or exposed aught for sale, and then the magistrates could successfully enforce the provisions of the law against such Sabbath traffic.

Nehemiah himself, strengthened by that covenant, took the thing in hand. He shut up the fish-market, where the men of Tyre had been accustomed to bring their fish,

and a whole chaos of sea and land ware besides, to sell on the Sabbath, to the children of Judah and in Jerusalem. He shut up all the grog-shops, and indicted those whom he found treading their wine-presses on the Sabbath, and lading their asses, and bringing in sheaves, grapes, figs, wines, and all manner of burdens into the city on the Sabbath-day. He took hold of the nobles with a strong hand, and dealt alike with high and low, rich and poor, with great energy.

In addition to this, every evening before the Sabbath, so soon as it began to grow dark, he commanded the gates of the city to be shut, and not to be opened again till after the Sabbath; and he set watchmen at the gates, and commanded the Levites to prepare themselves, and make it a part of their business to keep the gates, that the Sabbath might be sanctified, and that no burden might be brought into Jerusalem on that day. Notwithstanding this, the merchants and sellers of all kinds of ware came as usual, and supposing that this was but a temporary flurry of reform in the city, knowing neither the covenant that had been entered into, nor the character of Nehemiah, lodged without Jerusalem once or twice, and there bided their time and tempted the people. Then Nehemiah indicted them also, and said to them, "Why lodge ye about the wall? If ye do so again, I will lay hands on you." From that time forth came they no more on the Sabbath. Nehemiah was perhaps the best mayor of a city the world ever saw. He was afraid of no man, and of no clan of monopolizers or traders; but being backed up by the covenant and the people, and resting on the law of God, every man was afraid of him, and no man dared to sell wine or strong drink on the Sabbath. His power, under God and his law, for success in this reform, was in that covenant. And his aldermen and common council never

licensed groggeries, or avoided indicting offenders, for the sake of getting votes. But if those who put their seals to that covenant, had some of them rented shops in Jerusalem to those who would sell wine and strong drink on the Sabbath, and others of them taken a Sunday-morning newspaper once in a while before service, and so patronized and winked at sins which they had sworn with an oath neither to commit nor sanction, Nehemiah's power of public opinion would have been cut off, and Satan would still have kept possession of the Sabbath. But the Jews in this case were not such monstrous hypocrites; they kept themselves pure from other men's sins, and supported their excellent mayor in his energetic and faithful execution of the law.

Now this combined moral power, and faithful, unhesitating execution of the law, growing out of it, and sustained by it, to do good and not evil on the Sabbath-days, to save life and not destroy it, is precisely what we need. A great part of the evil among us arises from the miserable Sabbath-breaking and drinking habits of very many of the emigrants pouring in upon us from dram-drinking and Sabbath-breaking Europe. England, the wealthiest nation on the face of the globe, after letting the great part of her population grow up steeped in poverty, in ignorance, and beer-drinking, ships off her paupers to this country, that her own oligarchy of wealth and power may not have to bear the tax of supporting them. Shame on her combined luxury and cruelty, opulence and meanness! But, these things being so, we have double need of some dike against this black sea of drinking and Sabbath-breaking. There is a greater need of this, arising out of the peculiarity of our institutions, which are such that nothing but religion and a pure morality in the people can sustain them. Were we Americans alone, and the growth of character, of our

own institution, under New England and American influences, there would be very little difficulty, and comparatively very little Sabbath-breaking. It is with us, as in the case of Nehemiah and the Jews, the people of other lands mostly, accustomed to a lax observance of the Sabbath, or an entire neglect and profanation of it, that make this evil so enormous. And this just imposes on us the responsibility of greater earnestness and effort, because of the danger to which our institutions are exposed. The right observance of the Sabbath, according to our Savior's intention in its gift to man, is with us the only bulwark and life of continued freedom and prosperity. This becomes more than ever apparent, in a comparison of the social state as it is constituted among us, with its constitution in the greater part of Europe.

