

### Sunday Rest.

THERE are two solid grounds on which Sunday laws rest: one, the right of the prevailing religion of the country (be it Jewish, Christian, or Pagan) to have its day of worship free from disturbance; and the other, the right of every man to an equal share in a rest-day from toil.

As regards the first, if this country were a Jewish country the Jewish worship on Saturday should be peculiarly protected from molestation. If it were a Mohammedan country, the Friday should be in like manner protected. This is simple common sense applied to things as they are, and no action of doctrinaire theory. Where there is a conflict of sacred days, as among Jew, Christian, and Mohammedan, all cannot be protected, and hence the majority must determine the question. This certainly distinguishes the sacred day, but does no harm to those who do not count it sacred. It only obliges them to be courteous. The inequality in the matter is only such as in some things must obtain among the freest people.

As regards the second ground: physiologists, physicians, statisticians, and sensible observers in general, have agreed that man's body and mind need a complete rest at an interval of about seven days. But man will not take that rest from labor unless he is obliged by law to do so. His greed for gain will make him ruin health in his own case, or (worse still) make him force his employes to ruin theirs by continuous work. The law, therefore, must make and enforce a rest-day. But what day shall it take? Again: common sense says, "Take the day which the mass of the community, from religious reasons, already regard as a rest-day." So the civil law, providing for men's physical well-being, appoints and enforces a rest-day from labor, which is the same day on which the great Christian community worship, and in which the same law, for other reasons, protects them in worship.

There is the whole of the Sunday question in a nutshell. There is no compelling men to be religious, no supporting a state church, no puritanical blue-law. The Jew, or Mohammedan, or Pagan simply must not make a boisterous demonstration, such as a noisy parade, on Sunday. Why? Because the vast majority of the people see fit to worship on that day. The Jew, or Mohammedan, or Pagan must not keep open shop that day. Why? Because the people have decreed a rest-day from labor once a week to help humanity, and that is the day.

The only objection that has any color in it is that the Jew then must keep two rest-days in the week, and hence is at a disadvantage with his neighbor. Well, as we have already said, in the most equal administrations, there must, in the nature of things, be some inequality. Laws, for example, require a notice of "danger" to be put up in dangerous places in the city; but, alas! blind men cannot read the notices. The laws are unequal to the blind man. They have to be. So here the Jew's conscience tells him to keep from working Saturday. The law tells him to keep from working Sunday. It is a pity; but it cannot be helped. The other alternative would be "no rest-day," and that would be destructive to the whole community. We must all bear some burdens for the public good.

Our American liberties are largely connected with the weekly day of rest. This day has given the people time to think, and read, and enjoy family life, and without it we should have become an ignorant, brutish, machine-people, like the low peasantry of Continental Europe. Take away this rest-day, and you undermine our high moral and educational condition as a people. You turn us into a nation of mere "workies." The cry of religious oppression, as against Sunday observance, is a device of the enemy. It is but the voice of soulless corporations, and of the proprietors of drinking-saloons and other demoralizing places, who wish to make their great gains on Sunday, and care nothing for the welfare and happiness of the people. They are the oppressors, and the advocates of a day of rest are the staunch supporters of a true freedom.

America has three bulwarks of liberty—a free ballot, a free school, and a free Sunday, and neither domestic treachery nor foreign impudence should be permitted to break them down.

### Stealing a Minister.

THE great deep of Protestant ecclesiasticism is often vexed by no small tempest of talk about the relations of vacant churches to settled pastors. It frequently happens that a clergyman, supposed to be happily and permanently located, is called away from his work to a new field of labor, amid loud complaints of the injury done to the church left pastorless. Even when a decorous silence is maintained before the public, there is often not a little suppressed resentment; and the opinion that no church has a right to disturb a settled pastor by calling him into its service finds angry expression. The act is denounced as a species of larceny, and laws to punish the crime of stealing a minister are feelingly invoked. Several flagrant cases of this sort have recently occurred, arousing unwonted ire in the breasts of staid parishioners, and no week passes that does not witness griefs of this nature in some part of the land. The ethics of this relation deserve, therefore, a little careful study. It is a subject in which good Methodists are supposed to have no interest.

Without doubt it is a hardship that a church should be deprived, for any reason, of the services of a teacher to whom it has become attached, and who seems to be contented and successful in his work. The wish to be protected against such a loss is one which the members of a church naturally entertain. But the question has two sides, and the irate church whose pulpit has just been emptied is not apt to see more than one of them. The welfare of the minister, as well as of the church, must be considered. Now, it is unquestionable that the welfare of the minister sometimes requires him to change his field of labor. A life-long pastorate may be the ideal, but it is impossible, in many cases, to realize it. A change is sometimes demanded, not chiefly for an increase of salary, but for relief from burdens of labor and care that have grown intolerable, or to preserve health and power of work. In these exacting times, when the pulpit must grapple with so many great questions, and when the condition of power is wide and constant study, this necessity frequently occurs. There are ministers who,



by dint of tough constitutions, and by the allowance of liberal and frequent vacations, continue to do severe and thorough work in the same field for a long time; but there are many whose health is less firm and whose congregations are less liberal.

