

Since the week chronicled above a mission has been held in the parish. Crowded congregations have been assembling in the church—men who have never been at church before have been seen there, and seen Sunday after Sunday, too ; and better than all, men and women and elder lads and girls have been pressing into the kingdom of heaven, so that there has been a blessed *reaping* time. And though this reaping immediately resulted from the earnestness and power of the mission preachers and workers, yet it cannot be wrong to suppose that the steady work going on week by week and year by year has been the *sowing* time. The country clergyman, like his town brother, has to go forth bearing precious seed and often weeping as he goes ; but if he does it patiently and without fainting, he shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him ; or if not he, when he lies in the churchyard some successor shall reap where he has sown, and some day both together shall rejoice.

The word that goeth from the mouth of God
 Shall not return Him void, Himself hath said.
 Oh, be not weary in thy glorious toil !
 Thy work is done for God, and thou shalt reap
 All in due season if thou dost not faint.
 Away then, foolish fears ! pluck up thy heart ;
 For *doubtless* thou shalt come again with joy,
 And with thee priceless sheaves—redeemèd souls.

A COUNTRY PARSON.



ART. II.—THE SUNDAY OPENING MOVEMENT.

ALTHOUGH the Sunday opening of the People's Palace in East London is referred to in a recent article on "The Working of the People's Palace" in the *Nineteenth Century*, there are many important facts connected with the Sunday opening of the Palace which are not mentioned, and which ought to be carefully considered by all who are interested in the work of the Palace and kindred institutions.

It is regretted by many that an institution which is designed for the benefit of all classes of the working population should have been so managed as to have aroused the active opposition of a very large portion of the most thoughtful sections of the working classes in East London, and the active resistance of many of the clergy and Nonconformist ministers and other philanthropic workers who, for many years, have done great and good service in that part of the Metropolis.

The late Dean Stanley once said: "The observance of Sunday, more than any other religious question, touches the

heart and conscience of the whole community;" and the trustees of the People's Palace would have acted wisely if they had pursued their educational work on six days, and left the thorny question of Sunday opening in abeyance.

One result of the Sunday opening policy of the trustees has been to elicit a most important expression of working-class opinion against Sunday opening.

In 1888 a canvass was made, and no less than 20,240 persons of the industrial class, nearly all residing in the Tower Hamlets, signed protests against the Sunday opening of the library and news-room of the People's Palace, and formed themselves into a "People's League against the Sunday opening of the People's Palace." To ascertain the working-class character of the persons signing the protest, their occupations were taken and afterwards analyzed.

It was found that the 20,240 persons were engaged in no less than 1,257 different trades and occupations.

Not only have many thousands of the working people of East London expressed their disapproval of the Sunday opening policy of the trustees of the People's Palace, but the most active clergymen and ministers of East London, and more than 680 clergymen and ministers of London and its suburbs, have signed protests against the Sunday opening of the Palace.

A committee has been formed of hard-working clergymen and ministers and philanthropic laymen to resist the policy of the trustees. These gentlemen have not lightly taken up a stand against the trustees of the People's Palace. They have done so because they feel deeply that the policy of secularizing the Sunday, pursued by the trustees, is doing much to undermine the religious work in which they have been engaged for many years, and to lower the tone of public morals.

A very grave responsibility rests upon the trustees of the People's Palace. Their Sunday opening is in opposition to the expressed opinions of many eminent statesmen and divines. Not a few of our most distinguished men feel the deepest anxiety on account of the loosening of the restraints on Sunday labour by the various Sunday opening movements which are taking place.

Nearly one hundred years ago (1793) the National Assembly of France passed a law to abolish the Sabbath. They appointed one day's rest in ten. The result was that one of their most distinguished men said: "We have lost the Sabbath for ever." In September, 1889, the French Government, anxious to take some steps to win back "the lost Sabbath," called an International Congress to consider what could be done to secure the Sabbath for France. Delegates attended from England, Germany, the United States, Switzerland,

Belgium, Italy, Norway, Austria, Brazil and many other countries. M. Léon Say, the Minister of Commerce, presided, and forty-eight resolutions were passed, all in favour of the Sabbath day.