In English society, for example, to take one of the best patterns there, the world of life, manners, and influences, has been likened to a series of concentric rings, laid flat upon one another, but without any other connection than that of proximity in time and place. You may strike one of them, but your blow does not resound in the others, is not transmitted through the whole. In this country it is entirely different. Society here is one united connected body. It is not like concentric rings piled one above another, but it is like a vast spiral of rings, rising and running into one another, like the folds or involution of a screw. There may be thought some exceptions to this rule, in some of the foreign ingredients mingled with our home manufacture. The Roman catholic element, so far as it recognises allegiance to a head called the pope, who himself, it is declared, can never be anything but a sovereign, never a subject, might be supposed hostile to this homogeneousness and oneness of our social and civil system. But on the whole it is true, that society with us is made up of rings as in a

spiral, rings passing into one another, from the lowest to the highest. The lowest finds itself, by virtue of the action of the whole, insensibly rising into the next grade above, and that grade or ring finds itself as insensibly, and gradually, and without violence, or marked change, rising into the next, and that into the next, and so on to the last; no one by displacing another, but following into the place made by the other in the motion of the whole.

The full realization of this state of things would convey an image of a perfect society. The perfection of society is not, on earth, nor ever will be, society without distinctions or inequalities, but with them; the poor always with you, but always rising by you, and by your help; the ignorant and vicious always with you, but instructed, enlightened, reclaimed, by you, for you, and rising through your instrumentality. This is social progress, neither levelling down, nor levelling up, but rising continually from lower to higher. A man may cast himself out of this progressive series, this onward and upward movement, if he will, by bad behavior, by continued ignorance, bigotry, and depravity, and then, the screw of society, instead of carrying him up, goes over him. But any man may also, if he will, keep himself in the train and place of onward and upward movement. And any class may do the same, though a class as well as an individual, may keep itself secluded and degraded.

In the perfection of such a social constitution, under such a law of progress, it is manifest how incalculably greater must be the power, the capacity, the energy, of the social and civil body as a whole, than it can be in a state where society is laid or piled as in rings, and not connected as in the spiral. It is as much more powerful in the former case, the connected spiral, than in the

latter, as a screw is more powerful than a bunch of rings soldered together, but not passing into one another. The social state of England is the pile or bunch of rings, some of lead, some of iron, some of silver, some of gold; concentric, but not spiral, cemented together by the solder of a powerful government, and an enormous state debt, but still more, even without any cement, by the heavy pressure of one class upon another.

In such a state of things, the whole force of society can not possibly be brought to bear upon any given great and good object. The whole pile of metallic rings will not sound together. You may bring out a sharp ringing sound from one ring, but the next will give nothing but a dull heavy jarring. You can not make the whole pile ring to a note struck upon the bottom, or the top, or the middle. But if you have your spiral of rings, passing into one another, the sound runs from one to the other, and indeed through the whole, with greater or less power and clearness, as the case may be. And in a spiral which is always rising, a steel spiral, suppose for example, the ringing clear note, which begins by striking at the lower, grows deeper as it rises, till at the top, where it rings off into the surrounding air, you have it careering like the peal of a musical bell. Just such *may* be the voice of society; just so consentaneous, rising, deepening, harmonious, and clear. It depends altogether upon the influences which are set a-going, and kept acting.

Now you may set your steel spiral, or suppose it set, into what you please, at the bottom; a metallic plate of whatever nature or construction; but, whatever it be, the influences which it takes up from that plate, it will carry up from grade to grade consecutively. If you set it into a Sabbath-plate, so to speak, into the fundamental social institutions of the Sabbath, recognised and maintained *as* a fundamental social institution, it will not

cease to carry up those influences. You must, however, have that institution at the bottom, and keep it there. You might or may, indeed, have it half or two thirds the way up, surrounding the spiral at that point; but whatever influences may then and there be taken up into the spiral system, will be overtaken also, and run into, and weaken or overcome by the adverse influences rising up from below, whatever be the antagonistical plate of influence into which you have permitted the lowest ring or twist of the spiral to run at the beginning. If that be a grog-shop, the theatre, houses and habits of dissipation and ill-fame, the action of the spiral will carry up those influences.

