

A

**SECOND LETTER**

**ON THE LATE**

**POST OFFICE AGITATION.**

**BY**

**CHARLES JOHN VAUGHAN, D. D.**

**HEAD MASTER OF HARROW SCHOOL, AND LATE FELLOW OF  
TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.**

**LONDON:**

**JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET:  
CROSSLEY, HARROW.**

**MDCCCL-**

LONDON : PRINTED BY W. NICOL, SHAKSPEARE PRESS, PALL MALL.

A

SECOND LETTER,

&c.

MY DEAR SIR,<sup>1</sup>

It has been satisfactory to me to receive, from many excellent and well-informed persons, assurances of their entire concurrence in the sentiments of my former Letter. I am neither surprised nor alarmed to find myself assailed, in other quarters, by loud and severe animadversions. You, Sir, have occupied an intermediate ground. You are too well aware of the particular circumstances which occasioned my letter,

<sup>1</sup> Lest another inference should possibly be drawn, it is right to state that this Letter (like the former) is addressed to no one whose name is known to the Public.

to accuse me of a gratuitous interference in a wearisome and unthankful controversy. Your strictures, therefore, are confined to some particular points in my argument, which you regard as requiring further elucidation. And you urge me, not so much for your own satisfaction as for that of others, to take the same opportunity of clearing away some misapprehensions to which, in the judgment of persons unacquainted with my opinions, my former Letter may have been exposed.

Half, and more than half, the arguments of my Reviewers would have been felt by themselves to be irrelevant, if they had taken the trouble to observe the circumstances under which my Letter was written. It was not to the general question of the observance of the Sunday, nor even of the extent to which it may be right that the Post Office should observe it, that my remarks were directed. The question before me was this. I am urged, as an act of religious duty, to protest against a particular Order of the Government. I am told, in the most sacred place, that a particular

Regulation of the London Post Office is to be regarded no less as an affront to religion, and a violation of the rights of conscience, than as an infraction of the liberties of England. An examination of the question leads me to an opposite conclusion. I believe that the measure thus stigmatized will, so far as it extends, promote rather than impede the interests of religion, will, on the whole, facilitate rather than interfere with the attendance of that class which it concerns upon the ordinances of worship, while it leaves untouched those wider and more general considerations which would involve, if seriously and consistently entertained, a revolution in the management of the whole department. I refuse, therefore, to protest. I refuse to assert, what I see no reason to believe, that the national observance of the Lord's Day will suffer from this particular modification of an existing system. I refuse to assert, what I think it a most unchristian malignancy to suspect, that the object of this new Regulation was that which is disavowed and repudiated by its authors. I cannot discover in it an in-

sidious but resolute attack upon the holy ordinance of the Christian Sunday. It would have been in me an act of ridiculous affectation to express an alarm in which I did not participate; or to remonstrate against a measure of detail, by way of expressing a principle which was not at issue. So far, however, my duty was but negative. It was discharged by refusing my signature. Nor was it until I heard that refusal (which had ultimately proved sufficiently general to defeat the remonstrance altogether) commented upon afterwards, from the pulpit, in terms, to say the least, of grave disapprobation, that it ever occurred to me to vindicate myself and others from a suspicion of indifference or of timidity, by a statement of the real nature and object of the measure thus impugned.

It was enough, therefore, for my own vindication, enough, I repeat, to justify my refusal to protest, to show that the mere transmission of letters through the London Post Office on the Sunday, taken in connection with its avowed object on the one hand, and with its concomitant measures

of relief on the other, was not that affront to religion, that disparagement of Divine ordinances, which alone could necessitate the interposition of a Christian nation for its discomfiture. This was the object of my Letter. This object, steadily kept in view, necessarily confined my argument within narrow limits, and excluded many topics of discussion to which the opponents of the measure would gladly divert our attention.

