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DEATH

HALL.—On September 29, at his residence, Queen street, John Joseph Hall, accountant, aged 74.—R.I.P.

BLANEY.—On October 5, at her residence, Anderson's Bay Road, Bridget, beloved wife of Captain John Blaney; aged 61 years.—Requiescat in pace.

MARRIAGE.

CROWE—BOURNIQUE.—On September 23, at the Pro-Cathedral, Christchurch, by the Very Rev. Dean O'Donnell, Daniel, only son of John Crowe, Tinwald, to Marie Josephine, only child of the late Auguste Bournique, Chavannes, France.



To promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.

LEO XIII. to the N.Z. TABLET.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1903.

A 'SABBATH' CONTROVERSY

**B**ACTERIOLOGISTS tell us of a pestiferous microbe which is endowed with such amazing vitality that it will endure without wincing six months' imprisonment in a block of solid ice and stand boiling water for six hours on end before you can be sure that it has 'passed in its checks.' In the wide field of discussion there are fallacies as tenacious of life as that tough and enduring microscopic pest. One of these is the Sabbatarian fallacy. It is of Puritan growth and cultivation and shows itself once in a while—usually in a spasm of controversy and protest—in countries in which Puritan creeds or Puritan ideals are found among us; it is at one time a protest against the signing of the Journal of our House of Representatives on the 'Sabbath' morning; at another, against the holding of an urgent Cabinet meeting on the 'Sabbath'; anon, against the running of trains on the 'Sabbath' to suburban centres or church openings, and at frequent intervals the running of tramcars on the 'Sabbath' day has been made the subject of hot denunciation and long-drawn controversy in every great centre of population in New Zealand. Auckland has just had its spasm of discussion and voting on this perennial topic, and the temper displayed was distinctly reminiscent of the swift exchange of fiery words and pleiocene skulls and chunks of old red sandstone that broke up the scientific society upon the Stanislav.

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In every instance the word 'Sabbath' is used as if it meant Sunday—a name which seems to be 'tapu' to the average Puritan preacher and church adherent. They serenely forget that Sunday or Lord's Day is not the seventh, but the first day of the week; that the Sabbath is really the seventh day, or Saturday; and that the application of the term Sabbath (without other addition) to the Christian Sunday is merely a bit of ill-informed religious slang dating back only to the Sabbatarian Controversy and the hard and unspacious Judais-

ing days that produced Praise-God-Barebones and Hew-Agog-in-pieces-before-the-Lord. Ministers of religion, in Auckland and elsewhere, might at least be expected at this time of day not to confound the Jewish Sabbath with the Christian Sunday. The precept of observing the Sabbath (Saturday) was completely abrogated in the Christian Church. The Sacred Day of the New Dispensation, 'the Lord's Day' (Apoc. i., 10), was to be celebrated on that 'first day of the week' on which the Saviour of the world rose from the dead. Sunday was the weekly feast of the Resurrection, as the Sabbath had been of the Creation. The observance of Sunday does not rest on the natural law. Neither is it commanded by any written positive Divine precept. 'No regulations for its observance,' says the Presbyterian divine, Schaff, 'are laid down in the New Testament, nor, indeed, is its observance even enjoined. . . . The Lord's Day was not a continuation of the Jewish Sabbath . . . but a substitute for it.' Protestants accept the change from Saturday to Sunday on the sole authority of the Church's tradition which they affect to despise, and in direct violation of their alleged ground-work principle: 'The Bible and the Bible only.'

The Jewish Sabbath (Saturday) and the Christian Sunday differed widely in their chief purpose. The Sabbath was primarily a day of rest. The Sunday was ever primarily a day of prayer and worship. The law of Sunday rest arose gradually, as a protection for the law of worship. Lecky's words on the change are worth quoting here. He says, in his 'History of European Morals' (vol. ii., pp. 244-245):—'The celebration of the first day of the week, in commemoration of the Resurrection, and as a period of religious exercises, dates from the earliest age of the Church. The Christian festival was carefully distinguished from the Jewish Sabbath, with which it never appears to have been confounded till the close of the sixteenth century; but some Jewish converts, who considered the Jewish law to be still in force, observed both days. In general, however, the Christian festival alone was observed, and the Jewish Sabbatical obligation, as St. Paul most explicitly affirms, no longer rested upon the Christians. The grounds of the observance of Sunday were the manifest propriety and expediency of devoting a certain portion of time to devout exercises, the tradition which traced the sanctification of Sunday to apostolic times, and the right of the Church to appoint certain seasons to be kept holy by its members. When Christianity acquired an ascendancy in the Empire, its policy on this subject was manifested in one of the laws of Constantine, which, without making any direct reference to religious motives, ordered that, "on the day of the sun," no servile work should be performed except agriculture, which, being dependant on the weather, could not, it was thought, be reasonably postponed. Theodosius took a step further, and suppressed the public spectacles on that day. During the centuries that immediately followed the dissolution of the Roman Empire, the clergy devoted themselves with great and praiseworthy zeal to the suppression of labor both on Sundays and on the other leading Church holidays. More than one law was made, forbidding all Sunday labor, and this prohibition was reiterated by Charlemagne in his Capitularies. Several Councils made decrees on the subject.' They laid down the obligation of spending the greater part of the day in devotional exercises, and forbade such work as would interfere with the due discharge of this sacred duty. Up to the change of religion in England, the people recognised the obligation of hearing Matins, Mass, and Vespers. Mass in those times was preceded by the public recitation of Matins—the whole function occupying over two hours. The letter of the modern discipline is satisfied by simply hearing a Low Mass. But the spirit of the law requires something more than this. Prayer, good reading, instruction, etc., are duties which no one can neglect without danger to his soul. Innocent recreation is perfectly lawful in due moderation, and in due subservience to the great end for which the Sunday observance is primarily intended.

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