Whatever of good you expect to make universal in society, you ought to begin it from below, or at least to make its application there as invariable, punctual, and perseveringly and simultaneously, as at any higher point. Begin it there, and you are quite sure to carry it through the whole; for there is not one surer law in morals, than that law in our social state, by which the individual or class at the lowest point of the spiral, if acting in obedience to the principles of religion and morality, with industry and knowledge, will be sure to come to the highest. But if you do not begin it there, but at some other point, and meanwhile, by your neglect and indifference, suffer a habit or influence adverse to piety and good morals to begin, you can not prevent that influence disastrous and powerful, from overtaking the other, and disappointing or neutralizing it, even where it was at first applied with success. Vice propagates itself upward, sideways, any and every-wise, but morality does not so easily shoot downward. It is true that we look upward for examples, but still more around and down, if not *for* examples, at least subjected to influences, which insensibly regulate and form our habits. If we are

somewhat above the multitude, still we regard them, and are influenced by them; if we are below them, we regard them; if we are on a level with them, we regard them, and are in the main satisfied, although we do not rise above them in goodness, with that degree of goodness which just prevents us from falling beneath them. Comparing yourselves among yourselves, is an evil, even in Christian society, as old as the times of the apostle Paul.

Now the institution of the Sabbath is an institution for the poor, and for them it ought to be protected and guarded. It is eminently the poor man's friend, and the poor especially ought to be preserved from the efforts of their enemies, who would deprive them of the blessings of that day. As far as society is able, it ought to preserve the poor from temptations to evil on that day, and to strengthen for them the obligations, as well as the opportunities, of good on that day. On that day, above all others, the influences of good should be applied to the poor, to the ignorant, and as much, and as simultaneously, and as uninterruptedly as possible, to the lowest classes, or rings, in the spiral of the social state. They are everywhere needed; but there especially, in the depraved heart as well as the outskirts of society, they must be applied. The Sabbath, and the gospel to accompany it, were given for that purpose, to reach all classes, and bless all; and we are bound to look to it that the class which eminently needs the resting and ameliorating influences of the one sacred day in seven, be not defrauded of their birthright by those who would steal it from them, not with the temptation of anything so good as a mess of pottage, but with the elements of damnation, bringing liquid fire, and distilled death, into their hearts, their homes, their dwellings.

The fundamental, irresistible power of the gospel, as

promulgated by the Savior of mankind, depends on this, that it is directed into, and goes into, the heart of the masses. It is a system for the poor, and begins with them, and not with any other class in preference or exclusively. It is a missionary system, and mission churches are needed, not only in heathen lands merely, but in all our cities, where the gospel may come to the poor, even if the poor will not come to the gospel. It is externally almost the central evidence of the Christian system as God's system, that *to the poor the gospel is preached*. And hence when John, who had been cast into prison, sent messengers to inquire of Christ more definitely and explicitly whether he were the Messiah, (for the lonely imprisoned forerunner of Jesus had his hours of doubt and discouragement) our blessed Lord wrought many miracles in the presence of the messengers, and then sent them away again to John to tell him all that they had seen and heard, but added, as the climax of all evidence, and the most heavenly and convincing proof, that could be given, *to the poor the gospel is preached*. And that went straight to John's heart, and met his wants, and the Lord Jesus knew that it would; and when the messengers recounted to John all that they had seen and heard, though, through all the array of external miracles related, he may still have had some misgivings or questionings, yet when it came to the last, *to the poor the gospel is preached*, then John knew that it was Jesus. "That is Christ," said he, "that is the Messiah, and none other; that is Immanuel, God with us! Mine eyes have seen thy salvation! Let thy servant depart!"