The proceedings of the French Congress ought to open the eyes of public men in England to the danger of breaking down the Sunday closing principle.

At that Congress some weighty opinions were expressed. M. Carnot, the President of France, thus expressed his view of the value of the day of rest :

The Sunday rest is an essentially democratic institution, a restorer of the force spent in the week's toil and anxieties, and more needed now, owing to the high pressure at which we live, than it ever was before. His father (continued M. Carnot) observed Sunday all his life. At home he and his wife set apart Sunday for charitable works.

Mr. Harrison, the President of the United States, wrote to M. Léon Say as follows :

Experience and observation have convinced me that all persons working either with the hands or mentally need rest, which Sunday observance alone can guarantee to them. Philanthropists and Christians can consider the question in all its different points of view, but whether we consider man as an animal or as a human being, we ought to unite together to secure for him the rest which body and mind equally claim in order to be maintained in the best possible conditions. Those who do not see the Divine command in the Bible cannot fail to see it in man himself.

Mr. Gladstone wrote to the President of the Congress as follows :

It seems to me unquestionable that the observance of Sunday rest has taken deep root both in the convictions and in the habits of the immense majority of my countrymen. If it appears to many of them a necessity of spiritual and Christian life, others not less numerous defend it with equal energy as a social necessity. The working class is extremely jealous of it, and is opposed not merely to its avowed abolition, but to whatever might indirectly tend to that result. Personally, I have always endeavoured, as far as circumstances have allowed, to exercise this privilege ; and now, nearly at the end of a laborious public career of nearly fifty-seven years, I attribute in great part to that cause the prolongation of my life, and the preservation of the faculties I may still possess. As regards the masses, the question is still more important ; it is the popular question *par excellence*.

Acting up to his conviction, Mr. Gladstone, when asked in Paris on Sunday, September 8, 1889, to receive a deputation of Armenians, declined to do so. Why? Because if he had received one deputation he would have been asked to receive others, and make speeches to them, and this would have deprived him of Sunday rest. The case is exactly the same with public libraries, reading and concert-rooms, and museums. If you open these places on Sundays, you must open others, and then Sunday labour takes the place of Sunday rest, and a wrong is inflicted on the workers.

The policy of opening the People's Palace on Sundays for amusements by concerts, newspaper and novel-reading, is also in direct opposition to the views unanimously expressed at the Pan-Anglican Conference of 145 Bishops from all parts of the world held at Lambeth Palace in July, 1888.

The resolutions passed at that Conference were as follows :

1. That the principle of the religious observance of one day in seven is of Divine and primeval obligation, and was afterwards embodied in the fourth commandment.

2. That from the time of our Lord's resurrection the first day of the week was observed as a day of sacred joy by Christians, and was ere long adopted by the Church as the Christian Sabbath, or the "Lord's Day."¹

3. That the observance of the Lord's Day as a day of rest, of worship, and of religious teaching has been a priceless blessing in all Christian lands in which it has been maintained.

4. That the growing license in its observance threatens a grave change in its sacred and beneficent character.

5. That especially the increasing practice on the part of the wealthy and leisurely classes of making the day a day of secular amusement is most strongly to be deprecated.

6. That the most careful regard should be had to the danger of any encroachment upon the rest which on this day is the right of servants as well as their masters, and of the working classes as well as their employers.

These resolutions, representing as they do the unanimous opinions of the recognised leaders of the Anglican Church throughout the world, should have much influence with the clergy and responsible public bodies.