For example, a Clerical antagonist,<sup>2</sup> for whose character and evident sincerity I entertain great respect,—and whose name, as he well knows, is enough to secure for him at my hands a degree of forbearance and courtesy which he would think it a dereliction of duty to reciprocate,—complains that I have not enunciated in my Letter any positive opinions of my own as to the grounds of the observance of the Lord's Day.<sup>3</sup> To supply this deficiency, he has had recourse to my published Sermons ;

<sup>2</sup> Reply to Dr. Vaughan's Letter on the late Post Office Agitation. By the Rev. J. R. Pears, M. A. Master of the Bath Grammar School.

<sup>3</sup> Reply, page 10.

and, selecting from a Sermon preached on a particular occasion an incidental notice of the question, continues his complaint that there also my language on this subject is vague and unsatisfactory. I can direct him, if a time of unwonted leisure should ever permit him to avail himself of the reference, to three consecutive Discourses on the Lord's Day, contained in a volume of Parochial Sermons, published four years ago, in which I have entered fully into the discussion, and expressed myself in language to which I still heartily subscribe. You, my dear Sir, will not require to be informed, that there, as everywhere, I have spoken of the Lord's Day, as every Christian man must speak and think of it, with veneration, with thankfulness, with an earnest and watchful jealousy for its honour. The Author of the "Reply" would have expressed himself, doubtless, in language more eloquent and more impressive, but he could scarcely have used any more decisive as to his own convictions, than that in which the national observance of the Sunday is there enforced. For his

information, not for yours, I quote the sentences which follow.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, I would desire to press upon you the responsibility under which the possession of such an ordinance places us, whether we will hear or whether we will forbear. A responsibility to God—for which we must, each and all of us, give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. But a responsibility also to our country, and to generations yet perhaps to come. Other nations once had this privilege of a Christian Sabbath; but they have almost or utterly sinned it away. They neglected and abused it, till God took away, by a just retribution, almost the very name of His day from amongst them. There are countries in Christendom, in which Sunday is known almost only as a day of amusement or of common business. England too may one day be brought to this state, unless our responsibilities are better remembered than they are now. Let us, at all events, so honour this holy day ourselves, that our children may inherit it from us as one of the most precious of all the gifts of God. “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

If any later expression of my opinions be demanded by the anxious vigilance of my inquisitor, let me add a short passage from a Sermon preached to a more youthful con-

<sup>4</sup> Parochial Sermons, page 291.

gregation on the Sunday before my Letter was written.<sup>5</sup>

And shall we, a later, but certainly not a holier generation, despise and tread underfoot a gift so gracious?<sup>6</sup> Shall we thanklessly weigh and measure the amount of observance by which we may avoid condemnation in the use of it? Shall we either count it a weekly burden, a deprivation of one seventh part of life's legitimate enjoyments; or else turn it from a day of heavenly into one of earthly pleasure, and, because we dare not openly secularize it, presume to nullify it altogether? My brethren, be wiser: wiser as to your own good, wiser as to your own happiness. Be assured that a wasted Sunday is the precursor of a sinful or an unhappy week. Be assured, on the other hand, that He whose gift it is — a gift of love unspeakable, even of that love which laid down life for us — will make it a happy as well as a profitable day, to all who accept it as His gift, and use it for the purpose of growing in the knowledge and love of its Giver.

I have thus far followed the guidance of the Author of the Reply into a field which I still maintain to be foreign to the subject. I owe it to myself, and to the office with which I am entrusted, to leave no room for doubt as to my opinions on so serious a

<sup>5</sup> MS. Sermon, preached in the Chapel of Harrow School, Nov. 11, 1849.