The institution of the Sabbath is a fundamental social institution. As such, it is to be regarded and protected. It is just as fundamental and social as the institution of marriage, and just as essential to the good

of society to be preserved in its sacredness, to be guarded from desecration. It is the most social institution in the world, and even in that respect alone the most cementing and beatifying to society. It is to the purity and happiness of society what marriage is to the purity and happiness of the household. It is to the very existence and possibility of a refined and healthful society, what marriage is to the very existence and possibility of a refined, healthful, and happy family. And we put these institutions together, as to the obligations of society to cherish them, and in its power of government to protect them from outrage and injury. Government is as much bound to preserve the Sabbath from being profaned, and to protect the good in the quiet uninterrupted enjoyment of their social religious observance of that day, as it is to preserve the family from being profaned, and to protect it from the outrages of the seducer and the adulterer. If there be immoralities which destroy the sacredness of that day, and prevent or nullify its influences, and turn away or prevent society from its blessings, society is bound to restrain such immoralities. If it do not restrain them, it violates the obligation incurred to its members, as well as the responsibility it is under to God.

Now the form and texture of our social system are such as to impose a double obligation upon us, for the defence of this institution of our religious and social well-being. Our power, our purity, our happiness, must be that of the whole, that of all. The Sabbath can not be left to one class, or ring, as it might to one of the concentric rings in England to take care of. The influence of its observance or its desecration runs through all the ramifications of our social system. That system, regarded as a spiral, carries its influences from the lowest to the highest; regarded as a screw, it is tremendous

in its power for evil or for good. Let the whole energies of all classes be united in a good object, and our organization, our intimate connection and interpenetration of classes and influences, will make an example of supremacy in good, such as the world never saw. But if our good be turned into evil, how great is that evil.

Let it be remembered that there is no rejuvenescence possible for our institutions, if we suffer them to fall. There are no younger veins than ours, from which we can draw a supply of healthful blood. That which we are receiving from other sources is much of it corrupted, and relies upon the redemptive vigor of our own system to be cured. It is not as if we were having a tide of purely virtuous emigration pouring in upon us. And there is no captivity that we can go into for our discipline, and return after a temporary failure. The Jews had this advantage; they had been destroyed by the profanation of the Sabbath, and still, after learning this awful lesson of its value, had opportunity of salvation. God called them back from their captivity; and then the very first thing the true patriot did (and there never was a truer patriot than Nehemiah) was to reinstitute and reinstate the Sabbath. They had had dreadful experience of the hell on earth of a sabbathless society. For us there is no such probation. There is no Savior to come. God has no more time to spare in this world for such costly experiments, and besides there have been plenty of them, already, and the world is strewn with the carcasses of dead empires.

When tyrants would subjugate a people, they toss the Sabbath to them as a jubilee of sin. It was thus that James and the Charleses profaned the Sabbath with their books of sports. The preservers and defenders of liberty in the kingdom were those who protected the Sabbath against these incursions of its enemies. It is the best

defence of freedom both against the passions of the multitude and the despotism of the Jew. If the Sabbath had been kept in France, there would have been no French revolution, and no need of one. If the Sabbath by example and influence, had gone careening over the continent as Napoleon went, the Sabbath, with the word of God and its attendant influences, there would have been no need of the scourge of Napoleon's armies, and Europe of this day would have been enjoying the blessings of freedom, and of quiet social order. The Sabbath is the nurse of freemen and the dread of tyrants.

The Sabbath in a great city is of incalculable importance to our temporal interests as well as our spiritual. But in proportion to its importance as a sacred day, is the evil of its perversion, and the capacity in it of being used as the most tremendous engine of corruption. It is God's day; if it were not, if Satan now had possession of it as God has, we might despair of the world's salvation. And now, as it is, if we let it be taken as a day of labor and profit for grog-shops, to make men drunken, we are mad. All the days in the week put together can not have so dreadful a power in promoting intemperance, among young men especially, as the Sabbath with the grog-shops open. In the week, multitudes are too busy to drink, too laborious to be tempted. But on the Sabbath they have a breathing-time, a time of relaxation and rest. Tempt them then, and it is the very triumph of hell. Open these infernal doors to them, and draw them together in social mood, with hours of revelry at their disposal, and what can save them? There was some hope in the Sabbath to save them from the week, but what shall save them from the Sabbath? The week itself, of labor and of temperance, can not do it. Their *Sabbaths* make men's character. If *they* are well spent, they are like bridges over the whole week's temptations

