

LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 1329
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

Facing Life Fearlessly

The Pessimistic Versus the Optimistic View
of Life

Clarence Darrow

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**HALDEMAN-JULIUS PUBLICATIONS
GIRARD, KANSAS**

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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FACING LIFE FEARLESSLY

[Report of a lecture delivered at the University of Chicago, under the auspices of the Poetry Club and the Liberal Club; revised by Mr. Darrow.]

I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. A. E. Housman in the summer of 1927. I spent two hours with him, and before that I had been to the home of Thomas Hardy. Mr. Hardy told me how much he thought of Housman, before I visited Housman; and Housman was a frequent visitor at the Hardy home. Their ideas of life were very much alike; they were what the orthodox people and the Rotary Clubs would call pessimistic. They didn't live on pipe dreams; they took the universe as they found it, and man as they found him. They tried to see what beauty there was in each of them, but didn't close their eyes to the misery and maladjustments of either the universe or man, because they were realists, honest, thorough, and fearless.

Hardy himself had received the censure of all the good people of England and the world, who, in spite of that, bought his books. They all condemned him when he wrote his *Tess*; so he determined not to write any more prose. He thought that people probably were not intelligent enough to appreciate him; certainly not his viewpoint, and he didn't wish to waste his time on them.

Housman's viewpoint is much the same, as all of you know. He has written very little.

You can read all he has written in two hours, and less than that; but everything is exquisitely finished. When I met him he was in his study in Cambridge. He is a professor of Latin. I can't imagine anything more useless than that—unless it be Greek! He has been called the greatest Latin scholar in the world, and he seemed to take some pride in his Latin; not so much in his poetry. He said he didn't write poetry except when he felt he had to; it was always hard work for him, although some of the things he wrote very quickly; but as a rule he spent a great deal of time on most of them.

I asked him if it was true that the latest little volume was what it is entitled—*Last Poems*. He said he thought it was true; that it had been published as his last poems in 1922—five years before—and he had only written four lines since; so he thought that would probably be the last. Upon my asking him to recite the four lines, he said he had forgotten them.

Both Hardy and Housman, and of course Omar, believed that man is rather small in comparison with the universe, or even with the earth; they didn't believe in human responsibility, in free will, in a purposeful universe, in a Being who watched over and cared for the people of the world. It is evident that if He does, He makes a poor job of it!

Neither Hardy nor Housman had any such delusions. They took the world as they found it and never tried to guess at its origin. They took man as they found him and didn't try to

build castles for him after he was dead. They were essentially realists, both of them; and of course long before them Omar had gone over the same field.

It is hardly fair to call the *Rubaiyat* the work of Omar Khayyam. I have read a good many different editions and several different versions. I never read it in Persian, in which it was first written, but I have read not only poetical versions but prose ones. Justin McCarthy brought out a translation a number of years ago which was supposed to be a literal translation of Omar's book. There is no resemblance between that book and the classic under his name that was really written by FitzGerald. There is nothing very remarkable about the Omar Khayyam as found in Justin McCarthy's translation. It is probably ten times as expansive as the one we have, and no one would recognize it from the FitzGerald edition.

The beauty of the *Rubaiyat* is Edward FitzGerald's. He evidently was more or less modest or else he wanted to do great homage to Omar, because no one would ever have suspected that Omar had any more to do with the book than they would have suspected Plato. But, under the magic touch of FitzGerald, it is not only one of the wisest and most profound pieces of literature in the world, but one of the most beautiful productions that the world has ever known.

I remember reading somewhere that when this poem was thrown on the market in London, a long time ago, nobody bought it. They

finally put it out in front of the shop in the form in which it was printed and sold it for a penny. One could make more money by buying those books at a penny and selling them now than he could make with a large block of Standard Oil! It took a long while for Omar and FitzGerald to gain recognition, which makes it rather comfortable for the rest of us who write books to give away, and feel happy when somebody asks us for one, although we suspect they will never read them. But we all think we will be discovered sometime. Some of us hope so and some are fearful that they will be.

Neither Omar nor FitzGerald believed in human responsibility. That is the rock on which most religions are founded, and all laws—that everybody is responsible for his conduct; that if he is good he is good because he deliberately chooses to be good, and if he is bad it is pure cussedness on his part—nobody had anything to do with it excepting himself. If he hasn't free will, why, he isn't anything! The English poet Henley, in one of his poems, probably expressed this about as well as anybody. It looks to me as if he had a case of the rabies or something like that. But people are fond of repeating it. In his brief poem about Fate he says:

I am the master of my fate
I am the captain of my soul.

A fine captain of his soul; and a fine master of his fate! He wasn't master enough of his fate to get himself born, which is rather important, nor to do much of anything else, except brag about it. Instead of being the cap-

tain of his soul, as I have sometimes expressed it, man isn't even a deck-hand on a rudderless ship! He is just floating around and trying to hang on, and hanging on as long as he can. But if it does him any good to repeat Henley, or other nonsense, it is all right to give him a chance to do it, because he hasn't much to look forward to, any way. Free will never was a scientific doctrine; it never can be. It is probably a religious conception, which of course shows that it isn't a scientific one.

Neither one of these eminent men, Hardy or Housman, believed anything in free will. There is eight hundred years between Omar and Housman, and yet their philosophy is wondrously alike. I have no doubt but that Omar's philosophy was very like what we find in the rendering of FitzGerald. It is not a strange and unusual philosophy, except in churches and Rotary Clubs and places like that. It is not strange in places where people think or try to, and where they do not undertake to fool themselves. It is rather a common philosophy; it is a common philosophy where people have any realization of their own importance, or, rather, unimportance. A realization of it almost invariably forces upon a human being his own insignificance and the insignificance of all the other human atoms that come and go.

Men's ideas root pretty far back. Their religious creeds are very old. By means of interest and hope and largely fear, they manage to hang on to the old, even when they know it is not true. The idea of man's importance

came in the early history of the human race. He looked out on the earth, and of course he thought it was flat! It looks flat, and he thought it was. He saw the sun, and he formed the conception that somebody moved it out every morning and pulled it back in at night. He saw the moon, and he had the opinion that somebody pulled that out at sundown and took it in in the morning. He saw the stars, and all there was about the stars was, "He made the stars also." They were just "also." They were close by, and they were purely for man to look at, about like diamonds in the shirt bosoms of people who like them.

This was not an unreasonable idea, considering what they had to go on. The people who still believe it have no more to go on. Blind men can't be taught to see or deaf people to hear. The primitive people thought that the stars were right near by and just the size they seemed to be. Of course now we know that some of them are so far away that light traveling at nearly 200,000 miles a second is several million light years getting to the earth, and some of them are so large that our sun, even, would be a fly-speck to them. The larger the telescopes the more of them we see, and the imagination can't compass the end of them. It is just humanly possible that somewhere amongst the infinite number of infinitely larger and more important specks of mud in the universe there might be some organisms of matter that are just as intelligent as our people on the earth. So to have the idea that all of this was made for man gives man a great

deal of what Weber and Field used to call "proud flesh."

Man can't get conceited from what he knows today, and he can't get it from what intellectual people ever knew. You remember, in those days the firmament was put in to divide the water below from the water above. They didn't know exactly what it was made of, but they knew what it was. Heaven was up above the firmament. They knew what it was, because Jacob had seen the angels going up and down on a ladder. Of course, a ladder was the only transportation for such purposes known to Jacob. If he had been dreaming now, they would have been going up in a flying machine and coming down in the same way.

Our conceptions of things root back; and that, of course, is the reason for our crude religions, our crude laws, our crude ideas, and our exalted opinion of the human race.

Omar had it nearer right. He didn't much over-estimate the human race. He knew it for what it was, and that wasn't much. He knew about what its power was; he didn't expect much from the human race. He didn't condemn men, because he knew he couldn't do any better. As he puts it:

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-Board of Nights and Days;

Hither and thither moves, and checks and slays
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

Compare that conception with Mr. Henley's, with his glorious boast that he is the captain of his soul and the master of his fate. Anyone who didn't catch that idea from the ordinary

thought of the community, but carved it out for himself, would be a subject for psychopathic analysis and examination. When you have an idea that everybody else has, of course you are not crazy, but if you have silly ideas that nobody else has, of course you are crazy. That is the only way to settle it.

Most people believe every day many things for which others are sent to the insane asylum. The insane asylums are full of religious exaltants who have just varied a little bit from the standard of foolishness. It isn't the foolishness that places them in the bug-house, it is the slight variations from the other fellows' foolishness—that is all. If a man says he is living with the spirits today, he is insane. If he says that Jacob did, he is all right. That is the only difference.

Omar says we are simply "impotent pieces in the game He plays"—of course, he uses a capital letter when he spells *He* which is all right enough for the purpose—"in the game He plays upon this chequer-board of nights and days." And that is what man is. If one could vision somebody playing a game with human pawns, one would think that everyone who is moved around here and there was moved simply at the will of a player and he had nothing whatever to do with the game, any more than any other pawn. And he has nothing more to do with it than any other pawn.

Omar expresses this opinion over and over again. He doesn't blame man; he knows the

weakness of man. He knew the cruelty of judging him.

The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

Whatever the impulse calls one to do, whatever the baubles or the baits that set in motion many acts, however quickly or emotionally, the consequences of the acts, as far as he is concerned, never end. All your piety and all your wit cannot wipe out a word of it! Omar pities man; he doesn't exalt God, but he pities man. He sees what man can do; and, more important still, he sees what he cannot do. He condemns the idea that God could or should judge man. The injustice of it, the foolishness of it all, appeals to him and he puts it in this way:

O Thou who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestin'd Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

Nothing ever braver and stronger and truer than that! Preachers have wasted their time and their strength and such intelligence and learning as they can command, talking about God forgiving man, as if it was possible for man to hurt God, as if there was anything to be forgiven from man's standpoint. They pray that man be forgiven and urge that man should be forgiven. Nobody knows for what, but still it has been their constant theme. Poets have done it; Omar knew better. Brave and strong

and clear and far-seeing, although living and dying eight hundred years ago. This is what he says about forgiveness:

O thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devised the Snake:
For all the sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

“Man's forgiveness give—and take!” If man could afford to forgive God, He ought to be willing to forgive man. Omar knew it. “Ev'n with paradise devised the snake.” Taking the orthodox theory, for all the sin with which the earth is blackened, “Man's forgiveness give—and take!” That is courage; it is science. It is sense, and it isn't the weak, cowardly whining of somebody who is afraid he might be hurt unless he whines and supplicates, which he always does, simply hoping that some great power will have compassion on him. Always cowardice and fear, and nothing else!

Omar was wise enough to know that if there was any agency responsible for it, that agency was responsible. He made us as we are, and as He wished to make us, and to say that a weak, puny, ignorant human being, here today and gone tomorrow, could possibly injure God or be responsible for his own weakness and his ignorance, of course is a travesty upon all logic; and of course it does great credit to all superstition, for it couldn't come any other way.

* * *

Housman is equally sure about this. He knows about the responsibility of man. Strange how wonderfully alike runs their philosophy!

Housman condemned nobody. No pessimist does—only good optimists. People who believe in a universe of law never condemn or hate individuals. Only those who enthrone man believe in free will, and make him responsible for the terrible crudities of Nature and the force back of it, if there is such a force. Only they are cruel to the limit.

One can get Housman's idea of the responsibility of the human being from his beautiful little poem, "The Culprit," the plaintive wailing of a boy to be executed the next morning, when he, in his blindness and terror, asked himself the question, "Why is it and what does it all mean?" and thought about the forces that made him, and what a blind path he traveled, as we all do. He says:

The night my father got me
His mind was not on me;
He did not plague his fancy
To muse if I should be
The son you see.

The day my mother bore me
She was a fool and glad,
For all the pain I cost her,
That she had borne the lad
That borne she had.

My mother and my father
Out of the light they lie;
The warrant would not find them,
And here 'tis only I,
Shall hang on high.

Oh let no man remember
The soul that God forgot,
But fetch the county kerchief
And noose me in the knot,
And I will rot.

For so the game is ended
That should not have begun.
My father and my mother
They have a likely son,
And I have none.

Nobody lives in this world to himself or any part of himself. Nobody fashions his body, and still less is responsible for the size or the fineness of his brain and the sensitiveness of his nervous system. No one has anything to do with the infinite manifestations of the human body that produce the emotions, that force men here and there. And yet religion in its cruelty and its brutality brands them all alike. And the religious teachers are so conscious of their own guilt that they only seek to escape punishment by loading their punishment onto someone else. They say that the responsibility of the individual who in his weakness goes his way is so great and his crimes are so large that there isn't a possibility for him to be saved by his own works.

* * *

The law is only the slightest bit more intelligent. No matter who does it, or what it is, the individual is responsible. If he is manifestly and obviously crazy they may make some distinction; but no lawyer is wise enough to look into the human mind and know what it means. The interpretations of the human judges were delivered before we had any science on the subject whatever, and they continue to enforce the old ideas of insanity, in spite of the fact that there isn't an intelligent human being in the world who has studied the

question who ever thinks of it in legal terms. Judges instruct the jury that if a man knows the difference between right and wrong he cannot be considered insane. And yet an insane man knows the difference better than an intelligent man, because he has not the intelligence and the learning to know that this is one of the hardest things to determine, and perhaps the most impossible. You can ask the inmates of any insane asylum whether it is right to steal, lie, or kill, and they will all say "No," just as little children will say it, because they have been taught it. It furnishes no test, but still lawyers and judges persist in it, to give themselves an excuse to wreak vengeance upon unfortunate people.

Housman knew better. He knew that in every human being is the imprint of all that has gone before, especially the imprint of his direct ancestors. And not only that, but that it is the imprint of all the environment in which he has lived, and that human responsibility is utterly unscientific, and besides that, horribly cruel.

Another thing that impressed itself upon all these poets alike was the futility of life. I don't know whether a college succeeds in making pupils think that they are very important in the scheme of the universe. I used to be taught that we were all very important. Most all the boys and girls who were taught it when I was taught it are dead, and the world is going on just the same. I have a sort of feeling that after I am dead it will go on just the same,

and there are quite a considerable number of people who think it will go on better. But it won't; I haven't been important enough even to harm it. It will go on just exactly the same.

We are always told of the importance of the human being and the importance of everything he does; the importance of his not enjoying life, because if he is happy here of course he can't be happy hereafter, and if he is miserable here he must be happy hereafter. Omar made short work of that, of those promises which are not underwritten, at least not by any responsible people. He did not believe in foregoing what little there is of life in the hope of having a better time hereafter.

He says, "Ah, take the Cash and let the Credit go." Good advice that; "Ah, take the Cash and let the Credit go." If you take the "Credit," likely as not you will miss your fun both here and hereafter. Omar knew better.

It is strange how the religious creeds have hammered that idea into the human mind. They have always felt there was a kinship between pleasure and sin. A smile on the face is complete evidence of wickedness. A solemn, uninteresting countenance is a stamp of virtue and goodness, of self-denial, that will surely be rewarded. Of course, the religious people are strangely hedonistic without knowing it. You couldn't expect them to know it! There are some of us who think that the goodness or badness of an act in this world can be determined only by pain and pleasure units. The thing that brings pleasure is good, and the

thing that brings pain is bad. There is no other way to determine the difference between good and bad. Some of us think so: I think so.

Of course, the other class roll their eyes and declaim against this heathen philosophy, the idea that pain and pleasure have anything to do with the worth-whileness of existence. It isn't important for you to be happy here. But why not? You are too miserable here so you will be happy hereafter; and the hereafter is long and the here is short. They promise a much bigger prize than the pagan for the reward of conduct. They simply want you to trust them. They take the pain and pleasure theory with a vengeance, but they do business purely on credit. They are dealers in futures! I could never understand, if it was admissible to have joy in heaven, why you couldn't have it here, too. And if joy is admissible at all, the quicker you get at it the better, and the surer you are of the result. Omar thought that: "Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go!" Take the Cash and let the other fellow have the Credit! That was his philosophy, and I insist it is much better, and more intelligent philosophy than the other.