<sup>6</sup> The Lord's Day.

question of duty, even at the risk of embarrassing for the moment a discussion which lies properly in a narrower compass. But the concession, so far as I am concerned, shall end here. I assumed, throughout my Letter, that the national observance of the Sunday is a solemn and sacred duty. But we may surely be allowed to discuss the objects and probable results of a particular change in the working of the London Post Office, without obtruding upon our readers the enquiry whether the Lord's Day is identical with the Jewish Sabbath, whether the sanctity of the Christian Sunday is derived from the Law or from the Gospel, from "the letter which killeth" or "the spirit that giveth life." If indeed I were one of those who believe every enactment of the Mosaic Sabbath to be of rigid and perpetual authority, and who yet do and exact on that day, without scruple or remorse, acts which, if so, are worthy of death; or if, while admitting the lawfulness, on that day, for an individual or for a family, of works neither of mercy, strictly speaking, nor of necessity, but only of

*extreme convenience*, (and what more can be said in defence of many of those domestic arrangements with which, I imagine, even the Author of the Reply, even on the Sunday, can scarcely dispense?) I yet denied the possibility of a *nation's* having any such household duties as even the arrival of the Lord's Day must rather modify than supersede; if I regarded it as a plain and obvious sin for a nation, under any circumstances, to suffer any one of its officers to do any portion of his common work on its holy day; if, in short, I regarded the question as thus foreclosed, by a plain and unequivocal revelation of the Divine will, excluding the consideration of motives, of circumstances, of consequences, altogether;—then certainly, sharing my opponent's principles, I might have used, with more or less of his severity, something at least of his language; though, even then, I trust I might have possessed sufficient discernment to distinguish between a question of principle, and a question of detail; sufficient respect for the understandings, and regard for the consistency, of my neigh-

bours, to have invited them to a protest rather against the permission of any Sunday work in any Post Office, than against a particular adjustment of that burden to which some had always been subjected.

There is another region, besides, into which I must resolutely refuse to follow my opponent; the region of personalities. He is evidently an adept in the occult science of *motives*. He speaks, with the irritation of a baffled magician, of any one whose spirit he cannot discern. He confesses that I have puzzled him. He is unwilling to suspect one motive, unable to impute another. The question is left doubtful.<sup>7</sup> But it is otherwise with Mr. Rowland Hill. He lies helplessly open to the dissecting knife of the operator. And with unflinching severity is it applied.<sup>8</sup> Hostility to the Sabbath, enmity against religion — these are visibly his principles. All else is a veil, a cloke, a mask. When he speaks of desiring rest on the Sunday for his subordinates, he means labour. When he prefaces his Minute with the profession

<sup>7</sup> Reply, page 21.

<sup>8</sup> Reply, page 16, &c.

of regard for the Sunday, he speaks but to deceive, and smiles (*vainly* smiles, says my Reviewer) at the easy credulity of his victims.<sup>9</sup> When he not only promises, but effects, a measure of undeniable relief,—the discontinuance, for example, of a second Sunday delivery,—this is only to disguise his restless spirit of antichristian malignity, that he may proceed, more covertly, but not less surely, to his real object, the annihilation of an ordinance of God.

I am not the apologist of Mr. Rowland Hill. I know him only, as all the world knows him, as the originator and accomplice of one of the boldest and most beneficial of all the achievements of modern civilization. It will require more than mere assertion, to attach to his name those odious imputations which it is necessary for the impugnors of the late change to suggest and to foster. And what, after all, are the grounds on which such imputations rest? Mr. Rowland Hill, says the *Record*, was a Director of a Railway which refused Return tickets extending from Saturday to Monday,

<sup>9</sup> Reply, page 19.

and thus compelled its passengers to travel on the Sunday.<sup>10</sup> Mr. Rowland Hill, says the Author of the Reply, is an officer of that department of the Government, which is notorious above all others for its desecration of the Sabbath :<sup>11</sup> a department of the Government, we may add, so beyond all others unfortunate, that to it alone is denied the possibility of self-reformation, and every effort after amendment is branded by anticipation as hypocrisy and imposture.