and dangers, by which the soul goes safely. If they are ill-spent, the whole week's virtue can not bridge *them* over, for they are a hebdomadal descent into hell, and they carry the week with them. It may be said of the Sabbath, as our blessed Lord said of the very light of God in the soul perverted. If the *light* that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness! The Sabbaths are the light of the week and of the world's business; but if the world's grand vices be turned into the Sabbath for their jubilee, it were better blotted out. The Sabbaths are a fountain of spiritual and intellectual nourishment for the people, but if you fill the fountain with strong drink, it becomes the people's greatest curse. It is as if a company of men should be license to poison the Cróton reservoir once a week with a barrel of arsenic.

Nor is this the only profanation of the Sabbath, against which we ought to be protected by our legal authorities, although it is the most glaring evil. There is another, to which we feel bound to refer, and that is, the sale of Sunday newspapers. We speak of this, as well the rum traffic, as being an intrusion, a monopoly by a particular small class, an advantage in trade stolen under forbearance of law, and a great evil sanctioned, which, if it came in the shape of some useful article sold by virtuous men, would soon be put a stop to. If men went about selling religious books on the Sabbath, we should have an outcry from the very profaners of the Sabbath. Or if our butchers were to get up perambulating stalls for Sunday dinners, nice roasted fowls, beef-steaks, oysters, and were to go about vociferating those eatables, we doubt not such a monopoly as that would be exclaimed against. And yet any trader or class of tradesmen in the city have as much right to hawk about their goods as the newspapers. It is a monopoly and an intrusion

that ought no more to be permitted on the part of any class, than a man would be permitted for his own private benefit, to build a booth or a warehouse in the middle of Broadway. The Sabbath is as much public property, to be kept clear of all intruders and speculators, as Broadway.

But it is the Sabbath traffic in liquors which is doing more than all other causes together to break down and destroy this safeguard of our religion, our liberty, our prosperity. We want a public sentiment, strong and intense against it. We had such a sentiment once, and those educated among us, and accustomed to a Christian Sabbath, and acquainted with our public morals, had too much self-respect to violate it. But the vast multitude of foreigners from lands and neighborhoods where there was almost no Sabbath, and no temperance reformation, and no public feeling stamping this traffic as immoral, have broken in upon this public sentiment; and it is one of the most melancholy spectacles in the world to see such a thing taking place. All good patriots are called upon to throw themselves into this breach.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this subject. The keeping of the Sabbath is the sheet-anchor of our salvation, temporal and spiritual. We shall not long maintain our superiority to the nations of Europe in freedom and happiness, if we let the Sabbath fall into neglect and profanation. We shall have worse revolutions and ruin here, than they are having there, if we let the Sabbath go. And it is a sad and fearful spectacle to see any diminution of the reverence with which the Sabbath has been regarded among us. Ten thousand times better the severest Puritanic strictness, or even the very letter of the Mosaic law, than the laxity, the infidelity, the desecration introduced in great measure from abroad, and sustained and increased so alarmingly

by the undisturbed temptations to Sabbatical intemperance. The poet Cowper beautifully says, speaking of the charming and simple religious books that pleased his childhood:—

T were well with most, if books that could engage
 Their childhood, pleased them at a riper age;
 The man, approving what had charmed the boy,
 Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy,
 And not with curses on his heart who stole
 The gem of truth from his unguarded soul."