But Omar had no delusions about how important this human being is. He had no delusions about the mind, about man's greatness. He knew something about philosophy or metaphysics, whatever it is. He knew the uncertainty of human calculations, no matter who arrived at them. He knew the round-about way that people try to find out something,

and he knew the results. He knew the futility of all of it.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

That is what Omar thought. Man evermore came out by the same door where in he went. Therefore, "take the Cash and let the Credit go!" He put it even stronger than this. He knew exactly what these values were worth, if anything. He knew what a little bit there is to the whole bag of tricks. What's the difference whether you were born 75 years ago, or fifty or twenty-five? What's the difference whether you are going to live ten years, or twenty or thirty, or whether you are already dead? In that case you escape something! This magnifying the importance of the human being is one of the chief sins of man and results in all kinds of cruelty.

If we took the human race for what it is worth, we could not be so cruel. Omar Khayyam knew what it was, this life, that we talk so much about:

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's rest
A Sultan to the realm of Death address;
The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrash
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

"'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's rest"—is there anything else, if one could just make a survey of the human being, passing across the stage of life? I suppose man has been upon the earth for over a million years.

A million years, and perhaps his generations may be thirty to thirty-five years long. Think of the generations in a thousand years, in 5,000 years, in a hundred thousand, in a million years! There are a billion and a half of these important organisms on the earth at any one time. All of them, all important—kings, priests and professors, and doctors and lawyers and presidents, and 100 per cent Americans, and everything on earth you could think of—Ku Kluxers, W. C. T. U.'s, Rotarians, Knights of Columbus and Masons, everything. All of them important in this scheme of things! All of them seeking to attract attention to themselves, and not even satisfied when they get it!

What is it all about? It is strange what little things will interest the human mind—baseball games, fluctuations of the stock market, revivals, foot races, hangings, anything. Anything will interest them. And the wonderful importance of the human being!

* * *

Housman knew the importance just as well as Omar. He has something to say about it, too. He knew it was just practically nothing. Strangely like him! The little affairs of life, the little foolishnesses of life, the things that consume our lives without any result whatever; he knew them and knew what they were worth. He knew they were worth practically nothing. But we do them; the urge of living keeps us doing them, even when we know how useless and foolish they are. Housman understood them:

Yonder see the morning blink:
 The sun is up, and up must I,
 To wash and dress and eat and drink
 And look at things and talk and think
 And work, and God knows why.

Oh often have I washed and dressed
 And what's to stow for all my pain?
 Let me lie abed and rest:
 Ten thousand times I've done my best
 And all's to do again.

That is what life is, rising in the morning and washing and dressing and going to recitations and studying and forgetting it, and then going to bed at night, to get up the next morning and wash and dress and go to recitation, and so on, world without end.

One might get a focus on it from the flies. They are very busy buzzing round. You don't exactly know what they are saying, because we can't understand fly language. Professors can't teach you fly language! We can't tell what they are saying, but they are probably talking about the importance of being good, about what's going to happen to their souls and when. And when they are stiff in the morning in the Autumn and can hardly move round, the housewife gets up and builds the fire, and the heat limbers them up. She sets out the bread and butter on the table. The flies come down and get into it, and they think the housewife is working for them. Why not?

Is there any difference? Only in the length of the agony. What other? Apparently they have a good time while the sun is shining, and apparently they die when they get cold. It is a proposition of life and death, forms of matter

clothed with what seems to be consciousness, and then going back again into inert matter, and that is all. There isn't any manifestation that we humans make that we do not see in flies and in other forms of matter.

Housman understands it; they have all understood it. Read any of the great authors of the world—any of them; their hopes and their fears and their queries and their doubts are about the same. There is only one man I know of that can answer everything, and that is Dr. Cadman.

Housman saw it. He knew a little of the difference between age and youth—and there is some. The trouble is, the old men always write the books; they write them not in the way they felt when they were young, but in the way they feel now. And they preach to the young, and condemn them for doing what they themselves did when they had the emotion to do it. Great teachers, when they grow old! Perhaps it is partly envy and the desire that no one shall have anything *they* can't have. Likely it is, but they don't know it. Housman says something about this:

When first my way to fair I took
Few pence in purse had I,
And long I used to stand and look
At things I could not buy.

Now times are altered: if I care
To buy a thing I can;
The pence are here and here's the fair,
But where's the lost young man?

The world is somewhat different. The lost young man was once looking at the fair. He couldn't go in, and he liked it more for that;

but now he is tired of the fair and tired of the baubles that once amused him and the riddles he once tried to guess, and he can't understand that the young man still likes to go to the fair.

* * *

We hear a great deal said by the ignorant about the wickedness of the youth of today. Well, I don't know: some of us were wicked when we were young. I don't know what is the matter with the youth of today having their fling. I don't know that they are any wickeder today. First, I don't know what the word wicked means. Oh, I do know what it means: it means unconventional conduct. But I don't know whether unconventional conduct is wicked in the sense they mean it is wicked, or whether conventional conduct is good in the sense they mean it is good. Nobody else knows!

But I remember when I was a boy—it was a long time ago—I used to hear my mother complain. My mother would have been pretty nearly 125 years old if she had kept on living, but luckily for her she didn't! I used to hear her complain of how much worse the girls were that she knew than the girls were when she was a girl. Of course, she didn't furnish any bill of particulars; she didn't specify, except not hanging up their clothes, and gadding, and things like that. But at any rate, they were worse. And my father used to tell about it, and I have an idea that Adam and Eve used to talk the same fool way.

The truth is, the world doesn't change, or

the generations of men or the human emotions. But the individual changes as he grows old. You hear about the Revolt of Youth. Some people are pleased at it and some displeased. Some see fine reasons for hope in what they call the *youth movement*. They can put it over on the old people, but not on the youth! There is a Revolt of Youth.

Well, youth has always been in revolt. The greatest trouble with youth is that it gets old. Age changes it. It doesn't bring wisdom, though most old people think because they are old they have wisdom. But you can't get wisdom by simply growing old. You can even forget it that way! Age means that the blood runs slow, that the emotions are not as strong, that you play safer, that you stay closer to the hearth. You don't try to find new continents or even explore old ones. You don't travel into unbeaten wilderness and lay out new roads. You stick to the old roads when you go out at all.

The world can't go on with old people. It takes young ones that are daring, with courage and faith.

The difference between youth and old age is the same in every generation. The viewpoint is in growing old, that is all. But the old never seem wise enough to know it, and forever the old have been preaching to the young. Luckily, however, the young pay very little attention to it. They sometimes pretend to, but they never do pay much attention to it. Otherwise, life could not exist.

* * *

Both of these poets saw the futility of life: the little things of which it is made, scarcely worth the while. It is all right to talk about futility. We all know it, if we know much of anything. We know life is futile. A man who considers that his life is of very wonderful importance is awfully close to a padded cell. Let anybody study the ordinary, everyday details of life; see how closely he is bound and fettered; see how little it all amounts to.

* * *

There are a billion and a half people in the world, all of them trying to shout loud enough to be heard all at once, so as to attract the attention of the public, so they may be happy. A billion and a half of them, and if they all attracted attention none of them would have attention! Of course, attention is only valuable if the particular individual attracts it and nobody else can get it. That is what makes presidents and kings—they get it and nobody else.

Then when you consider that it is all made up of little things, what is life all about, anyway? We do keep on living. It is easy enough to demonstrate to people who think that life is not worth while. We could do it easier if we could only settle what worth while means. But if we settle it and convince ourselves that it is not worth while, we still keep on living. Life does not come from willing; rather it does not come from thought and reason. I don't live because I think it is worth while; I live because I am a going concern, and every going concern tries to keep on going, I don't

care whether it is a tree, or a plant, or what we call a lower animal, or man, or the Socialist party. Anything that is going tries to go on by its own momentum, and it does just keep on going—it is what Schopenhauer called the *will to live*. So we must assume that we will live anyhow as long as we can. When the machine runs down we don't have to worry about it any longer.