It is sometimes urged that several clergymen are in favour of the Sunday opening of the People's Palace. This may be true, but respecting such Dr. Ryle, the Bishop of Liverpool, writes as follows :

How any clergyman holding office in the Church of England and reading the Fourth Commandment every Sunday to his congregation can lend his aid to movements which must infallibly prevent the Sabbath being kept holy, if they succeed, is one of those mysteries of the nineteenth century which pass my understanding. I am amazed, pained, troubled, grieved, and astounded. The good that the best clergyman does at his very best in a fallen world is small ; but he that expects to do good by introducing a Continental Sunday into his parish, exhibits in my judgment great ignorance of human nature. He is cutting off his right hand and destroying his own usefulness. Whatever may be the bad habits of the working classes in large parishes, they will never be cured by organizing modes of breaking the fourth commandment. We should call that statesman a poor lawgiver who sanctioned petty larceny in order to prevent burglary ; and I call that clergyman an unwise man who, in

¹ For an able, clear and exhaustive exposition of the teachings of God's Word about the Sabbath, and the observance of the Lord's Day by the early Christian Church, I would call the attention of my readers to three admirable articles on "The Law of the Sabbath," by the Rev. Alfred Pearson, M.A., Incumbent of St. Margaret's, Brighton, in the December, 1889, and February and April, 1890, numbers of *THE CHURCHMAN*.

order to stop drunkenness and its concomitants, is prepared to throw overboard the Sabbath Day. Surely, to sacrifice one commandment in order to prevent the breach of another is neither Christianity nor common-sense. It is simply "doing evil that good may come."

The argument urged that the Palace is opened as a counter-attraction to the public-house is utterly unsound. The people who lounge in the public-house on Sundays are not the people who go to the Palace on Sundays. A large number of the Palace Sunday visitors have been observed to wear gloves and tall hats. These are not public-house loungers.

Mr. Broadhurst, M.P., well disposed of this argument from his seat in Parliament on May 19, 1882, when, in opposition to the Sunday opening of museums, he said :

You talk of this motion relieving the public-house of its customers on a Sunday. I will ask my honourable friend if he is prepared to say that the skilled artisans of this country—that the respectable workpeople of this country—spend their Sundays in public-houses? I am certain he is not prepared to say so. Who are the poor, neglected creatures with whom our public-houses are filled on Sundays, if they are filled? They are those who are the most unfortunate of my class—the least skilled, and, therefore, the worst paid, and consequently the worst housed amongst our population. But surely you will not attempt to persuade this House to believe that this class of people, who loiter around the doors of a public-house during the hours that they cannot get admittance inside, are the people who are thirsting to worship your exhibitions of the fine arts miles from their homes? Will you suggest that these are the class of people who would rush in their teeming thousands to the British Museum to make scientific and historical examinations of the mummies and other curiosities that crowd the galleries, and to worship at the feet of the works of the old masters in the National Galleries? I am positive you will not advance such extraordinary arguments in its favour.

As to the danger of "de-Christianizing" the Sunday by the Sunday opening of places of amusement, Lord Halsbury, the Lord High Chancellor of England, expressed the conviction of many thoughtful men at a large meeting of the working classes in Exeter Hall on May 19, 1887, when he spoke as follows :

There were two dangers which pressed much upon his mind—the first was that insidious attack upon the Sabbath which consisted in a professed care for it. It sounded very plausible, and he had heard many plausible speeches made about it : people talked about "hard-worked sons of toil," and argued that art was so elevating, and, therefore, these poor people ought to have an opportunity on Sunday of inspecting works of art. Yes, Greece and Rome had taught us what art elevated people to. That sophistical plea for art and amusement on the Sunday was another mode of de-Christianizing the Sunday. And then when persons talked about the relief of toil by these means, he had a strong suspicion that if the facts were inquired into it would be found that hard-worked people did not, after all, want to go long distances to look at pictures ; they wanted quiet rest and that collection round the family hearth which to many was only possible on Sunday. It was true that there did exist a feverish desire for amusement, which sometimes passed for a desire for

art; but we should not surely on that account sanction what was only another scheme for de-Christianizing the Sunday.

Mr. Robert Coningsby, a well-known working-class writer, has also clearly expressed in the artisans' reports the truth as to the danger of breaking down the Sunday closing principle as follows:

The advocates for the Sunday opening of museums would do well to take warning from what is to be seen across the Channel, where every year sees the fall of some barrier between the poor man and his Sunday rest. It is all very well to plead for the refinement of the people, but in a country like ours, where competition is so strong, and people are so eager to make money, everything which has a tendency to make Sunday more like other days of the week helps to bring on the time when capitalists will discover that it is against the laws of political economy to keep mills empty and machinery standing idle during one whole seventh of the week. As for the rest which is obtained by exploring museums and studying pictures, I am quite certain that an employer would get more work on Monday out of a man who had spent the day before in a factory than from the one who had been all the Sunday instructing himself and improving his mind—an occupation which most people find very tiresome.