We may apply this to our early, native, New England reverence for the Sabbath, that reverence which by God's blessing had come down to us as an heir-loom from the piety of our pilgrim-fathers. If there is any curse deserved, any anathema more terrible than another, let it fall upon those who labor to destroy that native, home-born reverence, and to trample the Sabbath under the swinish hoof of infidelity and intemperance. If he who steals the truth from one soul is to be held accursed, what indeed shall be said of those who steal it from a nation? What shall be said of those who break down and put to scorn that sacred hedge around the religious observance of the Sabbath, that strong and religious public sentiment against its profanation, which a few years ago no American, who could hope for a respectable position in society would have dared to violate, for he knew its power, and was well aware that the man who attempted to break it down would be scorned and rejected by it. But men come in, ignorant of this sacred public sentiment, strangers to it, and entirely out of its circle, and, deterred by no fear, trample down the Sabbath with impunity. And such an example being once set, the prescriptive sacredness of this admirable public feeling is broken, the angel is gone that helped guard this gate of paradise from intrusion, and fools and sots rush in, where angels and true patriots

would not have dared to tread. It is a sight to fill the bosom of a true lover of his country with intense anguish. We are glad enough to have our country a refuge for the oppressed; we welcome them, of whatever name, language, nation; but every Sabbath-breaker is a curse to the country, and we would rather have every foreigner that starts from Europe, to set up the traffic in liquor as the means of his subsistence in this country, sunk to the bottom of the ocean, rather than come to recompense the enjoyment of our privileges with the destruction of our morals and religion; rather than come to accomplish the desecration of our Sabbath, which is the only safeguard of our prosperity and freedom, the only insurance of the favor of our God. We fervently wish that instead of the easy importation of such examples, there were thirty thousand miles of ocean between us and Europe rather than three; yea, we would rather have an impassable gulf, than our dearest institutions trampled on.

And it is a very solemn question, inasmuch as the tide of emigration sets, and will continue to set still more strongly from Europe to America, what are the moral and religious influences and examples by which the new comers shall be surrounded; and what are the institutions, not of government merely, but of daily life and manners, into the bosom of which they shall be received, and by the power of which their own future being shall be moulded. Here again, in view of our present and future relations to Europe and the world, no language can tell the importance of the preservation and protection of the Sabbath, in all its religious power and sacredness. For the sake of the continuance and increase of our usefulness among the nations, for the sake of the power of our influence in purity and wholesomeness, in all social order, and as the great example of an equal civil and religious liberty to all the world, the Sabbath must be

sustained ; for it is the foundation of all our good ; it is the helm of our destinies. And shall we make intemperance the pilot ? Shall we relinquish the ship to the guidance of influences, under the power of which no wise discerning merchant would venture a single cargo of his goods across the Atlantic ?

What shall we do for the poor of our city ? What is the talk and pretence of socialism, as a cure-all for the evils of a poverty-stricken and degraded society, if, letting the morals and religion of the people, in God's only constituted safe-guard and training of them, the Christian Sabbath, go by the board, it turns only to material interests, associations of house and labor, rents and prices, banks and all that, and leaves the spiritual being to corrupt and perish ? And of what avail even, would be mission churches, so long as for one such place sustained for preaching to the poor, there are five hundred places licensed to make them drunken ?

The weight of this misery is mainly on the poor. It is the sanction and pressure of a professedly Christianized social state, trampling them down by the agency of the demon of ruin. A professedly Christian socialism is responsible for this misery, because, while it has the power to stop it, and while there are the most just and wholesome laws against it, it winks at it, permits it, does not execute those laws, and silently sanctions that evil, which in its legislative capacity it condemns and stamps as illegal. This is a monstrous inconsistency and wickedness. The social state is bound to protect its poor, and not give them over to the unrestrained operation of causes that inevitably make them poor, and keeps them wretched. The social state is bound to protect its poor against those enemies that without such protection prey upon them and destroy them. The social state is bound to protect for the poor man the poor man's Sabbath, and

not to suffer its salutary rest and its healing renovating mercies to be stolen from them. We repeat it; the blessings of the Sabbath ought to be guarded for the poor and ignorant; for they are the classes that above all others need the redemptive recuperative power of that day. Instead of this, by the permission of the Sabbath traffic in ardent spirit, it is the poor and ignorant mainly that are given over by the social state to the unrestricted agencies of evil on that day.