Housman asked himself this question, and Omar asked himself this question. Life is of little value. What are we going to do while we live? In other words, what is the purpose, if we can use the word *purpose* in this way, which is an incorrect way? What purpose are we going to put into it? Why should we live; and if we must live, then what? Omar tells us what. He knew there was just one thing important; he knew what most thinkers know today. He put it differently—he and Fitzgerald together. It is a balance between painful and pleasurable emotions. Every organized being looks for pleasurable emotions and tries to avoid painful ones. The seed planted in the ground seeks the light. The instinct of everything is to move away from pain and toward pleasure. Human beings are just like all the rest. The earth and all its manifestations are simply that. Omar figured it out, and after philosophizing and finding that he ever came out the same door where in he went, he said:

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;

Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

That is one way of forgetting life—one way of seeking pleasurable emotions: "I took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse." A way that has been fairly popular down through the ages! Even in spite of the worst that all the fanatics could possibly do, it has been a fairly universal remedy for the ills of man. It would be perfect if it were not for the day after!

He says in his wild exuberance:

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-Garment of Repentance fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

There isn't much of it; but while it is fluttering, help it. It has but a little way to flutter, and it is on the wing!

To those who are not quite so strenuous, there is an appeal more to beauty, a somewhat more permanent although not much more, but a more beautiful conception of pleasure, which is all he could get:

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

Well, if you get the right jug and the right book and the rest of the paraphernalia, it isn't so bad!

* * *

It is strange that two so different human beings have sought about the same thing. This physical emotional life that we hear so much about is the only life we know anything about. They sought their exaltation there, and Omar

Khayyam pictured it very well. Housman again does as well. What does he say about the way to spend life and about life?

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

What else is there? So while the light is still on and while I can still go, and when the cherry is in bloom—I will go to see the cherries hung with snow.

That is the whole philosophy of life for those who think; that is all there is to it, and it is what everybody is trying to do, without fully realizing it. Many are taking the Credit and letting the Cash go. Housman is right about that.

Since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

That is why I have so little patience with the old preaching to the young. If youth, with its quick-flowing blood, its strong imagination, its virile feeling; if youth, with its dreams and its hopes and ambitions, can go about the woodland to see the cherry hung with snow, why not?

Who are the croakers, who have run their race and lived their time, who are they to keep back expression and hope and youth and joy from a world that is almost barren at the best?

It has been youth that has kept the world alive; it will be, because from the others emotion has fled; and with the fleeing of emotion, through the ossification of the brain, all there is left for them to do is to preach. I hope they have a good time doing that, and I am so glad the young pay no attention to it!

* * *

Of course, Housman and Omar and the rest of us are called pessimists. It is a horrible name. What is a pessimist, anyway? It is a man or a woman who looks at life as life is. If you could, you might take your choice, perhaps, as to being a pessimist or a pipe dreamer. But you can't have it, because you look at the world according to the way you are made. Those are the two extremes. The pessimist takes life for what life is: not all sorrow, not all pain, not all beauty, not all good. Life is not black; life is not orange, red, or green, or all the colors of the rainbow. Life is no one shade or hue.

It is well enough to understand it. If pessimism could come as the result of thought, I would think a pessimist was a wise man. What is an optimist, anyway? He reminds me of a little boy running through the woods and looking up at the sky and not paying any attention to the brambles or thorns he is scrambling through. There is a stone in front of him and he trips over the stone. Browning said, "God's

in his heaven and all's right with the world." Others say, "God is Love, Love is God," and so on. A man who thinks that is bound to be an optimist. He believes that things are good.

The pessimist doesn't necessarily think that everything is bad, but he looks for the worst. He knows it will come sooner or later. When an optimist falls, he falls a long way; when a pessimist falls it is a very short fall. When an optimist is disappointed he is very, very sad, because he believed it was the best of all possible worlds, and God's in his heaven and all's well with the world. When a pessimist is disappointed he is happy, for he wasn't looking for anything.

This is the safest and by all odds it is the wisest outlook. Housman has put it in a little poem. It is about the last thing I shall give you. Housman is the only man I know of who has written a poem about pessimism. Nearly all the people who are talking about pessimism talk in prose; it is very prosy. Poems are generally written about optimism:

I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

Those are the sort of poems. Of course there have been poems written about pessimism. Poetry is, really, to my way of thinking, good only if it is beauty and if it is music.

I don't mean tonight to discuss the question of free verse and poetry, or the comparative merits of the two styles, or of prose, but I do think that poetry is an exaltation and that you can't hold it for long. Poetry ought to

have beauty and it ought to have music. It should have both. You can be the poet of sadness; sadness lends itself to poetry as much as gladness, although few poets know how to use it. Listen to this from Housman:

With rue my heart is laden,
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose-lipt maiden
And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leading
The lightfoot boys are laid,
The rose-lipt girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade.

That is sad, isn't it? But it is beautiful.

I remember once, years and years ago, reading Olive Schreiner's *Story of an African Farm*, in which she describes the simple Boers of South Africa, with their sorrows and their pleasures. She used this expression, which it took me some time to understand, in describing pain and pleasure: "There is a depth of emotion so broad and deep that pain and pleasure are the same." They are the same, and I think they find their meeting in beauty. The beauty, even if it is painful, is still beauty. You find the meeting of pain and pleasure, and you can hardly distinguish between the two emotions.

Housman knew it; he knew how to do it. Here is his idea of the young lad who dies: not passes on—passes off. He dies:

Now hollow fires burn out to black
And lights are guttering low:
Square your shoulders, lift your pack,
And leave your friends and go.

Oh never fear man, nought's to dread,
Look not left nor right :
In all the endless road you tread
There's nothing but the night.

Does it bring you painful or pleasurable emotions? It is beautiful; it is profound; it is deep. To me the painful and pleasurable are blended in the beauty, and I think the two may be one.

* * *

Housman, as I have said, is the only one I know who wrote a poem of pessimism; and this, like all of his, is very short, and I will read it. Somebody else may have written one; but Housman carries the philosophy of pessimism into poetry, perhaps the philosophy that I have given you. This poem is supposed to be introduced by somebody who complains of Housman's dark, almost tragical verses. For in every line that he ever wrote there is no let down. He is like Hardy; he never hauled down the flag. Life to him was what he saw; what the world saw meant nothing. This was the view in all of Housman's work. In all of his work there is not one false note; and when I say a false note I mean one that is not in tune with the rest. This is his idea of pessimism in poetry:

"Terence, this is stupid stuff:
You eat your victuals fast enough;
There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,
To see the rate you drink your beer.
But oh, good Lord, the verse you make,
It gives a chap the belly-ache.

We poor lads, 'tis our turn now
 To hear such tunes as killed the cow.
 Pretty friendship 'tis to rhyme
 Your friends to death before their time
 Moping melancholy mad:
 Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad."

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,
 There's brisker pipes than poetry.
 Say, for what were hop-yards meant,
 Or why was Burton built on Trent?
 Oh many a peer of England brews
 Livelier liquor than the Muse,
 And malt does more than Milton can
 To justify God's ways to man.
 Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink
 For fellows whom it hurts to think:
 Look into the pewter pot
 To see the world as the world's not.
 And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past:
 The mischief is that 'twill not last.

Oh I have been to Ludlow fair
 And left my necktie God knows where,
 And carried half way home, or near,
 Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer:
 Then the world seemed none so bad,
 And I myself a sterling lad;
 And down in lovely muck I've lain,
 Happy till I woke again.
 Then I saw the morning sky:
 Heigho, the tale was all a lie;
 The world it was the old world yet,
 I was I, my things were wet,
 And nothing now remained to do
 But begin the game anew.

Therefore, since the world has still
 Much good, but much less good than ill,
 And while the sun and moon endure
 Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,
 I'd face it as a wise man would,
 And train for ill and not for good.

'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale
Is not so brisk a brew as ale:
Out of a stem that scored the hand
I wrung it in a weary land.
But take it: if the smack is sour,
The better for the embittered hour;
It should do good to heart and head
When your soul is in my soul's stead;
And I will friend you, if I may,
In the dark and cloudy day.

"Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure." The moral of it is to "train for ill and not for good."