My antagonist is fond of recurring to first principles. When he was engaged, some years ago, in what he now denominates "the easy and pleasant task"<sup>12</sup> of a somewhat similar controversy with a very different Correspondent,<sup>13</sup> he constructed for that Gentleman, in a catechetical form, a sort of *Rudimenta Minora* of Theology,<sup>14</sup> adapted to what he conceived to be the extent of his religious attainments. Start-

<sup>10</sup> The *Record*, December 3, 1849.

<sup>11</sup> Reply, page 19.

<sup>12</sup> Reply, page 4.

<sup>13</sup> Letter to the Hon. Grantley F. Berkeley, on the Delivery of Letters on the Lord's Day. By the Rev. J. R. Pears, M. A.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* page 10.

ing from the immortality of the soul, he descended, by stages judiciously graduated, to a humbler and more practical question—the Sunday labours of the Bath Post Office. For me, a somewhat more advanced pupil, he has drawn up a series—indeed two series<sup>15</sup>—of rather less elementary propositions, ending with this revolting (though certainly unquestionable) truism, “That it is better for sixty thousand letters to be burned, unopened, than for one Post Office Clerk to perish in hell for ever.” Now, if I might be permitted to assume for a moment an office which my opponent appears to regard as peculiarly his own, that of a theological preceptor of adults, I would start, like him, from some elementary axiom, such as the authority of Revelation, or the Inspiration of the Bible, and, leading him, by an easy train of reasoning, through a few brief truisms on the properties of Christian charity, I should not despair of gaining his acquiescence at last in this singularly startling paradox, That it is the duty of every Christian to believe his neighbour’s word until it is

<sup>15</sup> Reply, pages 12, 20.

proved to be false, and to put upon his conduct, not the least but the most favourable construction of which it is reasonably capable. Tried by this test, the personalities of this question would be scattered to the winds. It might remain to be considered, whether in the measure of the Government there had been anything of mistake or miscalculation; whether their hopes had been too sanguine, or their assertions too positive; but for imputations of malignant design, of intentional deception, no place whatever could have been found.

When the opponents of a measure turn aside from the consideration of its inherent merits, to that of the secret motives and intentions of its author, the attempt injures their cause far more than the success of the attempt could aid it. No man would resort to such an argument, till all else had been exhausted. And if unhappily such outrages upon common honour and morality be excused, as here, by the plea of zeal for religion, it is well if the cause of religion itself do not suffer by its association with practices so unworthy.

But even upon the merits of the case my Reviewers are ready to join issue. I am accused of the grossest ignorance of the facts involved in the discussion. The *Record*, refraining with an unwonted tenderness from the imputation of a more corrupt motive, or unwilling to expend upon a less formidable enemy any portion of that artillery which must be reserved entire for the devoted head of Mr. Rowland Hill, is contented to represent me as “a respectable man, occupied for the last three months in reading nothing but the *Times*,” and an instructive example of the pernicious influence of its “suppressions.”<sup>16</sup> Now, if the burden of this charge is a preference of the *Times* to the *Record* as a channel of political information, I must plead guilty. But, if it be intended, as the context implies, that I borrowed from that or any other Newspaper the statements of facts contained in my Letter, I can only reply that the charge is false. Not one assertion is there made, which was not obtained by explicit information from what every candid enquirer

<sup>16</sup> The *Record*, as above.

would regard as the most authentic source. I do not for one moment hesitate to confess that I regard an official Government return as better evidence on a question of fact than the irresponsible publications of a "Lord's Day Society." If the latter informs me that "the new Sabbath labour already employs a considerably larger number of men on the Sabbath than was professed by Mr. Hill's Minute;" and if I learn from what I must regard as higher authority that the amount of extra-work to be done on Sundays in the London Office will, in all probability, be very shortly reduced to the employment of *six* persons, and may ultimately be accomplished even without *any* such addition, nay, with an actual *diminution* of the original number; while, at the same time, more than one hundred and ninety persons, who have hitherto performed regular work on Sundays, are set entirely free, within the London District itself; can I hesitate which to follow?

