

**Shall we Exchange our American Sabbath for a German Sunday?**

FROM A SERMON BY THE REV. HOMER PATTERSON, D.D., OF BROOKLYN, CALIFORNIA.

This proposal has not only been made, but is actually on a large scale carried into practice in our city every Sabbath. The makers of liquor and the makers of music combine their energies, and barrels of beer and brass bands unite to promote the worship of Bacchus and to disturb the worship of God, in all our suburbs during the day; and as night begins to throw her veil over the face of blushing heaven, the gas-lights reveal to the reporters glimpses of shameful indecencies which would not be tolerated for an hour in Paris or Vienna. This is the specimen of the German and French Sunday revelry presented to us in exchange for our American Sabbath.

We are thus absolved from the duty of arguing the weakness of music to control the passions of mankind, or of demonstrating by historic examples that its sweetest strains have as often enlivened the orgies of Bacchus as solemnized the worship of God; and that music is just whatever men make of it, a blessing or a curse. We have seen here how it is prostituted by the drunkard-makers as a barmaid to sell their beer, and by harlots to attract their customers. We cannot separate this disgraceful revelry into its component parts; it is all one combined partnership in vice. The beer bewilders the music, and the Sabbath revelers at once insult God, disturb their neighbors and degrade themselves.

What do the American people think of the German Sunday? The very first impression this exhibition makes upon every beholder is, that it is at variance with the existing institutions of this country, that it is foreign and anti-American.

Our American Sabbath is the most distinctive social institution of our Republic; the day for the public education of our people in their duties to God and each other; a day regarded as sacred for that purpose by the founders of our commonwealth, by the laws of our States, by the decisions of our Courts, and by the proclamations and examples of our Chief Magistrates. It is a national institution, believed to be essential to the permanency of our republican liberties. We are now asked to remove the fence of sacred authority which has so long protected it, and to lend our aid to a number of foreigners, who propose to erect over its ruins a temple of pleasure, such as the despots of Europe erect for their slaves, where they may drink and dance, and forget the chains which bind them in helpless slavery.

The Sabbath is the oldest of our American institutions. The planting of this free Republic was preceded by an act of homage to the Sabbath and to the God of the Sabbath, which can never be forgotten by the people of America.

In every one of the United States, save Louisiana, founded by French Papists, the Sabbath has been recognized as a day of sacred rest. While no compulsory religious duties are prescribed, the laws forbid common labor and noisy revelry on that day, as infringing the public peace and right to rest guaranteed to man and beast of our Creator. The laws of the State forbid all common labor, in running steamboats and railroads, selling liquor and refreshments, and all that noisy revelry of bands and processions, disturbing worshipping assemblies, which form prominent features of Sabbath revelry. The constitutionality of the Sabbath law has been again and again tested in the Supreme Courts of the various States, and affirmed through a long train of decisions. The Sabbath is an American institution.

But our principal objection to this inauguration of Sunday revelry is,

that it is utterly ungodly and profane, degrading to the people, and so destructive to our Republic. It directly assails and abolishes the worship of God, so far as its attendants are concerned; and it degrades the thousands engaged in ministering to the pleasures and vices of the revelers into seven-day drudges, destitute of manhood and character. The Sabbath, God's day of rest and worship, for the elevation of the people, is thus perverted into Satan's Sabbath of sensuality, drunkenness and lewdness.

That high moral character, which is the truest and most endearing glory of nations, bears a close connection and relationship with the cultivation of religion and the observance of the Sabbath. Where the Sabbath is spent as a day of revelry, the hard working classes are deprived of their only opportunity of worship and instruction, and speedily degenerate into mere animals, ignorant of God, and acknowledging no restraints of conscience—the dangerous classes of European cities. The middle and higher classes also, seduced by these spectacles from the house of God, lose the habit of worship, and infidelity and atheism grow rankly over the ruined people. Justice McLean, of the Supreme Court, stated an historical truth which admits of no exceptions when he said, "When there is no Christian Sabbath there is no Christian morality; and without this free government can not be long maintained."

Sabbath observance is closely connected with morality. The statistics of public morals show that the Sabbath-breaking countries are most licentious, and the Sabbath-keeping countries the most moral.