If I had my choice, I would not like to be an optimist, even assuming that people did not know that I was an idiot. I wouldn't want to be an optimist because when I fell I would fall such a terribly long way. The wise man trains for ill and not for good. He is sure he will need that training, and the other will take care of itself as it comes along.

Of course, life is not all pleasant; it is filled with tragedy. Housman has told us of it, and Omar Khayyam tells us of it. No man and no woman can live and forget death. However much they try, it is there, and it probably should be faced like anything else. Measured time is very short. Life, amongst other things, is full of futility.

Omar Khayyam understood, and Housman understood. There are other poets that have felt the same way. Omar Khayyam looked on the shortness of life and understood it. He pictured himself as here for a brief moment. He loved his friends; he loved companionship; he loved wine. I don't know how much of it he drank. He talked about it a lot. It

might have symbolized more than it really meant to him. It has been a solace all down through the ages. Not only that, but it has been the symbol of other things that mean as much—the wine of life, the joy of living.

THE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE

CLARENCE DARROW

This veteran of the courts, who has spent fifty years tearing deserved holes in the law, takes and swings his priceless irony towards these professional Christians. When do we rest and when do we play? Apparently we don't. What price salvation? It's not worth it.

Among the various societies that are engaged in the business of killing pleasure, the Lord's Day Alliance of New York deserves a place of honor. If any poor mortal is caught enjoying life on Sunday its agents gleefully hie themselves to the nearest legislature and urge a law to stop the fun. Their literature and periodicals tell very plainly the kind of business they are in. This association of crape-hangers seems to be especially interested in the State of New York, which contains about one-tenth of the population of the Union, and among them an unusually large number of foreigners and other heathen who have not been taught the proper regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath.

The activities of this Alliance in New York still leave them ample time to watch the sinners in the other states and bring to book the wicked who are bent on having pleasure on the holy Sabbath Day. In their own language, the work is "in the interests of the preservation and promotion of the Lord's Day as the American Christian Sabbath . . . to oppose all adverse measures seeking to weaken the law and

to seek the passage of such measures as would tend to strengthen it." The Alliance informs us that "in the last four years it has furnished sixty-seven addresses per month, on an average. During this time over three hundred and twenty institute meetings have been held for the study of the Sabbath question. Several million pages of literature have been distributed." It "also furnishes press articles and syndicate matter for the newspapers." Imagine an institute spending so much time in the study of the Sabbath question! If they have learned anything on that subject it is not revealed in their tracts.

These Lord's Day folk seek to protect the day "in the interest of the home and the church," "to exalt Jesus Christ who is Lord of the Sabbath Day and to spread the knowledge of the will of God that His Kingdom may come and His will may be done." Though the organization is still young it points to a long list of glorious achievements. We are informed that "no adverse measure affecting the Sabbath has passed at Albany during this time, although forty-two such measures have been introduced in the legislature. . . . A representative of our organization has been present on each occasion to oppose all such adverse measures." It boasts that it "opposed the opening of the State Fair in 1925 on Sunday, by vigorous protest to the members of the Commission and the Attorney General." The result was a ruling from the Attorney General sustaining the law. Of course, so long as no one could go to the fair on Sunday the people were obliged to go to

church. It "has defeated annually an average of forty commercial and anti-Sunday bills in our legislature and has brought about the closing of the First and Second Class Post Offices on Sunday. . . . As a result, thousands are in our churches each Sunday." It has been thanked by President Coolidge for the services rendered hundreds of thousands of government employees in the District of Columbia and elsewhere throughout the nation." What further honor could anybody get on earth? It has "accepted the challenge and in scores of places defeated . . . commercial amusement forces which have declared a nation-wide fight to the finish for Sunday movies and are even proposing to enlist the aid of the churches in their unholy campaign." It succeeded in "changing the date of the gigantic air carnival to which admission was charged, from Sunday, August 2, to Saturday, August 1, 1925, held at Bolling Field, Washington." No one but a parson has the right to charge for his performance on Sunday. Through its request "the War Department issued orders on November 2, 1925, covering every military post in the United States, banning Sunday public air carnivals and maneuvers." It is "now leading a country-wide movement for the enactment of a Sunday rest law for the District of Columbia. Washington needs and must have a Sunday rest law." It informs us that the "day must be kept above the Dollar, Christ above Commercialism on the Lord's Day, the person must have the right of way over the Pocketbook on our American Sunday."

Surely this is a great work and deserves the active support and sympathy of all people who are really interested in driving pleasure-seekers from golf grounds, automobile trips, baseball parks, moving-picture houses and every other form of pleasure on Sunday. It is possible that for lack of any other place to go, some of them might be compelled to park themselves in church. If America does not succeed in bringing back the ancient Puritan Sabbath with its manifold blessings, it will not be the fault of the Lord's Day Alliance.

As a part of this noble work the organization publishes various pamphlets and leaflets and scatters them broadcast through the land. As a rule, these pamphlets are the effusions of more or less obscure parsons. These preachers have special knowledge of God's plans and God's will. Their sermonettes are conflicting in their statements and utterly senseless in their assertions. The sentries of the Alliance on guard at the state capitals and in the national Congress, while these wise bodies are in session, have no doubt succeeded in coercing spineless members of legislative bodies to yield to their will and their parade of votes; and thus spread considerable gloom over the United States on the Sabbath Day.

These Lord's Day Alliance gentlemen are not only religious but scientific. For instance, they publish a pamphlet written by one Dr. A. Haegler, of Basle, Switzerland, in which he says that experiments have shown that during a day's work a laborer expends more oxygen than he can inhale. True, he catches up with

a large part of this deficiency through the night time, but does not regain it all. It follows, of course, that if he keeps on working six days a week, for the same time each day, he will be out a considerable amount of oxygen, and the only way he can make it up is to take a day off on Sunday and go to church. This statement seems to be flawless to the powerful intellects who put out this literature. Any person who is in the habit of thinking might at once arrive at the conclusion that if the workman could not take in enough oxygen gas in the ordinary hours of work and sleep he might well cut down his day's work and lengthen his sleep and thus start even every morning. This ought to be better than running on a shortage of gas all through the week. Likewise, it must occur to most people that there are no two kinds of labor that consume the same amount of oxygen gas per day, and probably no two human systems that work exactly alike. Then, too, if the workman ran behind on his oxygen gas in the days when men worked from ten to sixteen hours a day he might break even at night, since working hours have been reduced to eight or less, with a Saturday half-holiday thrown in. It might even help the situation to raise the bedroom window at night. These matters, of course, do not occur to the eminent doctor who wrote the pamphlet and the scientific gentlemen who send it out. To them the silly statement proves that a man needs to take a day off on Sunday and attend church in order that he may catch up on his oxygen. To them it is perfectly plain that for catching up

on oxygen the church has a great advantage over the golf links or the baseball park, or any other place where the wicked wish to go. This in spite of the fact that in crowded buildings the oxygen might be mixed with halitosis.

The exact proof that these patrons marshal for showing that the need of a Sunday rest is manifest in the nature of things is marvelous. If the need of Sunday rest was meant to be shown by natural law it seems as if this should have been clearly indicated, especially if the righteous God had determined to punish Sunday violations with death and hell. There was no reason why the Creator should have been content to leave the proof to a revelation said to have been made in a barbarous age to an unknown man, hidden in the clouds on the top of a high mountain peak. Humans would not have graven such an important message on a tablet of stone and then insisted that the tablet should be destroyed before any being except Moses had set eye upon it. Even God should not ask for faith that amounts to credulity and gross superstition.

A deity could have written the Sabbath requirements plain on the face of nature. For instance, he might have made the waves be still on the seventh day of the week; the grass might have taken a day off and rested from growing until Monday morning; the wild animals of the forest and glen might have refrained from fighting and eating and chasing and maiming and have been made to close their eyes on the Sabbath Day, and to have kept peace and tranquillity. The earth might have

paused in its course around the sun or stood still on its axis. It should have been as important to make this gesture in homage of the day as it was to help Joshua hold the sun in leash that a battle might be prolonged. If nature had made plain provision for the Sabbath Day it would be patent to others as well as to the medicine men who insist that the Sabbath Day was made for their profit alone.