But, on other points, the conflict of evidence is less real than nominal. The Society for Promoting the Observance of the

Lord's Day has forwarded to me a table of returns from its Secretaries and Correspondents, showing the hours of labour in seventy-three Country Post Offices, both before and since the recent Order. It is there stated, that, "putting together all these seventy-three Post Towns, the aggregate number of additional hours for which the Post Offices are now closed, does not exceed one hundred and ten hours, being on an average one hour and a half for each place." Even in that document are contained the names of several Towns in which the relief thus afforded has amounted to four hours of additional rest on the Sunday. But I will allow, for argument's sake, the entire correctness of their calculations. In seventy-three Country Post Offices the average of relief amounts but to one hour and a half. The Government, in the meantime, has received returns, not from seventy-three, but from upwards of four hundred and eighty Towns, in which the amount of relief has varied from one half-hour to seven hours on the Sunday, and the average has amounted to between three and four hours. Where is the real incon-

sistency of these statements? The Lord's Day Society, on a much smaller induction, and with materials (it may be) carefully selected, arrives at one result; the Government, on larger and less partial information, presents another. But in this case again, I ask, can I doubt for one moment which to follow?

You express some hesitation as to the justice of one statement contained in my Letter, that the new Regulation involves no change of principle.<sup>17</sup> You consider that the attendance on Sunday in the London Post Office, whatever its extent, has been hitherto private and unnoticed, whereas in future it will be public and notorious. Nor can I deny that the publicity which has been given to the subject by the recent agitation has attracted to the proceedings of the Post Office a degree of public attention to which they were never before exposed. But the distinction you draw, though I understand it, seems to me somewhat arbitrary. The attendance of the twenty-six<sup>18</sup> will *henceforth*, at all events, be as notorious

<sup>17</sup> Letter I. page 8.      <sup>18</sup> Letter I. Note 7, page 8.

as that of the twenty-five,<sup>19</sup> or the six.<sup>20</sup> Henceforth, at all events, the two objects of Sunday attendance will be separated by no such line of distinction. If the one does not involve publicity, does not constitute what can fairly be called an opening of the London Post Office, neither will the other. The Public will have no admission. The London Public will be unaffected by the change. As far as London is concerned, the Office will still be closed. If the former attendance was not enough to open it, the present Regulation, when the tumult of this agitation has once subsided, will work no less privately. If it is otherwise now, whose fault is it?

The Author of the Reply, with singular inconsistency, has thus disposed of this part of the question. "The Office in London has been considered as uniformly at rest, and always spoken of as such by both parties, the slight exceptions being not of a nature to be cited honestly against that position."<sup>21</sup> Slight exceptions! Is this the

<sup>19</sup> Letter I. page 7.      <sup>20</sup> See above, page 17.

<sup>21</sup> Reply, page 18.

same hand which penned the ninth axiom?<sup>22</sup> Twenty-six Post Office clerks, involved in perils such as he has painted, a slight exception, not of a nature to be cited honestly! Why then the twenty-five, or the six, or the gradually vanishing number, of *additional* clerks required by the new measure?

Again, you can see no obvious connection between the additional Sunday labour in London and the additional Sunday rest in the country Offices. Is it fair, you ask, to append to a measure of relief a condition of an opposite kind? You would be the last man in the world, I well know, to impute to me (even as “an elegant close to a period”<sup>23</sup>) the horrid and impious crime of “striking a balance with Jehovah” by “offering Him a lesser sin instead of a greater.”<sup>24</sup> You would not call it a sin in one member of a family to endeavour to lighten the Sunday labour of another by the sacrifice of a portion of his own Sunday leisure. You would not call it a violation of the consciences of others, or an exchange

<sup>22</sup> See above, page 14. Reply, page 13.

<sup>23</sup> Reply, page 7.