Mr. S. Smiles, the eminent author, in his work "The Huguenots," thus warns thoughtful men of the danger of breaking down the Sunday closing principle:

What the so-called friends of the working classes are aiming at in England has already been effected in France. The public museums and galleries are open on Sundays, but you look for the working people there in vain. They are at work in the factories, whose chimneys are smoking as usual, or building houses, or working in the fields, or they are engaged in the various departments of labour. The Government works all go on as usual on Sundays. The railway trains run precisely as on week-days. In short, the Sunday is secularized or regarded but as a partial holiday: As you pass through the country on Sundays you see the people toiling in the fields. Their continuous devotion to bodily labour without a seventh day's rest cannot fail to exercise a deteriorating effect upon their physical as well as their moral condition, and this we believe it is which gives to the men—and especially to the women of the country—the look of a prematurely old and over-worked race.

Public opinion, as expressed by the votes of the House of Commons, has always been strongly against the Sunday opening of public institutions, such as museums, etc. Since 1855 the following votes have been given after debates on the Sunday opening of museums in the House of Commons:

	For Sunday Opening.	Against Sunday Opening.
1855	48	237
1856	48	376
1874	70	273
1877	87	229
1882	83	208

The latest expression of public opinion on this question took place in the Common Council of London on January 30 last,

when a proposal to open the Guildhall Library and Museum on Sundays was defeated by 83 votes against 43. At the previous division and debate on the same subject in January, 1888, the votes were 54 against, and 50 for, Sunday opening. These figures show that so far as public opinion is expressed by the Common Council, the Sunday opening proposals have received an important check. At the Trades Union Congresses, out of four discussions on the Sunday opening of museums, three have had majorities of votes against Sunday opening.

The question of Sunday labour in connection with the opening of the People's Palace, concerts, public libraries, news-rooms, museums and galleries is a most serious one. At the People's Palace fourteen persons are paid to work on Sundays, and there are a considerable number of volunteer workers. At the Manchester public libraries about thirty persons work from 2 till 9 p.m. on Sundays.

The labour at present at the various amusement and recreation places open on Sundays may not be great, but it is growing larger year by year. It was stated in the *Daily News* of December 16, 1887, that there are 500,000 persons employed in the amusement industry, 150,000 of whom are in London. This vast army of workers now substantially rests on Sundays; but if trustees and other governing bodies open public libraries, museums, news-rooms, concerts, etc., on Sundays, and employ the caretakers and performers, the example of Sunday opening will soon spread, and tend to bring the amusement industry into full operation on Sunday as on the Continent.

If it be right and beneficial to conduct Sunday concerts and organ recitals for the amusement of the people in the Queen's Hall of the People's Palace, it cannot be wrong to have similar entertainments in the Albert Hall, St. James's Hall, or in every schoolroom in every parish throughout the country. If it be desirable to open the news-room and public library of the People's Palace on Sundays, it cannot be undesirable to open similar news-rooms and libraries all over the country. If fourteen persons may be legitimately employed on Sundays for money in the People's Palace to conduct concerts, news-rooms and libraries, 14,000 persons may be employed in a similar way at other places.

If it be right to open concerts on Sundays, it surely cannot be wrong to open exhibitions, museums and galleries. If the People's Palace may be opened for Sunday recreations and amusement, why not the Crystal Palace? Why not the Alexandra Palace? Why not every innocent place of amusement? Why not operas as well as concerts? Is it right to go to the People's Palace concerts, but wrong to go to concerts at the Crystal Palace on Sundays? The trustees call their enter-

tainments "sacred concerts," but the tunes and music of secular pieces are just as innocent and sweet as the music and tunes of sacred pieces, and if the concerts are sacred, certainly the comic and sensational Sunday newspapers and novels in the reading-room cannot be called sacred. The term "sacred" will only be used until the public conscience becomes blunted, then secular concerts and exhibitions and amusement may come in with a rush.