* * *

But let us pass from the realm of science, where pastors never did especially shine, into a field where they are more likely to excel. Here it is fairly easy to see what it is all about. The Reverend McQuilkin, Pastor at Orange, New Jersey, furnishes a pamphlet for The Lord's Day Alliance. Read what the Doctor says:

God claims the Sabbath for himself in a very unique, distinctive way as a day of rest and worship. He again and again commands you to spend its hours in the conservation of our spiritual power in the exercise of public and private worship. To spend this holy day in pleasure or unnecessary secular labor is to *rob God*. We have got to be careful how we take the hours of the Sabbath for secular study or work, for God will surely bring us to judgment concerning the matter. Church attendance is a definite obligation, a debt which we owe to God.

Here is where the Alliance seems to strike pay dirt! What reason has God to claim the Sabbath for Himself, and why is God robbed if a man should work on Sunday? It can hardly be possible that the puny insects that we call men could disturb God in His Sunday rest. Is

it not a little presumptuous even to parsons, to say that a debt to the church is a debt to God?

To emphasize the importance of leaving the Sabbath to the preachers, we are warned of the fate of the sinner who profanes the Sabbath by work or play. The Lord's Day Alliance has issued a little folder on which there is the following heading in large letters: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DEATH PENALTY. Under it is printed this timely caution: "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to Jehovah; whosoever doeth any work on the Sabbath Day shall surely be put to death. Ex. 31-35." The pamphlet also states that a wealthy business man is furnishing the money for the distribution of this sheet. If this barbarous statement represents the views of the Lord's Day Alliance then what is the mental caliber of the Congressmen, members of the legislatures, judges, and the public that are influenced by their ravings? Can anyone but an idiot have any feeling but contempt for men who seek to scare children and old women with such infamous stuff?

Let us see what the Bible says on this important subject. In Exodus 19:8-12 we find not only the commandment which was delivered to Moses in reference to the Sabbath, but the reasons for such a commandment:

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant nor thy maid servant

nor the cattle which is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day and hallowed it.

It is plain from this commandment that the Sabbath was not instituted in obedience to any natural law or so that man might catch up on his supply of oxygen, but because the Lord in six days had performed the herculean task of creating the universe out of nothing. Therefore, every man must rest on the seventh, no matter whether he has been working and is tired or not. This is made even more binding in Exodus 35:2:

Six days shall work be done; upon the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, the Sabbath of the rest of the Lord. Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.

In view of the commands of God, certainly his special agents on the earth cannot be blamed for cruelty, no matter what ferocious doctrine they may preach. In Numbers 28:9-10, in connection with various offerings that the Law required on the Sabbath, a provision is made for meat offerings and drink offerings. The meat offerings enjoin the sacrifice of lambs by fire as "a sweet savor unto the Lord," and then the Lord provides that the pastor shall further:

Sacrifice on the Sabbath Day two lambs of the first year without spot and two-tenths of a part of an ephah of fine flour for a meal-offering, mingled with oil and the drink offering thereof: this is the burnt-offering of every Sabbath, besides the continual burnt-offering and his drink offering.

It is evident that the lambs less than one year old, without spot, were to be burned because they were so young and innocent and would therefore make such a "sweet savor unto the Lord." Nothing is lacking in this smell but mint sauce. If Moses is to be obeyed on pain of hell in his command to abstain from work or play on the Sabbath why is the rest of the program any less sacred? How can the holy parsons release their congregations from the sacrifice of the two spotless lambs and the two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mingled with oils?

In the Fifteenth Chapter of Numbers, it is related that while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath Day. The Hebrews were evidently at a loss to know what should be done with him for this most heinous offense, so they put him in "ward" to await the further orders of the Lord. It is then related, "and the Lord said unto Moses: The man shall surely he put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp and stoned him to death with stones: *as Jehovah commanded Moses.*" In spite of manifold texts like this there are persons who protest that they love this bloody, barbarous, tribal God of the Jews. The literature of the Alliance clearly indicates that its sponsors would follow this command of Jehovah at the present time if they could only have their way.

Dr. McQuilkin further tells us that the defenders of the day have often been too super-

ficial in their contentions on behalf of this holy Sabbath; that they should soft-pedal the "thou shalt nots" and "we should thunder our 'thou shalt' into the ears of the foolish, wicked men who for the sake of pleasure or financial profit would rob their fellow men or themselves of the precious rest God had given them for the cultivation and nurture of their immortal souls." "Such men," he continues, "must be identified with murderers and suicides." The common punishment for murder is death, and suicide is death, therefore Dr. McQuilkin, with the rest of his associates and with his God, believes in the death penalty for working or playing on the Sabbath.

How one involuntarily loves this righteous Dr. McQuilkin of Orange, New Jersey. He must be a man whose love and understanding oozes from every pore of his body. No doubt the people of Orange who are burdened with sorrow or sin bring their sore troubles and lay them on his loving breast. I am sure that little children in their grief rush to his outstretched arms for solace and relief.

The Reverend Doctor McQuilkin makes short work of the idea that you cannot make people good by law. In fact, that seems to him to be the only way to make them good. Therefore people and enterprises that commercialize Sundays by baseball games and moving pictures, who "whine about the impossibility of making people good by law, ought to go either to school or to jail." Probably the pastor would be in favor of the jail. The Reverend Doctor is very much exercised about his idea that the

Sabbath should be spent in cultivating our "spiritual nature." From the gentle and kindly character of the doctor's utterances, one judges that he must spend several days a week cultivating his "spiritual nature."

The godly doctor is indeed earnest about the church-going. He says, "God will surely bring us to judgment in the matter of staying away from church, for church attendance is a definite obligation, a debt which we owe to God." The doctor has a naive way of mixing up himself and his private business affairs with the Lord.

Could it be possible that the Reverend Doctor McQuilkin's serious case of rabies might be due to vacant pews? Such cases are related in the following extract from a very disheartening paragraph put out by the Lord's Day Alliance in a folder entitled "Let's Save Our American Christian Sabbath."

A significant part of this falling away from old American ideals has been the neglect of the churches—life among Christian people dropping to a lower plane on Sunday. The lure of pleasure and the drift to seven-day slavery within a few years have utterly changed the character of the day. The average attendance at Sunday morning services, taken for all the churches of New York State—counting large city churches as well as small country ones—has steadily dropped until it has now reached only *fifty-three* persons. This amounts to but little more than one-fourth of their total enrolled membership! The old days of tithes are gone. Lack of support is making the situation more and more critical and many churches have had to be abandoned. Is the church to survive? *Are we to remain a Christian nation?*

This is indeed distressing. I can well imag-

ine the feeling of chagrin that steals over the parson when he talks to fifty persons on a Sunday morning. Here are the few parishioners, solemn-visaged and sitting impatiently in their pews while a joyous crowd rolls by in automobiles on their road to hell. I cannot help thinking of the parson on a Sunday morning, telling the same story over and over again to his half hundred listeners.

I have seen this pastor and this congregation in the country church and the city church. What have they in common with the world today? Who are these faithful fifty? One-third of them, at least, are little boys and girls, twisting and turning and yawning and fussing in their stiff, uncomfortable clothes, in the hard church pews. Then there are the usual fat old women, wearing their Sunday finery. Their faces are dull and heavy and altogether unlovely. They no longer think of the world; they are looking straight into space at the Promised Land. They hold a hymn book or a Bible in their time-worn hands. Perhaps there are ten full grown men in church; two or three of these look consumptive; one or two are merchants who think that being at church will help them sell prunes; the rest are old and tottering. It has been long years since a new thought or even an old one has found lodgment in their atrophied brains. They are decrepit and palsied and done; so far as life and the world are concerned, they are already dead. One feels sympathetic toward the old. But why should the aged, who have lived their lives, grumble and complain about youth with

its glow and ambition and hope? Why should they sit in the fading light and watch the world go by and vainly reach out their bony hands to hold it back?

Aside from the Lord's Day Alliance's way of appealing to the law to make people go to church, I can think of only two plans to fill the pews. First, to abandon a large number of the churches and give the parsons a chance to find some useful and paying job. Secondly, to get more up-to-date, human and intelligent preachers into the church pulpits.