Another fact to be considered is that ministers who, for any reason, are out of service, are not generally wanted. The vacant pulpits do not affect the unemployed parsons. The church that has just been raging about the "stealing" of its own minister will pass by scores of clergymen who are seeking places, and fix its choice on some pastor whose hands are full of work. Among the unemployed clergymen capable and excellent men may often be found; but no fact is more familiar to those who are acquainted with ecclesiastical affairs than that the unemployed clergyman, whatever may be his merits, is at a great disadvantage in seeking a parish. This is a state of things for which the ministers are not responsible; the churches themselves have established this rule, by which it has generally come to be understood that a minister who wants a place is a minister whom no place wants.

It is not, therefore, prudent for the minister to resign his charge, even when he feels that a change is imperative. Even if he were known to be seeking a place, the committees of supply would steel their hearts against him. His only hope is in quietly staying where he is, and doing his work as well as he can. Peradventure some vacant church may spy him out and come to his relief.

Churches are not always so considerate and generous as they ought to be in their treatment of their ministers. The ministers are willing to work, and the churches are willing to let them. The harder they work the heavier are the burdens laid on them. The contracts, on the part of the churches, are not scrupulously kept; and if the minister is good-natured and does not complain, it is assumed that there is no reason for complaint. Probably, if he should complain, nothing would be done; he thinks it wiser, therefore, to go on with his work and wait until relief shall come to him from some other quarter.

If, therefore, it should be established as a rule that vacant churches must make no overtures to settled ministers, it would go hard with scores of overworked men who ought to find respite in a change of labor. The churches have already made it difficult for a minister without charge to gain employment; if they could create a sentiment which would prevent a settled minister from receiving a call, the ministers would be left in an embarrassing position. The attempt to create such a sentiment is an attempt to form a kind of ecclesiastical trades-union, under which ministers shall be wholly at the mercy of the churches. It is not likely to succeed, but those who are calling for it ought to be aware of the nature of the demand which they are making.

The truth is that the labor market ought to be as free in the clerical profession as in any other business, and attempts to restrict the freedom of movement in this calling are not in the interests of justice and fair play. Granted that there ought to be something other than a business relation between pastor and people; it still remains true that that higher relation must in no wise contravene those principles of justice and freedom on which all contracts are based.

A vacant church has a right to ask any settled pastor whether he desires to change his field of labor. If he does not wish to change he will say so, and no harm will be done. Such a negative reply is often made, even when a great increase of salary is offered. The minister who can be toled away by a bigger salary—with whom the salary is the paramount consideration—is not worth getting or keeping. The church is the gainer that loses him. Doubtless there are such clergymen, but they are not all such: there is no other class of men with whom pecuniary considerations have so little influence. The church whose minister is worth keeping ought to be willing, therefore, that any committee of supply should have free access to him. If the church has confidence enough in its pastor's judgment and integrity to desire his services as a religious teacher, it must believe that he will not encourage any such approaches, unless it is necessary, for some reason, that he should seek another field. And when, for any good reason, such a change becomes necessary, the church should put no obstacle in his way.

The estimate of the ministerial character which is implied in all this clamor of the injured churches, is the reverse of flattering. It seems to be assumed that he is not a free and responsible being; that he is the victim or the dupe of those who have beguiled him away. "It is mean to steal a sheep; but meaner to steal a shepherd," is a common saying of those who thus complain. The saying uncovers the fallacy of the whole case. A sheep can be stolen, because it is a chattel; but a shepherd cannot. The shepherd makes his own contracts, in this country, and so does the minister. His place of labor is not likely to be changed without his own free choice.

Another similitude commonly quoted in such cases is equally lacking in pertinence. The church that calls a settled minister is said to be guilty of an act precisely like that of the woman who hires your cook out of your kitchen. But if there is any wrong in this case, it is in the fact that your cook is ignorant and easily imposed upon; that the woman who has coaxed her away offers her no better place, and thus injures you without benefiting your servant. If the servant is able to judge for herself, and knows that she is improving her condition by the change, what right have you to stand in the way of her going, or to complain of another for giving her what you withheld? This kind of outcry is never heard concerning any class of employes save those who are assumed to be unable to choose wisely for themselves. The cashier of a bank, the superintendent of a railroad, is called from one place to another, and nobody ever thinks of questioning his right to go, or the right of another employer to offer him employment. There seems to be no good reason why the minister should not be credited with as much judgment, and allowed as much liberty, as is granted to a bank cashier or a railroad superintendent.