<sup>24</sup> Reply, page 6.

of sin for sin, if the Master of a family proposed to his servants such an equalization of their Sunday employments. And on the same principle, if there be any connection between Sunday work in London and Sunday relief in the country, I cannot admit for one moment that it is a sin to propose to a clerk in the London Post Office the discharge of a duty which shall lighten the work elsewhere, not of one, but of tens and perhaps hundreds, of his fellow-servants; and this, without forfeiting for himself the opportunity of attending Divine service twice on the Lord's Day, with all comfort and quietness, and with leisure, besides, for reflection and repose.<sup>25</sup> Are domestic servants, to speak generally, even in Christian families, in a more favourable position than this for their religious welfare? The Author of the Reply objects to these "national" views of the question. With him, "national" is the opposite of "scriptural" and "spiritual."<sup>26</sup> He can see nothing but the individual; the "one Post Office clerk." He would deny the

<sup>25</sup> Letter I. pages 7, 8.

<sup>26</sup> Reply, page 8.

applicability to a nation of the command to "bear one another's burdens." What in a family would be virtues, in a wider sphere are sins.

Your view, I am persuaded, is not thus microscopic. You will grant the conclusion, if the premises are established. Your only doubt is as to the effect of the labour here upon the labour there. The Government have coupled the burden and the relief; but is there any real and natural connection? It was the object of my Letter to indicate, chiefly by references to Mr. Hill's Minute, the existence of this connection. I will not repeat now the obvious statement that the cessation of the Sunday detention of letters in London will obviate at once those circuitous methods of communication by which the detention was formerly evaded, and Sunday labour, in various ways, materially increased.<sup>27</sup> I will rather select the point to which you particularly direct my attention. And I would show you, as briefly as possible, the operation of the new Order in diminishing the amount of letters

<sup>27</sup> Letter I. note 8, page 10.

delivered and read, written and posted, in the country on the Sunday.<sup>28</sup>

Under the old system, the average number of letters passing through the London Office was greater by six per cent. on Saturday than on other days. Why? Because it was known that the following was a blank post. If not transmitted before Sunday, they must wait in London throughout that day. Now the augmentation of letters passing through London on Saturday caused an augmentation of letters delivered and read in the country on Sunday. The effect of the new Regulation is at least to obviate this *excess*, and to reduce the Sunday morning delivery in the country to the measure of an ordinary day. The labours of sorting and of distribution will be diminished obviously to a proportionate extent.

Again, the average number of letters passing through London on Monday was greater, not by six, but by twenty-five per cent., than on other days. Such letters must have been posted in the country either on Saturday evening or on Sunday. But

<sup>28</sup> Letter I. note <sup>10</sup>, pages 11, 12.

Saturday evening, under the old system, was in most Towns a blank post time. Sunday, therefore, was the day to which the excess was to be attributed. The knowledge that letters posted on Saturday evening would lie in London till the Monday, led to a very general habit of either writing, or at least posting, letters on the Sunday. The latter habit, equally with the former, involved a corresponding increase of the Sunday labours of the country Offices. Under the present system, the temptation to prefer Sunday for either purpose is removed. Saturday now offers equal advantages with any other day for sending letters from the country through London. In the same degree, the burdens of the country Offices on Sunday are lightened: the *excess*, at least, of those burdens, a marked and heavy excess, above those of common days, is effectually removed. And, beyond this, the religious feeling which leads so many to shrink from such an employment of the Lord's Day cannot but operate in diminishing the Sunday occupations (in this respect) of the country Offices even *below*

those of other days. Of the actual result, the relief actually experienced in the provincial Offices, I have before spoken.<sup>29</sup> And it is the cessation of the Sunday detention — in other words, the introduction of a Sunday transmission through London — to which, as you have seen, the result, whatever it be, is strictly and wholly due.