The literature issued by the Alliance shows great concern about Sunday newspapers. These papers consume a great deal of valuable time on the Sabbath Day. They are in no way the proper literature for Sunday reading. Automobile trips, too, are an abomination on the Sabbath. One pamphlet records approval of the conduct of the "venerable" John D. Paton who even refused to use street-cars on Sunday while visiting America. He kept his appointments by long walks, sometimes even having to run between engagements. This sounds to me strangely like work. Still it might have been necessary in order to get the proper amount of oxygen gas.

Playing golf on Sunday is a sacrilegious practice. A whole leaflet is prepared by Dr. Jefferson on golf. "No one ought to play golf on Sunday. . . . The golf player may need oxygen but he should not forget his caddie." The doctor calls our attention to the fact that men in the days of Moses were mindful of even the least of these. How our parsons do

love Moses and his murderous laws! We are told that a caddie works, that it is not play to trudge after a golf ball with a bag of clubs on his back. The leaflets say that the caddie does not work on Sunday for fun but for money, and it "isn't a manly thing for the golf player to hire him to work on Sunday." We are told that "there are now over one hundred thousand caddies on the golf links every Sunday. These caddies are making a living." Of course this picture is pathetic. It is too bad that the Lord's Day Alliance cannot get these hundred thousand caddies discharged. Then possibly some of them would go to church on Sunday. They might even drop a nickel in the contribution box.

Does anyone believe that if the caddies were offered the same money for going to church that they get for hunting golf balls they would choose the church? It takes a bright boy to be a caddie.

The caddies do not inspire all the tears; we are told that chauffeurs and railroad employes are necessary to take the players to and from the golf links. This is no doubt true. Still, we have even seen chauffeurs sitting in automobiles outside a church where they had driven their employers to get their souls saved. On our suburban railroads there are many trains put in service on Sunday to take people to and from church, but these have not come under the ban of the Lord's Day Alliance. Its complaint is that so few trains are needed for this blessed work.

There is some logic in this folder. We are told that "if golf is allowable on Sunday, then, so is tennis, baseball, basketball, football, bowling and all other games which our generation is fond of." "You can't forbid one without forbidding the others," says the Alliance. We heartily agree with the Reverend Doctor on this particular question.

No one needs to go to ball games or movies or play golf on Sunday unless he wants to spend his time that way. I have never seen anybody who objected to the members of the Lord's Day Alliance or any others from abstaining from all kinds of work and all sorts of play and every method of enjoyment on Sunday.

Dr. Robert E. Speer of Englewood, New Jersey, is very definite and specific as to the proper way to spend Sunday and the sort of recreation man should naturally enjoy on this holy day. Dr. Speer says, "God wants the worship of the Lord's Day and he wants us to have the indispensable comforts and pleasure of it." One would think that Dr. Speer got daily messages from God. "We need the day for meditation and prayer and plans for better living." No one questions the good doctor's right to satisfy his needs in such way as seems necessary and pleasurable for him. All that I contend for is that I, too, shall decide these questions for myself.

Dr. Speer says:

There are some things deadly in their power to spoil it (referring to the Sabbath). One is the Sunday newspapers. . . . I pass by all that may be de-

nounced as defiling in it. . . . There is harm enough in its "wallow of secularity." . . . Look at the men who feed their minds and souls on Sunday with this food. They miss the calm and holy peace, the glowing divinity of the day.

It is just conceivable that one might read a Sunday newspaper and still have time for "the glowing divinity of the day," to glow long enough to satisfy every desire.

Dr. Speer condemns those who berate the quality of the sermons preached on Sunday and informs us that the wisest man can learn something from the poorest preacher, although he neglects to say just what. He tells us that a country preacher's sermon is superior to the country editor's writings or the country lawyer's speeches. This may be true. It is, at all events, true to Dr. Speer, and there is no reason in the world why he should not hunt up the "poorest preacher" that he can find and listen to him on every Sunday. No doubt Dr. Speer might learn something from him.

Dr. Speer disapproves of riding on railroad trains on Sunday if it can be avoided. "Certainly no one should take long railroad journeys on Sunday." He tells us, "Sunday golf, newspapers, and all that sort of thing are bad and weakening in their influence. These are particular evidence of the trend of the man who thus abandons his birthright." The doctor is more definite in his beautiful picture of just what one ought to do on the Sabbath Day. On this subject he says:

I do not believe that anyone who grew up in a truly Christian home in which the old ideas pre-

veiled can have any sympathy with this modern abuse of the old-fashioned observance of Sunday. There, on Sunday, the demands of the week were laid aside. The family gathered over the Bible and the Catechism. There was a quiet calm through the house. Innumerable things rendered it a marked day, as distinct from other days, and probably it ended with a rare walk with the father at the son's side and some sober talk over what is abiding and what is of eternal worth.

We could hazard a guess that the reason that the mother was not present on this joyful occasion was because she was at home washing the dishes from a big Sunday dinner that she had prepared.

It is entirely possible that Dr. Speer's picture of the ideal Sabbath is a good picture. Doubtless it is good to him. Still, hidden in my mind and recalled by Dr. Speer's alluring language, is the memory of his ideal Presbyterian Sunday. This was a day of unmitigated pain. No spirit or life or joy relieved the boredom and torture of the endless hours. The day meant misery to all the young. Even now I can feel the blank despair that overcame youth and hope as we children left our play on Saturday night and sadly watched the sun go down and the period of gloom steal across the world. Why should Dr. Speer and the other dead seek to force that sort of a Sabbath upon men and women who want to take in their oxygen gas in the baseball bleachers, or the golf links?

From Dr. Speer's picture of the ideal Sabbath I infer that he is a Presbyterian. This opinion has been confirmed by reference to

Who's Who. I find that for long years he has been a Presbyterian preacher, not only in America, but he has carried the blessed gospel even into China that the heathen of that benighted land might not live and die without the consoling knowledge of eternal hell.

Dr. Speer's beautiful picture of the old-time Christian Sabbath describes "the family gathered over the Bible and the Catechism." I, too, sat under the ministrations of a Presbyterian preacher and was duly instructed in the Westminster Catechism. In spite of the aversion and terror that its reference inspired, I took down the book to read once more the horrible creed of the twisted and deformed minds who produced this monstrosity which has neither sense, meaning, justice nor mercy, but only malignant depravity. A devilish creed which shocks every tender sentiment of the human mind. I am inclined to think from their internal evidence that most of the sermonettes circulated by the Lord's Day Alliance had their origin in the warped minds of the Presbyterian clergy. I would hazard a bet that the tender, gentle, loving Dr. McQuilkin is a Presbyterian. I sought to confirm this belief by consulting *Who's Who*, but found that the editors had stupidly left out his name. Still I am convinced that he is a Presbyterian.

In this ancient Westminster Catechism which few men read I quote question and answer number sixty:

Question: How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

Answer: The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly

employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

Small wonder that these croakers should seek to call children from joy and laughter to spend "the *whole time* in public and private exercises of God's worship." The wonder is not that these Divines should seek to place their palsied hands upon the youth but that an intelligent people, who really do not worship a God of malignancy and hate, would ever let these lovers of darkness invade a legislative body. They have no more place in the sunlight and pure air than croaking frogs and hooting owls. Here is the first question and answer in this wondrous catechism:

Question: What is the chief end of man?

Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

What sort of a God is this in which these parsons believe? A God who can find no other work for man and no other use for the emotions that nature placed in him, except to spend his life in glorifying His maker? Imagine taking a child from play and the life and activity that nature has made necessary for its being, and seeking to make him understand something that no preacher can possibly comprehend.

Again, as to the simple nature of the God-head, the catechism says: "There are three persons in the God-head; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one

God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." Imagine a family spending the whole Sabbath unravelling a mystery like this. It is evident that any child whose mind has been permanently twisted by this wondrous logic would later be found visiting legislative bodies and imploring them to pass laws to blot the sun from the sky on the Sabbath Day.

Here is Number 7:

Question: What are the decrees of God?