A people assembling from Sabbath to Sabbath in the sanctuary to learn the lofty lessons of their relation to the God of heaven as their common Father, and of the equal obligation of his law upon all ranks and degrees of men, and, by this knowledge of the truth, made free from the bondage of the fear of man, can not be indefinitely held in slavery. With a true instinct, the despot, King James, published his "Book of Sports," commanding fencing, archery, games, and dances on the Sabbath, well knowing that could he succeed in debauching the people of England and Scotland into French revelry, he would have no trouble in keeping them under French despotism. The English and Scottish people rejected the despot and his Sunday sports, and asserted their Sabbath and their liberty, while France and Germany retain their Sunday festivals, their standing armies, their spies, their passports, and Bismarck.

The connection of the Sabbath with liberty is fundamental. Ignorance and vice among the people are the conditions for the existence of despotism; intelligence and morality are the indispensable conditions of liberty. But popular intelligence demands education; not merely the ability to write, but the time and inclination to read and write something useful and elevating. The Sabbath is the workman's only school-day. All the week he must toil for his daily bread and that of his children. At night he is too wearied to read or study serious subjects. The blessed Sabbath brings him time to think on the most elevating themes—the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man; the equality of all men before God; the universal obligation of God's moral law alike in prince and peasant; the common salvation of all mankind through Christ; that judgment seat of God, who is no respecter of persons, before which master and servant, ruler and subject, must soon appear to give an account of the deeds done in the body, and the coming of our Lord Jesus in the clouds of heaven, with

his mighty angels and risen saints, to abolish every organization of transgressors, and establish his everlasting kingdom of love, and righteousness, and peace on earth. Men educated in these truths cannot become slaves of despots, but have ever been free.

On the other hand, let the working people spend their Sabbaths and their wages in revelry, and return on Monday to the toils of the week as ignorant of their rights and as unfit for their duties as they were, and let their lives be spent in alternate drudgery and revelry, and they become the dupes of demagogues, who flatter their pride, and abuse their ignorance, and make them the tools of their factious designs. Party strife speedily becomes enraged to bloodshedding, and the republic becomes a Mexico of perpetual revolutions; until wearied of the strife, and longing for peace, the people cast themselves at the feet of any military dictator able to protect them from the drunken mob.

The only considerable free State in Europe to-day is Britain—the only nation where the voices of the people controls the action of the government, and where the government is administered with some measure of regard for the welfare of the people, and where the general prosperity and industry rest on so broad a basis as to give promise of stability. The northern extremity of Great Britain, distinguished by a more rigorous climate, a less productive soil, and a more scanty population than the southern, has distinguished itself beyond all the rest of the world for the intelligence and enterprise of its sons. The names of Mackenzie and Frazier mark the rivers of our continent, while Livingstone has explored the hitherto inaccessible interior of Africa; and wherever a steam engine propels a mill or an ocean steamship, the name of James Watt is commemorated as one of Scotland's benefactors to the civilized world. And Scotland has been distinguished above all nations for its sacred Sabbaths. Amidst the overthrow of kingdoms, and the wreck of nationalities, England bravely defied the despot who thought to enslave the youth of Europe by the conscription of France, and the slaughter of three million of the people of Europe. By her indomitable energy and wise counsels, no less than by the vast resources of her industrious people, Britain succeeded in combining the powers of Europe, and delivering mankind from Napoleonism on the field of Waterloo; and she has since been regarded as one of the orbiters of the destiny of the world. Need I tell you that this England is a Sabbath-keeping nation? Count de Montalembert declares his astonishment at beholding all the vast machinery of England's commerce—her docks and warehouses, and shops and streets—ceasing from labor on the Sunday, as the most remarkable phenomenon which the Continental traveler witnesses, and traces the superior prosperity and peacefulness of England to the habits of order and religion thus engendered.

It is unnecessary to dilate on the prosperity of our own land, sufficiently attested by the resort of hundreds of thousands, of the people of Europe and Asia to our shores; nor on the moral and political influence of this young republic, which makes the heart of the oppressed of every clime exult at the sight of the American flag, and which has exalted the ministers of American commerce, even in the most remote cities of Asia, into protectors and deliverers of the victims of tyranny. But there is in this an argument of great importance, to assert emphatically the religious character of our country, as the natural and historical basis of our nation's greatness, and her respect for the Sabbath, as both the expression of American religion and the grand in-