It would be bad enough, it would be intolerably bad and wicked, simply to have the Sabbath stolen from the poor and wretched, taken away from them with all its sacred institutions and influences, and they themselves debarred from any participation in its direct blessings. But the evil stops not there; it goes much further; it is not a mere negation of the day of rest and mercy to the poor. It is the introduction, in its stead, of a day of absolute energy in making them more miserable; a day of fatigue in drunkenness; a day of revelling, temptation, and crime; a day of profaneness and evil; a day in which grog-shops, instead of the temples of God, are their churches; a day that takes them poor and makes them poorer; a day that consumes the hard-gotten wages of the week past, and at the same time renders them less unfit to labor and to gain wages for the week to come; a day that is looked forward to with terror by their wives and families; a day that instead of bringing God's light and peace to shine quietly into their dwellings, makes home a worse hell than in any other part of the week; a day of absolute, appalling, heart-rending evil. And all this by the sanction of society for the money-making of Sabbath rum-sellers! All this array of forces, temptations, demoniac agencies against the poor, in order that the traffickers in liquor may not be disturbed in their gains on that holy day, when the poor are at leisure from

work to be fleeced and destroyed by them! There is an atrocious wickedness in that state of socialism, by whatever name it may be called, which will continue to permit this; it is rotten at the core; it is a system of monopoly and oppression.

If you were to see a man robbed of a purse of five hundred dollars, all his fortune in the world, and stripped also, and left naked, by a gang of villains, this would be bad enough, intolerably bad. But if in addition to this the villains should knock the man down, beat him, bruise him and break his bones, so that he could not stir, and depart leaving him helpless and perhaps dying, this would be much worse. But what would be thought of a state of society, of a social state, which would permit such things unpunished, and leave the gang of villains to the enjoyment of their spoils. Now much worse than this is the treatment of the poor by the Sabbath traffickers in ardent spirits; for the injury is moral and spiritual, and not physical merely. Their money is not merely taken from them, and all the privileges and blessings of the day of God, which, rightly enjoyed, would be better to them than all wealth, but they are made drunkards, their character, principles, habits, are destroyed, their existence is poisoned with sin, poverty, and wretchedness, of which, for themselves and their families, a perpetual fiery fountain is kept flowing from the Sabbath through their souls. God's greatest blessing is turned into man's greatest curse.

Now again we ask, how long shall these things be? Look upon undeniable facts. There are in the city of New York four thousand five hundred and sixty-seven places for the sale of ardent spirits, three thousand eight hundred and fourteen licensed sellers of the same, and seven hundred and twenty-nine without license. There is about one such place to every hundred inhabitants.

It is known by the police that three thousand five hundred and seventy-three such places *are open on the Sabbath contrary to law*. In the seventh ward there is a dram-shop to every twenty families. In the tenth ward one hundred and ninety-seven places of sale for ardent spirits were found open on the Sabbath. Mr. Marsh gives it as the opinion of a gentleman of much observation and character, that there resort to a house of this description in his neighborhood from morning till midnight not less than five hundred persons. These are truly the devil's churches; and he has a large and attentive congregation; and the texts and the sermons, earthly, sensual, devilish, which they carry away Sabbath evening, are not forgotten Monday morning, but last through the week. No language can tell the variety of crime and evil, and the depths and bitterness of misery, resulting from this Sabbath traffic.

The wretched beings whom Satan thus catches in his snares, and takes captive at his will, are run, as to their whole habits and character, into an unprincipled, irreligious, dissipated mould of life. They never enter a church; they never hear the preaching of the gospel; they are precluded and separated from all the influences of religion. If young in life, they grew up in habits of sensuality, profaneness, hardness of heart, intemperance. They are gradually prepared for all evil. All the restraints of the Sabbath and of the Christian system being taken off from them, and all the temptations of hell let loose upon them, under the permission of society, what can society expect from them. They constitute the incessant phalanx of recruits, a thousand deep, for crime, for our prisons, for the alms-house, for the pestilence, for death. If the cholera is among us, they are victims for the cholera. They are a conducting agency, supported by the city at a vast expense, by which the cholera and

every other deadly sickness, is invited, sustained, fed, and increased among us.