There seems, then, to be no other method for a church to pursue, if it wishes to keep its minister, than that which every employer must pursue who wishes to retain a valued servant. The church must keep its part of the contract, must see that its minister is not overworked, must cooperate with him in all possible ways, must show him that his labors are



appreciated and that his welfare is fairly considered. If, after the church has done all this, the minister goes away, common sense will bring the church to one of two conclusions: it will either bow to the providential decree that has removed a faithful teacher, or it will thank God that it is rid of a trifler.

#### Our Printers.

OUR readers will have noticed that the imprint of Francis Hart & Co., as printers of THE CENTURY MAGAZINE and ST. NICHOLAS, has recently given way to that of Theo. L. De Vinne & Co. This is a change in name, but not entirely a change in fact. Since the death of Mr. Hart, Mr. De Vinne has for years carried on the business of "the firm" under the old style. Mr. De Vinne has an individual reputation as the author of a work entitled "The Invention of Printing," and of various essays in this and other periodicals on the history and art of printing. It is known to many, moreover, and should be known to all, that it is mainly to Mr. De Vinne that credit is

due for the high reputation of American printing of wood-cuts. The refinement to which wood-engraving has been carried in America would have come to naught if the printing of the wood-cuts—the rapid steam-printing required by the periodicals—had not kept pace with the advance in wood-engraving. This corresponding excellence of printing has not been reached without a long and difficult struggle. An interesting chapter might indeed be made of the experiments and devices resorted to during many years, of endeavors and accomplishments requiring, no one can imagine how much intelligence, patience, forbearance,—how much knowledge, and how many of the Christian virtues as well. Mr. De Vinne has given some points of this history himself in his articles on "The Growth of Wood-Cut Printing," in this magazine for April and May, 1880; but he has not told how much should be placed to the credit of his own individual account. In the name of the readers of THE CENTURY (who have good reason to be interested in the fortunes of the new firm), we wish long life and prosperity to "our printers."

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## LITERATURE.

### Lounsbury's "James Fenimore Cooper."\*

PROFESSOR LOUNSBURY'S life of Cooper is, so far, the most important contribution to this series. The lives of Irving and Thoreau had already been written, so that the work of their biographers consisted largely in selection and condensation; while Noah Webster and George Ripley occupy hardly any position in the history of American literature, as distinguished from scholarship and journalism. Cooper remains the most popular of all native writers of fiction; and, with the possible exception of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and portions of the writings of Irving and Longfellow, his books are still more universally read than those of any American author whatever. A generation has passed since his death, and yet this is the first biography of him, if we except the slight and inaccurate sketches of his life in cyclopedias and periodicals, and Bryant's funeral oration delivered at New York, in 1852.

"When Cooper lay on his death-bed," says Professor Lounsbury in his prefatory note, "he enjoined his family to permit no authorized account of his life to be prepared. \* \* \* It is a necessary result of this dying injunction that the direct and authoritative sources of information contained in family papers are closed to the biographer." The men of Cooper's own age, who might have furnished personal reminiscences, are long since dead. Hardly anything in the shape of diaries or private correspondence is obtainable.

Such material as exists is widely scattered, and is mainly in the form of references in contemporary newspapers, or in the prefaces and introductions to the novelist's own books. The biographer was, therefore, driven to take the line of Cooper's public career, and especially of his career as an author. This is, however, the line which has been adopted in all the lives of the present series, and is perhaps the one which Professor Lounsbury might have deliberately chosen as appropriate to the design of the series, even had matter been at hand sufficient to furnish forth a more personal and private memoir.

In one respect the biographer has been fortunate in his subject. Cooper was a man who fairly bristled with characteristics. His views were strong, and his expression of them decided. His prejudices were many and frequently diverting. His walk was upon the toes of his contemporaries, and of the British and American public, and loud were the screams which attended his progress. Perhaps no other writer except Byron has been at once so eagerly read and so shrilly cursed by his own countrymen. One of the most striking episodes in his life was the war which he waged for years against the leading Whig newspapers of the State of New York, assailing them one after another with libel suits, which in nearly every instance he carried to a triumphant conclusion, conducting his own cases and securing damages varying from fifty to four hundred dollars. The chapters devoted to these conflicts are written with force and humor, and form a dramatic narrative. The reader may doubt whether Cooper's

\* James Fenimore Cooper. By Thomas R. Lounsbury. [American Men of Letters Series.] Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.