In the article by Sir E. H. Currie in the *Nineteenth Century*, it is stated that "the dances organized among the students and members of the People's Palace have been successful from every point of view, and that as many as 1,200 East-End young men and women have stood up to dance at one time in the great Queen's Hall," and in an article from the *People's Palace Journal* (the official organ of the trustees) of January 11, 1888, the following significant eulogium of dancing appeared :

Three hundred years ago there was no country whose people were more addicted to dancing than the English. They danced at every church or village festival, at Christmas, Shrovetide, Easter and Whitsuntide, at the village fair, the Church ale, the wakes, and the harvest-homes, at the New Year, on Plough Monday, and on the first of May. They danced round the May-pole, and they danced round the bonfire. In the city of London the 'prentices and the girls danced in the streets, after the shops were closed, to the music of the pipe and tabor. At the Guilds feasts they went to church in the morning, and after church they feasted, and after the feast they danced. The dancing-room, properly conducted, is above all things a school of good manners ; rude and rough behaviour cannot enter there ; nothing evil of any kind can be carried on under the electric light of a great hall. Let the English folk have their dancing restored to them. Of the recreation of the future it will form the principal and the most delightful part. There is little fear that the people, when they are once permitted and encouraged to dance again, will ever suffer the ballroom to be turned into a scene of orgy and riot. There must be a school of dancing as well as of carpentry. Those who have witnessed the experiment tried at the Palace during the last week may indeed be sanguine for the future.

If dancing is such a pure and delightful recreation, and if the dancing after "church in the morning" of three hundred years ago is to be "restored," may we not ere long see the People's Palace opened on Sundays for dances as well as concerts? Is it right to go to news-rooms and concerts on Sundays, and wrong to dance on Sundays?

The advocates for the opening of places of amusement on Sundays are trying a dangerous experiment. "They are on a slippery inclined plane with no foothold. Where is the *line* to be drawn?" Who is to decide what amusements and recreations are right, lawful, and beneficial on Sundays and what are wrong? These questions cannot be answered. A line cannot be drawn. The only safe course is to close our places of amuse-

ment and public institutions as we close our places of business, and to discourage every kind of Sunday opening which involves the Sunday labour of others, and which tends to break down the Sunday-closing principle, or which is inconsistent with the sacred duties of the day of holy rest.

With the Saturday half-holiday almost universal ; with the shortened hours of labour, when millions of our people leave their daily work at five, six and seven o'clock in the evening ; with our museums and galleries, concert-rooms, public libraries, and reading-rooms lighted with electricity, and opened till ten or eleven at night on week days ; with our beautiful parks in all parts of London open as public thoroughfares on Sundays and on week-days ; with books and papers so cheap that the poorest can become owners of works of every description for a few pence ; with the daily increasing privileges of the toiling classes ; with their improved homes springing up in all directions ; with cheap education on six days, with the marvellously cheap excursions from Saturday to Monday to seaside resorts, and the summer holidays and Bank holidays enjoyed by all sections of the people—surely with all these and many other advantages on week-days there can be no need to trespass on the day of rest with concerts, news-rooms, museums, or exhibitions. Quiet bodily and mental rest, quiet walks, quiet reading at home, quiet intercourse with the wife and children, with brothers and sisters, quiet worship in the house of God, the quiet study of the Book of God—these are the legitimate, the beneficial and proper duties and recreations of the day of holy rest ; and those who are breaking down the Sunday closing principle for Sunday amusements, those who are rooting up the defences which protect the Sunday as a day of national rest, those who are blunting the national conscience as to the religious character and duties of the Sunday, are inflicting an incalculable injury on one of the most blessed privileges which our people at present enjoy, and are helping to change the Lord's Day into a day of toil and injurious excitement.

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ART III.—THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE CRITICS.

THE following paper does not profess to bring before our readers the technical and more abstruse features of the controversy which has gathered during the past few years around the Old Testament Scriptures. Such a disquisition is