

THE SUNDAY QUESTION.

THIS, like all other questions, has its extremes. On the one hand stands the old, long-faced, sour-visaged puritan, advocating his "Blue Laws" as the best and only method of governing the Sabbath. In his opinion Sunday is to be exclusively a day of worship. Any secular pleasure or recreation on that day is desecration. When not worshipping, one should be either meditating or reading Scriptural books. Everything must be subdued and quiet. Some even claim that it is sinful to ride to church in any kind of conveyance. He is entirely uncompromising in his belief, and will not hear to any more liberal ideas.

On the other extreme stands the advocate of the doctrine of the Personal Liberty league. His idea is, that Sunday is to be a sort of holiday. It is to differ from the other days of the week only, in the fact that he is not to attend to his usual occupation on that day, unless he so desires. The stores, saloons, theaters, etc., are all to be open, and it is to be a day of pleasure and dissipation, more than anything else. He is to have upon him no religious restraint whatever. This idea is somewhat new to Americans, the great majority of whom have been accustomed to the very strict method of our early pilgrim fathers. The Personal Liberty League is composed principally of foreigners. They think the civil and religious liberty of our country entitles them to observe the Sabbath exactly as they see fit. Much as we are opposed to the "Blue Laws," we prefer them to the chaos which these outcasts of Europe seek to bring upon us.

These are the extremes, and a middle ground is pretty hard to strike. A more liberal view should be taken, however, than that held by the puritans, by the people of this country, and a more liberal mode of observing the Sunday be adopted. The old manner of observance must be slightly relaxed. Sunday was never intended

to be the day of punishment which the "Blue Laws" make it. It is against the entire nature of mortals to sit in a hard pew for two hours, twice and often three times a day, gazing at bare walls and listening to a minister bewailing the wickedness of his flock, and continually warning them of eternal fire and punishment. We think that true religion can be offered to people in a more effective and pleasing manner. This, however, can be called a model religion for some districts, especially in the country, where if people cannot stand the strain of a two hours' sermon, they have comfortable homes in which to rest and content themselves. The people are simple and quiet, and in many respects, form a model community.

In the cities, however, it is very different. There are thousands of men and boys who, having worked hard all week, look forward to some sort of change on Sunday. They live in squalid, wretched quarters, and can find no pleasure at home. Hence, we see large numbers of them lounging on the streets. But what can they find here? A walk, a car ride, and Sabbath-school, is about the complete list of possible recreations of a moral nature. When winter comes they no longer enjoy walking, the car rides cost money, and the Sabbath-schools do not contain many of them. Thus, you see, our present laws force men to find amusement and change in the always ready saloons and low dives. Let the complacent Pharisee, who resists all change of the laws, go himself and see the dens of vice and iniquity to which our men and boys are driven in order, as they say, "to keep the Seventh day holy." They would keep it holy by forcing wickedness upon a great part of our population.

In order to remedy this, let the Christian people allow the libraries, picture galleries, museums, concert halls, and other public places of amusements, be opened on Sunday. There may not be much religion in looking at a picture, but it would certainly keep men from