As to disease, the weekly tables of mortality after the recurrence of the Sabbath's revelling and drunkenness, read a frightful lesson to us; a demonstration of what the city suffers by its Sabbath dram-shops. *Through the dissipation produced by the leisure and temptations of that day thus combined, the ratio of deaths reported after the Sabbath is from one third to one half greater than at any other time.* Such is the teaching of a pestilence like the cholera; and the perennial evil and death flowing from a desecrated Sabbath, spent in idleness, in vagrancy, in rum-shops, in bar-rooms, in the indulgence of the sensual appetites, is always proportionably great, even in a time of health. In the city of Bristol, in England, where it has been determined that the places for the sale of ardent spirits shall be entirely closed on the Sabbath, it is supposed, from accurate statistics, that annually there will be a thousand commitments for crime prevented by that measure alone! A thousand less commitments for crime during the year, than when the dram-shops were opened! What a tremendous, irresistible lesson is this! Who does not see, that if the places of traffic in ardent spirit be still permitted to be kept open on the Sabbath, the responsibility of all this mass of crime and wretchedness consequent thereupon rests upon the people and the government who refuse to carry the laws against them into execution. Upon the people, if they do not sustain the magistrates in executing our laws, upon the magistrates, if, supported by the people, they do not vigorously and pre severingly execute the laws, and suppress the evil. And no doubt the people are ready to sustain such execution and suppression. Nay they call loudly to have them put in practice. And we can not doubt that our present excellent mayor will find himself abun-

dantly supported in his energetic measures for this great object. Let those measures be persevered in. Let it be seen that this is no transitory reformation. *The people will certainly sustain it.* They see too clearly, and know too well, the incalculable evil, crime, pauperism, wretchedness, flowing from the Sabbath dram-shops, not to wish and resolve earnestly that they shall be put down.

We have good and wholesome laws, none better, and why are they not executed? And what *are* good laws, without the execution of them? We are told there is a law prescribing that no places shall be licensed to sell liquor on the Sabbath, but such as have accommodations both for man and beast; and on the ground of this law, our authorities themselves might be indicted, for licensing *contrary* to law. But in truth the Sabbath grogeries are all places for the beast alone, and not the man. There is not one of them but what might plead that it has accommodations both for man and beast, first for the man, to *make* him a beast, and second, for the beast when he is drunken. But indeed it is a shame that our wholesome laws are not executed. They are a mere bugbear if not. Of what use is a prison for rogues if the gates are left wide open? Or of what use are gates to a city, if there is no mode of fastening them, or if any enemy can carry them off in open day upon his shoulders?

If we have good laws, then the unpunished breach of them only makes the way for bad ones. Good laws, and a good public sentiment sustaining their execution, are our security; they are our dykes against evils that have swamped other governments. But these profanations of the Sabbath undermine the foundations of all law, and if permitted to go on, will be like those neglected crevasses on the Mississippi, through which a torrent of immoralities and evils will rush in that no laws can keep out, and that will sink the city. The four thousand grog-

geries will become ten thousand, and the Sabbath from being a dyke of heaven's mercy to keep out the tide of evil, will only itself be a sluiceway, broader and deeper than all the rest of the week together, to let every evil in. To such ruin things are tending if we do not awake.

Now a noble effort has been made, and is proceeding to put a stop to this enormous evil, and to carry our wholesome laws into execution. What is needed is a sustaining of this effort on the part of the people; and it must be sustained. We appeal to the good sense and true public spirit and love of order in all good men. We appeal to all classes. If you have any patriotism, we call upon you, by the love of your country, to stand here and make head against this evil. We call upon the young men, the pride and hope of our city, to take part in this conflict against the elements of ruin. Keep the Sabbath, and the Sabbath will keep you. Let the Sabbath go, and you will go with it. There is no possibility of avoiding swift destruction, if this talisman of salvation is torn from us. There is no guidance for opinion and no stay against the passions of the mob, and the power of a wide licentiousness and utter corruption, if you let God's Sabbath go. Throw yourselves forth in its defence. Keep it yourselves, and help others to keep it. Be temperate, and honor God's Sabbath, and you may conquer and redeem the world.

THE END.