I believe that a similar examination of other details would establish with equal certainty this connection of cause and effect between the Regulation itself and the beneficial result. But, were it otherwise, is it a reasonable demand that the connection between the different sections of the new Order should be, in every point, capable of mathematical demonstration? Is every complex measure to be stigmatized as a fraud, because its component parts, however perfect their harmony, do not arise out of each other by a logical sequence? Might not even an apparently extraneous appendage (though I am far from regarding this as a just description of any part of the present Regulation) be ac-

<sup>29</sup> Letter I. page 13. See above, page 18.

cepted as at least an indication of the spirit and object of the framer?

There is yet another point, which has left on your mind, as on that of others, an unfavourable impression. The attendance of the additional Clerks on Sunday in the London Post Office is voluntary. In other words, a man whose conscience forbids him to attend on the Sunday shall not forfeit his situation by refusal. Does this imply, on the part of the Government, any misgiving as to the lawfulness of the duties proposed? It merely recognizes the possibility of such scruples, and extends to them the amplest toleration. That there *are* men who would think such attendance wrong, is a matter of fact: the Government tolerates, though it does not share, the opinion, and would prevent its operating harshly upon the fortunes of the conscientious recusant. How loud an outcry, from the very same quarters, would have followed a system of *compulsion*, may be inferred from the strange contradiction which "closes a period" in the "Reply." "He must be a very prejudiced man who calls the poor

clerk a voluntary agent in the matter, when he is enticed by a bribe, which his small salary makes an irresistible temptation, or compelled by the fear of the loss of his only means of subsistence.”<sup>30</sup> “The poor clerk” is not threatened with the loss of his subsistence : that he is not, was urged just now against the authors of the measure as a proof of conscious guilt or weakness.

But is it not, you ask, too strong a temptation to a man of infirm religious principles, to offer him a reward for Sunday labour? Can you expect him to resist the “bribe?” And if afterwards this voluntary labour should lie heavily on his conscience, how could you justify to yourself your own share in his transgression? Now, if the act proposed be in itself, and of necessity, a sin; if no consideration of motives or circumstances can justify the occupation of any portion of the Sunday in the most urgent of worldly concerns; he, certainly, is deeply guilty, who proposes it, even with an alternative, to the choice of his neighbour. But, if this be one of those questions

<sup>30</sup> Reply, page 19.

on which God's Word leaves scope, within certain limits, for the exercise of an individual judgment ; if, in reducing to practical detail the admitted duty of a religious observance of the Sunday, one man may conscientiously approve what another no less conscientiously condemns, and it remains only that "every man be fully persuaded in his own mind ;" then the demand made by this Regulation upon the candour and courage of those to whom it offers the work and the wages, is no greater than that which must daily be encountered by all who labour for their own bread, and would do so in the fear of God. To none does it propose, as the Author of the Reply would lead us to imagine, the surrender of religious instruction and worship, the abandonment of all opportunity of serious meditation, or the devotion of the Lord's Day to the service of a "godless or thoughtless multitude."<sup>31</sup> On the contrary, the possibility of such profanation, within the precincts to which its authority extends, the Order in question expressly and peremptorily precludes.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Reply, pages 13, 14.

<sup>32</sup> Letter I. pages 7, 8.

There remains, however, on the minds of many, an impression, scarcely affected by the most conclusive reply to individual objections, that the result, if not the object, of the late alteration will be a delivery of letters on the Sunday in London. Hitherto, it is said, the merchants of London have enjoyed, and have thought themselves entitled to enjoy, an advantage in this respect over the merchants of Bristol or of Liverpool. Letters arriving in London on the Sunday were in their possession at a far earlier hour on the Monday than that at which they could reach the hands of their provincial rivals. Can it be expected that the loss of this advantage will be borne with patience? Will not an irresistible clamour demand some compensation? And what can this compensation be, but a Sunday delivery of letters in London? Now let it be remembered, in the first place, that the advantage lost by London is not given to the country. No one pretends to say that by means of the Sunday transmission through London the provincial merchant will receive his letters *earlier* than the me-

tropolitan. The injury complained of is at last but equality. The complaint rests only on the supposition that the London merchant has a right to an *advantage* over his provincial competitor. And, if this advantage has been once lost; if the claim to superiority has once been set aside; if the interests of every country merchant throughout England are now concerned in preventing its restoration; may it not be expected that the clamours of London for the reestablishment of inequality will be balanced by the clamours of the provinces for the maintenance of equality? But, again, from what quarter shall we expect the demand for a Sunday delivery in London? The merchants of London have pledged themselves, by the terms of their late remonstrances, to the principle of Sunday observance. They have availed themselves of the *religious* argument in their recent agitation. They have urged the sacred right of every Englishman to his seventh day of rest. Is it to be supposed, that they who have resisted, on religious grounds, the slightest possible interference with the completeness

of the Sabbatical rest, are prepared now to revenge their disappointment by clamouring for a wide and sweeping desecration? If any examples of so lamentable an inconsistency should unhappily be presented, nothing more can be required, as an exposure of the *new* agitation, than a reference to the recorded principles of the old.

I have now discharged, however imperfectly, the task imposed upon me by circumstances which I must still deplore. Earnestly, most earnestly, do I desire the thankful and reverent observance of the Lord's Day, with which I believe our national as well as individual welfare to be closely, inseparably linked. Deeply do I lament the condition of those weary and comfortless labourers, who are cut off from the inestimable blessings to be derived from its holy rest. It is because I believe that many of the provincial officers of our national Post Office are involved in this calamity, and that the present measure contemplates, and in part effects, their

emancipation, that I have condemned the blind hostility with which it has been assailed, and laboured to expose the misrepresentations by which that hostility has been fostered.

While, however, the late alteration has been, in my opinion, a measure of relief, for which many will have cause to be thankful, it is not a final measure. The Government itself has not so regarded it. Other measures of Sunday relief have followed and are following it in quick succession. Already the order is given for the final closing (as a general rule) of every country Post Office on the Sunday, at ten o'clock in the morning. I have intimated in my former Letter the particular hopes which I entertain of a still further reform.<sup>33</sup> I do not

<sup>33</sup> Letter I. page 12. Nor is it perhaps altogether presumptuous to express a hope that the unrestricted *transmission* of letters on the Sunday may eventually be followed by an equally general *suspension* of their *delivery*; by which London and the country would be placed, in this respect, on a footing of perfect equality; the due observance of the Sunday being alike in both secured, with no injurious consequences, in either, to the business of the following day.

despair of the arrival of a day when every Post Office throughout England and Wales shall have followed yet more completely the example of the Post Office of London ; when the ordinary delivery of letters shall be totally suspended every where on the Sunday, while at the same time, from a due regard to the infinite necessities of a great country in an advanced stage of civilization, the sanctity of the day of rest is not so interpreted as to shorten practically by one the six days of labour. To this extent, at least, my own hopes and wishes are carried. If it should prove that even more than this can safely be attempted ; that the transmission, as well as the delivery, of letters may from the Saturday to the Monday be suspended ; far be it from me to raise a finger in hindrance of so unexpected, yet theoretically so desirable, a result. Let me only express a hope, that, if this demand be seriously urged upon the attention of the Government and the Legislature, it may not be made in a spirit which must rouse the just indignation of those to whom it is ad-

dressed, while it alienates the sympathy of every candid and reasonable mind.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

C. J. VAUGHAN.

LAPWORTH RECTORY,  
*December 29, 1849.*

*By the Same Author.*

---

SERMONS, chiefly Parochial. 8vo. 1845.

SERMONS, preached in the Chapel of Harrow School.  
8vo. 1847.

NINE SERMONS, preached for the most part in the  
Chapel of Harrow School. 12mo. 1849.

---

AN EARNEST APPEAL to the Master and Seniors  
of Trinity College, Cambridge, on the Revision of  
the Statutes. By TWO OF THE FELLOWS. 8vo.  
1840.