Answer: The decrees of God are His eternal purpose according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He has fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.

After the child had been made to thoroughly understand how to harmonize freedom and responsibility of man with the statement that God had foreordained whatever comes to pass, he might then on pain of hell tackle number 8:

Question: What is the work of creation?

Answer: The work of the creation is God's making all things of nothing, by word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

Any child could understand how God, as the catechism says, is a "spirit" and could make all things out of nothing, Himself included. God's justice to man is lucidly explained in the Westminster Catechism which tells the Sabbath Day student that "the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit."

Question 16 and answer make this a living issue:

Question: Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

Answer: The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

The answer to the seventeenth question says: "The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery."

* * *

There are thousands of generations between the first man, if there ever was one, and the boy who likes activity and play on the Sabbath Day. Unless the boy is perverse and wicked he should understand the justice of being condemned to an estate of sin and misery because Adam made a covenant, not only for himself, but for all his posterity. It is not worth while to quote further from the Westminster Catechism. This brutal creed runs on for 107 questions and answers. And this is the *shorter* catechism!

It is amazing to think that any human being with ordinary intelligence would accept such doctrine now. It is still more amazing that in spite of the brazen effrontery of the Lord's Day Alliance, legislative bodies should help to enforce such teaching upon the young. But even this is not sufficiently terrible for a Sabbath Day diversion. In answer to Question 19 we are told, "All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." Of course, no one would believe

this today except on fear of eternal torture. Does the fear never enter the minds of these parsons that God might punish them eternally for believing that He is such a monster?

* * *

When one thinks of this organization with its senseless leaflets, its stern endeavors, its blank despair, its half-shut eyes blinking at life, one is reminded of the frogs in the green scum-covered pond in the woods who sit on their haunches in the dark and croak all day. No doubt these frogs believe that the germ infested pond is a sacred pool. They are oblivious of the rolling, living ocean that lies just beyond.

Dr. Speer, like the other members of the Lord's Day Alliance, is very sure that one of the chief occupations of Sunday should be attending church. But what church, pray? We are informed that any preacher is better to listen to and read from than any editor, lawyer or other person. Most of us have heard all sorts of preachers. We have listened to some whose churches could only be filled if the Lord's Day Alliance should succeed and make it an offense punishable by death not to go to church. We have heard preachers who had something to say and could say it well. There is as much difference in the views and ability of preachers as in other men. Would Dr. Speer think that we should go to hear the Fundamentalists or the Unitarians? Should we listen to the Holy Rollers or the Modernists?

There are few men outside of the Lord's Day Alliance who would care to listen to their

favorite preacher for a *full day* and there are few preachers who would undertake to talk for a whole day. What, then, must one do for the rest of the time? One simply cannot sleep *all day* on Sunday.

* * *

In all this literature we are constantly urged to preserve our "American Sabbath." Is there any special holiness that lurks around an "American Sabbath"? Are not European Christians as competent to determine the right way to employ their time on Sundays as American Christians? The Lord's Day folk say that reading the Sunday newspapers, playing golf, riding in automobiles, and witnessing baseball games and movies is "un-American." This compound word has been used to cover a multitude of sins. What it means nobody knows. It is bunkum meant to serve every cause, good and bad alike. By what license does the Lord's Day Alliance call its caricature of Sunday an "American Sabbath?" On what grounds does it urge it as against the European Sabbath? Is this nightmare which the Lord's Day Alliance is so anxious to force upon the United States a product of America? Everyone knows that Sunday, with the rest of the Christian religion, came to us from Europe. The weird ideas of the Lord's Day Alliance are European. When and how it came to us is worth finding out.

Jesus and His disciples did not believe in the Jewish Sabbath. They neither abstained from work nor play. St. Paul, specially, condemned the setting apart of days and said to his dis-

ciples, "Ye observe days and months and times and years. I am afraid of ye lest I have bestowed upon ye labor in vain."

The early fathers did not approve of any such day as the Lord's Day Alliance insists shall be fastened upon America. St. Jerome and his group attended church services on Sunday, but otherwise pursued their usual occupations. St. Augustine calls Sunday a festal day and says that the Fourth Commandment is in no literal sense binding upon Christianity. Even Luther and Calvin enjoined no such a day upon the Christians as these moderns wish to fasten upon America that the churches may be filled. The righteous John Knox "played bowls" on Sunday, and in his voluminous preaching used no effort to make Sunday a day of gloom wherein people should abstain from work and play. It was not until 1595 that an English preacher of Suffolk first insisted that the Jewish Sabbath should be maintained. The controversy over this question lasted for a hundred years and resulted in a law proscribing every kind of Sunday recreation, even "vainly and profanely walking for pleasure." England soon reacted against this blue Sabbath and permitted trading, open theatres and frivolity in the afternoon and evening. Under the leadership of the Church of England the Sabbath no longer was a day of gloom and despair.

* * *

The real American Sabbath was born in Scotland after the death of John Knox. It fits the stern hills, the bleak moors and the unfriendly climate of this northern land. It was

born of fear and gloom and it lives by fear and gloom. Early in the Seventeenth Century, Scotland adopted this stern theory of the Jewish Sabbath and applied it ruthlessly. The Westminster Confession was adopted by the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland in 1647 and has remained the formal standard of faith to the present day. Ordinary recreations were disallowed. Books and music were forbidden except such as were recognized as religious in a narrow sense. No recreation but whiskey-drinking remained. This Presbyterian Sabbath of Scotland was brought to New England by the early settlers of America and is, in fact, a Scotch Sabbath—not an American Sabbath.

Even in spite of the natural gloom and cold of Scotland, Sunday strictness has been greatly modified there in the last fifty years. It is not the present Scotch Sabbath that these modern Puritans insist on forcing upon America. It is the old, ferocious, Scotch Sabbath of the Westminster Confession. It was brought from a land of gloom into a land of sunshine, and the Lord's Day Alliance prefers the gloom and hardness of this outworn, out-lived Scotch Sabbath to the sunshine and joy that comes with a fertile soil, a mild climate and natural human emotions.

It is almost unbelievable that a handful of men without reason or humanity, should be able to force their cruel dogmas upon the people. Not one in twenty of the residents of the United States believes in the Sabbath of the Lord's Day Alliance. Our cities, villages,

and even country districts, protest against the bigotry and intolerance of the Lord's Day Alliance and their kind. Still in spite of this, by appeal to the obsolete statutes, religious prejudice, crass ignorance and unfathomable fanaticism, they carry on their mighty campaign of gloom.

After long years of effort, with the lazy, cowardly public that does not want to be disturbed, the Legislature of New York, in the face of the opposition of the Lord's Day Alliance, managed to pass a law providing that incorporated cities and towns should have the right to legalize baseball games and moving picture shows on Sunday after two o'clock in the afternoon and charge an admission fee for seeing the entertainment. Why after two o'clock? The answer is perfectly plain: It is possible that someone might be forced into church in the morning if there was nowhere else to go. Were the hours after two o'clock any less sacred in the laws of Moses and the prophets than the hours before two o'clock? Or was Legislature induced to pass this law simply to give the minister a privilege that it grants to no one else?

Ours is a cosmopolitan country, made up of all sorts of people with various creeds. There should be room enough to allow each person to spend Sunday and every other day according to his own pleasure and his own profit. In spite of the Lord's Day Alliance and all other alliances, it is too late in the history of the world to bring back the Mosaic Sabbath. Regardless of their best endeavors it will prob-

ably never again be a crime punishable by death to work or play on what they are pleased to call the Lord's Day. Those ministers who have something to say that appeals to men and women will be able to make themselves heard without a law compelling people to go to church. If the Lord's Day Alliance can provide something equally attractive to compete with the Sunday newspapers, golf, baseball games, movies and the open air, they will get the trade. If they cannot provide such entertainment, then in spite of all their endeavors the churches will be vacant. It is time that those who believe in intolerance, and in freedom, should make themselves heard in no uncertain way. It is time that men should determine to defend their right to attend to their own affairs and live their own lives, regardless of the bigots who in all ages have menaced the welfare of the world and the liberty of man.