

ON SUNDAY EXHIBITIONS

What Clergymen Say of the Rembrandt's Experiment
[excerpt]

Dr. Canfield Thinks Picture Shows Are Better Than Base Ball or Club Card Playing

The Rev. Dr. A.[Andrew] J. Canfield, of the Church of Our Father, said: I consider it a very generous act on the part of the members of the Rembrandt Club to give all classes and equal opportunity to study art. So long as the community winks at ball playing and card playing in the clubs on Sunday, and allows such things to go on uninterrupted, I consider it a decided step toward improvement to open picture galleries and reading rooms on Sunday. There is a vast class who do not go to church, and if they do it is only for one hour of the day. They want some sort of amusement and entertainment, and yet their taste nor their conscience does not invite them to go to the ball games. They are respectable people, yet they do not believe in the Puritanical idea of keeping Sunday. Now, the opening of the Rembrandt Club's exhibition affords this class of people an opportunity for pleasure and education as well. I don't believe in forcing people to go to church, and the preaching must be of such a character as to interest people in their daily duties, and should be made as free as the necessary expenses will permit. The wealthy individuals in churches should contribute liberally beyond their pew rents toward the musical exercises and artistic embellishment of the church. In my judgment it would be an excellent thing if the churches were ornamented with pictures and frescoes and artistic designs, thus ministering to the æsthetic education of the people, at the same time enriching their minds by the presentation of lofty moral ideas. They should be made as free as possible, and poor people who are obliged to spend six days of the week amid unpleasant surroundings should be invited to enjoy the highest achievements of genius as manifested in every department, either in art galleries, libraries, reading rooms or places of worship on Sundays.

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Transcribed on 1 Aug 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY