THE ETHICS OF THE SABBATH.

BY DAVID PIRRET.

Ὡς φρονίμοις λέγω· κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὃ φημι.—PAUL.

Quid enim laboro, nisi ut veritas in (hac) quæstione explicetur?—CICERO.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., LONDON.
MDCCCLV.

EDINBURGH: T. CONSTABLE, PRINTER TO HER MAJESTY

PREFACE.

THE main subject of the following discussion is the obligation of the Sabbath. The argument is drawn from the dictates of conscience, and not from the statements of Scripture, or the results of experience. This forms the distinctive peculiarity of the present work. Some may be tempted to pronounce it impossible to prove the obligation of the Sabbath on natural principles. Let me ask the reader to suspend his judgment till he knows precisely *how much* is intended to be proved, and *how* this is attempted to be done.

The inquiry naturally assumes a philosophical, rather than a popular character. My aim throughout has been not so much to make a readable book, as to present sound argument in perspicuous language.

The critical remarks introduced in the first chapter seemed necessary to justify the present attempt; and they may be useful in calling attention to what I cannot help regarding as serious defects in most of the treatises on this subject hitherto published. The different steps of the main argument are considered in the five following chapters. In the two concluding ones, various questions are discussed which occupy at present a considerable share of public attention. On some of the points, more especially on some of those noticed in the last chapter, it would be unreasonable to expect entire unanimity, even among the friends of the Sabbath. I have freely stated what appears to me to be truth, without seeking to make my statements harmonize with any particular theory, or please any particular party. In so far as they are *true*, let them be received; in so far as they are *not* true, let them be rejected. The position, that Government has no *right* to open on the Sabbath such places of recreation as the Crystal Palace, I hold to be conclusively established.

The discussion is necessarily of a controversial character, yet it is so only in part. The greater portion of it will be found to be constructive, rather than de-

structive. Few objections have been noticed, except such as required to be removed, in order to the validity of the argument. If the reasoning be sound, a great host of objections are deprived of all force, and need no refutation. It has been my endeavour to treat the opinions of others respectfully, to meet their arguments fairly, and to exclude all invective and mere declamation. How far I have succeeded, the reader must determine.

The ground is, to a certain extent, new and untrodden. I do not presume to think that I have escaped error at every point, though I am fully persuaded of the truth of all the *essential* points. The work will not be fruitless, if it correct any of the false notions so prevalent with respect to the Sabbath, or direct the attention of its defenders to a branch of evidence hitherto very much neglected.

D. P.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VII.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ETHICS OF THE SABBATH.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY :—CRITICAL REMARKS AND STATEMENT OF THE ARGUMENT.

"WHAT a chimera," says Pascal, "is man! What a surprising novelty! What a confused chaos! What a subject of contradiction! A professed judge of all things, and yet a feeble worm of the earth; the great depositary and guardian of truth, and yet a mere medley of uncertainty; the glory and the scandal of the universe." The language is strong, but the whole history of human opinion clearly proves that it is not too strong. From the earliest ages down to the present time, men have differed widely in their sentiments on almost every subject. There are, indeed, a few truths deeply embedded in human nature, which have in all ages been generally

believed. They are, however, very few in number, and of the most general nature. And no sooner do we begin to descend from these first principles, than a thousand subordinate points arise, where divergence is possible. At any of these points, we may stop and inquire with the Roman Procurator, "What is truth?" But, alas! how seldom do we receive a certain reply! In some few cases, the answer returned may be plain and decided; but in many, the oracle is altogether dumb, and in multitudes more, the response is ambiguous. On many subjects, we must be content to know, that truth lies beyond the range of our vision, and on many others, that we can see it only "through a glass darkly."

In no province within the range of human thought, does there exist more uncertainty, than in the sphere of morals. True, there is general unanimity with respect to the fundamental principles of religion and morality, but nowhere do particular questions create a greater diversity of opinion, or lead to more frequent discussion. In innumerable cases, when theory comes to be applied in practice, conscience, whose prerogative it is to speak with authority, can scarcely make her voice be heard amidst the Babel-like confusion. Losing self-confidence, she is content to give out her commands in a whisper, or put them into the form of mere suggestions.

Still, we have the settled conviction, that, even in such cases, truth has a real and independent existence. Were this not the case, difference of opinion would cease to furnish any reason for controversy, and the search after truth might be given up in despair. Proteus-like, the phantom might assume ten thousand forms, and in all it would be equally unreal. *Opinion* would reign rightfully as "Queen of the world," and "Disposer of all things." Consciousness, however, gives us the most complete assurance, that truth has a real and absolute existence, and it cannot be that the "root of our nature is a lie." It is altogether unnecessary here, to prove that God has given us a law in conscience; that this law is universal; and that its clearly enounced dictates are not the result of arbitrary appointment on the part of God, but are in accordance with an objective standard of right, which we cannot but think to be eternal and independent, alike of the conscience of man and the will of God. The foundations of morality are laid in the relations which man sustains to God and to his fellow-men. Out of these relations necessarily arise corresponding duties, which must be as unchangeable and universal as are the relations whence they spring. The individual who fails to comply with all these moral requirements, fails to do his duty; and the individual who transgresses any of them does wrong.

There is thus an objective standard of right, to which the individual conscience ought ever to conform its dictates, and whose perfect embodiment can be found only in the nature of God. To deny this, would involve us in inextricable difficulties. If it be right for one man to hold certain opinions, and pursue a course of conduct in harmony with these opinions; and if it be, at the same time, right for another man to hold opposite opinions, and pursue a corresponding course of conduct, it is obvious there can be neither right nor wrong in holding such opinions, or pursuing such a course. Morality thus becomes a mere relation. Right is a variable quantity,—it may be much, or it may be little, or it may be nothing at all.

At the same time, it must be admitted, that conscience is invested with a legitimate and supreme authority. With respect to the fundamental duties of natural religion, which are unequivocally enjoined by conscience, and generally admitted as obligatory, there is no room for discussion. But when we pass from these, and come to such controverted points as the obligation of the Sabbath, the question is a very important one, Can the individual who acts conscientiously be justly regarded as morally blameworthy? One may say, "I cannot see any moral obligation for observing a seventh-day Sabbath. My conscience does not enjoin me to set apart any set

time for the worship of God. It may be duty for those who see differently to set apart a special day for this purpose, but their convictions of duty can never affect my obligations. It is obviously not a natural duty; for, if it were, conscience would bear witness to the fact. In disregarding the Sabbath I do not violate the law of my nature; and, therefore, I cannot be fairly regarded as a moral transgressor." Now, we admit and assert that liberty of conscience is man's natural and inalienable birthright. Intolerance in religion or morals, denying, as it does, the authority of conscience, takes away the very foundation of all morality. Any system which does not assert the right of the individual conscience to command, virtually annihilates conscience altogether, and denies to man a moral constitution. Any human arrangement or institution, which practically ignores this authority, is contrary to the law of man's nature, and ought to be swept away. Whenever conscience utters a positive and distinct command, the duty of the individual is most certainly to obey. And yet, paradoxical as it may appear, one may follow the dictate of his own conscience, and at the same time be morally culpable for doing what is in itself wrong. The legitimate and supreme authority of conscience is perfectly compatible with the blameworthiness of the individual in complying with its

injunctions. Suppose a person has done a wrong action at the bidding of his conscience; and suppose he is charged as a moral delinquent for so doing, he might reply: "Although I may have done what is in itself, or absolutely wrong, I have done what is relatively right. If conscience be the supreme law of right, and if I have acted out the instructions of that law, how can there be moral transgression?" In answer to this, we go a step further back, and ask, Why did conscience not point out the path of duty? The answer to this must be, either it was uninformed, or misinformed, or obtuse, or asleep. And may a rational and free agent not be blamed for permitting his conscience to remain in any one of these states? Is there any necessity of nature by which these states are induced, or which renders a change impossible? Most assuredly, there is no such necessity. We grant, however, with reference to the first two, that moral obligation is cancelled, if it can be shewn that the removal of ignorance or error is a natural impossibility. But on any hypothesis, and more especially on any hypothesis that ignores the corruption of conscience, all the cases of this kind that can occur in the sphere of natural duty, must be only exceptions. In the vast majority of instances, the ignorance, the error, the obtuseness, and the torpor, must be held to be voluntary and

blameworthy. Is ignorance no crime, when the capability and opportunity of acquiring knowledge are possessed? Is error no crime, when this may have been the result of mental indolence, or cherished prejudice, or perverse desire, or evil habit, and when there still exists a possibility of arriving at the truth? Is obtuseness of moral perception no crime, when a more assiduous cultivation of the moral faculty would have sharpened its vision? Is the torpor of conscience no crime, when the very law of its existence requires it always to be awake and watchful? Let it ever be remembered, that each individual stands in a twofold relation to his own conscience. He is at once its subject and its custodier. As a *moral law*, he is bound to obey all its requirements. As a *mental faculty*, he is bound to guard against its perversion, and to care for its training and development. To comply with the former obligation, even when the dictates of conscience are contrary to the law of objective right, is not in itself morally blameworthy; but in such a case, there may be, there generally is crime in the prior neglect of the latter obligation. Like all the other powers of the mind, conscience may be greatly improved or deteriorated. The manifold glosses, and interpolations, and omissions, and mutilations, which are frequently to be found in the *law*, must be

traced, in a great measure, to a culpable neglect in the education of the *faculty*. The man, who is desirous to discover and do his duty, will not content himself with simply asking, in any particular case, What is the decision of conscience on this matter? He will see to it, that his conscience is duly and correctly informed; and that no mist of prejudice, or passion, or practice, is concealing or obscuring the path of duty.

In many cases, the error of conscience in giving a wrong decision, or its inability to give any decision at all, arises from the fact that known and admitted principles are not followed out to their legitimate conclusions. There are some duties strictly moral, which conscience does not recognise or enforce, until by reflection they are discovered to result necessarily from some of the fundamental principles of natural morality. Among these we place the observance of the Sabbath. When an appeal is made to conscience with respect to such duties, it cannot, at once, impress upon them the stamp of authority. But this is not because they lie beyond the province of conscience;—it arises from the simple fact that each case involves a greater combination of circumstances than can be comprehended at a single glance, or even met by a single response of conscience. There may be so many relations in the case as to necessi-

tate a chain of reasoning, proceeding step by step from some general principle, or to demand from conscience, at each step, a separate decision. But, surely, the deductions of reason when made from principles laid down by conscience, are not less true or binding than they would have been, had they been uttered immediately by conscience. If the general principles are admitted, and the reasoning sound, the conclusions must be received. We hold it to be unreasonable to put any of such truths into a categorical form, and then make an appeal to conscience for an immediate decision. We protest against the legitimacy of concluding that, because an answer is not at once returned, affirming the obligation in question, the duty is not imposed by conscience—is not strictly a moral duty. With as much reason might it be argued, that, because conscience does not at once positively deny the obligation, or affirm the opposite, the duty must be imposed by conscience—must be a strictly moral duty. No one, who reflects for a moment, can admit the legitimacy of such reasoning. There are a thousand duties binding on man by the law of his nature ; and yet they are not imposed by the immediate responses of conscience. Indeed, it is plain, there are subordinate points—matters of detail about the performance of every natural duty, that cannot be determined by con-

science. The relations in a given case may be many or few; and hence, reason may require a longer or shorter time to obtain a perfect mastery of them all; but surely this circumstance cannot derogate from the authority of the moral decision given in accordance with these relations after they are fully known.

These remarks have an important bearing on the question of Sabbath obligation, more especially when viewed in the aspect which it is the design of the following pages to present. If what has been said with regard to *unfelt* responsibility be well-founded, it follows that, if the observance of the Sabbath be a duty, the mere fact that this is not intimated by the individual conscience, is no sufficient excuse for its neglect—does not exonerate from the guilt involved in a breach of obligation. It is even possible for one to investigate minutely the whole subject, and arrive at the conclusion that the claims of the Sabbath cannot be made out in such a way as to establish its obligation, and yet not be absolved from moral blame. From one or other of the above-mentioned causes, a veil may have been drawn over the understanding or the conscience, which may have obscured, or totally concealed the truth. This much, at least, will be granted:—no one can be justified in setting himself at ease on the matter, by complacently saying, "It may be duty for others,

in obedience to the dictates of their consciences, to observe a Sabbath, but my conscience recognises no such obligation; and, therefore, in disregarding it, I am not amenable for any breach of moral law."

Let us not be understood as insinuating that all the prejudice, and all the obliquity of mental vision, are to be found on one side. There is every ground for expecting that these will prevail, perhaps, to an equal extent on the other. Education or some other cause, may have given birth to prejudices in favour of the Sabbath equally strong with any that can exist against it. These prejudices, laying hold of the religious instinct in human nature, may have made the acknowledgment of the obligation of the Sabbath a very easy, and a very unintelligent affair; just as in the former case, prejudices of an opposite character seizing on other tendencies of human nature, may have led to a not less easy, and a not more intelligent rejection of its claims. Prejudice and an irrational passivity of mind are worthy of severe condemnation, whether leagued with truth or with error.

Further, it is a fact to be deeply deplored, but not to be denied, that there is much outward profession of respect for the Sabbath, where there exist no corresponding convictions and feelings. Such professions are, in many cases, easily seen to be inconsistent and hypocritical; and are more damaging to the

cause of the Sabbath itself, and to the interests of religion generally, than the attacks of enemies. It has been justly said:—"It is the infatuation of persons of a certain character to live always at variance with wisdom on account of other men's follies; and this is the deplorable error of those who will see nothing in religion but its corruptions. Nevertheless truth owes always a vindication of herself to her friends, if not to her enemies, and her sincere friends will not wish to screen their own errors when this vindication requires them to be exposed."* Far be it from us to palliate the heartless and lying professions of many who outwardly observe the Sabbath. Language is too feeble adequately to express the guilt and impiety involved in thus insulting Heaven with uplifted hands—making a pretence of sacrifice to the God of heaven, while the spirit is meanwhile burning incense in the house of its own idol. Caligula is reported to have built a temple for himself, and placed representations of his own head on the statues of the gods: he is also said to have ordered his own statue to be set up in the temple of the God of Israel at Jerusalem. Scarcely less flagrant, and still more inexcusable is the impiety of those who would fashion the idol of *self* after the Divine similitude, and defile the temple of God by

* Natural History of Enthusiasm, p. 17.

there paying to it divine honours. Deceit, idolatry, sacrilege,—these are the appropriate terms by which to designate such conduct. For hypocrisy and cant we make no apology. It were well for the world, it were well especially for the Church, were these swept from the face of the earth. But, while we thus brand religious insincerity with the infamy it deserves, justice—we do not say charity—compels us to admit that there is such a thing among men as honest worship—sincere devotion. And while we freely grant the existence of hypocrisy on the one side, and that to no small extent, it is but common fairness to remember that there is a possibility of finding this on the other side also ; and that, too, in the anomalous and inconsistent act of self-denunciation. Those who are loudest in their protestations against all hypocrisy may themselves be hypocrites. The iconoclast himself may be an idolater. Over the altar of Earnestness one may swear eternal hostility to all religious simulation, and yet, the very swearing of that oath may be itself a monster sham. If we spare neither man, woman, nor child, let us be consistent, and hew Agag also in pieces before the Lord.

These remarks are not made for the purpose of retorting a charge, or decrying the virtue of earnestness and sincerity. On both sides it is but justice

to keep in mind that the counterfeit supposes the genuine. In the words of Rochefoucauld, "Hypocrisy is the homage which vice renders to virtue."

But to return: It does not appear, that the mere fact that there are many religious hypocrites in the world, can materially affect the obligation of an institution which they falsely pretend to honour. No man, who thinks for himself, will put so high a value on the candour and intellectual capacity of hypocrites, as to yield up his own mind to be influenced, either by what they believe, or by what they disbelieve;—by what they love, or by what they hate;—by what they do, or by what they leave undone. The conduct of such persons may disgrace or damage a party, but it can never disprove a principle. Were we to parade what is confessedly the abuse of any institution, for the purpose of shewing its inefficacy, or the hollowness of the principles on which it is based, we would discover either a very weak, or a very disingenuous mind. It would be much more rational to exercise a jealousy over ourselves, lest such an abuse should lead us to form too low an estimate of the principles and working of the institution, by identifying it with the inconsistency of those who, for sinister objects, may have assumed its outward forms.

In the present essay, it is incumbent on us to look

at the question of Sabbath obligation, not only apart from all external associations, but also from all points of detail. Our duty is neither to defend the Sabbath as it is observed by hypocrites or by honest men ; nor is it to present such a phase of the general question as may settle some particular point of controversy. The subject must come before us in a broad and general form. As an ethical question it ignores all connexion with the characters and actions of individual men ; it has to do simply with their nature as rational and moral beings. Nor can such matters as the running of railway trains, and the opening of Crystal or Gin Palaces come before us as *distinct* subjects of inquiry. Not that the establishment of our position will be of no avail in the settlement of such questions, but our sole business here is to inquire into the dictates of conscience and their legitimate application in the evolution of general and universal *principles*. Hence, the argument is addressed neither to Christians nor to Jews merely, but to all who admit the authority of conscience, together with the existence of God as the Creator and Governor of all. The sources whence the evidence is professedly drawn, are acknowledged as legitimate by all except the Atheist. The court of appeal is the chosen and supreme one of our opponents ; and its decision is supposed by

them to be subversive of our position, or, at least, to render the establishment of that position an impossibility. But if it can be shewn that the judgment of conscience not only contains nothing adverse to us, but even settles the whole question in our favour, they are bound to receive the decision with implicit submission. Let it not be supposed that we hold the opinion, that conscience affirms the obligation of setting apart the seventh day as a Sabbath by a single oracular response. The question is complex, and must be resolved into its elements before conscience can reasonably be expected to give any decision. If it can be shewn by legitimate reasoning, that the obligation of the Sabbath is deducible from natural and moral principles, the duty of observing it must be allowed to be as really moral as if no reasoning process had been necessary.

Some, doubtless, will feel inclined to preclude all discussion by pronouncing the proof of our position impossible. They might be induced to listen to our argument, if it included the more decisive or plausible proofs that may be drawn from revelation; but an attempt to construct an argument for the obligation of observing one day in seven as a Sabbath independently of Scripture, seems the very height of absurdity. We ask such persons to give us a patient

hearing. If false principles are assumed, let them be pointed out,—if logical laws are violated, let the fallacies be exposed; but let the principles be examined before they are condemned as false, and let the reasoning be tested before it is pronounced unsound.

There are others, whose anxiety for the maintenance of the Sabbath may induce them to question the propriety of thus isolating one branch of the evidence for its obligation from all the others. Since there are many who are not convinced by *all the proofs taken together*, it seems to argue foolish rashness rather than well-grounded confidence, to select *one*, and that by no means the strongest, or the most palpable, and stake the whole question at issue on its validity. A brief indication of the train of thought which determined the writer to take the course pursued in this essay, will at once account for his seeming temerity, and place the reader on the precise standpoint from which he viewed the whole question. The different points introduced in the following remarks are deemed of sufficient importance to justify a short delay in entering on our main topic.

One cannot look into any of the treatises that have been written in defence of the Sabbath, without remarking the number and variety of the proofs that are advanced for the universality and perpetuity of

its obligation. It has frequently appeared to us that the very abundance of the evidence may render it to many minds less convincing. It may appear strange and paradoxical, yet it is not the less true, that an additional proof, so far from increasing, may diminish the power of the whole evidence to produce conviction. This, however, must not be understood absolutely, but in relation to the mental condition and capacity of those to whom the evidence is presented. An additional argument must tend to give intensity and power to those that have gone before, in the minds of all who can retain the whole, and comprehend in one grasp the mutual relations of the several proofs, and the bearing of all on the common conclusion. But where a number of considerations may be adduced in support of a position, as in the present instance, how few comparatively are capable of embracing all the particulars, and forming an adequate estimate of the whole? And even of these few, how small a minority will in good earnest bring their powers to the task? To the great body of general readers, an argument framed by the combination of such particulars is convincing, or not, just as the item of evidence, that for the time happens to be present to the mind, is large or small. And it frequently happens that the entire effect produced by a great number of particulars, is not materially greater,

and may be less, than would have been produced by the last of them taken by itself. This impotence and indolence of the human mind have led some rhetoricians to lay down as a general rule, that "the strongest arguments should be reserved till the conclusion;" and others, who prefer the presentation of the strongest first, to recommend a recapitulation in an *inverse* order. Hence, in the discussion of questions where the evidence is of a multifarious character, the writer, who aims at the conviction of general readers, ought to make a selection. It is vain and foolish to attempt to strengthen sound arguments by such as are comparatively weak, or even doubtful in their character. In the mind of the writer the value of each successive item, however small, may be adequately estimated and *added* to what preceded, but in the mind of the reader, a less powerful argument is liable to be so *mixed up* with those that went before, that, while the amount of evidence is increased, its power over the mind is diminished. Besides, a number of such minor considerations, especially when brought prominently forward, give to an opponent a great advantage in dealing with the popular mind. It is an easy matter for him to select such subordinate points, and treat them as if they were indispensable to the establishment of the general conclusion. And if he can succeed in throwing doubt over one of

these points—making a single argument appear inconclusive, a little dexterous manœuvring is all that is necessary to make very many believe that, *falsus in uno falsus in omnibus*, the chain of evidence is broken, and consequently, the conclusion that depended falls to the ground.

It appears to us that the apologists of the Sabbath have not taken such considerations sufficiently into account. In their anxiety to say all that can be said in its defence, they have given to the argument *as a whole* a form not the best adapted to operate on the popular mind, and at the same time laid it widely open to attack. We do not deem it necessary to enter into a minute examination of any of the treatises written in defence of the Sabbath in order to substantiate the statement now made. Let the reader take up any of these treatises, and even a cursory glance at the headings of the separate sections, will convince him that the writer aims at being exhaustive, rather than select and effective in his proof. To give a single example from one of the ablest writers on this subject—Dr. Wardlaw. In the "Discourses" of this venerable author, we have the various arguments, more especially those drawn immediately from Scripture, brought forward and urged with his usual clearness and force. His "Tract for the Times" contains in a short compass the substance of the "Discourses."

One of his main arguments for the universal obligation of the Sabbath is derived, of course, from its *early origin*. After having urged in support of this the fact that the Sabbath is commemorative of God's resting from the work of creation, he adduces as an additional proof the passage in Heb. iv. 3-8. Without saying anything with regard to the different views that have been taken of this passage, it is sufficient for our present purpose to mention the fact, that the majority both of expositors and general readers differ from Dr. Wardlaw in his interpretation, and therefore cannot admit his argument. Again: Along with Owen and many others he brings forward the 9th and 10th verses of the same chapter as a "direct inspired authority" for the change of the day. Here, also, many even of the best friends of the Sabbath will be constrained to set aside his argument by rejecting his exegesis. We give no opinion as to the justness of Dr. Wardlaw's interpretation in either of these cases. What we wish to say at present is, that the evidence in support of the Sabbath does not need such doubtful arguments, and is not rendered more convincing by them, but rather the reverse.

Further, the writers on the obligation of the Sabbath have seldom, if ever, presented their arguments in a strictly *cumulative* form. Though there are several distinct lines of argument by which, sepa-

rately, that obligation may be clearly established, these are not stated in such a way as to compel the reader to see that they are entirely independent of each other. He is in great danger of supposing that the several considerations are but so many links in one chain; whereas they are, or may be made several distinct chains, each of which is amply sufficient to sustain the whole burden of proof.

There is another point to which we must here allude. None of the treatises on this subject which we have met with, appears to us to be sufficiently adapted to *the spirit of our times*. No one, who has at all considered the matter, can have failed to perceive that the *nature of the law* is the point at which all difference of opinion, with regard to the obligation of the Sabbath, takes its rise. This meets us at the very threshold of the subject, and lies at the foundation of the whole discussion.

How then has this fundamental point been treated? On the one side, the positive nature of the law has been taken for granted as self-evident. On the other side, its moral nature has not received that prominence in the argument to which its importance and inherent strength fairly entitle it. If we may be allowed to make the inquiry; What appears to be the process by which those who deny the obligation of the Sabbath arrive at their conclusion? Speaking generally, we

believe this process will be found to be something like the following. Being satisfied that the law is not moral, they pronounce it altogether unsuitable, either to the nature of man, or to that spiritual dispensation whose very introduction was intended to sound the knell of all that was positive and ceremonial in religion. This foregone conclusion must exert a powerful, if not a paramount influence over the further consideration of the question at issue. If it does not lead at once, and independently of Scripture, to the unqualified denial of Sabbath obligation, it at least generates in the mind a strong presumption against that obligation. And in exact proportion to the strength of this presumption, will there exist an aversion to discover evidence of an opposite kind in Scripture. The universal and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath will not be admitted, unless the language of Scripture be incapable of explanation on any other hypothesis. We do not say this is the beaten path which the mind, in every case, treads before it can be satisfied of the non-obligation of the Sabbath; but we are fully persuaded this is the course pursued in multitudes of cases, even where the several steps of the process have not so risen into consciousness as to be remembered. And who that knows anything of the natural working of the human mind, can wonder that, setting out from such

a starting-point, they should at length reach such a goal?

If there is any truth in the statements now made, may we not obtain from them a hint as to the best mode of dealing with the present question? Is it not very plain, that *the nature of the law* ought to be made the subject of special consideration? And while this is expedient in every age, it seems to be especially necessary at present. It is the boast of men of every religious creed, and of men of no religious creed, that we live in an age of reason. We have no wish to cry down such boasting, though in many cases we believe it to be vain-glorious. There is good cause for rejoicing in the fact, that the long dormant faculties of the human mind have been to a great extent roused into activity; and that the fetters of political and religious tyranny which so long bound the human spirit, have been in so many instances broken. But we ought to remember, that here, as in other cases, extremes tend to produce each other. The elasticity of the human mind is such, that when set free, it may spring at a single bound from one pole of belief to its very opposite. The spirit may have groaned so long under the bonds of a galling slavery, or been wrapt in so profound a slumber, that from the moment it gains its freedom, or is roused into activity, it will submit to no law,

Liberty and lawlessness are identified. A verification of these remarks may be found in the religious opinions of the past, and of the present age. There has been a transition from unthinking belief to rationalistic scepticism. This tendency, in its fullest development, has led to the rejection of Scripture as an authoritative document—a divine revelation. By one class, inspiration is wholly denied. Another class, without denying inspiration, adopt a method of interpreting Scripture by which every statement and doctrine is made to pass through the alembic of human reason before it can be received. Need we say, that in this process the divine element altogether disappears? There is nothing incomprehensible left in any of the doctrines of Scripture, and nothing miraculous in any of its facts. What is too great for the grasp of the human mind, is arbitrarily reduced to its limited capacity, and what is supernatural, is ingeniously explained away. In this way, the grand characteristics of a heavenly religion are altogether lost, and the distinctive glories of Christianity are placed on the altar as an offering to human reason.

This influence of reason, even where it is not paramount, tends to reduce revelation proper, and its supernatural accompaniments to their lowest possible limits. Numerous expedients of criticism are

ever ready, and are unhesitatingly employed to get rid of any precept or doctrine that is supposed to be inconsistent with human reason. One example may here be given with reference to the early origin of the Sabbath. It is found not very easy to reconcile, in a natural way, the reason given for the observance of the Sabbath—God's creating all things in six days and resting on the seventh—with its later or Jewish origin. This difficulty is very conveniently got over by simply affirming, though without the shadow of evidence, that the reason must have been *interpolated*.* The unnatural interpretation of the passage in Gen. ii. 1-3, by a *prolepsis*, is also rendered necessary by the hypothesis of the non-obligation of the Sabbath, and is adopted without hesitation. The sentiment contained in the last clause of the following sentence, we believe to be held by not a few. "It would undoubtedly involve a moral wrong to attempt to reverse any moral precept whatever; but this is a very different matter from civil governments declining to recognise the obligation of a religious ordinance, *not moral* in its nature, and the very *existence* of which is the subject of an apparently *interminable theological dispute*."†

We may lift up an indignant protest against this

* See Cox's Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties, pp. 95, 492.

† Modern Sabbath Examined, p. 23.

unjustifiable mode of dealing with Scripture, and these gratuitous assumptions, but it can serve no good purpose to ignore their existence as results of the rationalistic tendencies of our age. We may, and do hold that the argument from Scripture is of itself decisive—that it never has been, and never can be satisfactorily refuted; and yet we may descend to the arena of our opponents, and argue the question on purely rational grounds. This appears to be quite possible in the present case, and we conceive this has not been done, to the full extent of which the case admits, in any of the existing treatises on the Sabbath that we have seen. It will be found by any one who takes the trouble to examine these treatises, that the main stress is generally laid on the scriptural arguments, and more especially on that derived from the institution of the Sabbath by God at creation. All the other considerations are made to cluster round and support these. For example, the nature of the law, as moral, is presented as a kind of apology for its divine institution; and its benevolent character is urged, in order to establish an antecedent probability that God would consult the happiness of man by imposing such a law.

There seem to be, at least, three distinct lines of argument that may be pursued, quite independently, in support of the universal obligation of the Sabbath.

First, it may be shewn that the law of the Sabbath is essentially a law of *nature*, and involves a universal obligation not derived from the will of God; this may be termed the *a priori*, or ethical argument. Secondly, the obligation of the Sabbath may be vindicated on the ground of *moral expediency;* this may be called the *a posteriori*, or historical argument. Thirdly, the Sabbath may be proved to be a *divine institution intended for the race*. This is the scriptural argument.

There are some who are not disposed to admit the validity of any of these arguments, but base the obligation of the Sabbath on the *authority of the Church*. We do not deem it legitimate to add this to the three arguments mentioned above; for the authority of the Church can only be binding, in so far as it is supported by the dictates of conscience, the interests of humanity, or the word of God. These are the ultimate grounds of obligation; and while the mere fact that the Church has practically recognised these grounds may be a good reason for careful investigation before setting them aside, as a direct and independent argument for the obligation of the Sabbath, it is worthless. If introduced at all, it must be under one or other of the heads we have enumerated. The idea of *authority* must be left out altogether, unless we are prepared to give up the right of private judgment.

In order to keep these three arguments distinct, and give to the evidence a palpably *cumulative* form, it will be seen that under the first the appeal must be made only to the responses of conscience and the deductions of reason ;—under the second, it must be shewn, that the observance of the Sabbath is productive of general good, and that this results from its being kept as a holy day, and not as a holiday ;—while, under the third, the discussion must turn on the interpretation of Scripture, and be settled by the application of sound hermeneutical principles. Were we to speak with metaphysical exactness, the first two ought to be classed under one head. Neither can be carried fully out altogether independently of the other. Indeed they do not differ so much in matter as in mode. The mental phenomena that arise in the one, though not entirely, are substantially the same as arise in the other; the same faculties of the mind are employed about the same or similar objects, and the ultimate ground of certainty in both is conscience. There are, however, in a strictly logical point of view, two arguments. Every one knows that a mental process may be proved by being simply reversed. Synthesis and analysis are mutual tests. Having reached the point at which we aimed, we turn and retrace our steps. If by keeping in the same path which we formerly traversed we find our way

back to the precise point from which we started, then are we doubly assured that the way is a right and a safe one. In a loose way, this is the difference of the two arguments in question. In the one we begin with the dictate of conscience, and proceed step by step until we are finally compelled to acknowledge the obligation of observing a seventh-day Sabbath. In doing this, we are obliged to consult reason with respect to many of the particulars, and in some she cannot decide without the knowledge that can be gained only by experience. This, however, is a natural process, and must be admitted to be legitimate. In the other argument we begin with the observance of the Sabbath as an external phenomenon—a simple matter of fact. Taking a sufficiently wide survey of this in its effects, we ask, What is its influence on the whole on the wellbeing of man? If this be found to be beneficial, then we make an appeal to conscience, and she, being satisfied with the application of her own test, pronounces the Sabbath to be a *right* institution, and binds to its observance. It thus appears that, though under the first an appeal must be made to experience, and under the second an appeal must be made to conscience, still, as *arguments*, they are clearly distinct.

In this way we may call in and examine separately, three independent witnesses, and in each case form an

estimate as to how far the single testimony goes to settle the point at issue. This evidently places the argument as a whole on a high vantage ground. One individual may not see the force of one, or even two of these proofs, and yet the third, being wholly independent, may be convincing. Another may not admit any one of them to be decisive, but acknowledge a certain amount of force in them all. In this case the cumulative nature of the argument requires that the separate probabilities be added together. The individual may not be willing to suspend the truth of the conclusion on any one of these arguments separately, but having tested the precise strength of each, he may intertwine them into a threefold cord that cannot be broken.

Besides, this mode of conducting the discussion shuts up an objector to the necessity of separately and independently refuting each of the arguments. A fair opponent will feel that justice demands of him that he begin at the very beginning three times ;—and that it is not competent for him to bring into the discussion of one head any conclusion that he may, fairly enough, have arrived at in the consideration of one that has gone before.

The case, as we have stated it, stands thus : On the one hand there are three distinct chains of evidence for the obligation of the Sabbath. First of all, we

proceed to examine each of these as if no other existed. The result of this trial may be, either that some one, possibly every one, is found to be valid, or, none is admitted to be decisive. If any *one* is admitted as valid, the whole matter is settled in favour of the obligation of the Sabbath; but, if not, justice demands that another step be taken before an opposite conclusion can be drawn. The separate probabilities that may have resulted, however small, must be placed alongside of each other, a new estimate must be made of each in its new position, and then the whole must be summed up. We call the witnesses into court separately, in order that we may be the better able to appreciate, at its true value, their independent testimony; but every impartial judge, in summing up the evidence, and every impartial jury in returning a verdict, will put the several circumstances together, observe the light which they cast on each other, and then take in the whole at a comprehensive glance. Every one knows that in moral reasoning, as in a judicial trial, a proof that may not be worth much when taken by itself, may acquire great value when taken in connexion with other considerations. In the case before us, Sabbath-obligation must not only be suspended from the three cords of evidence *at the same time*, but before this is done, these cords must be *interwoven*.

On the other side, the case is somewhat different. The conclusion sought to be established is negative, and the refutation of *all* that can be advanced for the opposite conclusion is an indispensable premiss in the *single* argument. The objector must follow, step by step, the whole course pursued by his opponent, and shew, that each of his arguments taken singly, and the whole taken together, are invalid before he is entitled to draw any conclusion. It is not enough that he be able to state a number of objections to each of the arguments, and throw the shadow of uncertainty over all. This may be done in the case of almost every proof that is not demonstrative. The objector ought to be able, at least, to shew that two of the arguments have absolutely no force, and that the third is weaker than the objections brought against it. For should a residuum of force be left in two or in all, this may be sufficient, when combined and fairly estimated, to produce moral certainty. The difference, then, in the two cases is briefly this:—In the one case there are *three* arguments furnishing three independent grounds on which we can affirm the obligation of the Sabbath; and the establishment of *any one* of these is sufficient: in the other, the refutation of all these arguments can furnish only *one* ground on which to deny this obligation; and the refutation of *all* is indispensable. In the former,

the independence of the several arguments gives additional strength to each in the final summation—the intertwining of the separate cords causes the strength to increase in a much greater ratio than that of their number; in the latter, the dependence of the several refutations on each other tends greatly to diminish their united force.

Such a course of argument might, we think, be pursued with advantage in the general discussion of the subject. It has already been remarked, that the scriptural argument is that most frequently and most prominently brought forward. It stands in the foreground of every discussion; and well does it deserve this distinction. We do not grudge the Bible such a pre-eminence. The *word* of God will ever remain the great bulwark of his *Sabbath*. As the most direct, the most intelligible, and the most conclusive, the Bible argument must ever stand high above all others. This field, however, has been so often and so thoroughly traversed already, that there seems little need at present of again opening up the discussion.

What we have called the historical argument, or the argument from expediency, has also received considerable attention. Of late this branch of the evidence has received large additions, and more especially, from the essays of working men. "What a rich store of fact and illustration have these men

accumulated in proof of the adaptation of the Sabbath to the necessities of our race ! As affording, in addition to the nightly repose, a weekly rest for the labouring man, in which to recover his exhausted energies, as favourable to cleanliness and order, propitious to health, and tending to foster self-respect—as affording to the families of our poorer classes the principal opportunities for cultivating the domestic affections, bringing together, in countless instances, sisters and brothers, whom the stern demands of toil have separated during the week, and giving to thousands of labouring men the only opportunity of realizing the poet's dream, when,

> " The lisping infant prattling on his knee
> Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
> An' makes him quite forget his labour and his toil,"—

as providing a day in which his intellect shall be refreshed, instructed, and elevated, in which virtue shall acquire new strength, and be braced for new trials, and the whole man's spiritual being brought under the continuous influence of divine themes, shall receive the invigoration and influence of a new life,—these are the points on which these essayists have shed a flood of illustration and evidence."* The ethical line of argument is the only one which has been, in a great measure, overlooked. For this reason and

* Hendersonian Testimony. Introductory Address by Rev. Dr. Thomson, p. 10

others that have been already sufficiently indicated, we shall confine our attention exclusively to it, and endeavour to prosecute its discussion independently of the others. In doing so, let us first see distinctly what is to be proved—what is the point at issue.

The general question is the obligation of the Christian Sabbath. But this is a complex question—it involves a number of subordinate points which must be separately considered before it can be satisfactorily settled. Now, in the discussion of every such question, the most natural, indeed the only judicious method of procedure is, to begin with the most general principles, and proceed from these to the details. Such an analysis, in the present case, affirms these five things, as implied in the obligation of the Christian Sabbath. It is our duty to set apart *some time exclusively* for the worship of God, and the performance of other religious duties; this time ought to be observed *simultaneously* by the whole community; this time ought to be an *entire day;* this day ought to recur once every *seven* days; and this seventh-day ought to be the *first* of the seven. These are the points demanding proof, and this is the natural order in which they present themselves to the mind.

Some there are who will, no doubt, be willing to admit one or two of these propositions, but will be strongly tempted to cut short the discussion by pro-

nouncing the proof of others, on natural principles, a manifest impossibility. Such persons will consider it only a waste of time to read a defence of certain points which they unhesitatingly admit, while they are fully convinced that certain other points equally essential *cannot* be established. If those who differ from us will not give us a hearing, on the ground that they must be right in their views, and that we must necessarily be wrong, we cannot help it. In this age of rational inquiry and liberty of speech, a conviction on the part of any individual, with a desire to exhibit the foundations on which that conviction is based, is reckoned sufficient to establish a claim to be patiently and candidly heard, more especially if the subject be one of general importance. We make no demand, then, beyond that of simple justice, when we ask that no one will bar the avenues of discussion by bringing forward *now* what they consider to be fatal objections, but which refer to some of the points that fall to be considered towards the close. By all means let the objections be brought forward, but let this be done in its proper place. We are bound to prove all the positions we have laid down, and to notice any reasonable objection that may be made at any point; but it cannot fairly be expected that we should invert the natural order, and begin by defending any of the

subsequent points before we have considered the preceding. Let it be observed, that none of these propositions has the slightest dependence on any which follows it: the disproving of the second cannot set aside the first, nor the denial of the fourth invalidate the proof of the third. Suppose any one, after a careful perusal of the following pages, is disposed to admit only the first two or three of our positions, still this admission involves an obligation thus far, which must be met at some other time, on the supposition that the Sabbath is set aside.

We ask the reader to keep in mind what has already been said with regard to the mode in which the inquiry should be conducted. It has been shewn, that a duty may be, in the strictest sense of the word, a moral duty, though conscience do not at once and oracularly affirm its obligation. As moralists, we ought to confide in the truthfulness of our own reasoning powers, as unhesitatingly as we submit to the direct authority of Conscience. If Reason deal fairly with the data supplied by Conscience, the conclusion arrived at must possess all the certainty and authority which the rational and moral nature of man can impart. It is the office of Conscience to point out the *end* to be sought; it is the province of Reason to discover the best *means* of gaining that end. The Sabbath, as time set apart, is only

a means to an end, and therefore Reason, and not Conscience, must deal with its claims. Hence, in the construction of our argument, Conscience, as affirming the obligation of the end, must lay the foundation, but Reason alone can legitimately raise the superstructure. In this way we disencumber ourselves of those objections which make a direct appeal to Conscience for a categorical decision in reference to all or any of the points involved in the obligation of the Sabbath.

What, then, is the end which invests the Sabbath with a natural obligation? We answer, *it is the worship of God, and the general development of the religious element in human nature.* It is here taken for granted, that man is a religious being, and that he is bound to exercise and cultivate his religious affections. Should the reader not be willing to admit these points, he needs not proceed further. We do not feel called on here to illustrate the obligation of the fundamental duty of religion—the worship of God, any more than to discuss with the Atheist the fundamental doctrine of theology—the existence of God. The argument is addressed only to such as admit equally, that God is the Creator of man, and that man ought to be a worshipper of God.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD DEMANDS THE APPROPRIATION OF TIME.

THIS proposition may seem so self-evident as to make it appear little better than an insult to the understanding of the reader, to say a single word in its support. Yet it is openly or covertly rejected by not a few; and as it is our wish to make the argument as comprehensive as possible, we ask the reader's forbearance while we offer a few observations tending at once to confirm the point, and open up the way for the further consideration of the subject.

In many of the popular objections to the Sabbath such sentiments as the following are either expressed or implied,—"The worship of God is of a purely spiritual nature. It does not need, nay, it refuses any alliance with outward forms. Bodily observances can be of no value in the sight of God. They are not only useless; they are even prejudicial. Their tendency is to destroy the spirituality and acceptability

of genuine worship where it does exist; and to lead to a hypocritical show of worship where it does not exist, which must be an impious trifling with respect to God, and an unprincipled attempt at deception with respect to man. Does not the man who honestly follows out the laws of the physical and moral constitution which God has given him, perform a continuous act of worship much more acceptable to God than that which proceeds from the exclusive occupation of special times, even when the worshipper is sincere, and still more if he be a hypocrite? Is not a religious spirit cherished at all times and in all circumstances a much more rational service than the giving up any time exclusively and formally to the worship of God?" We have heard an individual of intelligence attempt to place the matter on the horns of a dilemma, thus: "If the religious spirit be preserved always, there is no need for any special occasion for worship; and if such a spirit be not so preserved, the worship of special occasions is mere hypocrisy." We believe such objections to be prevalent to a considerable extent at the present day, and we confess, some of them are not without plausibility. They are, at least, entitled to a fair and candid consideration.

There are two principles involved, with which we profess our entire concurrence. We contend as

earnestly as any one can do, that genuine, acceptable worship must be *spiritual*, and that a religious spirit ought to be cultivated *at all times*. The supposition that true worship may be rendered to its Divine object by a mere outward act, ignores alike the constitution of man and the nature of God. The essence of worship is to be sought for only in the state of mind. A contrary opinion is as unphilosophical as it is impious. In morals an action is nothing apart from the will of the agent; and the character of the volition must be determined by the motives that called it forth. Thus are we led back to the heart as the fountain whence proceed all the good and evil that flow down the streams of action. Hence, an outward act of worship is morally of no value apart from the internal feeling. If the worshipper substitute the former for the latter in ignorance of what true worship is, his crime is ignorance; but if he know in what true worship consists, and assume the outward as an expression of the inward act, he is chargeable at once with immorality and impiety. "God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth." Man is spiritual and capable of spiritual worship, and hence, nothing short of the homage of his moral and spiritual nature can satisfy the requirements of the highest law of his being.

Not less cordially do we admit that in a certain sense the *life* of man as a religious being should be *one continued act of worship*. Whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he does, ought all to be done to the glory of God. The offering of prayer and thanksgiving ought ever to burn on the altar of a holy heart, diffusing its sacred perfume over all around, and sending up an incense of sweet savour to the throne of the Eternal. As firmly as any of those who differ from us do we hold that in this sense every day should be a Sabbath—that the element of worship should encircle our entire being, giving a high and holy character to the most trivial and the meanest of earthly pursuits, and shedding the hues of heaven over all the objects of earth.

But while admitting, to the fullest extent, the necessity of *spirituality* in the act, and *permanence* in the spirit of worship, we cannot see the inconsistency of either of these with the giving up a portion of time exclusively to devotion—worship, in the proper sense of the term ; nay, we hope to be able to shew, that these two qualities of worship, so far from presenting valid objections to our position, furnish us with a most satisfactory argument in its defence.

Let us first see that we understand clearly what true worship is. All are agreed that it must be

spiritual in its nature—an exercise or a state of *mind*. It is not necessary here to enter into a full analysis of this act or state of mind, as we choose to term it. These two feelings are prominent—veneration and gratitude. When we contemplate the character of God as revealed in his works, we are naturally impressed with wonder and awe; when we think of what he has done for ourselves, we ought to be moved with gratitude. It is very obvious that neither of these feelings can be experienced, and consequently no worship can be rendered, without the contemplation of the character of God.

There is another element of worship more strictly moral in its character than either of these, namely, a complacent delight in the *moral* character of God. Any man, whether religious or not, who turns his thoughts for a moment to the greatness and glorious majesty of Jehovah, must feel a certain amount of awe; and the feeling of gratitude for favours bestowed, is common to man with many of the lower animals. But it is not every one who can take complacency in the moral perfections of his Creator. This supposes the possession of a character resembling in its main features that of the Divine Object of worship. The man who is habitually immoral may be capable of being touched with a feeling akin to the sublime in the contemplation of God as manifested in his works,

and he may possibly have certain sentiments of gratitude to the Author and Preserver of his being, but such a man is totally unfitted to render unto God acceptable worship. He keeps out of view, as much as possible, the moral elements of the Divine character; and when he does think of these, it is not with cordial satisfaction, but with dislike and terror. The contrast is so great, and the antipathy is so strong, between purity and pollution, that the contemplation of moral perfection by one, who is not in some measure pure in heart, can only produce pain, and call forth an aversion that effectually incapacitates for genuine worship.

Whether these remarks may be regarded as psychologically correct, or not—whatever may be the emotions of the mind in the worship of God—what we point attention to at present is, that these emotions have God for their immediate object; —the natural and moral perfections of the Creator must be present to the mind of the creature, else there can be no rational, spiritual worship. It is not uncommon to hear persons talk as if this realization of God were not necessary to his worship. "The homage of the life," say they, "is the highest and truest kind of worship—it alone is acceptable to God, and no other can be obligatory or necessary." Now it is only to make a gross abuse of language to say,

that all obedience is worship. No doubt the spirit of worship is the spirit of obedience. Wherever there is genuine worship, there will be sincere obedience as its natural result. But submission is not the only element of worship. "Worship," says Vinet, "is the co-operation and consent of all the elements of our being in one purely religious act."* In no language, Pagan or Christian, so far as we are aware, are the two words, obedience and worship, synonymous. Worship ever has been, and still is applied to an exclusively religious service; while obedience applies equally to things secular and sacred. The ancient Greek or Roman would no more have called obedience to the gods in any secular matter, worship, than the Briton of the present day, obedience to the commands, "Thou shalt not kill," and, "Thou shalt not steal." But is it said, that the question is not about terms, but things, and that the opinion even of all nations with regard to the nature of worship, cannot be forced on us who live in these days of freedom and progress? To this it might be answered, that the simple fact that all nations have agreed that worship, how widely soever different in other respects, should have God for its immediate and sole object, is a very strong proof that this is the kind of worship sanctioned by the voice of conscience.

* Pastoral Theology, p. 161.

But waving this at present, we appeal to the moral sense of the reader, and failing this, to his common sense. Does conscience, then, dictate, or does reason sanction the assertion, that obedience or practical virtue, as exclusive of all exercises which are wholly religious, embraces all the duties laid upon man by the constitution which God has given him? Why did the Creator give to man the capability of engaging in the contemplation of His character, if He did not mean that it should be exercised? Why did He write His own perfections in characters of light on the ten thousand objects by which man is surrounded, if He never intended His creature to read, and study, and know? For what purpose were those feelings of veneration, and gratitude, and love, that dwell in the very depths of the human heart, implanted there, if they ought not to go forth towards Him who is the greatest, and the best, and the kindest being in the universe? How does it happen that the system of human nature has been so constructed, that the purest happiness of which man is susceptible, springs from the contemplation of God's character, and the experience of corresponding emotions, if there was no design to allure and bind him, through this benevolent adaptation, to the noble and delightful exercise of such a worship? To such questions as these, we believe no satisfactory answer can be returned. And

until they are satisfactorily answered, we are fully justified in maintaining, that the worship imposed on man by the law of his nature, implies a realization of God as manifested in his works or ways, and the possession of feelings appropriate to such a realization.

The question then returns, Does such a worship demand a time for itself, or may it be properly and acceptably performed amidst the duties of ordinary life? We appeal to the reader's own sense of propriety for a reply to this question. Let him think for a moment of the Being worshipped—the almighty, infinitely wise and good Creator—the holy and just Governor of the universe; let him think of the being worshipping,—a creature wholly and ever dependent on the goodness, subject to the authority, and entirely at the disposal of the Being he worships, and then say if it be not fitting that the worship of the Divine Being should be undisturbed by any other occupation, whether physical or mental —that when God is the object of contemplation and affection, other objects should, for the time being, cease to divide the mind and the heart. Descend, for a little, from the lofty platform, where the human spirit meets, as it were, face to face, with the Great Presiding Spirit of the universe. Confront yourself with a fellow-creature, intellectually and morally

your equal, perhaps your inferior, but exalted high above you in respect of birth, or possessions, or authority, and mark how you conduct yourself in the presence of such an individual. Suppose you stand before your Sovereign, with what attention, and decorum, and profound respect, do you behave when holding intercourse with royalty? She may be surrounded by many objects worthy of your attention, but they are not heeded; she may be attended by the nobles of the land, but they are scarcely observed; your own mind may be burdened with other cares, but meanwhile, all are forgotten: one object alone fills the eye of sense, and at the same time keeps alive and concentrates the utmost attention of the mind. This is perfectly natural and proper. Can it be less, is it not ten thousand times more natural and proper, when you substitute the Creator for the creature, and perfect, for partial moral excellence;—when you take every quality and circumstance that can excite veneration, and multiply all by infinity;—when you put complete dependence of body, soul, and spirit for social and political subjection? It would seem almost impossible that there should be a difference of opinion on this point among reasonable and reflecting men. If the worship of God, as we have explained it, be a duty at all, it certainly is the highest of which our nature is

capable. It is a law of human activity, that if we would do anything well, we must do one thing at a time; and if unity of object be necessary anywhere, it is pre-eminently here. Except in the case where no opportunity can possibly be found, it is indispensable to rational and acceptable worship, that the worshipper be able to say, "this one thing I do." A piety so universal as to comprehend all times, and yet so niggard as to yield up no time, is no piety at all. In its horror of all hypocrisy and cant, its flight from these has not stopped at the antipodes; it has completed the circle, and now it occupies a still higher place in the category of sham than that assigned to the grossest embodiment of what it regards with so much loathing. Better far to discard worship altogether, than to maintain a position which just amounts to this—that worship must reach the vanishing-point before it can have any existence—that an exercise which demands for itself an undivided mind, can only be performed when the mind is otherwise engaged. Thus we have seen from one of the objections brought against us, namely, that worship is spiritual, that is, an exercise or a state of mind, that it demands the appropriation of time to itself.

It is admitted on all hands that spirituality is an essential characteristic of true worship. We would

be wrong, however, did we suppose that this excludes all *form*. But here, let it be distinctly understood, that we do not regard forms of worship as *in themselves* either moral or religious; and consequently, we believe that in themselves they are neither approved nor disapproved by God. The state of mind with which they are connected is the only thing regarded by him, and as moralists this ought to be the rule of our judgment also. By the constitution of our nature they cannot have a *bona fide* existence except as the natural result—the outward expression of certain states of mind. These states alone have an *intrinsic* moral value. All counterfeits of devotion by merely external observances, involve a state of mind immoral and impious, and therefore hateful in the sight of God. These must, in all fairness, be left out of the account here; they are not forms of devotion at all, they are forms of deception. It is wholly illegitimate to separate the form from the feeling, and then to institute a comparison between them. Indeed, they have nothing in common either to be compared or contrasted. Who would ever think of instituting a comparison between a man and the garment he wears. It is natural for man to clothe himself, and it is not less useful than becoming. So is it with forms of worship. This has often been forgotten, and inaccuracy and confusion have been

the result. Take a single example. Paley says:—"That silent piety which consists in a habit of tracing out the Creator's wisdom and goodness in the objects around us, or in the history of his dispensations; of referring the blessings we enjoy to his bounty, and of resorting to his succour in our distress; may possibly be more acceptable to the Deity than any visible expressions of devotion whatever."* Now such a comparison as is here made, tends either unduly to depreciate, or unduly to elevate form as something that may be wholly distinct from feeling. Instead of saying: "Silent piety *may possibly* be more acceptable to the Deity than any visible expression of devotion whatever," he might have said, it *must* be more acceptable; nay, as thus viewed apart from the inward feeling, the "visible expression" cannot be an object of God's moral approbation at all. If the "visible expression" be not the expression of the "silent piety" as here explained, it is a mere sham—a lie; if it be, then must the "silent piety" as the principle or feeling expressed, be the only moral reality in the case, and the form or expression be merely that which brings this reality within the cognizance of the senses. In religion, spirit and form are not necessarily contradictory. Form may be substituted for spirit, and then they

* Moral Philosophy, Book v. chap. i.

may be opposed, but form may also be added to spirit without destroying it or changing its nature. There is no religion in mere form, but there may be forms in religion. The outward expression neither annihilates nor diminishes the spirituality of the inward feeling. A religion all spiritual would be altogether unsuitable to the nature of man. The Creator has given him a compound nature, whose two grand constituents—soul and body—are capable of affecting each other in a thousand different ways. The cords of sympathy that bind them together at every point, are innumerable, and can be severed only by death. Everything is thus made double in the nature of man. Every action springs from a corresponding motive, and certain states of mind inevitably tend to embody themselves in actions. Even those mental states that are not properly active, have a visible influence on the body. So naturally does the look, the gesture, or the posture of the body result from the feeling of the mind, that the individual is often altogether unconscious of them. We cannot, even if we would, dissociate the feeling from its outward expression—they are united by a necessity of our nature. We may indeed get rid of all form in religion, but only by smothering all religious emotion. If, then, it is not in human nature to be powerfully under the influence of any

feeling without giving it some visible or audible expression, and if worship be rational and acceptable in proportion as the mind is engaged, it follows that sincere heart-felt devotion ought to have some outward manifestation. Of course, this may vary both in kind and degree, according to the temperament of the individual, and the nature of the feeling that for the time has possession of the mind. There is one form, however, which all emotions have a strong tendency to assume—language. There are few states of mind which do not naturally seek an expression through the lips. The feelings peculiar to worship are assuredly not among the exceptions. No one will question that Milton knew human nature, and spoke according to its dictates, when he represents our first parents as giving utterance to their religious emotions in a hymn of praise:—

"Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce up-risen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim,
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bowed adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
Unmeditated: *such prompt eloquence*
Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous verse."

Paradise Lost, Book v. verse 138.

Not less strikingly in harmony with human nature, in that aspect of it which we are at present considering, are the words of the Hebrew Poet,—"My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: *then spake I with my tongue.*"

It would be altogether superfluous were we to say more in corroboration of this point. No one who has at all studied human nature will question its accuracy. And if the *naturalness* of outward expressions of feeling, or forms, in religious worship be admitted, this is a sufficient ground for asserting that, when kept in their proper place, they are at once *becoming and right.* "The outward forms and observances of worship," says Isaac Taylor, "are manifestly intended to discourage and exclude the false refinements of an imaginative piety, and to give to the religious affections a mundane rather than a transcendental character. The congregated worshippers come into 'the house of God'—the hall or court of audience on the intelligible terms of human association. And being so assembled as in the actual presence of the 'King of saints' they give utterance to the emotions of love, veneration, hope, joy, penitence in all those modes of outward expression, which are at once *proper to the constitution of human nature*, and proper to be addressed to a being of kindred character and sympathies. Wor-

ship is planned altogether in adaptation to the limitations of the inferior party, not in proportion to the infinitude of the superior:—even the worship of heaven must be framed on the same principle; for how high soever we ascend in the scale of created intelligence, still the finite can never surmount its boundaries, or at all adapt itself to the infinite. But the infinite may always bow to the finite. Those, therefore, who, blown up with the vapours of enthusiasm, contemn and neglect the *modes and style of worship proper to humanity*, must find that, though indulgence is given to their affectation on earth, there can be no room allowed it in heaven."*

But we go further, and assert that such forms may be not less *useful* than they are natural. This is just what might have been expected. The Author of our nature has done nothing in vain, and though we cannot, in all cases, see his purposes, in most cases we can discover some of the objects contemplated. It is not difficult in the present case, to see at least one of the reasons why God has connected the inward emotion with its outward expression. Language, and we may add posture, though in a less degree, as forms in religion, are not only natural results of the existence of religion in the mind, but they operate powerfully as causes in deepening and intensifying

* Natural History of Enthusiasm, p. 34.

the feelings that called them into existence. This is not a peculiarity of the devout emotions;—it happens in accordance with a general law. We do not feel less sympathy for an individual in affliction, when we have an opportunity of putting the feelings of our hearts into language, or unconsciously writing them on our countenances. We do not love a friend less that we have had the happiness of seeing him, shaking him warmly by the hand, and interchanging with him words of affection and kindness. In all such cases, there is a decided tendency in the external form to heighten the internal feeling. In like manner, not only do the emotions of veneration, gratitude and love, when exercised towards the Divine Being, tend to clothe themselves in some outward form, but this outward form exerts a powerful reflex influence on the feelings whence it springs. Emotion, be it remembered, is not the child of accident, but of understanding and sense. Hence, spoken language, both as furnishing invaluable aid to the understanding, and as making an appeal to sense, is intimately connected with feeling. Let the emotion exist, and let it be expressed in words; this expression helps greatly to preserve the attention, and keep the mind steadily directed towards its object, and in this way to perpetuate and intensify the emotion which called it forth. And even the very tones

of the voice may find through the ear a direct avenue to the heart. The same holds true, though to a less extent, in regard to the postures of the body. "By the constitution of the human mind," says the author quoted above, "its emotions are strengthened in no other way than by exercise and utterance; nor does it appear that the religious emotions are exempted from this general law. The Divine Being is the proper and supreme object of reverence, of love, and of affectionate obedience: and the natural means of exercising and of expressing these feelings are placed before us, both in the offices of devotion, and in the duties of life;—just in the same way that the opportunities of enhancing the domestic affections are afforded in the constitution of social life."*

Now though form had not been the natural, and therefore permissible and proper accompaniment of devout feeling, still, as a means of deepening religious impressions, and assisting pious contemplation, it would have been highly expedient. If it be our duty to have our minds as fully as possible under the influence of devotion in the worship of God, it is also our duty to allow that devotion to assume an outward form. In general circumstances, any such form is altogether precluded during the hours of labour by the nature of modern avocations, and hence, the ne-

* Natural History of Enthusiasm, p. 40.

cessity of leisure and retirement in order that the individual may without restraint employ that form of worship which is best calculated to fix the mind, and to beget and intensify devotional feeling. Thus it appears that forms, so far from being incompatible with the true spirit of worship, are the natural manifestation of that spirit, and are also useful in sustaining and promoting it; and, therefore, are *proper* and *expedient*. But, all such forms demand *time*.

Our position might have been still farther confirmed by a consideration of the vast influence that may be, and is exerted by *association* in the sphere of religion. It is capable of being rendered an important auxiliary to devotion, not only with respect to the forms of language and posture, to which reference has been more particularly made, but also with respect to those of *time* and *place*, which are in themselves wholly indifferent. But enough has been said on this point.

Another of the objections brought against us is, that "it is much more rational, and therefore must be more acceptable to God, to cherish at all times and in all circumstances a religious spirit, than to give up any period formally and exclusively to the worship of God." It has been said already, that the worship of God at all times, and the worship of God on special occasions, ought not to be opposed. We hold them not only to be compatible, but equally

obligatory. But it is further objected: "If the religious spirit be preserved always, there can be no need of any special occasions for worship." This is the point that now demands our consideration. The first remark we have to make here is, the worship of God in all circumstances will necessarily lead to his exclusive worship on suitable occasions. Let us suppose an individual actuated by a habitually religious spirit, we ask, How will such a person employ the leisure periods of time that must occur even in the busiest life? If we find him so devout that even secular matters become sacred from the light in which they are contemplated, may we not expect to find him, when freed from worldly encumbrances, turning his mind with delight to God as the Great Object of worship? In all ages, and by heathen as well as by Christian worshippers, the pursuits and business of the world have been regarded as opposing the upward tendencies of devotion. As a magnet, when turned from its natural direction, shews its nature by returning as soon as set free to its normal position, so the habitually devout man will manifest his religion by yielding up his whole mind, when occasion presents itself, to the possession of those feelings which he is so anxious to preserve during the common business of life. We put it to any one who knows anything of the constitution of the human mind,

whether it is possible to be so much under the influence of religion as to carry its spirit into the ordinary concerns of life, and at the same time, prevent himself from giving up portions of time exclusively to the worship of God.

But further, the special acts of religious contemplation stand in the same relation to the spirit of worship as the cause does to its effect. Let the reader try to give any other account of the origin of a habitually devout spirit, and he will find that no other can be given at all satisfactory and consistent with his own mental constitution. It cannot be self-originated; and there exist as certain laws among mental, as among material phenomena. We venture to affirm, there is no rational way of explaining the existence of a devotional spirit except that which has been indicated. But not to press this point, suppose the spirit of worship to exist, how is it to be continued? It is not self-supporting, any more than it is self-originated. It does not possess the power of extracting from the gross matters of earth, with which it is ever in contact, nourishment adequate to its healthy development, or even its continued existence. Who that understands anything of the spiritual system, but knows the tear and wear that is the necessary consequence of prolonged occupation with the engrossing and distracting cares of the world? We do not need

to call in anything supernatural to account for the undeniable tendency of worldly business to enfeeble the sense of religion, and obliterate the subject from the mind. It is the natural result of a mental law. Any idea or feeling loses its force in proportion to the length of time it may be absent from the mind, and the number and intensity of other ideas and feelings that occupy the mind during its absence. This would have remained a general law though human nature had been morally perfect. How much stronger must the tendency appear, when we consider the influence of that antipathy to everything spiritual and truly religious which, beyond all question, is found in every human bosom. It is a notorious fact, that man universally is bound by the fetters of the material and the sensible. True, all are not equally slaves, but those who are most nearly emancipated, feel themselves the most hopelessly enslaved, and mourn most bitterly the extent of their bondage. All who are really religious will frankly acknowledge that worldly pursuits have an inevitable tendency to efface religion from the mind ; and all who are not religious furnish but too conclusive evidence that such is the fact. We might trace the stream of religious biography in Christian and in heathen lands, and from the earliest to the latest times ; and at every point we might find illustrations of the truth we have now

brought forward. But this is altogether unnecessary for the confirmation of a point which needs only to be stated to secure assent, and of which every man has the witness in his own experience.

The necessary conclusion obviously is, that religious impressions or a spirit of worship, in whatever way produced, will die away unless the attention of the mind be called away from the material to the spiritual, from earth to God. The individual must give up periods of time to pious contemplation, and its natural concomitant religious worship, else it is quite impossible in the nature of things, that he can preserve the spirit of religion amidst the duties of active life. Those who hold that the maintenance of the spirit of devotion every day, and all day, exhausts the claims of religious duty, are still bound to yield to God the worship of special occasions, as the only means of gaining the end which they acknowledge they are under obligations to seek.

Thus have we seen from the very objections that are urged against all formal and special acts of worship, that these, in the general sense we have indicated, are not only highly expedient, but even indispensable to the existence of religion in the soul. Other considerations might be adduced in confirmation of this position, but we feel as if an apology were due to the greater number of our readers, for having detained

them so long on a point that is so self-evident. The great vagueness of the floating opinions on the subject, seemed to demand some notice, and we have dwelt more minutely on some of the objections than their own importance demanded, in order to explain more fully our own views, and save us the necessity of making digressions in the subsequent part of our argument.

There is another objection of a general nature, that has been often repeated, and which it may be well to glance at before passing to the consideration of the next division of the subject. We give it in the words of another. "They who can acquiesce in the extraordinary dogma that one portion of time is more holy in its *nature* than another, are no doubt at perfect liberty to act on their own convictions of truth and duty; but it seems very unreasonable that this apparently incredible notion should be forced upon others, whose minds it may be are too logically constructed to allow them to acquiesce in its accuracy; and it seems to be especially unreasonable that civil governments should be called on to acknowledge its correctness and obligation, on the penalty of being denounced as vile Atheists, who presume to oppose the eternal moral laws of the Deity."*

With respect to this quotation, and others that

* The Modern Sabbath Examined, p. 22.

might be made, we may be allowed to remark that it does not contain a fair representation of the views of those against whom it is advanced. They do not "acquiesce in the extraordinary dogma that one portion of time is more holy in its nature than another," nor do they seek to "force upon others" this "apparently incredible notion." True, they speak of sacred and of common time, but it does not follow from this that they suppose the nature of the time to be different in the two cases. Language is only the index of thought, and common justice demands that in getting at the ideas in this case, words should be understood according to analogy and custom in other cases. There is nothing more common than to hear persons speak of good and bad times, of peaceful and troublous times, of joyful and sad times. Who ever thinks of charging the individuals who use such terms with holding any "extraordinary dogma," any "apparently incredible notion" with respect to the nature of time? In truth, were we never to speak of time except in language that correctly expressed its nature, we could never speak of it at all except as long or short. For it is impossible for us to think of time as being anything else in its nature than simple duration. All other terms that can possibly be applied to it are relative either to ourselves or to the circumstances in which we are placed. Every expression in which

some other idea is linked on to that of time, will be found when traced to its source to have arisen not as a notion of the nature of time at all, but wholly from the phenomena external or internal of which the individual was then conscious. Nay, time is not realized by the mind at all in such a case—it is merely the condition and not the object of thought. Time, like space, is not an existence, although it is involved in all existence. "It seems very unreasonable" to charge any one with holding and forcing upon others, opinions with regard to some object of thought, when, by the nature of the case, such an object could not be present to his mind at all. The notion of holiness as residing in time, is not only "apparently incredible" but really impossible, and hence the absurdity of even supposing that such a notion can be held by any man. No doubt, persons sometimes speak of time as if it were a separate existence, and could be made an independent object of thought, but a little consideration of the language employed will suffice to shew that the ideas have been originated by the law of association. If we would not impose upon ourselves and do injustice to others, we must interpret language according to its own laws. Suppose yourself standing at any point in a mathematical line which stretches on both sides of you into infinity. If you would describe the nature of such a line, you might define it as "infinite

extension;" but suppose you wished to point attention to that part of the line that lay behind you, or to that part which lay before you, or to the point at which you were standing, how would you express yourself? If you were resolved not to speak of any of these parts, except in terms which should correctly indicate the nature of the line, you could never speak of it at all. You must first of all place some object of thought, for example, yourself, in relation to this line, and then you may apply to the line terms that are strictly applicable only to the relation which exists between it and the related object, or that are merely descriptive of some property or circumstance of that object. But no one ever dreams that these terms, whatever they may be, can convey any idea of the *nature* of such a line. So is it with the line of infinite duration—*time*. As an individual moves along in the direction of this line, all that is behind him he calls *past*, the point at which he has arrived is for the moment named *present*, and the infinity that lies before him is termed *future*. These and all other terms that may be applied to time have no reference to its nature—they are only relative. When, therefore, we speak of sacred or holy times, we speak in the strictest accordance with the genius of human language, while no reference whatever is made to the nature of time itself as such. At different

periods the engagements, feelings, or circumstances of an individual vary; these are associated in the mind with particular points of time, and terms are applied to the latter that are strictly applicable only to the former. Hence the use of such phraseology in reference to time as good and bad, joyful and sorrowful, *sacred* and *common*. With respect to their nature *all* times are most unquestionably alike, but with respect to their engagements we have already seen that all times ought not to be alike. Whether all *days* ought to be alike will be considered under a subsequent division of the subject.

CHAPTER III.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD DEMANDS THE APPROPRIATION OF A SET TIME.

THE only assumption we have hitherto made is, that it is the duty of man to worship God. We have seen what is meant by this worship, and the only way, so far as regards *time*, in which it can be performed. The unequivocal demand which the worship of God makes that time be devoted to itself, requires that some arrangement be made, by which such time or times shall be secured. In the language of Addison: "Stated times for particular acts of devotion or the exercise of certain religious duties, have been enjoined in all civil governments, whatever deity they worshipped, or whatever religion they professed. That which may be done at all times is often totally neglected and forgotten, unless fixed and determined to some time more than another; and therefore, though several duties may be suitable to every day

of our lives, they are most likely to be performed if some days are more particularly set apart for the practice of them."* It will not do to suspend the performance of this primary duty on the promptings of passing inclinations, or the mercy of circumstances. We concede, at once, where a sufficient time is at one's disposal, his setting apart such occasions as enlightened reason may dictate as proper and suitable to his peculiar circumstances, would satisfy the claims of duty so far as his *individual relation to God* is concerned. But no man has any right to act as if he were a *solitary* inhabitant of this earth of ours. Each man is bound to his fellow-men by *moral* ties, as well as by social instincts, and prudential considerations. The bond that unites all men to God, connects one man with every other man.

To apply this obvious truth to the case in hand: If it be the duty of any man to worship God, it is the duty of all men. It must be in accordance with the will of God that all his creatures should worship him. As a creature, I am bound to give effect to the will of God, so far as I know it, to the utmost extent of my ability, whether in regard to myself or others. Hence, I am under an obligation to do all I can to enable and induce every man that can possibly be

* Tatler, No. 267

brought within the sphere of my influence, to perform the duty of worship. The obligation that lies upon me, lies upon every individual who knows what the will of God in regard to this matter is; and therefore it is the duty of all such, in a social as well as individual capacity, to see to it, that all available means are used, to put it within the moral and physical power of every member of the community to attend to the performance of this duty.

Again: This obligation may be easily deduced from the universal law of benevolence, which is admitted, on all hands, to be a law of our nature. The constitution of man is such that his highest happiness is dependent on the performance of his duty. The observance of worship, as a moral duty, must, therefore, be conducive to the best interests of the worshipper. So that, if I am bound by the law of love to promote the welfare of my fellow-men, I am also bound to promote, as far as I possibly can, the sincere observance of the worship of God. The simple fact, that I am at once a moral being, and a member of society, lays upon me an obligation, of which I can never rid myself. The conscience of every enlightened man must, at once, give the stamp of its unqualified approval to the validity of this obligation.

In order to the establishment of our position, it is

incumbent on us to shew, that a general cessation from all worldly pursuits during a fixed period, for the purpose of affording an opportunity of worship, is either absolutely *indispensable* to the possibility of general and intelligent worship, or, at least, is the *best* means of gaining its most extensive and rational observance. If either of these points can be made out, our object will be gained. Let it here be kept in mind, that we do not say that any man's conscience can recognise the simultaneous character as essential to worship; we only say, that every man's conscience testifies that the worship of God ought to be universal, and that every man ought to do all in his power to bring about this universality. It is not conscience immediately, but enlightened wisdom that dictates a general arrangement, as the best means of gaining the contemplated end.

Let it also be remembered, that we have nothing whatever to do, under this division of the subject, with the *length* of the time to be set apart, that is, left free from labour and worldly business for the purposes of religion. This will engage our attention afterwards. Meanwhile, we have only to inquire, whether the claims of duty will be most fully met, by leaving each individual to arrange the time for himself, or, by making some general arrangement securing a specific time for religion, and thus afford-

ing to all a possibility of worshipping God. The brief consideration of two remarks will suffice to decide this question.

1. With respect to the *great majority of the people*, the worship of God, in a manner suited to the importance of the duty, is a *physical* impossibility, on the supposition that no remission of labour is made for this purpose.

It is an easy matter for those who have time at their own disposal to talk of liberty of conscience in matters of religious worship, but where would be the working man's liberty, if he were denied the opportunity of exercising it? There are some who will grant to others the right to worship God according to their own consciences, but practically ignore the duty of doing anything whatever to make it *possible* for them to comply with the dictates of conscience. They would not directly put the soul into chains, but they would virtually do this by laying such fetters upon the body as incapacitate the mind for free and active exercise. On the supposition that there is no cessation from labour, the great mass of the population could have at their disposal only portions of time so brief as to be utterly inadequate for the due discharge of the duties of religion. The circumstances of the working classes especially, are such as to preclude the possibility of getting more

than a very short and a very unfavourable time. Let the reader select an average case, and endeavour to gain as correct an idea as he can of the position of such an individual. Working men must, for the most part, live in families or with companions: they cannot enjoy solitude, except occasionally, and by snatches. Take the case of a father of a family. At night he stretches his exhausted body on the couch of repose. In the morning, when the hour of rising comes round, nature calls loudly for a "little more sleep, a little more slumber," and he is strongly tempted to enjoy the last minute of repose, which the necessity of labour will permit. Even where religion operates powerfully on the mind, the portion of time that can be secured for devotion, by such an individual, before the labours of the day, must be extremely small. In the intervals during the day, there is no time, and no mental fitness for engaging in an act of worship. With few exceptions, the only period of leisure is to be found in the evening. When one takes into account the protracted hours of labour, and the proportionally greater demand which is thus made for repose; and at the same time makes allowance for the numberless items of time that must be subtracted from the small portion that is left, it must be very obvious that the total amount of time available for the purposes of religion, cannot, at the

very utmost, be large. Indeed, it seems very plain, and it might be verified by facts, that without a greater degree of order and forethought than is generally found, even in well-regulated families, a quiet hour for devotion cannot be obtained, except by subtracting it from the necessary hours of repose.

But, suppose that by wise arrangement the necessary leisure is obtained, is the mind of such an individual as we have supposed in the best state for the performance of such a duty? Though the exercise of worship does not require any straining of the mental faculties, it demands a wakeful and active mind. But the bodily frame is exhausted, and consequently the brain, the mind's organ, refuses to put forth any continued or active exertion. Hence, the efforts of the mind in such a case to concentrate or sustain attention, and to excite or deepen devotional feeling, must in a great measure be fruitless. This is a simple and well-known fact, confirmed by all experience. Let it not be supposed that we mean to depreciate the morning or evening worship of the labouring man. It is invaluable. The shortness of the time at his command, and his physical exhaustion, do not absolve him from the obligations of devotion; they only make an imperative call for order in domestic arrangements. But while we admit that the claims of religious duty may to a certain extent

be met in this way, we unhesitatingly assert that these claims cannot thus be exhausted. Is the duty of devotion one of so small importance as not to call for anything more than a mere fragment of time, or a dull and drowsy mind? Our sense of propriety forbids us to entertain, for a moment, such a supposition. But, not to insist further on the obvious inadequacy of the time, or the unfitness of the mind to give a suitable attention for a sufficient period, we put it to the conscience of the reader, if it is right that religion should thus be ignored in a general or conventional arrangement of time. Is not the disrespect shewn to religion, and the Great Object of worship, both wrong and impious? It is a duty to labour for the maintenance of ourselves and our families, and there is a time for labour; the body requires nourishment, and there are periods for refreshment; it needs repose, and the night is given up for this purpose. In fixing these periods regard is had to their relative claims; and no man could unduly augment any one at the expense of another without subjecting himself to the charge of selfishness, or misanthropy, or injustice. Religion, too, puts in her claim, but that claim is unheeded in the general allocation of time, on the present supposition. Why? If we are moral beings at all, it must be our duty to worship God, and this demands time as

peremptorily as any of the things now mentioned; and yet every other claim must first be satisfied, and any odd moments that remain must suffice for its performance. In the name of religion, we protest against such contemptuous and impious neglect. Why must she be compelled to stand neglected at the gate waiting to be fed with crumbs? Is not her proper place that of principal guest at the table? Ought she not to have the first attention? Or, if this be objected to, as supposing a competition or clashing among duties, all of which demand our attention, ought the claims of religious duty not to be distinctly recognised in the general distribution of time? Ought the duties we owe to God to be kept out of sight until everything else that may be termed duty has been performed? Is not the relation of man to God the closest and most indestructible of all his relations? Must not, then, the duties that arise out of these relations be the most sacred and inviolable of all his duties? It cannot be right to leave over the performance of such duties until the occurrence of mere remnants of leisure time. It is impossible that religious obligation can thus be fully met. It is due to worship, as a moral duty, and the primary and most exalted duty that has been imposed on us by the law of our nature, that *time be hedged off* in some way or other for its becoming observance.

2. With respect to *vast multitudes* in the lower ranks of society the worship of God is a *moral* impossibility, on the hypothesis that there is no remission of labour made for its observance.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the worship of God must be intelligent. To speak of worshipping a Being whom we do not know, is obviously contradictory. It were blind and irrational worship, to raise an altar, and inscribe on it, "To THE UNKNOWN GOD." Where there is no *definite* knowledge of God, there may be religious feeling of a certain kind, but it is vague and objectless. There may be an upturning of the eye, but it finds nothing on which to rest. If all above is not darkness, it is at best but a glorious haze that conceals the Great Object of worship. The Supreme Being must be present to the mind as a personal Divinity, else there can be no rational devotion. And it is just as indispensable that our ideas be *correct*, as that they be definite. If we entertain erroneous conceptions of the character of God, the object of our worship is the creation of our own imaginations. We can worship God in spirit and in *truth* only when our knowledge respecting him is both distinct and accurate. Nothing short of this can either be approved by Reason, or accepted by God. And how can we know God, apart from Revelation, but by the discovery of his perfections as

unfolded in his doings and dealings with his creatures in the works of creation and providence? And how can we gain a distinct and accurate knowledge of these perfections except by turning the mind patiently to their contemplation? It is not necessary here to inquire in what way the mind may most easily and clearly gain a knowledge of God's true character. We shall come to that afterwards. Let it be observed now, that mental effort is necessary for the acquisition of Divine knowledge, which is the basis of all genuine devotion;—and that this mental effort necessarily demands *time*. It has already been remarked that, on the supposition of no general cessation from labour, the time at the command of the lower, and we might add also of the middle classes of society, is altogether disproportionate to the becoming performance even of the *act* of worship, considering its great importance and its exalted nature; how much more inadequate must that time be to meet the obligations of the case when it is borne in mind that this act must be the homage, not only of a devout heart, but of an enlightened mind—that it demands the acquisition of knowledge as a necessary preliminary? Is it said that this knowledge may be acquired once for all, and that subsequently it is only necessary to call up those ideas which have formerly been obtained? To this it might be replied, that the highest finite

conceptions of the Infinite Mind must be infinitely below the truth. In the words of an Eastern sage, "Canst thou by searching find out God, canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" "The idea of the Supreme Being has this peculiar property; that, as it admits of no substitute, so, from the first moment it is formed, it is capable of continual growth and enlargement. God himself is immutable; but our conception of his character is continually receiving fresh accessions, is continually growing more extended and refulgent, by having transferred to it new elements of beauty and goodness, by attracting to itself, as a centre, whatever bears the impress of dignity, order, or happiness. It borrows splendour from all that is fair, subordinates to itself all that is great, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe."* Though we can never reach, we ought ever to be tending towards this goal. The nature of the mind is expansive and progressive. The exercise of to-day fits it for a still greater effort to-morrow; and the acquisition of one truth opens up the way for the discovery of another. The history of an individual with respect to religious knowledge bears an analogy to the general history of science and art. Men never dream that the last truth of science has been discovered, or the utmost perfection of art attained.

* Robert Hall's Works, vol. i. p. 29.

The field of the astronomer, for example, is infinite —no one will ever be able to say that he has descried its furthest limits. Every improvement and enlargement of his instrument brings more distant portions of that field within the range of his vision. So is it in the case before us. The character of God opens up an infinite field in which the mind may expatiate: exercise in this field, as in every other, enlarges the capacity of the mind; and hence, there may be an indefinite progress. Now, in genuine devotion the intensity of the proper emotions—the acceptability of the worship, will ever be proportionate to the amount of the knowledge possessed and realized. Love in the heart, if it be of a normal character, will not only be in the ratio of the light in the understanding, but be its natural result. Hence there is an obligation laid even on the wisest of men to go on discovering and adding new truths to those that have been already acquired; and hence also, there is a *universal* necessity for having a portion of *time* for the acquisition of religious knowledge, in addition to that which is necessary for the act of worship.

But, not to dwell further on this, there is no one, who is at all acquainted with the religious character of mankind, as unfolded in history, or exhibited at the present day, but is aware that in every nation.

whether civilized or savage, Christian or heathen, there have been, and still are vast multitudes without any just conception of God's character; and therefore wholly disqualified for engaging in his worship. To pass over all those countries that are shrouded in the grossest moral and spiritual darkness, let us confine our attention to those favoured spots of earth, where the light of truth shines most brightly, and is most widely diffused. We presume there are few who will go far beyond Christendom to seek for such favoured spots; and in these lands, at least, few will be found willing to admit that any other country under heaven, is much in advance of our own in regard to a general knowledge of the fundamental principles of religion. But let the country be any whatever, and the creed anything you please, new or old, long or short; for our argument here is so comprehensive as to exclude none, and so conclusive that the weakest case that can be supposed is amply sufficient. Of course, the greater the ignorance and barbarism, the greater strength is added to our reasoning; and consequently, if our position is shewn to be good in the most enlightened case, it must be so, and much more so, in all other cases. Let the reader, then, cast his eye over the country which he conceives to be the most distinguished for religious knowledge; let him walk

abroad over the length and breadth of the land, and endeavour to form a correct estimate of its religious enlightenment. The result of such an inquiry would undoubtedly establish this fact, that there are multitudes of the people who possess no definite or correct ideas of God at all, and that there are multitudes more who seem to have clear and accurate conceptions of his character, inasmuch as they make use of a phraseology in harmony with truth, but whose knowledge extends no further than words. All these, in their present condition, are morally incapable of worshipping God in a rational and intelligent manner. The question that immediately suggests itself to every right-thinking and benevolent individual is, Can anything be done in such a case to dispel ignorance from the mind, and thus to kindle devotion in the soul? We assume that everything that can be done *ought* to be done. If there be an individual so "concentred all in self," as to console himself with the thought that since he was in no sense the cause of that ignorance, he can be under no obligation to do anything for its removal, he shews most conclusively that his own knowledge, whatever that may be, has had little effect in humanizing his heart. Can it be that any one will justify himself for passively consenting that the night-mare of ignorance should continue to brood over myriads of his fellow-

men? Shall the evil be left to perpetuate and propagate itself from generation to generation, stretching its dark form over the entire moral firmament, like a murky, menacing thunder-cloud charged to the full with the elements of destruction? No one at least on whose heart the lineaments of the Divine image have been traced, will be content to allow the noblest feature of that image to remain effaced from the minds of so many, if he can do anything whatever to enstamp it there. Enlightened conscience and right feeling conspire in demanding that the very utmost effort be made for their enlightenment.

The question that next meets us is, How is this ignorance to be dispelled? What are the best means of imparting to these multitudes such a religious knowledge as shall fit them for discharging the highest duties of which their natures are capable? The question is a practical one, and must be answered by enlightened common sense. It is very obvious, first of all, that there can be no other way of dispelling ignorance and error than by presenting truth; and that there are only two ways of presenting truth to others,—the circulation of books, and oral instruction—truth must be addressed either to the eye or the ear. Take either of these instrumentalities, and we ask, How is it to be employed as a

means of removing the vast incubus which weighs down into the mire of earth that noble and god-like nature which was meant to soar on the wings of light and love—truth and devotion, to its native skies? An agency of some kind is plainly necessary, in order to circulate the truth in a written form, or communicate it through the medium of spoken language. But how, or when, is this agency to be brought into operation so as to induce any reasonable hopes of success? It has already been remarked that the working classes have little time and as little fitness at that time for engaging even in the *act* of worship; how then are the additional time, and retirement, and mental activity, that are indispensable for the acquisition and contemplation of truth, to be obtained? It were preposterous to expect that individuals, with all the tastes and habits that ignorance has engendered, should be found willing, after the labours of the day, to leave their homes for the purpose of hearing lectures on religion, or that they should listen with candour and patience to instructions pressed on them in their own houses at a time which would be generally felt to be very inconvenient. And where is the time or the inducement for such persons to read books, not to mention the case of those who may be unable to read? Neither of these instrumentalities, and no combination of them,

can ever bring truth into contact with the minds of the people generally, on the supposition that no remission of labour is made for the purpose of affording to all an opportunity of acquiring religious truth, and performing religious duty. It seems as if it were almost an insult to the reason of the reader, to suppose that argument is necessary to convince him that a general cessation from labour is absolutely indispensable to bring about or maintain the religious enlightenment of the great mass of the population in any country. The history of the past, the facts of the present, and the very constitution of the human mind, demonstrate that there never can be a God-worshipping people where there does not exist some arrangement by which *time* is secured for religion.

These remarks have taken for granted, that some active measures are called for, in order to diffuse religious knowledge among the ignorant. But it may be conceived that no such measures are necessary or binding. Some may, and do say, that the clearest and most impressive knowledge of God may be obtained, and the most devout feelings excited by the contemplation of nature, and the study of the Divine perfections as there revealed. We do not need to inquire at present into the truth of this opinion; since it is very plain that such a communion with

nature, equally with the other means referred to, demands *time*, and this is all we wish to make out here. It matters not from what quarter, or in what manner, truth is presented, that truth must be dwelt upon and digested by the mind, else it can be of no use. Hence the absolute necessity of time—a remission of labour, in order to bring the enlightenment of the people within the range of possibility.

The duty of *social* worship has not been assumed in any of the preceding observations. Even although private and individual worship were held to exhaust the claims of duty, still, this would imperatively demand a special time for its becoming and intelligent performance. But there is a social element in man's nature which may be turned to good account in the service of religion. Sympathy has a very powerful influence over the mind, and nowhere is it capable of exerting greater power than in the sphere of the religious affections. Can any good reason be given why an instinctive tendency should be ignored in the worship of God, any more than in other matters? It is natural for man to worship God in a social capacity. And it is not less becoming than natural. Is it not fit that there should be an open recognition of the claims of religion? Is there not a peculiar propriety in thus publicly honouring God? Would this not be a sufficient vindication of the public cele-

bration of worship, even though nothing else could be said in its favour? But social worship may be as useful as it is appropriate. There is something fitted to solemnize the mind and impress the heart in the circumstances of a congregation of individuals assembled for the purpose of holding intercourse with the eternal and invisible Author of their being. The mutual influence exerted gives a keener edge to the mind, and thus imparts a greater clearness to its perceptions, and a deeper intensity to its emotions. In this way worship becomes more worthy of man, and more acceptable to God. Were it necessary these statements might be confirmed by an appeal to the experience of all who have sincerely and devoutly engaged in such an exercise. Social worship —as in the strictest harmony with the principles of human nature—as peculiarly appropriate to the relation in which all men stand to God—and as fitted to be eminently useful to the worshippers themselves, is highly expedient and necessary. Besides, such worship is admirably adapted to impress the minds of those who are destitute of true religion. On this ground alone it might be asserted that, "if the worship of God be a duty of religion, public worship is a necessary institution." The example itself is calculated to have a beneficial influence on the ignorant and indifferent; while the opportunity afforded by

such occasions for imparting religious instruction is of immense importance. Comparatively few of those who are at all conversant with the facts of religious society, and the tendencies of human nature, will question the truth of Paley's assertion, that, "without public worship the greater part of mankind would exercise no religion at all."* Whether, then, we consider it with relation to God or to man, —in its influence on the religious or the irreligious part of the population, the social worship of God is plainly a moral duty.

It were a waste of words formally to shew that the general observance of such worship demands a general cessation from labour. Without the appropriation of a *set time* for this special purpose, the thing is obviously impossible.

Thus have we seen that the worship of God can neither be *general*, nor *intelligent*, nor *social*, unless a *definite time* be given up for its observance.

All the preceding observations under this section have had respect to the setting apart of some time by an individual community. They admit, however, of a wider application, though this is not imperatively necessary to our argument. Suppose it left to each country, or district of country, to select a time for itself. No good on the whole could result from each

* Moral Philosophy, p. 307.

district selecting a different time from that chosen by the neighbouring districts. Indeed, we believe the interests of trade alone would be sufficient to suggest, and in the end to secure the observance of the same time, at least, throughout an entire country. The same reason, if it did not create uniformity at first, would tend to assimilate the practice of all the religious countries in a continent, and of all the continents in the world.

And then, besides its commercial advantages, look at its religious utility. If there be a social element in man's constitution ; if this element render him capable of receiving an influence from the mere fact, that others are associated with him in any pursuit ; and if this influence be capable of increase by an addition to the numbers thus associated, then is it plain, that in proportion to the largeness of the circle in which the same time is observed, must be the power of the social influence exerted on the worshipper. Again, supposing contiguous districts of country to observe different periods, the worship of any one of these would inevitably be broken in upon and disturbed, in a greater or less degree, by the necessary arrangements of the others in carrying on the ordinary machinery of labour and traffic. Such a state of things would present innumerable temptations to omit or hurry over the services of devotion appro-

priate to the occasion. Along the borders of districts, especially, there could not be seen the seemly sight of the inhabitants joining together with one mind in one employment. The silent stillness of a general Sabbath with its sacred influence over the soul, would be wanting. With such a Sabbath the poet could never have written,—

"How *still* the morning of the hallowed day!
Mute is the voice of rural labour, hushed
The ploughboy's whistle, and the milkmaid's song.
* * * *
"With dove-like wings *Peace* o'er yon village broods;
The dizzying mill-wheel rests; the anvil's din
Hath ceased; *all, all around is quietness.*
* * * *
"*Calmness* seems throned on yon unmoving cloud."

No one who has had experience of the influence of solitude and stillness in soothing the feelings, and putting the whole mind into a favourable frame for devout contemplation, can doubt for a moment the desirableness of a universal Sabbath.

Besides, does not our sense of propriety instinctively pronounce in favour of uniformity in such a case? Do not the sympathies of the soul seek as wide a field as possible in which to expatiate? Does not the imagination of the sincere worshipper delight to dwell on the fact that along with him in many other lands there are to be found numbers at the same

time laying the same tribute of grateful adoration and praise on the same altar—surrounding in spirit the same eternal throne? Suppose the true character of God to be universally known, and his worship universally observed, what a grand spectacle would be presented at the season especially set apart to devotion, if this were the same all over the world! The entire family of man gathered together in one temple, and worshipping together one God! How grateful the odour, how goodly the sacrifice when all with one heart should lay incense and a pure offering on the altar of Jehovah!

It is quite possible a difficulty may have presented itself to some minds with respect to our observations on this part of the subject, and they may be ready to ask, "How can a public decision come to for the purpose of carrying out a moral duty, be binding on an individual who regards that decision as erroneous?" To this we reply, that there is nothing approaching to religious compulsion in coming to such a general arrangement. It imposes no religious duty whatever. No obligation of religion or morality can originate in any human authority. The penetralia of conscience must be entered by no such unhallowed foot. The ground of obligation to the worship of God must ever remain the same—the relation of the rational creature to his Creator. But the obligation imposed

by a general decision such as we have supposed, extends merely to a cessation from labour, and may be shewn to lie even on the individual who does not admit the necessity of setting apart any time for religious worship. "No human law," says Whately, "can, or should attempt to *force* men *to be religious;* but it is only fair that the laws should prevent any hinderance being thrown in the way of those who are disposed to practise the duties of their religion. For such a law cannot do violence to any man's conscience. Whatever any one's religious or irreligious notions may be, he cannot think himself bound in conscience to labour on the Lord's day."*

So far is there from being anything like religious compulsion in the case, that some such arrangement is unequivocally demanded in order to the existence of religious liberty. Look for a moment at the reason and the object of the arrangement. It has already been shewn that this is indispensable, in order that the great mass of the people may have it in their power to engage in a becoming manner in the worship of God. Hence, without such an arrangement all these would be deprived of liberty to comply with the dictates of their own consciences. If it is universally admitted that each individual ought to obey the dictates of his conscience; if it is

* Charges and other Tracts, p. 116.

the duty of each man to put no obstructions in the way of his neighbour's doing so, but rather to give him assistance, when he can do this conscientiously; and if it is a fact, that a large proportion of professedly religious men are bound in conscience to set apart a certain time to religion;—then, it cannot be the duty of any man, whatever be his views, to offer opposition to any arrangement which infringes the rights of no one, and at the same time puts it within the power of every man to yield obedience to a sacred moral obligation. To accede to a general pause in the eternal round of exhausting labour, cannot, surely, involve any violation of conscience. There is no imposing of religious duty on the one hand, nor is there the setting aside of any moral obligation on the other. And if even the Atheist, as he would concede to others the same freedom of thought and action which he claims for himself, is bound not to oppose any measure absolutely necessary to enable multitudes of his fellow-men to carry out their convictions of duty, it cannot be wrong for a religious man to make a slight concession to his brethren, and cordially to adopt the supposed arrangement. If he considered the period too short, he would plainly be bound to make the best use of it; and having done this, he would justly be entitled to look upon his duty as discharged. If he regarded the period as too long, then he ought to

devote at least the proportion which he conceives to be obligatory; and should conscience require compliance with some other non-religious duty in the remainder of the day, full liberty in this particular must be conceded to him, provided he do not interfere, directly or indirectly, with the religious convictions of others.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD DEMANDS THE APPROPRIATION OF AN ENTIRE DAY.

THE question here is not, What is the proportion or entire amount of time to be devoted to religion? This point will be considered under the next division of the argument. We inquire now, Into what portions ought this time, whatever it may be, to be distributed? we shall ask afterwards, How often ought such portions to come round? Suppose the time to be a fifth, or a tenth of waking or working time, how much of it should be given on *one* occasion? Shall we take a fifth or tenth of each day; or shall we take one day in five or ten; or shall we take several days in succession, and allow a correspondingly greater interval? It might, perhaps, have been more logical to have inquired first, whether the proportion can be determined, and then to have considered how it might best be distributed. But we prefer asking, What amount of time is necessary for the wise and becom-

ing performance of the duties in question *once*, before considering at what intervals the performance of these duties should recur ?

Here again, we freely admit that a direct appeal to conscience cannot be immediately answered. How is it possible ? Conscience has nothing whatever to do with the *discovery* of the relations involved in any given case ; its office is to pronounce what is right after these relations are fully known. Conscience is, indeed, the supreme authority in all matters of duty, but while she occupies a throne of judgment whence there can be no appeal, her decisions cannot be given without the assistance of Reason who is placed by her side as an indispensable assessor. All duties may be divided into two great classes—those *directly* imposed by conscience, and those imposed *indirectly*. The decision of conscience may be immediate, affirming what is right in *the particular instance ;* or, it may be mediate, affirming the rectitude of *a general principle*. In the one case, reason has to do with the relations merely ; in the other, it has also to apply to these relations the general principle laid down by conscience. The primary duties of religion and morality belong to the former class. The duties pertaining to the latter class are to be discovered by the application of these two grand principles—*first*, the will of God, however revealed,

is right; and, *secondly*, what tends to promote general good is right. The application of these two principles is often accompanied with much difficulty, but we have been left no choice. "It were to be wished," says Pascal, "that we had less occasion for rational deductions; and that we knew all things by instinct and immediate view. But nature has denied us this favour, and allows us but few notices of so easy a kind, leaving us to work out the rest by laborious consequences, and a continued series of argument."*

If the will of God be right, whatever he makes known as duty, must be obligatory. We assume nothing here as to the probability, or even the possibility of a divine revelation. The supposition, at least, is possible. If God speak to man, what he says must be true—what he enjoins must be right. Reason must answer the questions, Has God spoken? What does he say? Supposing that God has made a revelation of duty, and that its meaning may be discovered, conscience at once grants that it must carry along with it an unquestionable authority. In this case there is no need, and there is no room for conscience sitting in judgment on the rectitude of any particular command; all that is necessary is simply to make use of reason, first, in weighing the

* Thoughts on Religion, Chap. xxi.

evidence, and then in discovering the meaning of the supposed revelation.

The other general principle, that what tends to produce general happiness is right, forms the foundation of the utilitarian theory of morals. As a *basis* of moral science, this proposition will not bear examination. If it is said that an action is right, *because* it tends to produce happiness, we ask, What is meant by the term "right?" On the utilitarian hypothesis it can only mean "tending to produce happiness." So that the proposition in question just amounts to this, What tends to produce general happiness, tends to produce general happiness. No other meaning can be attached to the term, without a begging of the whole question. Right has an objective and independent existence. The idea of it is native to the mind, and not the mere result of a process—it will never own the paternity of reason or judgment. A duty, objectively considered, cannot be performed *for the sake* of its consequences. The essence of duty is to be found in the meeting of an obligation, and not in the gaining of any ulterior end however excellent.

But while the principle in question cannot be made the basis, it furnishes the grand *test* of morality. The constitution of man is the work of a Being at once benevolent and morally perfect. This is clearly

seen in the intimate and inseparable connexion of virtue and happiness. Man has been placed under a law of duty, and his intellectual and physical nature, as capable of pleasure and pain, has been expressly adapted to this law. Obedience to conscience is naturally and necessarily attended with the happiest consequences. Notwithstanding apparent exceptions, we have a conviction that this union of virtue and happiness is universal. Hence, we are accustomed to reason, with equal confidence, in these two ways:—we say, if an action is right, it will produce, or tend to produce happiness; and we reverse the case and say, if it produces, or tends to produce happiness, it is right. The consequences of an action, as happy or unhappy, thus form an acknowledged and legitimate criterion of moral qualities; indeed, in innumerable instances, the only criterion which can be applied.

Again: The constitution of man as capable of *moral progression*, furnishes another test, or another modification of the same test, from another set of consequences. Besides the results that flow to us in the form of happiness or misery, actions have other consequences still more subjective and moral in their character. They are not only productive of pleasure or pain, but they exert a powerful reflex influence on the entire moral nature. As a moral being, man is

improved by the performance of every right action, and deteriorated by the performance of every wrong action. The moral nature is thus in the strictest harmony with the moral law. The consequential test of duty is thus twofold—a tendency towards *happiness*, and a tendency towards *moral perfection*. Some cases admit the application of the one test, where the other could not be applied; many others admit the application of both.

In the sphere of religion, we may determine many points more easily by asking, what influence they will exert on the moral character, than by inquiring into their tendency to produce happiness or misery. More particularly does this apply to the modes or details of religious duties. For example, a religious duty is to be performed, and there are several modes of performing it equally lawful in themselves. The question arises, What mode is best, and on that account obligatory? In many cases, it would be altogether impossible to determine which of several modes would tend in the greatest degree to the production of happiness. But a careful consideration of the subjective influence which each is likely to exert, may shew very clearly what is the wisest, and therefore the obligatory course. To apply these remarks to the case which more particularly concerns us here: The worship of God is an acknow-

ledged religious duty, and its due performance demands a remission of labour. The problem requiring to be solved is, What length of time is necessary for one such occasion of religious worship? Conscience cannot furnish a solution of this problem; for it does not come within its sphere. There are only two ways in which the question can be answered, and, if there is duty at all in the case, it must be possible, in one or other of these ways, to come to such a knowledge or decision as shall justify and require action. On the one hand, were God to reveal to us what is the proper time, this would settle the matter at once. It is our decided conviction that God has made such a revelation, but the present argument requires that this be left altogether out of sight. On the other hand, we may come to the knowledge of the amount of time required for the proper discharge of religious duties by a careful consideration of consequences. If it be objected, that, from our ignorance of some of the consequences, and our very imperfect knowledge of others, it is impossible for us, in this way, to arrive at certainty as to the amount of time that is absolutely right, we reply, that in this respect the worship of God stands on a level with great multitudes, we might say, the great majority of other duties. Where there is, confessedly, an obligation to be met, but the

precise form, or mode, or extent of that obligation is not absolutely known, we feel at once that this uncertainty cannot cancel the obligation. If it did, there is no duty which we might not in some way or other get rid of. What must be done in such a case? Plainly this,—we must use our utmost efforts to get at the truth, and having made the greatest approximation in our power, we must act accordingly. No one can question the essential rightness of an action performed in these circumstances, though some point of detail may only be relatively right. Of course, in a general arrangement for a remission of labour, the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number, must rule the decision as to its extent; and the decision thus come to must carry along with it a universal obligation. This obligation, however, can extend no further than the mere remission of labour. It has already been remarked that an arrangement securing the possibility of every man complying with the dictates of conscience as to the worship of God, so far from infringing the rights of any one, is unequivocally demanded by the social and religious constitution of our nature.

In making any division of time, it seems so *natural* to adopt the division which nature itself has made—that of *days*, that argument appears to be

almost unnecessary. Even where there is no general allocation of time—even where *proportion* does not enter as an element into the division at all, the order of nature is generally followed. The anniversary of a birth is a day. The commemoration of a victory is a day. The celebration of any public event is a day. Still more natural does it appear that this order should be followed, when a grand, general division of time is to be made—when the whole of time is to be allocated in certain proportions to the two great classes of interests—the material and the spiritual—the temporal and the eternal. As a homage to the Author of our being, and to religion, an entire day at one time, seems both a more natural and a more worthy offering than any part of a day. The propriety of this distribution of time, however, has been called in question, and therefore it is necessary to give the point a brief consideration. The following remarks, it will be observed, are addressed to those who would make a part of the Sabbath *a mere holiday*. Whether holiday recreations are permissible and necessary *as works of mercy*, does not come within the sphere of the argument, and will be considered by itself in a subsequent chapter.

Let us, then, proceed shortly to indicate how, we conceive, a determination of the amount of time

proper for the due discharge of religious duties *once*, may be come to with such a degree of certainty as seems to be sufficient for the satisfaction of the candid and truth-seeking mind. It is obvious on the very surface, that a considerable period is required from the very nature of the duties to be performed. Anything like haste must not only be unbecoming, but positively wrong. The solemnity of the position in which the worshipper stands, and of the business in which he is engaged, makes it very plain that a desire to expedite that business, and get out of that position, must be highly culpable. The individual must either feel no delight in the exercise, or his mind must be engrossed with something else: on either supposition, the duty cannot be rightly performed. Hurried worship must, at best, be only half-worship, if, indeed, it deserves to be called worship at all. It ought to be gone about in a deliberate, decorous, and devout manner; otherwise, it can neither be acceptable to God, nor beneficial to the worshipper. Let it be remembered also, that besides the time necessary for the due observance of the worship which each individual owes to God, with its preparatory exercises of meditation and study, there is the time required for social worship, and for meeting the not less sacred obligation of communicating religious instruction to

children, it may be, or domestics, or any others whom Providence may have placed within the sphere of our influence; and it must be very apparent that no mere fragment of time can suffice for the adequate discharge of these and other religious duties. Few, comparatively, will be disposed to take any objection to this, but the question still remains, Can it be shewn that this time ought to be an entire day? This question appears to us to admit of being satisfactorily answered by making a fair estimate of the comparative reflex influence exerted on the worshipper, by the dedication of an entire day, and by the dedication of any part of a day.

The thought may perhaps arise in the mind of the reader, that there is here a mixing up of two arguments which have been distinguished in a previous chapter, and which we are bound to keep distinct. In adducing the reflex influence of the performance of the duty in question, is there not an appeal made to the argument deduced from moral expediency? A moment's reflection will shew that there is no confounding of the two arguments. In that drawn from moral expediency, as we have explained it, the appeal is made to experience and fact; in the present argument we confine ourselves to consciousness and the nature of the human mind. In the one case, actual results are used to establish

an obligation ; in the other, a tendency is advanced in order to determine the extent of an obligation already established.

Our business, then, is to shew that it is incumbent on man, as bound by a law of moral progression, to devote an entire day to the duties of religion. In order to make our remarks bear as much as possible on prevalent opinions, we ask, *first*, Is it *possible* to keep up the attention of the mind, and prolong a devout state of feeling during a whole day? and, *secondly*, Is this the *wisest* course that could be adopted?

As to the *possibility* of engaging for a whole day in religious duties, some say, and many more hold, that the mind will not bear to have its attention so long occupied on one subject. If it can be shewn that it is impossible to attend for such a length of time to religious duties, in a way either acceptable to God, or profitable to ourselves, it must be admitted that it cannot be our duty to set apart a whole day. In support of this position, however, we have little more than mere assertion, which a very few observations will be sufficient to shew to be altogether groundless.

The alleged impotence of the mind cannot arise from the difficulty of comprehending the objects contemplated by the mind in the performance of

religious duties. The utmost concentration of mind is not called for, nor is a heavy task imposed upon any one of its faculties. No doubt, there are deep points in natural theology which no human intellect will ever be able to grasp; for "a religion without its mysteries is a temple without its God:" but the exercises of devotion have to do mainly with the great essential doctrines, which are generally of easy comprehension. In order that worship may be rational, the attention of the mind must be awake, and this supposes a mental effort; but the requisite exertion is not nearly so great as is required for the study of philosophy in any of its branches, or even for the profitable hearing of a literary or scientific lecture. Nay, it is a matter of fact, that there are multitudes of professions, embracing every department of trade and commerce, in which, day after day, and week after week, a strain is made on the mind vastly greater than any called for by the performance of any religious duty. The inability in question, then, cannot arise from any overtasking of the mental powers.

There is only one other reason that can be adduced as accounting for the alleged impossibility of sustaining the requisite attention, and that is, the *continuance* of the mental application. But this is not of longer duration than is daily given to ordinary

employments, which, in multitudes of cases besides those of professional students, are more exhausting to the mind than the exercises of religion. If it be said that the sameness of subject, even more than the length of time, renders the religious observance of a whole day impossible, it might be answered that this objection applies with equal force to thousands of professions where we have ocular demonstration of the possibility of as lengthened an application to one subject. This reply would be satisfactory, even though the duties of religion had as much sameness as those of the lawyer, the clerk, or the shoemaker. But while all religious subjects may be placed under one category, within that category there is a wide range and great diversity;—and while the mental activities exerted with respect to religion may all be comprehended under one class, there exists in that class a considerable variety. The character of God is an infinitely diversified theme for contemplation. It is presented to us in manifold aspects, and reflected from a thousand different points. The nature and condition of man, as a moral, a religious, and an immortal being, presents another subject whose ramifications are endless. While the relations that subsist between God and man are so numerous, and ought to be esteemed so important, as to awaken and sustain the deepest interest in the minds

of all who are capable of apprehending them in their true light. Further, the worship of God may be varied in its *expression*, to prevent its being wearisome. Besides the direct acts of adoration and praise, there may be, and there ought to be, meditation on the works and ways of God; while important benefit may be derived from what others may have written on religious topics. Again, there is the worship of the family, admitting of a considerable variety in its exercises, and calling into play a new train of associations and feelings. The purest and deepest of all earthly affections is sanctified and rendered yet more intense in properly exercised minds, by the united expression of their common dependence, reverence, and love. Still further, there is social or public worship, capable of a new variety in the exercises, touching other chords in the human constitution, and calling forth still wider sympathies. "If for these and similar engagements (which form a positive relaxation from secular pursuits) and for peaceful domestic intercourse some should find the day too long, I can testify that there are many who feel its hours sadly too few."* No single exercise should be prolonged to such an extent as to tax the mind of the most uncultivated. That this may be done proves nothing; it is an abuse, and

* Letter to B. Oliveira, Esq., M.P., by E. Baines, Esq., M.P.

not at all essential to the observance of a whole day.

The true explanation of the supposed impossibility is to be found in the *want of an adequate relish* for religious duties. The difficulty arises from a wrong state of the heart, and not from a weakness of the understanding, or of the physical frame. If there be incapacity for attending during a whole day to the exercises of religion, it must *generally* be attributed not to a natural, but to a moral cause, which involves deep culpability. Let this cause be removed, let the religious appetite be possessed, and the impossibility in question will at once vanish. The individual will feel not only a conscious ability, but a great delight, in giving an entire day to the worship and service of God. Here, as everywhere else, the capacity of attention, whether as to intensity or continuance, is in the precise ratio of the interest felt; and this depends wholly on the degree in which the mind is enlightened and the heart impressed. It were preposterous to advance a moral incapacity on the part of some, or even of all, as a reason for seeking to lower or limit the demands of duty. We might pity the confirmed thief or miser, who should tell us that it was impossible for him not to steal or covet; but who would admit this as a plea for abrogating or modifying the eighth or tenth

command of the decalogue? The amount of duty in the present case has yet to be determined; but we will not allow the question as to an entire day to be closed by an alleged impossibility of observing it.

Some may be ready to object to what has just been said, that the interest would require to be heightened into enthusiasm—that the worshipper must become a fanatic, in order to secure such a prolonged effort of attention; and that it is neither desirable nor possible that men generally should become enthusiasts and fanatics in their religion. How, it may be asked, is interest to be so intensified as to ensure the continued putting forth of the requisite effort of mind? To this it may be replied, that there is no need of calling in the aid of anything bordering on fanaticism to preserve the activity of the mind for a whole day. Let the transcendent importance of the subjects with which the mind has to deal in the performance of religious duties be realized;—let the personal interests that are at stake and depend, in a very important sense, on the proper discharge of these duties, be duly pondered; and the result will undoubtedly be a calm and rational interest, yet so deep and absorbing, as to secure the edge of the mind for a much longer period than could be done by any other subject however important. Why should the sub-

stantial realities of heaven and eternity, if present to the mind, not exert a far more potent influence than the fleeting shadows of earth and time? Why should eternal happiness not be able to lay fast hold of the mind for a single day, when the temporary enjoyments of life are sufficient to lay the soul under chains—engrossing all the faculties of the mind by day, and haunting the imagination by night—and this, too, with uninterrupted continuity, in many cases, to the very close of life? No religious duty can be rationally or acceptably performed, even for the shortest period, without a considerable degree of felt interest; and an amount of interest bearing any proportion to the importance and sacred character of religious worship will be more than sufficient to preserve the vigorous activity of the mind for a whole day. The question as to an entire day is thus left open for further discussion.

Before the obligation of a whole day can be satisfactorily made out, it requires to be shewn that this portion of time is, on the whole, the *best adapted* to gain the ends in view. Again, we must caution the reader against supposing that the entire amount or proportion of time is here the subject of investigation. It is taken, at present, for granted that there is a right proportion, and the inquiry is, In what portions will this time, whatever it may be, most

fully meet the obligations involved? Shall we set apart a whole day in the given period, or shall we distribute that day into several parts over that same period? Taking, for convenience, a whole day, and a half day, as the alternatives, the question requiring to be settled is this, Is it wiser to devote a whole day at once, and have a longer interval, or to devote two half-days, and have two intervals instead of one? It is obvious that though it could be ascertained what is the absolute amount of the claims of duty, this would give us no assistance in the settlement of the question; for these would be equally met in both cases, since the same proportion of time is preserved. Their comparative moral effects, therefore, must be taken as the criterion by which the claims of these two periods are to be judged. The validity of this test of duty has already been sufficiently shewn.

At the first glance, it is apparent from the number of the duties to be performed, that, on the supposition of a half day being the proper period, a very short time only can be given to each. Granting it to be possible to overtake all the duties—the direct acts of worship appropriate to the individual, to the family, and to the public assembly, the study and meditation so indispensable to rational worship, and the instruction which ought to be imparted in the

family circle and to the ignorant wherever they are accessible—what will be the effects on the individual of despatching the performance of all these religious duties in a half day, as compared with a whole day? In favour of the half day it may be urged, that the interval between the times of worship is shorter, and, therefore, the impression not likely to fade so entirely from the mind as it would do were this interval doubled. The lapse of time, undoubtedly, tends to obliterate the effects that may have been produced on the mind; and, consequently, there must be a gain by a shortening of the interval. On the other hand, it may be said, that what is gained by the frequency of impression, is lost by its want of intensity. It is a general principle, that an object is more clearly apprehended, and more deeply impressed on the mind, in proportion to the time the mind is allowed to rest on it, provided the attention be sustained. Now, as it has already been shewn that the attention may, without difficulty, be preserved for a whole day, it is manifest that, in this respect, the longer period has a decided advantage over the shorter. How great this advantage is, it is not easy precisely to calculate. This, at least, is certain, that it is very much greater than the relative proportion would lead us to suppose—the beneficial influence is much more than doubled. Every one

knows that it is not the *first* efforts of attention that give us a vivid conception, and an indelible impression of any object, more especially, if this object make an appeal to the understanding and not to the senses. But, even supposing that the force of impression exerted by each successive effort of the mind were equal, it is yet evident that if we put forth only a few such efforts, and then stop, our labour may be altogether lost; just as an instrument only half-made is worth nothing, though it has cost half the labour of one that is completed. Let the mind, however, continue its attention in the same direction, and in a short time the influence becomes perceptible, and goes on increasing in a much greater ratio than that of the length of time. The law of inertia holds in the mental, as it does in the material world; and we would act wisely in taking measures for our moral and intellectual improvement, were we to keep in mind the mental analogy of those principles which we see daily exemplified in the locomotion, whether of dead or of living matter. The first efforts of mind are indispensable, but they are valuable, chiefly as preparatory for those that are to succeed; just as it is necessary to expend a great amount of force to put a body into a state of motion in order to its subsequent progress. As the greatest available power of

the steam-engine is incompetent to put the train into rapid motion until the inertia is gradually overcome, so the utmost efforts of the mind will, for some time, exert but a feeble influence, and, if soon discontinued, will leave little trace behind. In the sphere of mind, as in that of matter, the least loss of force is incurred and the greatest results are attained by the continued application of power in one direction. It is no doubt true, that the mind loves variety, and is greatly relieved by a change of object. But to one who feels interested as he ought, there is sufficient variety among religious exercises to satisfy this desire, while a common pervading element secures the unity of the whole, and turns time and effort to the greatest possible advantage. A short season of sacred employment may best suit the restlessness of nature, but the mechanism of the mind requires that the greatest benefit can be sought and secured only by a more prolonged attention. Considered, then, in respect of the *power* and the *permanence* of the influence exerted, a whole day possesses a great advantage over two half days.

But this is not all. The mind, viewed actively, does not resemble an organ, whose capacity of producing one combination of sounds expressive of certain ideas is not affected in the slightest degree by the fact that it has just given forth another set of

sounds suggestive of ideas of an entirely opposite character; nor, considered passively, does it resemble the plate of the engraver, where the permanence of one line is not interfered with by drawing another, however deep, immediately by its side. In its active capacity, the mind will neither be persuaded nor compelled to bathe itself at once in the waters of oblivion ; and, in its passive capacity, the impression made by any object is liable to be obscured and altogether effaced by contact with succeeding objects. The will possesses a great power over the direction of the mental faculties, but it is unable to isolate entirely the present energy from that which is just past, or to preserve the effects produced on the mind now, during subsequent engagements; more especially, if these are of an exciting nature, or contrary in their character to those which have preceded. Hence, on the one hand, the efforts of the mind may be feeble, and fail in attaining their object, on account of the previous engagements continuing to divide or engross the attention ; and, on the other, the reflex influence exerted may be weakened and destroyed by the engagements that follow. When distinctness and permanence of impression is the object, the pursuits of the mind should be arranged in such a way that those which have the greatest affinity may come together, and those differing

most widely may be placed at a considerable distance. The grave and the gay, whether in conversation, or music, or anything else, may be most strikingly brought out by immediate contrast, but the tendency of the one coming before the mind immediately after the other is to obliterate, at once and entirely, the effects that may have been produced.

The application of these remarks to the subject in hand must be obvious to all. The inference is inevitable, that it is incumbent on us to use all the means in our power to have our minds engaged as little as possible in any engrossing pursuit immediately before entering on the observance of religious duties; and also, to take care that these religious duties shall not be followed by other pursuits, tending, from their very nature, to wipe out the good impressions that may have been made. The whole weight of this consideration is clearly in favour of a whole day, in opposition to a half day, or any other portion, whether smaller or greater.

On the supposition that a part of a day only is observed, how is the remainder to be filled up? There are few, we presume, who would say, whatever some may *wish*, that this should be spent in ordinary labour. The great majority of those who think a day too much for religion, would give the

remainder to recreation. Now, were the half holyday succeeded by the half holiday, what would be the practical result? The question here is not, *May* the second portion of the day be spent in such a way as not to neutralize the good influence which the due improvement of the first would exert, but, taking human nature as we find it in the mass, *will* it be so spent? What is the natural *tendency* of such a conjunction of religion and recreation? It is not the possible in human nature, but the actual with which we have to deal. Let it be remembered that the special religious character of the first part of the day does not, by the hypothesis, extend over the second part of it,—that all that is necessary to be observed is, that our recreations be innocent. It is not, for example, taking a walk into the country, *for the purpose* of inspiring and deepening a devotional spirit, but it is harmless enjoyment, or an increase of health, that is contemplated by the latter part of the day. These objects are, no doubt, perfectly lawful, and even laudable, in themselves, yet it may be that *this* time could not be wisely chosen for seeking to attain them. By the supposition, we have exercises inducing the deepest seriousness of spirit, followed by such as have confessedly an opposite effect. The direct tendency of this would obviously be, to neutralize the moral influence which

the due discharge of religious duties is fitted to exert.

It may be said, that religion is not the gloomy thing which we would represent it to be, and that there can be nothing wrong in the pleasures of religion being succeeded by the enjoyments that may be derived from an increased flow of animal spirits, from the gratification of the senses, or from a compliance with the social tendencies of our nature. That religion is not a melancholy thing we rejoice to admit and assert on the very best of evidence—the concurrent testimony of all who have really experienced it. A serious, earnest religion is the fountain of the purest joy of which the human spirit can partake. Sincere devotion is bliss. The genuine worshipper who has been communing with his Maker will not appear with a downcast and pale countenance, as if he had been consulting the oracle of Trophonius; rather will he resemble Moses when he came down from the mount, with his face shining. Many of the false notions on this subject current in society must be traced to the conduct of the insincere professor, who, without a particle of seriousness in his soul, makes up for the want of it by an assumed air of superior sanctity, and an affectation of deep religious feeling. Such a gross counterfeit and caricature is taken by many as the representative of

religious seriousness. This is a radical mistake. There is a vast difference between seriousness and melancholy, whether real or feigned. Happiness is inconsistent with the latter, while the highest enjoyment of which man's nature is capable is compatible with the former, nay, necessarily involves it. Even the seraph, while he sings, is serious. It is the want, and not the possession of religion, that produces melancholy; but the presence of genuine religion in the soul will induce the deepest seriousness in all the special acts of religious worship.

Now, what we here deprecate is the juxtaposition of those exercises which are attended by this seriousness with those which tend, above all others, to dispel such a feeling, and induce hilarity and mirth. We do not say that this is *in itself* sinful, but its direct *tendency* is to render, in a great degree, unprofitable the previous exercises of worship. The course is unwise and inexpedient; and, therefore, it is objectionable and wrong. Where does the advantage of a holiday lie? Is it not in the fact that it tends to withdraw the mind from what it has previously been occupied with, and to turn it in an entirely new direction? This is the great object it contemplates. In order to enjoy the full benefit of a holiday, it is absolutely necessary to dismiss all harassing care, to suspend all serious reflection, and

to give free play to the animal spirits. In this way alone, is the individual prepared to receive, in its full extent, the beneficial influence exerted by bracing exercise, lightsome amusement, or social intercourse. Can it be the dictate of wisdom, after seeking first to engage the mind in spiritual exercises, and by means of these to raise it to a higher moral elevation, immediately afterwards to take the best means of banishing all these subjects from the mind, and wiping out at once, and it may be for ever, all the good impressions that may have been produced? This were to build up, in order to throw down—the highest conceivable folly. Hence, it is the dictate of *wisdom*, that an entire day should be devoted to the worship of God and other religious duties.

Further, a day is the portion of time not only best fitted to serve the great purposes of a Sabbath, but also the most *practicable*. Even in a secular and prudential point of view, a whole day is greatly preferable to two half days. It is the simplest and easiest, as well as the most advantageous method of making a division of time. But we call attention to this point, more especially in a religious aspect, as tending to facilitate the religious observance of the time, and preserve it in its entireness. A Sabbath could not gain its end, unless its limits were both

clearly defined and strictly maintained. It requires little penetration to see that if a period less than a day were adopted, the line of demarcation separating secular from sacred time would soon become almost invisible. "It is *far easier* to observe the Sabbath *wholly*, than to observe it in *part*. He who intends to divide it between earthly and spiritual pursuits will never know where to draw the line of division. Perpetually will he find himself wandering, now towards religion, and now towards the world; while his conscience will be unceasingly embarrassed by fears that he has neglected his duty."* To preserve inviolable a time for devotion, no barrier that can be thrown up by the utmost efforts of man can prove half so strong as that which has already been erected by the hands of Nature herself—the Sabbath can never be so secure as when it is guarded on both sides by the darkness and oblivion of night.

It thus appears that an entire day is the most *natural*, the most *advantageous*, and the most *practicable* portion of time that could be chosen; and, therefore, we are entitled to affirm that the worship of God demands the appropriation of *an entire day*.

* Dwight's Theology, vol. iv. p. 63.

CHAPTER V.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD DEMANDS FROM US THE APPROPRIATION OF A SEVENTH DAY.

At this stage in the argument there is alleged to be a Gordian knot that cannot be untied by the hands of the moralist. In one sense we readily grant the knot to be insoluble; in another, we shall attempt to shew that it may be easily unloosed. We do not profess to be able to prove from natural principles that the religious observance of a seventh day is *an absolute and universal* duty; our end will be gained if we succeed in shewing from such principles that this is *our* duty. We neither assert nor believe that conscience *oracularly* affirms, or the utmost ingenuity of reason can ever discover *a priori*, that a seventh part of our time ought to be devoted to the worship of God. But while we admit that our position cannot be made good by an *immediate* appeal to conscience, or by a process

of reasoning *from the nature of the case*, we shall endeavour to shew, by a legitimate and satisfactory method, that it is binding ON US, *as a natural duty*, to observe *a seventh-day* Sabbath.

In the outset it is necessary to have a distinct conception of the difference between a moral duty and a thing in itself indifferent. This difference may be illustrated, with special reference to our present argument, from the science of mathematics. Its suitability to our purpose must be our excuse for the technicality of the illustration: we shall endeavour to make it generally intelligible. The difference referred to seems very analogous to that which exists between the *unknown quantity*, which, for convenience, we shall call x, as it stands in a *simple equation*, and as it stands in an *identity*.* A few observations will enable the reader not conversant with algebra to see the principal points of analogy. In a simple equation, x is fixed and determinate—it has one and only one value. In an identity, x is unfixed and indeterminate—it may have any value you please. In the equation, the thing required before you can get quit of the algebraical symbol is *a solution*—a *discovery* of *the* value of x. In the

* To make the difference more palpable, we subjoin two examples.

$2x + 4 = 18$ is a simple equation; the *solution* is, $x = 7$.

$(x+1)(x-1) = x^2-1$ is an identity: *one substitution* is, $(7+1)(7-1) = 7^2-1$ or $8 \times 6 = 48$. There may be an indefinite number of such substitutions. Instead of 7 we may write 70 or 7000 or 0, and still the sides will remain identical.

identity, *a substitution at will* of *any* value is all that is necessary. In the former, the expression may be so involved as to render the problem very difficult, and even apparently insoluble: in the latter, there can be no difficulty; for there is no problem requiring solution. And all these points of difference necessarily result from the different *relations* of x in the two cases. Similar are the leading characteristics by which things moral and things indifferent are distinguished from each other.

A thing *in itself indifferent* possesses no inherent moral value, and thus resembles x in the identity. True, such a thing, when it passes a certain point, or stands in a certain relation, may come within the moral sphere, and then conscience may be called on to lay down the boundaries of obligation. But, so long as it does not come within the range of moral relations, it may be as much or as little as we please; just as the value of x in an identity may be varied at the will of him who makes the substitution. But the moment it passes within the moral sphere, its value, whether known or unknown, is fixed; just as the value of x becomes fixed when it is transferred from an identity to an equation. It is indeed possible for a thing in itself indifferent to become obligatory without the natural relations in the case being changed. It is a dictate of con-

science, and a necessary result of our relation to God, that, if He see fit to command a thing indifferent, it becomes a duty. Such a duty is termed *positive*, to distinguish it from those duties which arise out of natural relations, and are imposed by conscience, which are more properly termed *moral*. The divine command does not, like a change of relations, resemble the mere transference of x from the identity to the equation; it rather resembles the substitution in the identity of a definite value for the indefinite symbol. When a thing indifferent thus becomes a duty, it may be changed or abrogated only by the same divine will which first imposed it.

On the other hand, a *moral* duty, arising, as it does, out of the relations in which the moral agent is placed, must be in itself unchangeable, so long as these relations remain unchanged; just as the value of x in an equation cannot be affected by any will in the universe. The duty may be known, or it may be unknown, but the mere fact that it is unknown in any case can no more change either the relations or the duty, objectively considered, than the fact that the equation has not been solved can make the value of x cease to be eternally the same. The moral duty, not less than the mathematical quantity, is possessed of a definite and independent

existence—the office of the greatest philosopher and the merest tyro, with respect to both, is simply to discover their respective values. There are many cases, where we can clearly perceive a moral obligation, but are unable to tell its absolute amount; and yet we are conscious that it must have a fixed value. When the mind comes to the knowledge of an obligation whose extent is not defined, it spontaneously and inevitably asks, How far does this obligation reach? Does not this simple fact clearly shew that in every case duty or obligation is viewed by the mind as determinate and immutable? It matters not in what quarter information is sought, or whether it is even possible to obtain it; there is involved an intuitive, though it may be a tacit, assent to the principle, that wherever duty exists at all, it can have only *one* absolute amount or value.

This principle is logically, not less than intuitively, certain. Suppose a duty to have two values, or an obligation to be met not in two different *modes*, but in two different *measures*, then it obviously follows, that the obligation in question has no objective existence. Whatever we acknowledge to have an independent existence, must have determinate limits to that existence. It is utterly impossible, for example, that any material object should have at the same moment two magnitudes. True, one man may

look at an object and think it small, while another may look at the same object, and think it much larger ; but who would ever dream of arguing from this, that the object, which by the hypothesis continues the same, is inherently possessed of a double magnitude ? So is it with every duty which has an independent existence, that is, every duty which arises out of objective relation, and is imposed by natural conscience. If a duty may have two values equally true, it may have ten thousand. By what limits short of zero on the one side, and infinity on the other, is it possible to define the sphere of its incomprehensible existence ? If we give obligation a merely ideal or subjective basis, and make duty a mere relation, then, indeed, its different values may be all equally true, but this is only because they are all equally imaginary and false. There can be no third position between the two alternatives, either obligation has a determinate amount, or it has no existence.

Let us now proceed to apply these principles to the case in hand, the obligation of a seventh-day Sabbath. It is granted that it is a moral duty to allot some time to the worship of God. Assuming the preceding observations to be just, this moral duty must have a definite extent—this time must be determinate. It is admitted that we ought to set apart, or leave free from other concerns, *some* day for

the worship of God. What day? is the immediate and involuntary question that suggests itself to the mind. There is obviously here a tacit, but distinct recognition that the day ought to return after a *definite* interval; the discovery of the length of this interval is the only desideratum. Further, this admitted obligation cannot possibly have two measures equally correct. It is simply absurd with one breath to admit an obligation, and with the next to annihilate that obligation by asserting the measure of it to be a matter of indifference. While admitting the duty of worshipping God and the necessity of devoting *some* day for this purpose, many assert that apart from the divine command, it is a "thing *in itself indifferent*, whether a seventh day, or a sixth, or an eighth be observed." If the principle here assumed be true, it will bear to be carried out. If it be a matter of indifference whether one day in six, or in seven, or in eight, be observed, then, it must also be a matter of indifference whether one day in a week, or one day in a year, or one day in a lifetime, be observed. If not, how, and at what points between the two opposite poles of nothing and infinity, are we to erect the landmarks beyond which we are sure duty cannot pass? It is impossible to hold the specification of any particular day to be a matter of indifference, and at the same time retain the obligation of allot-

ting some day without manifest and gross self-contradiction. If the defining of the day be in itself indifferent, then must the duty, for whose performance *some one day must be defined*, be also indifferent.

But it may be said that though the phrase, "in itself indifferent," naturally suggests the idea of *absolutely* indifferent, it means only *relatively* indifferent, or indifferent in relation *to us*. It is possible and even probable that this is the usual meaning of those who assert the indifference of a *seventh-day* Sabbath. We are disposed to believe that very many hold the "allotting a certain portion of time to devotion" in *any given and particular case* to be a "thing in itself indifferent," simply because the absolutely right portion is indiscoverable by human reason. If we are correct in our supposition, there is certainly some ground for animadversion on the loose manner in which the terms are used. But, passing this, we ask, Is the position here assumed consistent with *truth?* Will the general principle taken for granted bear to be carried out? What is the principle involved? It is this: A moral duty ceases to be binding, or becomes indifferent to us, whenever its true extent cannot be discovered by reason. If this holds in the present case, it will hold also in others. Let us apply it to the case of charity or almsgiving. It is universally admitted to

be a moral duty for the strong to help the weak, and the rich to relieve the *bona fide* necessities of the poor. We hold this to be a case precisely analogous in very many respects to the setting apart a certain time to devotion. In both cases, natural conscience announces the general duty, but in neither can reason tell with certainty the extent of the obligation. This, however, does nothing to prove that either of these is not strictly a moral duty. There is an absolute right in respect of the amount of alms in the one case, just as there is an absolute right in respect of the amount of time in the other. Grant that the precise time in the latter case is undiscoverable, it is equally certain in the great majority of cases, that the precise amount of relief in the former is also undiscoverable. This does not require proof. Every one knows that in nine cases out of ten in which relief is asked or given, there are circumstances which, were they known, would modify the decision as to the amount of duty. Besides, granting that all the circumstances were accurately known, there are so many competing interests that must be taken into account before the individual giving relief can come to a just conclusion, that it must be a rare case in which he decides upon the absolutely right amount. And even, supposing this were possible in every case, who could find time for so minute and extensive in-

vestigation in the numerous cases in which claims are made upon our sympathy. So that it is plain, in the great majority of cases, we must be content to remain in hopeless ignorance of what is the true measure of moral duty. What then? If the principle in question be true, benevolence in the form of almsgiving, with few exceptions, must be a thing "in itself indifferent." It is right in the abstract, but indifferent in the concrete. The obligation is only theoretical—attempt to reduce it to practice, and it vanishes. I do not know how much I ought to give; therefore, I am not morally bound to give anything at all. This is a fair deduction from the assumption that a moral duty becomes indifferent when its absolute extent cannot be determined. Can any one hesitate a moment in rejecting this conclusion, and along with it the false premiss from which it is legitimately deduced? Does not the possibility of making an approximation to the truth, retain the obligation in all its force? No one will deny this in the case of almsgiving, and it must hold equally in other cases. Whether it is possible to make an approximation in the case of a Sabbath, will be considered presently. Meanwhile let it be observed that it is a gratuitous and false assumption to say, that since we cannot discover the right portion of time, therefore, it is a "thing in

itself indifferent." The simple fact that we are placed in hopeless ignorance of the absolute measure of the moral duty does not necessarily cancel its obligation on us.

But it may be held that the observance of the seventh day is indifferent, not because human reason is unable to discover the claims of *any one* day to be stronger than those of *any other* day, but because it cannot discover which of *several* days is best fitted to serve all the purposes of a Sabbath. While it is affirmed, that the precise day cannot be determined, it may be admitted that a maximum and a minimum period may be fixed, beyond which, on either side, the obligation cannot be conceived to extend. There may be a perfect moral certainty that the right time is to be found between the two extremes, though it cannot be decided which of the intermediate periods is the correct measure of moral duty. No one, for example, who admits the obligation of setting apart a day for God's worship, would, we presume, think one day in three too little, or one day in thirty too much. These might be taken as the maximum and minimum periods between which there might be the utmost certainty the right period would be found. There are few, if any, who would find much difficulty in bringing the extremes much nearer to each other, than we have now placed them. For conve-

nience of illustration, let us suppose that one day in five is granted to be too much, and one day in ten too little. The right day, therefore, must be sought somewhere between. There are thus four competing periods, a sixth, a seventh, an eighth, and a ninth day, some one of which, we are sure, must be the right period, though this cannot be determined. On the supposition that it is impossible for us ever to arrive at any conclusion, certain or probable, which of these periods ought to be preferred, What is the dictate of duty under such circumstances? Conscience unequivocally asserts the general duty, and reason as plainly prescribes the limits within which the obligation must be found, though it cannot decide which of these periods is the absolutely right one. Shall we say with some, that since the precise day cannot be determined by human reason, the duty cannot be a moral duty, and consequently, cannot, on natural grounds at least, be binding? A very little consideration of the nature of the case will serve to shew the fallacy of such an argument. To make its illegitimacy more apparent, let us return for a moment to the illustration of almsgiving. An individual in circumstances of want, we will suppose, makes an appeal to my benevolence. I am satisfied of the correctness of his statements, and the urgency of his case.

I cannot at once and unhesitatingly determine the exact amount of my duty, but after a little consideration, taking into account the individual's circumstances and my own ability, I come to the conclusion that it is my duty to give him something more than five, and something less than ten shillings. How would such a person be astonished were I to say, "My dear friend, I acknowledge the urgency of your case, and my obligation to do something for your relief. I am convinced I ought to give you a sum of money between five and ten shillings, but as I cannot decide whether it should be six, or seven, or eight, or nine, I am relieved from all moral obligation—it is no longer a moral duty for me to give you anything at all." Who does not see the illegitimacy and the absurdity which such a supposition involves? Every one feels instinctively, that were I not in these circumstances to give one or other of the sums supposed, I would violate a moral obligation as really as if I were unmistakably certain which of the sums was the absolutely right one.

The case of the Sabbath is precisely parallel. The individual or the community who should say, we grant it to be a moral duty to set apart some day for the worship of God, and are also satisfied this should be either a sixth, or a seventh, or an eighth, or a ninth day, but as we cannot decide which of these it

ought to be, the moral duty ceases to be obligatory, would be guilty of absurdity as great as we have just seen to be involved in the supposed case of alms-giving. On whatever principle the adoption of some one of these days is to proceed, or whether it is to proceed on no principle, there is an imperative necessity for carrying out the duty into practice, by adopting one or other of them. In the analogous case of charity, a man of narrow mind would probably adopt the smallest sum as the measure of moral duty; while another naturally more benevolent might adopt the largest. But, since the moral obligation ought to be met, a decision must be made arbitrarily, if not otherwise—one or other of the sums must be given. It must be admitted that the giving of *any one* of these sums would satisfy the dictates of conscience, but the giving of *some one* is indispensable. Even to entertain the thought for a moment, that the obligation may be cancelled by ignorance as to the exact sum it is absolutely right to give, is morally wrong. It implies a wish to get rid of an admittedly moral duty. So is it in the case of the Sabbath. An individual in whom the religious element is largely developed, might be inclined for himself to select the sixth day, while another in whom that element is weaker, might prefer the ninth day. On the present supposition that it cannot be affirmed that the

claims of any one of these four days are on the whole superior to the claims of all, or any of the others, both of these individuals might be equally conscientious. But, as has already been shewn, it is necessary that some general period be fixed upon, in order to put it within the power of all to observe a Sabbath. Suppose some general arrangement made, it matters not how, so far as the present argument is concerned, the consciences of all who regarded these four days, or whatever might be the number, as indifferent, would clearly be satisfied whichever of them was adopted. To assume, that the mere fact of four, or forty alternatives being presented to our choice in the performance of a moral duty, can annihilate or alter in one iota its moral nature, is obviously too absurd to call for a more lengthened refutation. There is an imperative necessity for choosing one, and a choice being made, the element of indifference must, henceforth, disappear. Around the particular day there immediately gathers all the force of the moral obligation that attaches to the general duty. The observance of such a Sabbath must be enforced by all the authority which naturally belongs to the primary duty of worshipping God.

To apply all this to the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed with respect to the Sabbath. General consent, arising from whatever motives, has

left a seventh day free from ordinary labour for the purposes of devotion and spiritual improvement. No other day is left free for these purposes. Hence it is possible for us to observe the seventh day as a Sabbath, and it is impossible to observe any other while the present arrangement continues. Is it not clear as day, that the indifference which arose from the fact of there being several days, any of which might have been chosen, exists no longer when a choice is denied us, and it is in our power to observe only one of these days? Is the mind, baffled in its attempts to settle rival claims, not thankful thus to obtain certainty and rest? Is conscience not content to acquiesce at once in such a decision? There is no fair escape from the full admission that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is binding on strictly natural grounds. This position cannot be set aside except by proving that the seventh day is not merely indifferent, but absolutely wrong, which is contrary to the hypothesis of our opponents. However great the number of days of which indifference may be predicated, if the seventh be among the number, the simple fact that it alone can be observed by us, is an unanswerable argument for its moral obligation. The seventh day now stands alone. Prior to its observance as a Sabbath, its claims to this distinction might appear to be on a level with

those of many other days, and to this extent it might have been asserted to be equally indifferent with them, but the case is very different now. There is a possibility of complying with the admitted obligation to give up a portion of time to the worship of God, by devoting the seventh day to this purpose; and there is at present no other possibility. Hence the obligation on us to observe the seventh-day Sabbath is as strong as is the necessity for having a time in which to cultivate the noblest part of our nature, and to observe the worship of God. This conclusion seems irresistible. The only alternatives presented *to us* in these lands, and at the present day, are a *seventh* day, or *no* day. But the obligation to set apart some day is granted; therefore *we* are bound to set apart *a seventh day.*

It may be said, "Suppose no day had hitherto been observed as a Sabbath, how could the day have been determined? How, in such a case, would it be possible either to get at the right time, or to make a near approximation? Does not the initiatory step present an insuperable difficulty?" Now, in reply to this, we might say, that it is not with any conceivable circumstances we have to deal, but with those in which we are actually placed. If it is duty for us, as matters are at present, to observe a seventh day, we need not perplex ourselves as to what

would have been our duty in other circumstances. Still, it may be well briefly to show that even had no day been observed hitherto, it would yet have been possible and obligatory to set apart some day as a day of worship. Though, on this supposition, it must be admitted there are not sufficient data in nature for arriving at an immediate decision, it is yet possible to create such data. This may be done, as in ten thousand other cases, by a tentative process. By repeated experiments it may be possible to discover what proportion of time is on the whole best suited to the nature of man as a physical, moral, and religious being. If the light of experience be necessary before the test of moral rightness can be applied, experience may be got. By a careful study of the moral nature of man in relation to the great purposes of a Sabbath, and by a due consideration of his physical constitution, and the demands of other duties, it may be possible to reduce the days whose comparative claims require to be tested to a very small number. Having done this, a fair trial may next be given to each day, and a general estimate formed of its relative suitability. In this way we might arrive by a sufficient induction at a very general conviction that some one of the days was better fitted than any of the others to serve the great objects of a Sabbath.

To say that this is a circuitous and clumsy way of discovering the true measure of a moral duty, is to say nothing to the purpose. If it be legitimate and possible, and if there be no shorter and more direct way of getting at the truth, it is obviously obligatory. Conscience can give no dispensation on account of a difficulty, if it is not insurmountable. We grant at once, that even after the most careful and minute observation in such a trial as we have supposed, it is not at all unlikely that the best day may not be that which is chosen. But, as has already been shown, this does not affect the obligation to observe it. As recognising the authority of conscience we are bound to carry out its dictates, even where we may be uncertain what is the absolutely right measure of duty. Better to make a slight error in complying with a moral obligation, than to disregard that obligation altogether. It were a vicious system of morals which should acknowledge nothing to be right unless all were right—which should ignore the relative altogether, and free from all responsibility except where the absolute was certainly known. Enough has been said, we presume, to show that the primary institution of a Sabbath, in obedience to the injunctions of reason and conscience, comes easily within the range of possibility. This is all we are here required to show.

With respect to the Sabbath at present observed, it is of course granted, that a *comparative* estimate cannot be made of the suitability of a seventh day, but we may form an opinion with respect to its *absolute* adaptation to the ends it has in view. Living in the nineteenth century, we have a long trial of three thousand years already in the past. The results of the *religious* observance of a seventh day may be found in the history of many nations, Jewish and Christian. We can thus take the facts of past ages and the experience of the present, and by a wide induction inquire into the correspondence of a seventh-day Sabbath with the moral and physical constitution of man. For the legitimacy of this appeal to experience in the present argument, the reader is referred to the introductory chapter, p. 29.

If we consult the history of the past, we find good men in every age testifying to the magnitude of the *religious* blessings which it was the means of conferring upon them. If we come to our own times, and question all those who faithfully and diligently use the Sabbath for religious purposes, we will find the same unanimity in ascribing the greatest and the happiest results of a spiritual nature to its observance. Now, we hold that such persons alone can give an enlightened opinion on this point ; for no others can speak from experience. One man may say of a

religious Sabbath, "When will it be over?" in order that he may "buy and sell and get gain;" and another, "What a weariness is it?" and may earnestly desire to get away from the dull monotony of the themes and services of religion. In all such cases there is a want of that congeniality of mind with the religious character of the day, which is the indispensable condition of receiving spiritual benefit. Such persons may suppose they have given the Sabbath a sufficient trial when they have gone through its external observances with conscientious exactness, but from want of the requisite feelings they are morally incapable of making a fair and full estimate of its spiritual influence. There is thus no testimony that can be legitimately placed over against that to which reference has just been made.

Nor is there less unanimity with respect to the adaptation of the Sabbath to man as a *physical* being. Were it necessary, a long list of competent authorities might be brought forward in support of this statement. But this would be altogether superfluous, as we are not aware that any of those with whom the present argument is conducted are inclined to deny the fact.

In whatever aspect it is viewed, a seventh-day Sabbath is eminently adapted to the nature of man. The long period during which it has been observed,

has furnished abundant opportunity for detecting its imperfections, and indicating whether it errs by defect or excess. But this has never been done either by its friends or its foes. No one has yet shewn, or, so far as we are aware, attempted to shew, that in any particular another day would be superior as a Sabbath. This is a decisive testimony in its favour; for even though it could be fairly made out, that in a number of particulars, some other day might serve the purposes of a Sabbath better, still, *on the whole*, a seventh day might be the best, and, therefore, the right day. Are we not fairly entitled to conclude from these facts, that if the seventh is not the absolutely right proportion of time, it is, at least, a very near approximation to it? It is impossible, of course, in the absence of experience, to say that a sixth or an eighth day may not be equally well adapted to the nature and circumstances of man. No one, however, has ventured to say, that in any respect either of these days would be preferable to the seventh. "There is a presumption," says Whately, "in favour of every *existing* institution. Many of these (we will suppose the majority) may be susceptible of alteration for the better; but still the 'burden of proof' lies with him who proposes an alteration; simply on the ground, that since a change is not a good in itself, he who demands a change should

show cause for it. No one is *called on*, though he may find it advisable, to defend an existing institution, till some argument is adduced against it; and that argument ought in fairness to prove, not merely an actual inconvenience, but the possibility of a change for the better."*

What is the usual and rational mode of procedure in such cases? When by a first trial anything is found to suit so well that it does not appear how anything else could suit better, there is no desire to make a second. More especially must there be some probable grounds for expecting an improvement on the first experiment before a second is made, when this cannot be done without great inconvenience. Now, let this course be adopted in the case before us. If any good reasons can be advanced for supposing that a sixth, or an eighth, or any other day, would be, on the whole, more advantageous than a seventh, let them be brought forward and discussed, and then, if it be deemed expedient, let a new trial be made. But it would be manifest folly to disturb an arrangement that is interwoven with the chronology, the history, the laws, the institutions, and the habits of Jewry and Christendom, unless there were good reason for expecting some advantage to result from the change. This much, at least, is plain, that *until*

* Whately's Rhetoric. Crown 8vo edition, p. 73.

such an experiment can be made, and another day substituted, *the seventh must continue to be obligatory as a day of worship.*

So far as our argument is concerned, we have done with the proposition which forms the subject of this chapter. It may be worth while, however, at this point, briefly to inquire how the preceding observations bear on the opinions of those who allow the moral obligation of observing a seventh-day Sabbath, but only on the ground that it has been appointed by God. The enemies of the Sabbath are justified in assuming that its friends rest the obligation of observing a seventh day rather than a sixth or an eighth solely on the *will* of God; for professing Christians almost universally acknowledge this to be a merely *positive* specification, and admit that, if God had so willed, the sixth or eighth day might have been appointed as the Sabbath. This opinion, which we hold to be erroneous, seems to arise from not perceiving clearly the difference between *the measure* of a duty, which is absolutely essential to its performance, and *a mere mode*, which is as plainly not essential. As an example of the manner in which these two very distinct things are generally confounded, and of the false conclusions to which this leads, we may cite the words of Archbishop Whately:—"If," says he, "it be meant by this

expression,"—namely, that the observance of the Sabbath is part of the moral law,—" merely that it is a moral duty to allot a certain portion of time to devotion, though the specification of particulars be a matter of positive enactment, it should be remembered that, in this sense, the Levitical sacrifices also might with equal propriety be termed a part of the moral law, since natural conscience teaches the duty of worshipping God, though not the particular mode of worship."* With all deference to a logician so eminent, we unhesitatingly pronounce his reasoning in this passage to be entirely fallacious. It is necessary to mention that the " particulars" in regard to the Sabbath of which he here speaks are, that the Sabbath is a *seventh* day, and that it is *the* seventh day ; the former particular being one of *amount*, and the latter one of *order*. It is with the first of these alone that we have to do here. It is obvious that the validity of the reasoning in the quotation now made depends on the Levitical sacrifices being a *mode* of worship in *the same sense* in which the specification of a seventh-day is a *mode* of " allotting a certain portion of time to devotion." Is this the case ? Evidently not. Some specification of the kind is essential to the performance of the duty in the latter case ; in the former it is manifestly non-

* Thoughts on the Sabbath, p. 6.

essential. We ask any one to show us the possibility of "allotting a certain portion of time to devotion" without allotting some *particular* portion of time—of setting apart some day without setting apart some *particular* day. On the other hand, no one will say that sacrifice is an indispensable condition, or even an expedient accompaniment of all worship. The fallacy is very apparent. To make the argument valid, it would require to be shown that the worship of God *by sacrifice* is a duty taught by natural conscience, or, at least, that *sacrifice* is the *only* mode in which God can be worshipped.

It is granted to be a moral duty, to allot a certain portion of time to devotion. Now, it is inconsistent, and even absurd to admit this, and at the same time to hold that the *limits* of this duty are indifferent. If the duty be moral, its limits cannot be changed even by the will of God. The *extent* of an obligation is not something different from the obligation; it is the obligation itself defined. Who can fail to see the wide difference between this extent and a mere mode, which may or may not accompany the performance of the duty, and therefore, being indifferent, may properly be the subject of positive enactment. The case stands thus: A general duty is admitted. Reason may go a certain length in approximating to its precise amount, but cannot with

certainty define its limits. At this point, by the supposition, revelation comes in—God gives a definite command on the subject. Conscience is thus satisfied, and the conjectures of reason superseded by the plain dictates of revelation. What then? Does the authority of God set aside the authority of conscience? Are we bound to observe the seventh-day Sabbath solely because it is Divinely appointed? By no means. True, the authority of God is sufficient of itself to constitute an imperative obligation, but this is not the only, or even the primary ground of obligation in the case. The will of God must ever be in the strictest harmony with all the attributes of his character. He is possessed of perfect knowledge, and perfect rectitude—He cannot but know and choose what is right in every possible case. Here, then, is a command of God in which a certain portion of time is fixed for devotion. Will any one say that in this instance He has set aside a moral obligation, and arbitrarily fixed another than the right time? This were a bold and reckless assertion. It were nothing less than to denude the Supreme Being of the grand characteristic of Deity —perfection. No one with whom we are now reasoning can for a moment doubt that, though the command is not in its *form* a simple solution of the problem which reason was unable to solve, yc

it *contains* a solution of that problem—it is not a mere authoritative *arbitrary substitution* of a seventh day for that unknown portion of time, whose obligation conscience unequivocally proclaims, but *it is that portion of time made known.* The argument is this: I acknowledge a moral obligation, but cannot tell its extent; God has given me a command in which that extent is defined; I cannot but believe that He has commanded what is in itself right; and thus, having discovered the true extent of the moral duty, I am bound by conscience to perform it, independently of Divine *authority.* It is surely conceivable, that God might have made human reason adequate to the discovery of what has, by the command, been revealed. Had this been the case, the obligation would at once have been admitted to rest on its natural ground. Does it alter the case, that the requisite information has been furnished by revelation, and not by reason? A *discovery* being all that was necessary to give full force to the primary obligation of conscience, the duty when discovered, *by whatever means*, must be a strictly *moral* duty. The authority of God does, indeed, impose an *additional* obligation, but it can never annul or displace one that already exists on the foundation of conscience—it may confirm, but never can, and never will cancel a natural obligation. In short, the seventh day appointed by

God as the Sabbath is either the right time, or it is not. If it is not the right time, then must the moral character of God be denied to be perfect, and consequently, no foundation remains on which obligation can rest. This cannot be. The seventh day must have been appointed *because* it was the right time, and thus conscience infallibly informed demands, first in her own name, and then in the name of God, obedience to the Divine command not as a positive, but as a *moral* duty.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD DEMANDS FROM US THE APPROPRIATION OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

A SEVENTH-DAY is now assumed to be obligatory on us as a day of worship. It is our business to shew that the seventh day observed by us ought to be the *first* of the seven. Here, as in the former instances, we affirm an obligation, but we place it on a different foundation. We admit at once that the duty in question is not moral *in itself*. All days being naturally alike, no reason from *the nature of the case* can be given why the *first day* should be observed rather than any of the others. On the principles of natural religion, we maintain the obligation of setting apart the *first day* as the weekly Sabbath, simply because no other day of the week could answer the purposes better, and being at present observed by Christians, no other day could be adopted without great inconvenience, and without

denying to them the privilege of carrying out their religious convictions.

Let it be observed that we do not regard this point in our argument as of equal importance with any of those already discussed. Our object has been gained, if we have carried along with us the judgment of the reader up to this point. We regard the *mode of reckoning the time* as of comparative insignificance when placed beside *the amount of time* observed as a Sabbath. Were we to represent the different phases of the obligation of the Sabbath in the technical language of logic, *day of worship—Sabbath* would indicate the *genus;—weekly Sabbath* would represent the species;—and *the first-day Sabbath* would correspond to the *individual.* In the first of these we have the *principal part of the essence;* in the second we have the *whole essence;* while in the third we have only an accident—*something joined to the essence.* As moralists, no less than as Christians, we must regard the last as far inferior in importance to the other two. The moral code of natural, equally with that of revealed religion, recognises "weightier matters of the law" to which the first place ought to be assigned.

Let it be further observed that we view the question as having reference simply to *our* mode of reckoning the days of the week. We dismiss as useless and irrelevant the question, whether, what

we now reckon the first day has been so reckoned since creation, or since the beginning of the Christian era. Even Christians understand no such question as involved either in the spirit or the letter of the Sabbath law; and common fairness requires that arguments should not be based on assumptions foisted upon them, but which they utterly disclaim. Still more are we bound to ignore such a question when we view it from the platform of natural religion. In an ethical aspect, it must be admitted to be of no importance whatever.

All that we are concerned to shew in this chapter is, that where the first-day Sabbath already exists, it is the duty of all who admit the validity of the arguments advanced in the previous chapters to adopt this as their weekly Sabbath, instead of cavilling with the Christian with respect to the foundation on which he supposes this part of the Sabbath law to rest. Our proof will not need to be lengthened, nor does it require to be reached by any intricate process.

First of all, it is very plain that as no reason can be found in the day itself for its preference, so there can be none for its rejection. If all days are alike, the *first* is just as good as any other. Some one weekly day must, by the hypothesis, be set apart. The first day is that at present observed by the

whole of Christendom. Can any reason be given why another should be adopted? Evidently none on the principles of those who hold an entire equality of days, and who on this ground object to the observance of the first day, *as* the first day; for if there were any such reason, this would suppose a denial that all days are alike, and would take away all force from their objection to the first day. If the day be a matter of pure indifference, then the simple fact that the first day is already observed as a day of worship by others, can be no reason why they should avoid making this *their* day of worship. It is, indeed, conceivable that the first day might be observed for reasons that rendered a protest expedient and necessary. In such a case, there would be sufficient cause for seeking a change in the day, or in the mode of reckoning all the days of the week. But is there anything in the Christian's observance of the first day requiring such a protest? Is there any encouragement given to principles directly or indirectly injurious to society? Is there any infringement on the consciences of others, or any wanton disregard of their feelings? No candid or intelligent man will ever make such a supposition. Nor can the Christian be fairly charged either with *weakness* or *superstition* in observing the first day. It cannot be justly said that he yields a blind assent

either to the truth of the Bible as a Divine revelation, or to the orthodoxy of the doctrines which he believes it to contain. When he receives the Scriptures as the Word of God, he does so on the ground of what he believes to be sufficient evidence; and when he frames his creed, he uses his own right of private judgment in discovering the meaning of that word. That many professing Christians do not act in this way, is no stronger an argument against the book itself, or any doctrine alleged to be contained in it, than the fact that many of those who reject the book, or any particular doctrine, do so equally blindly, would be a proof on the other side. But even although the opinions of the Christian were not reached thus rationally, still it would be our duty to respect his religious convictions. Conscientiously believing, as he does, the Sabbath to be a divine institution, it can be the duty of no one without a very good reason to ignore his conscientious belief, or wantonly to deprive him of the liberty to obey what he deems an express Divine command.

Further, the Christian alleges, that, besides the divine precept on the subject, the observance of the *first* day as a Sabbath is most advantageous, in his case, in promoting the great objects contemplated by a Sabbath. His views on this point are something like the following. It was in adaptation to the

principles of human nature, that *the seventh day* was appointed to be set apart to religion. The Sabbath was made commemorative, in order the better to secure *its continued and devout observance.* The *example* of God as addressed to the principle of imitation in man, is virtually a precept, and is fitted to exert a still more powerful influence. This example, as given *at creation,* appeals to the law of human association, and connects with the Sabbath the rich display of Divine power, and wisdom, and goodness made in that great work. In this way a powerful motive is supplied to the regular observance of the Sabbath ; while those very truths are brought before the mind which are most appropriate to the day, and those feelings are excited which it is its great object to create and cherish.

In the case of the Israelites, their deliverance from Egyptian bondage was included in the Sabbath memorial. Thus, the greatest event in the previous history of the world, and the greatest event in their history as a nation, conspired to present to their minds a vivid representation of the character of God, and to fill their hearts with devout and grateful emotion.

At the resurrection of Christ the day was changed from the seventh to the *first* day of the week, either by the direct instruction and example of Christ

Himself, or by the authority of His inspired Apostles. This change was made for the very same reasons which, at first, induced God to make it commemorative of creation, and in the case of the Jews, commemorative both of creation and providence. It has greatly enhanced the value of the Sabbath as a historical record and a religious instrument. The resurrection of Christ was the concluding act of a work vastly more glorious and important—infinitely more illustrative of the Divine perfections, than even the work of creation. The work of redemption is most fitly associated with the work of creation in the Sabbath record. These two works are the grand sources whence our knowledge of God is derived. And the mere position of the Sabbath with respect to the other days of the week, as leading back the mind to these greatest events in the history of our world is eminently fitted to promote its great end. It was meet, also, that the greater work should occupy the more prominent place—that the more important figure should stand in the foreground of the picture. Hence, the day was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. The day is still weekly, and therefore commemorative of creation; it is the first day, and therefore commemorative of redemption. These associations with the day bring truth before the mind with

a freshness and a power which it could not otherwise possess.

From this brief statement of the origin and object of the specification of the first day, it is obvious, on the one hand, that to the Christian it will appear most natural and appropriate, and that it may really be experienced by him to be very useful; and on the other, that there is nothing calling upon me to make a special protest against his observance of the first day. This being the case, as a natural religionist, I have no reason whatever, either of duty or personal advantage, to induce me to deprive my brother of the privilege of carrying out his convictions of duty, and securing any advantage however small; and, consequently, if my religion has anything in it of the spirit of benevolence, or even of enlightened freedom, it is plainly my duty to abstain from seeking a change in the day, and to adopt the first day as *my* weekly Sabbath. Even if I were convinced that the Bible is not true—that the Christian's faith in the divine institution of the Sabbath is mere fancy, still, his opinion is harmless to others, and it cannot be my duty to oppose him in a particular which he regards as both right and useful. I may do what I can to enlighten him, and induce him to lay aside all positive or supposed specifications from the moral duty, but meanwhile, it can do me no

good, and will injure him, to force him into a change of practice. As a member of society, and a friend of religious liberty, it is plainly my duty to observe my weekly Sabbath on the *first* day of the week. The validity of this obligation must be intuitively plain to the great majority of our readers, and if it is not so to some, we believe no amount of reasoning will ever make it apparent.

Our *national* arrangement for a remission of labour on the first day, rather than any other, must be admitted to be perfectly *fair and reasonable;* for it is in accordance with the conscientious convictions of the great majority of the inhabitants. The Jew, for example, has no just cause of complaint on the ground that this, or another remission of labour is not made on the seventh day. If the Jewish objection, or any other, render it impossible for the individual to observe his weekly Sabbath on the first day, then he must be content to make a personal sacrifice by remitting labour on two days of the week; while the Christian is required to cease from his labour only on one day. The case would not be different were the relative positions of Jews and Christians changed. A Jewish nation could not be expected to agree to a first-day Sabbath. If the Christian felt that he could not conscientiously observe the seventh day as his weekly Sabbath, then, just as in

the former case, he must be willing to make a sacrifice in order to comply with the dictates of his conscience. The supposition now made was actually realized in the first ages of the Christian church.

But suppose again, that a Jew in a Christian land, or a Christian in a Jewish land, were to find it impossible to carry out his convictions with respect to the day, would either of these be absolved from all obligation to make the day generally observed a day of worship? If we have succeeded at all in the previous part of this discussion, the answer to this question must deny the possibility of such an absolution. The obligation to observe the worship of God is a natural obligation wholly independent of the will of God, and therefore it cannot be cancelled by a question of particular days. Even though the obligation were supposed to rest solely on the will of God, we do not see how the circumstance of its being impossible for an individual to observe the particular day specified, could free him altogether from the duty of obeying the *substance* of the divine command on another day, if this were within his power. Some there are, indeed, who assert that unless a divine command be obeyed in its minutest particular, it is not obeyed at all. If they do not see the whole, they can see nothing. If they could not observe what they believe to be the commanded day,

they would regard the whole command as no longer binding. This were to "strain out a gnat and swallow a camel." Such a course is as directly opposed to the genius of Christianity, as it is contrary to the principles of sound morality. The withdrawal of any *circumstance* is no more the destruction of the *essence* of a duty, or a divine command, than the lopping off of a branch is the destruction of the tree. We do not take it upon us to speak for Jews resident in a Christian country, but we believe there are few sincere and intelligent Christians, who, were they resident where the seventh day was generally observed as the Sabbath, and found it altogether impossible to observe the first day even by a sacrifice, would not feel that they were obeying the divine command in its *spirit* and *essence* by observing the seventh day as their weekly Sabbath. In such a case, though they could not honour the *letter* of the divine law as they would desire, still they could observe any day *as* a *first day*, and thus gain the advantage which the specification of the day was intended to secure—the dawn of the weekly Sabbath would continue to be to them the memorial of their Redeemer's resurrection morn.

The determination of the day on which the weekly Sabbath is to be observed, is still further narrowed, as we have seen, when it is viewed as a question be-

tween the Christian and the natural religionist. Both admit the duty of having a weekly Sabbath, on the present hypothesis. At present, this is observed on the first day of the week. Now, the natural religionist cannot, like the Jew, advance a divine command binding to the observance of any other day, nor can he plead any good reason for making a protest against the Christian's observance of that day; and consequently, he must be at perfect liberty, nay, by his moral and social constitution, he must be bound to adopt the Christian Sabbath as his Sabbath. No one can have any ground of preference for another day without giving up the position that all days are alike. If, however, any one feel himself bound in conscience not to observe the first day, then he must be content, like the Jew, to make a sacrifice to satisfy the demands of conscience. On the supposition that it is impossible for any individual to give up the particular day he supposes to be binding, there cannot, on natural principles, be an adequate reason for refusing compliance with a confessedly moral obligation, whatever may be the day observed. Natural religion proclaims a duty, and nothing can free from responsibility but the entire want of an opportunity in which to perform it. This opportunity is furnished on the Christian Sabbath; and hence the obligation of using that

day for the purpose of discharging a sacred moral duty. As a question of natural religion, there being no valid objection to the *first-day* Sabbath, it is the dictate of *prudence*, *benevolence*, and *religious liberty*, to adopt this as the weekly Sabbath.

We have thus endeavoured to reach in a fair and legitimate way the point at which we aimed. If we have succeeded in our attempt, almost all the objections usually urged against the obligation of the Sabbath must fall to the ground; for, with few exceptions, *they all assume its positive nature*. The foundation being removed, the structure reared upon it must be overturned. So far is the *nature* of the Sabbath institution from furnishing a solid basis for objections against its obligation, that we have seen it to be a rock of defence against all such assaults. Even though it could be shown that the Sabbath was not instituted at creation, and that the command and example of God were meant only for the Jews, it would not thence follow that we are under no obligation to observe the Sabbath. It has been shown that, apart from all Scripture precepts, there is an imperative natural obligation which demands action, and must entail responsibility. Now, if the position assumed by our opponents be not only taken from them, but also turned into a means of defence

sufficient of itself to resist all their attacks, what must be the strength of the whole evidence when the main body of it is still in reserve? If one cord be adequate to sustain the whole weight, it must be impossible to break the rope when other two cords of equal, if not greater strength, have been added and intertwined. We have isolated the ethical argument, and endeavoured to estimate its independent strength, but its full and proper force as a cumulative proof cannot be appreciated unless it is considered in connexion with the other proofs. This, however, cannot be done here. We are so satisfied of its inherent strength, that, were it necessary, we would not fear to stake the whole question on its validity.

But we have not the presumption to suppose that the argument as now presented has produced conviction in the mind of every reader. Even though the argument were proved insufficient, and our exposition of it a failure, this would not set aside the obligation of the Sabbath. There still remains the Scriptural and historical evidence, which must also be disproved before a rational conclusion affirming its non-obligation can be drawn. Some may admit that we have made out some of the points we undertook to establish, but assert that we have failed in the more important. The discussion will not be in vain, however, if it dispel any of the false notions

which are very commonly entertained with respect to the Sabbath, and thus open up the way for a more candid consideration of the remaining evidence. Suppose, for example, our reasoning with respect to the proportion of time to be regarded as inconclusive, but the justness of our remarks on the strictly moral nature of the duty of allotting a certain portion of time to devotion to be admitted, what is the position in which the investigator of the evidence is placed? A moral duty is admitted; but it is denied that reason is competent to make such a discovery of its extent as to enable conscience to enforce it; and, consequently, it is held that, on natural grounds alone, a Sabbath is not obligatory. Now, wherever there exists a moral duty, we are shut up to adopt one of these two alternatives—either reason must be capable of so discovering its extent as to enable and require man to carry it into practice, or God must reveal this extent. For we cannot suppose that God has given us the perception of a duty which cannot in any case be performed on account of the weakness of reason, or the want of a revelation, without denuding the Author of our nature of His grand attribute—perfection. But, by the supposition, the former of these alternatives is denied, and, consequently, the latter must be admitted—there must be a Sabbath of divine in-

stitution. There is thus a presumption in favour of a divine revelation on the subject, which must bear a proportion to the inadequacy of reason to make the discovery of the absolutely right time. So that, if we have not succeeded in proving that reason is competent to give such a judgment as would be sufficient to regulate our practice, then, in the precise ratio of the weakness of our argument on this point, must be the strength of the presumption that God has fixed the time by a revelation.

And even though our reasoning be fully admitted; still, a revelation is highly probable. The vast importance of the Sabbath to man, in a religious, moral, and physical point of view, would manifestly be a good reason for God's departing from his ordinary course, and making a revelation; and though the uncertainty which would hang over a decision of human reason *could not cancel* the moral obligation, its removal would be a *great benefit* bestowed upon man.

CHAPTER VII.

SABBATH WORSHIP:—THE CONTEMPLATION OF NATURE AND THE STUDY OF SCIENCE.

In the preceding chapters the worship of God, and the Sabbath as a day devoted to this worship, have been considered only in a general point of view. We have endeavoured to show the imperative claims of divine worship as a moral duty, and the necessity of a Sabbath in order to its due performance. We have neither asked nor answered the questions, How may God be most acceptably worshipped? What is the best mode of filling up Sabbath time? No doubt much must be left to the conscience and reason of the individual in replying to such questions, but there are some points which admit of, and require a general consideration. It is not our intention here to enter into a full consideration of the subject of Sabbath worship. The object of the present chapter is simply to estimate the value of the contemplation of nature, and the study of science, as means of religious worship.

It has often been said, "Let the character of God be read in the volume of nature; let the works of his hands be contemplated as they are presented to our view in the heavens above us, or on the earth around us; let the mechanism of the human body, or the constitution of the human mind, be made the object of attention; let the laws of nature be studied as these are unfolded in any of the departments of science;—these are the most rational means of exciting a just and impressive sense of the divine perfections." The sentiments of Byron have been often echoed:—

> "Come and compare
> Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
> With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
> Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer."

And the verses of Southey on this subject have been often quoted:—

> "Go thou and seek the house of prayer!
> I to the woodlands shall repair,
> Feed with all Nature's charms mine eyes,
> And hear all Nature's melodies.
> The primrose-bank shall there dispense
> Faint fragrance to the awaken'd sense;
> The morning beams that life and joy impart,
> Shall with their influence warm my heart,
> And the full tear that down my cheek will steal
> Shall speak the prayer of praise I feel!"

Now, against science or philosophy we have not a word to say, nor do we deny their tendency, when

looked at in a proper spirit, to deepen devout impression; and were we to utter a syllable in depreciation of the beauty and grandeur of nature, or the moral influence which the contemplation of these is fitted to exert, the lofty mountain and the deep ocean, the lovely landscape and the blue sky, would kindle with indignation at the false and heartless aspersion—the roar of the cataract and the voice of the seven thunders would conspire to utter our condemnation. The experience of Coleridge, as described in these lines of his address to Mont Blanc, was most natural in the circumstances:—

> "O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee
> Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
> Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
> I worshipped the Invisible alone."

But while we willingly allow the utility of these means of worship, there are certain conditions with which they must comply in order to secure the end they have in view. It is the part of wisdom to ask not only, What means are, in themselves, best fitted to gain the object contemplated, but also, How are these means to be used in order to gain this object? The latter question is of as much importance as the former; for an instrumentality may be suitable, and even perfect in itself, while the peculiar circumstances in which it must be employed may clog it

with such restrictions as render it either useless or injurious. Now, granting, with the utmost cordiality, that the contemplation of nature and the study of her laws may be made subservient to devotion, it is both fair and rational to inquire, What are the conditions which must be complied with on the part of man in order to the efficiency of these means of religious worship?

It has already been remarked that worship must be spiritual—a state or exercise of mind. We remark here, further, as a carrying out of this idea, that the worship demanded by the rational and moral constitution of man implies a right *intention*, and a right direction of *attention*. There must be a conscious desire, and an earnest purpose of performing religious duty, as the motive for using these means; and there must also be a constant supervision and regulation of the mental activity, so as to make their use subservient to the grand purpose of devotion. This is indispensably necessary to the performance of genuine worship, through these or any other means.

Worship, in whatever way performed, is attended by great collateral advantages. The physical repose necessarily accompanying a cessation from labour is one of the most important, and is an obvious manifestation of the Creator's beneficence in so adapting

the two component parts of man's nature to each other, that the dutiful exercise of the one conduces to the wellbeing of the other. But the obligation of worship cannot depend, either in whole or in part, on the happy effects that flow from its observance, however great in number or magnitude. The setting apart and filling up of the time dedicated to religious duties must be a response to the primary and paramount claims of devotion, as fully as if no necessity of physical repose existed. The same thing holds in reference to the particular *means* employed for the worship of God. The use of certain means may secure important benefits of a merely physical or intellectual character. We are fully justified in selecting these means, and accepting these benefits, provided the spirituality and acceptability of the worship be also secured in as high a degree by these means as by any others. But the results must ever be kept in a strictly subordinate place, and cannot become the primary motive without vitiating the performance of worship as a religious duty. Now, the study of science and the contemplation of nature may be accompanied by superior advantages of a non-religious character, and, other things being equal, they ought to be preferred as a means or mode of worship. The intellectual culture and physical health that may be obtained by the

employment of these means are undoubtedly great recommendations, and may be legitimately taken into account in deciding as to the comparative merit of rival means, when these are equally balanced in a moral and religious point of view. But they cannot become the end contemplated by the mind in the use of these means, without destroying entirely the moral worth of the worship. The obligation of duty, and not any results, must be present to the mind of the worshipper, else it cannot be duly performed. The individual must enter upon converse with nature, or an inquiry with respect to her laws, with *the single aim of worshipping God.* Nor is it sufficient that this intention be experienced at the commencement—it must be maintained throughout the entire performance of the duty. The eye of the mind must be kept steadily fixed on the one object, and there must be an incessant mental activity exerted in a certain direction, in order to make the means effectual for gaining this object. It is quite possible that the sciences may be studied, and external nature surveyed without a devout thought or feeling arising in the mind. There is no necessary connexion between such exercises of reason or sense, and the worship of God. So far from this being the case, it is a fact that their conjunction in the experience of mankind generally, forms the ex-

ception, and not the rule. A voluntary effort and a certain process of thought are absolutely necessary to make the former instrumental in gaining the latter.

That this is the case with regard to the *study of the sciences*, will not be difficult to shew. Is it not merely the connexion and classification of phenomena with which the man of science, as distinguished from the theologian, has to deal? The range of his vision does not extend, meanwhile, beyond the sphere of secondary causes—the object after which he has gone in search is a *created unity*, and not the one God who made all. The aim of science is to bind together the phenomenal—the finite—and not to comprehend the Absolute—the Infinite. When one general law has been discovered, it may go in quest of another still more general, but the moment it is satisfied that the highest possible generalization has been reached, it asks no more. We have a palpable demonstration of the truth of these statements in the fact that many philosophers and men of science have been professedly or virtually Atheists. But it may be said that since the great majority of men ever have believed, and will believe, in an intelligent First Cause, may these not obtain much light from the truths of science with respect to his perfections? Granted. But how? Not by studying the details of science as a science—not by tracing the relations

of cause and effect among mental or material phenomena, or by seeking to discover general laws. The scientific method must be interrupted. The chain of observation must be dropt, and the exercises of abstraction and comparison must be put forth in a new direction, and for a different purpose. Whether the inquiry have reference to the relations of a single phenomenon, or the truth of a general law, the mind must stop short in its progress, and set out anew for another point. Suppose the question of causation in a particular instance to be proposed by Philosophy, her language would be, Out of what other and previous phenomena did this phenomenon arise? Should these be discovered, the same question might be proposed with reference to each of them. But when Religion speaks, she puts an end to these inquiries for the time, and asks, Who bound these phenomena together? and why did he so bind them? The mind thus passes from all created causes to the Great First Cause—it lays down the microscope of science, and takes up the telescope of faith. Phenomena, indeed, still continue to occupy the attention, but it is not their mere existence in certain causal or co-ordinate relations which is the subject of investigation. The mind turns its eye to the exquisite arrangements by which a cause produces its effect—to the numerous and nice adapta-

tions of part to part in a given whole—to the wondrous combination of means by which an end is gained, and then, piercing the veil of the material, gazes intuitively on the Invisible Mind, as the great fountain whence all these proceeded. General laws, too, may form the subject of consideration, but the mind does not put forth its efforts in making inductive generalizations: it takes such laws as have been already discovered and verified; it seeks to educe the *final causes* that may lie concealed in them; and thence passes to the perfections of Him who devised and brought into existence the whole economy of nature. Science is satisfied when it has reached the last link in the chain of material causation; Religion takes cognizance of secondary causes only as these are connected with the intelligent First Cause. The former is contented with general and abstract principles; the latter will not rest till it know something of the living, personal, voluntary Agent by whom "all things live, move, and have their being." "Oh! it is a deeply interesting spectacle to behold a man who can take a masterly and commanding survey over the field of some human speculation, who can clear his discriminated way through all the turns and ingenuities of some human argument, who, by the march of a mighty and resistless demonstration, can scale with assured footstep the sublimities of science,

and, from his firm stand on the eminence he has won, can descry some wondrous range of natural or intellectual truth spread out in subordination before him; and yet this very man may, in reference to the moral and authoritative claims of the Godhead, be in a state of utter apathy and blindness! While his mind is thus utterly devoid of what may be called the main or elemental principle of theology, he may have a far quicker apprehension, and have his taste and his feelings much more powerfully interested, than the simple Christian who is beside him, by what may be called the circumstantials of theology. He can throw a wider and more rapid glance over the magnitudes of creation. He can be more delicately alive to the beauties and the sublimities which abound in it. He can, when the idea of a presiding God is suggested to him, have a more kindling sense of his natural majesty, and be able, both in imagination and in words, to surround the throne of the Divinity by the blazonry of more great and splendid and elevating images. And yet, with all those powers of conception which he does possess, he may not possess that on which practical Christianity hinges. The moral relation between him and God may neither be effectively perceived nor faithfully proceeded on. Conscience may be in a state of the most entire dormancy, and the man be regaling

himself with the magnificence of God while he neither loves God, nor believes God, nor obeys God."* These are the words of one, who, by the peculiarities of his genius and history, was singularly qualified to speak with authority on the point now before us.

The processes of science, then, will never bring us within the sphere of religion; its results must be taken and made the subject of another process, if we would pass beyond the phenomenal—the finite—the created. The pursuits of science have no tendency to make the mind devout, but its established truths may be used in illustration of the doctrines of theology. In this way, and in this way alone, can science minister to our knowledge of God, and become the handmaid of devotion. The man of science must become the theologian, in order to render his stores of knowledge of any use to him in the worship of his Creator.

Were it necessary these statements might be abundantly confirmed by the testimony of experience. Let one example suffice. "P. made some interesting observations on the *moral effect* of the study of natural philosophy, including astronomy. He denied, as a general fact, the tendency of even this last grand science to expand, sublime, or moralize the mind. He had talked with the famous Dr.

* Chalmers' Astronomical Discourses. Dis. 7.

Herschel. It was of course to suppose, *a priori*, that Herschel's studies would alternately intoxicate him with reverie, almost to delirium, and carry him irresistibly away towards the throne of the Divine Majesty. P. questioned him on the subject. Herschel told him that these effects took place in his mind in but a very small degree; much less, probably, than in the mind of a poet without any science at all. Neither *a habit of pious feeling*, nor any peculiar and transcendent *emotions* of piety were at all the necessary consequence."*

With regard to the *contemplation of nature* the case is not widely different. The words of Herschel now quoted, indeed, imply, and we at once admit, that there is a wide contrast between the poet who converses with nature, and the man of science who deals with her laws. This admission may seem to countenance the conclusion of many, that while nature's laws have little tendency to kindle devotion, nature herself as presented to the senses has an inherent power of exciting *pious emotions* in the minds of all. No principle, however, so general as this is involved. The statement is made with reference to poets only—a small class of men possessed of peculiar susceptibilities of emotion. Even though poets were uni-

* Foster's Life and Correspondence, vol. i. p. 188.

versally and habitually devout, this would be altogether insufficient as a basis for the general principle that the contemplation of the works of nature is adequate to produce pious feelings in the minds of men *generally*. But there is a prior question demanding an answer before it can be of any use to inquire, whether poets form an exceptional class on account of their devout experiences. It is this: Is it *devotion* that is experienced even by them in their intercourse with nature? It is readily granted that the beauty and grandeur of nature are eminently fitted to awaken a certain emotion, not only in the mind of the poet, but in the minds of all, who by the possession, in any degree, of imagination or taste, are capable of their appreciation. But what is the nature of this emotion? Is it properly called *devout?* Is it the soul of worship, or even an essential element? In answer to these questions, we appeal to the reader's own consciousness. It is not necessary that he be a poet in order to be competent to give a judgment on this matter. Imagination, and taste, and emotion are not in the exclusive possession of poets, though undoubtedly they have these in a higher degree than other men. The very same feelings experienced by them are experienced, only more faintly, by all who are capable in any degree of perceiving and appreciating

the sublimity and beauty of external nature. Let the reader, then, carefully recall and analyze his own experience in order to arrive at the truth on this point. It may be safely asserted that, in the great majority of instances, the emotions consequent on a survey of the most striking objects in our world, or in the visible universe, are simply those awakened naturally and necessarily by the perception of sublimity and beauty. Now, these emotions have some resemblance to those experienced in devotion, and may be fitly associated with them, but they are entirely distinct. They want entirely the *moral* element. They arise in the mind irresistibly and independently alike of the moral nature and the will. Worship, on the other hand, is a *duty*, and man's conduct in reference to it must be voluntary and worthy either of praise or of blame. Further, as has already been remarked, God is the great object that is present to the mind in all genuine worship. Now, is it not a fact that these merely natural feelings, in numberless instances, are not even followed by such as are of a religious and moral character. Not only are the emotions we have been comparing essentially different, but they are not inseparably, or even generally connected.

It is quite possible, even, that another and a higher step may be taken, and yet the consequent state of

mind not be entitled to be called devout. An individual may ascend from the magnificent effect to its Great Cause without having his emotions materially changed. He may "rise from nature up to nature's God" without doing any homage to his Creator. "What charm and what beauty are added to the splendour of the starry heavens, to the savage harmony of the raging seas, to the smiling landscape of fields and woods under the beams of the morning sun, by the thought of the universal Spirit, which silently circulates through all beings, and which seems to reveal its immortal existence and utter its divine voice, amid all the motions and all the sounds of the universe! So that, frequently, man, absorbed in the contemplation of these wonders, unites himself, by his enthusiasm to the concert of the creation; his imagination feasts on the idea of God, and he believes himself to possess religion. . . . But imagination is not the whole of man; it is not by far his best part. When the imagination has been excited in this way, is man any more like God? Is he more worthy of God? And not to go even so far, has he more of peace or consolation? No! the charm is evanescent."* Does the experience of the reader not testify that frequently, on such occasions, his realization of God

* Vinet's Vital Christianity, p. 33.

has been nothing more than a vague sense of his greatness?—a mere personification of the sublime? Power, no doubt, is an essential attribute of the Divine Being, and must ever enter into our idea of Him. But the highest conceptions we can form of God simply as the Almighty are altogether insufficient as a basis for acceptable worship. There is still a lack of the moral element essential to enlightened devotion. There is here no idea of the relation in which the individual stands to God, and no feeling of gratitude or submission. There is no complacency in the moral character of God, or even a single conception of that moral character. This contracted idea of God may indeed be vivid, and this so-called devout emotion may be intense, but with such a Deity and such a devotion even the poet himself cannot be called pious. "It is nobler to cultivate the intellectual taste than to sacrifice to the palate—and the frenzy of the bard is finer than the delirium of the drunkard—yet the two things may be equally godless. The blind eagle striking his wing against the cloud, knows as little of the sun's glory as the blind hedge-sparrow hopping in the dust."* Were it necessary to produce palpable evidence in corroboration of this point, it might be found in the fact that these poetical feelings have been actually experienced

* Edmond's Memoir of Dr. Stark, p. 28.

in multitudes of cases without ever seeming to come into contact with the moral nature at all, or to exert any influence over the conduct. "The religion of the imagination is the charm of a few fugitive moments; it is neither the light, the support, nor the sanctification of the soul."

Let it not be supposed that we mean to say or insinuate that the feelings which form the religion of taste, are incompatible with those emotions which are proper to the religion of conscience. They are, indeed, essentially distinct, but so far from being contrary, the former may be very useful in exciting the latter. We cordially adopt the sentiments of the Essayist: "The creation is a perpetual feast to the mind of a good man; everything he sees cheers and delights him. Providence has imprinted so many smiles on nature, that it is impossible for a mind which is not sunk in more gross and sensual delights to take a survey of them without several secret sensations of pleasure. The cheerfulness of heart which springs up in us from the survey of nature's works is an admirable preparation for gratitude. The mind has gone a great way towards praise and thanksgiving that is filled with such a secret gladness. A grateful reflection on the Supreme Cause who produces it, sanctifies it in the soul, and gives it its proper value. Such a habitual

disposition of mind consecrates every field and wood, and turns an ordinary walk into a morning or evening sacrifice."* The admission of Dr. Chalmers is equally frank and just: "The sublime and interesting topic," says he, "which has engaged us (Astronomy) possesses in itself a charm to fix the attention and to regale the imagination, and to subdue the whole man into a delighted reverence; and in a word to beget such a solemnity of thought and emotion, as may occupy and enlarge the soul for hours together, as may waft it away from the grossness of ordinary life, and raise it to a kind of elevated calm above all its vulgarities and all its vexations."

Far be it from us to deny, or depreciate, or dispense with, the ministrations of nature in the temple of God. Poetry and piety go meetly hand in hand. Our sole object in these remarks has been to correct the popular mistake that the poetical is necessarily a religious elevation. We have only been asking whether one, *without the presence of religion*, "from the most elevated peak of some Alpine wilderness, may not become capable of feeling the force and the majesty of those great lineaments which the hand of nature has thrown around him, in the varied forms of precipice, and mountain, and the wave of mighty forests, and the rush of sounding waterfalls, and

* Spectator, No. 393.

distant glimpses of human territory, and pinnacles of everlasting snow, and the sweep of that circling horizon which folds in its ample embrace the whole of this noble amphitheatre ?—whether he may not kindle at such a perspective into all the raptures and into all the movements of a poetic elevation ; and be able to render into the language of poetry the whole of that sublime and beauteous imagery which adorns it ? And as if he were treading on the confines of a sanctuary which he has not entered, may he not mix up with the power and the enchantment of his description such allusions to the presiding genius of the scene ; or to the still but animating spirit of the solitude ; or to the speaking silence of some mysterious character which reigns throughout the landscape ; or, in fine, to that Eternal Spirit, who sits behind the elements He has formed, and combines them into all the varieties of a wide and a wondrous creation."*

But while granting to the fullest extent the utility in a religious aspect of bringing the mind through the senses into contact with external nature, it is very obvious that this utility depends not on the mere perceptions of the external, however vivid, but on a subsequent and internal process. It is not sufficient to open the eye and allow the scene to enter.

* Chalmers' Astronomical Discourses. Dis. 7.

A voluntary effort is required to scale the ladder whose foot is visible to the eye of sense, as resting on earth and in time, but whose summit can be discerned only by the eye of faith, as bathed in the glories of heaven, and reaching the throne of the Eternal. The link that connects the various manifestations of nature with their respective sources in the character of God, and thus consecrates the emotions of taste by superinducing those of religion, must be furnished by the exercise of the human intellect and the human will. Just as we found in the case of Science, so here, a following out of the ideas suggested, in a particular direction, is necessary in order that nature may be rendered subservient to religion.

The current of thought, too, with its parallel current of feeling, is likely to flow in this direction in proportion *as the previous state of mind is already devout.* If the mind is not to a certain extent prepared either by habit or by frame, all experience proves that there is little probability that converse with the material world will *originate* devotion, properly so called. As in photography, the artist requires to prepare the surface which is to receive the impression, to adjust his apparatus so as to let the light from the object fall upon that surface, and then to subject it to a further process by which the

invisible impression made by the light is brought out into distinctness, so the individual who wishes to transfer to his own mind a vivid and an influential representation of the character of God as it has been delineated in the works of His hands, must bring his mind in some degree to a devout state, must place himself, so to speak, on a religious stand-point, and, when he has allowed the divine light that radiates from the face of nature to enter his soul, must deepen the lines of the impression by subsequent reflection.

Again, religious worship is a rational service, and unless it be social, demands *retirement*. A religion that does not call into exercise the intellect, nay more, a religion that is not *based* on the perceptions of the understanding, is a mere blind sentimentalism, a diseased excrescence, and not a healthy development. Thought is the key which ought to open the fountains of religious emotion. Devotion, as the primary element of subjective religion, is worthy of man's nature only when it is the result of thought. But how can there be a possibility of reflection unless there be retirement and the absence of such objects as would distract the attention? Religious conversation even, however valuable in its own place, is altogether incompatible with that contact of the individual mind with the Great Object of worship which

all genuine worship necessarily supposes. The company of a single individual, unless there be the special exercises of social devotion, must be detrimental, and in most cases entirely destructive to worship, in the sense which we have already affixed to that term. This holds equally whether the worship be in the house or by the way, in the city or in the field. Solitude is highly expedient, and even obligatory, for another reason. Addison truly remarks, "It is not in the power of every one to offer up this kind of worship to the great Author of nature, and to indulge these more refined meditations of heart." The unintelligent many are liable to have their opinions and practices greatly influenced by those of the intelligent and devout few. Now, if the example of the latter should be the means of leading the former into theoretical or practical errors with regard to the worship of God, and this would unquestionably be its tendency in the present case, that example ought not to be presented. It is the dictate of reason and religion, that if the use of a liberty, quite legitimate in itself, and freely accorded to me by my own conscience, be yet the means of leading a weak and ignorant brother into error, I am bound by my relation to him to refrain from using a privilege which my higher attainments in knowledge render it possible for me to

turn to advantage. The additional enjoyment that I may experience, and the additional intensity of my devotion, will be purchased at too dear a rate, if it lead others to be satisfied with following my example outwardly, while it is impossible for them to enter into my devout feelings. If a deep enough solitude cannot be found under the open canopy of heaven—on the bank of the river or in the shade of the forest—in the sequestered vale or on the lone mountain's side, it ought to be sought elsewhere. The God whom I worship has formed me a member of human society, and any worship so selfish as virtually to ignore this fact cannot be required, and will not be accepted by Him.

From what has been said, it will be very plain to every reader what are the conditions deemed by us indispensable in order that science and nature may be rendered subservient to devotion. Under these conditions, the study of science, and the contemplation of nature, may be eminently useful. But this can only be in the case of the enlightened minority. With respect to the great majority, how does the case stand? A moment's reflection will be sufficient to convince any one that such means of worship are altogether unsuitable to their circumstances. As means of exciting devotion they owe their entire efficiency to the previous existence of that which,

by the hypothesis, they are meant to create. No one will see or will seek the traces of the divine character among the details of science unless he be previously devout. No one can gain more than very vague conceptions of that character from natural objects and scenes, unless his mind be enlightened beforehand. In other words, the ignorant and undevout must first become intelligent and pious by some other means before these can be resorted to with any advantage. It is difficult for an educated person to place himself in the position of one who is uneducated. The latter cannot fix his mind so as to conduct the requisite process of thought, and even if he could, he has not the desire to do so; for this would suppose him to be in some degree already devout. No one competent to form an unbiassed opinion will suppose that the great mass of our population are capable of turning science into natural theology, or eliciting the knowledge of the Supreme Being from the works of nature as seen by the eye. If such persons are to be enlightened and rendered devout by the means in question, there must be properly qualified persons to draw for them the necessary deductions from the data of science, and to extract the divine from the natural in the visible universe. Unless this be done, either orally or by books, it is impossible that the great majority of the

people can by these means arrive at definite and correct conclusions with respect to the perfections of God, the relations in which man stands to him, and the duties that rise out of these relations.

But suppose that, by some means or other, the people generally were to become enlightened and devout, how would the case then stand? What every one felt to be a privilege, and recognised as an obligation, would, doubtless, be complied with by the community generally. Country places of resort would be thronged with visitors, while the parks and gardens accessible to the public in the vicinity of large towns would be literally crowded. With few exceptions it would be utterly impossible to find that retirement which in every case is absolutely necessary.

Thus we have seen that comparatively few are mentally capable of using the alleged means of devotion to any advantage, and that many even of these may be debarred from using them by the want of the necessary solitude; while, with respect to the great majority, there exists an intellectual incapacity of thus worshipping God, and, even were this obstacle removed, the very universality of the duty would interpose an insurmountable barrier.

Since, then, the contemplation of nature and the study of science can be used as means of worship

only in exceptional cases, and under certain conditions, they cannot be advocated as generally legitimate or useful on the Sabbath. Even in the case of the small minority, we hold that they do not form the only or the best means of promoting religion in the soul; and we have proved, that except in their case they cannot be instrumental in the service of devotion, and, consequently, ought not to be employed on the day of worship.

Having said thus much with respect to nature and philosophy as handmaids of devotion, what shall we now say of *art?* In passing from the works of God and the laws that regulate mind and matter, to the works of man, however great and beautiful, we make an infinite descent. We find ourselves in a totally different sphere. Nor is the essential inferiority of art in such a comparison greater or more apparent than its inferiority as a religious instrument. Indeed it is difficult to imagine how the sight or the study of works of art could possibly be made serviceable in the worship of God, and therefore suitable to the Sabbath. To what part of man's religious nature can any piece of art make an appeal? What greater connexion has any manufacture, however ingenious, with religion than the process by which it is produced? There is nothing about the highest effort of human genius calculated to bring

God or religion before the mind. True, the *subject* of a work of art of the highest class may be religious, but this is only accidental, and must be confined to comparatively few cases. Even in such cases we might fairly question the reality, or the healthy nature of the effect produced by such representations in exciting devotional feeling; but passing this, nothing can be plainer than the fact, that in the great majority of cases there is absolutely nothing to make us rise above the artist or the artisan. Admiration, indeed, there may be, but it is the admiration of man. Emotion there may be, but it is not religious emotion. It is, indeed, true that a *devout* mind may extract matter of religious contemplation from such works, just as it may find "sermons in stones and God in everything." But this supposes an individual more than ordinarily devout and ingenious. It would not be difficult to show, that, even in such a case, the influence exerted is rather in the opposite direction. He is devout, not in consequence of the influence exerted by the work of art, but in spite of that influence. Suppose he enters a crystal palace, or a museum of art, under religious impressions, there is a moral certainty that the objects presented to his view will, in a greater or less degree, cool his devotion instead of fanning its flame. The reason is obvious. Any train of ideas, more especially if derived

from the senses, must tend to efface the impression produced by a previous train of a more abstract character. This tendency is all the greater if, as in the present case, the separate trains have no natural or necessary connexion. The individual is devout not because he happens to be in the museum, but because he is devout *everywhere*, and because he is more devout *elsewhere*. No man of intelligence and reflection can deceive himself or impose upon others by asserting that the sight or study of works of art is *naturally fitted* to beget or intensify a devotional spirit. We are compelled, therefore, to put works of art beyond the category of *means of devotion*.

In these remarks we have not been inveighing against art, either in itself, or in its relation to the comfort and enjoyment of mankind. It is no reflection cast upon art generally to say that it is not designed, and not fitted to be a *means of devotion*. As well might it be thought derogatory to the microscope to say that it is of little use in the science of astronomy. Foster has well said, "It is not to depreciate a thing, if, in the attempt to ascertain its real magnitude, it is proved to be little. It is no injustice to mechanical powers, to say that slender machines will not move rocks and massive timbers; nor to chemical ones, to assert that though an earthquake may fling a promontory from its

basis, the explosion of a canister of gunpowder will not. Between moral forces also, and the objects to which they are to be applied, there are constituted measures of proportion; and it would seem an obvious principle of good sense, that an estimate moderately correct of the value of each of our means according to those measures, as far as they can be ascertained, should precede every application of them."* Art is of great importance in its own place, and a taste for it may certainly be the source of much rational enjoyment. But its study is clearly the proper business of a holiday and not of a day of worship. Let the people have their holiday time, and let them use it in visiting exhibitions and galleries of art; but let them not suppose for a moment that this can be brought within the sphere of worship, or that it is justifiable on the day appropriated to religion.

* Essay on the Epithet Romantic. Letter V.

CHAPTER VIII.

SABBATH RECREATION, AS A QUESTION OF RIGHT AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

THE question of Sabbath recreation, like the more general one of Sabbath obligation, has occasioned a good deal of discussion; and in the former case, as in the latter, this discussion has generally been conducted on scriptural grounds. Bible precepts and precedents are the great points on which the controversy has been made to hinge. On the one hand, those who affirm recreation on the Sabbath to be unlawful, urge, in support of their views, the plain import of the fourth Commandment, and of many other passages of Scripture in which the sanctification of the Sabbath is enjoined; and they point to the example of God himself, to the strict and religious character of the Jewish observance of that day, and to the devout and reverential manner in which it was regarded and spent by our Lord and his Apostles. On the other hand it is argued, that the commands

and examples contained in the Old Testament are not applicable to us; that those in the New Testament do not assert or imply recreation to be sinful; while the whole spirit of the New Dispensation, which is of a liberal and merciful character, is held to countenance, rather than to prohibit rational and healthful recreation on the Christian Sabbath. Some have endeavoured not merely to reconcile Old Testament precept and example with holiday amusement on the Sabbath, but even to extract from these a positive argument in favour of Sabbath recreation. The Divine authority is thus brought in to sanction, and even to enjoin worldly recreations on the day devoted to rest and religion. Referring to the fourth Commandment, one writer says: "I have studied it for many years without finding in it a syllable that prohibits recreations; nor have I succeeded better in trying to discover in it an injunction of the public and private exercises of God's worship, as either the whole or *any part* of the duties of the day." Further he says, he has been forced to conclude, that if the fourth Commandment enjoins aught beyond the mere rest which it *specifies*, it actually enjoins, by implication, "worldly recreations," "more generous feeding than on other days," and "bathing," as positive Sabbath duties.* In like manner, the observ-

* Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties, p. 433.

ance of the Jewish Sabbath has been advanced as a precedent for our turning the Christian Sabbath into a mere holiday. Another writer says: "The leading object (of the Sabbath) was not religion, in our sense of the term, but relaxation. Religion, however, was so far connected with it, that the people attended on the Sabbath-day whenever they could conveniently do so, the 'morning and evening sacrifices.' The interval between them, we may be morally certain, was devoted, at the pleasure of individuals, to the miscellaneous objects of rational recreation:—visits to friends; pleasant walks; social pastime, the song, and the dance."*

Without inquiring here whether such statements are compatible with a fair interpretation of Scripture, it is sufficient to remark, that if there is any truth in the main part of the preceding discussion, a *religious* Sabbath is imperatively required by the dictates of natural religion. We appeal to the "Divine light of reason and conscience" for its moral obligation. Following this light alone, we have been led to conclusions that render it impossible for any one to make the Sabbath a mere holiday, except in open defiance of that very guide in which he meanwhile professes steadfastly to confide. We now assume what we have endeavoured to prove, that the Sab-

* Westminster Review. Oct. 1850, p. 185.

bath ought to be devoted to religion; and that recreation on that day cannot be justified unless it can be shewn to come within the range of necessity or mercy. The point demanding discussion here, therefore, is the *moral necessity* of Sabbath recreation *as a dictate of mercy.* In the following observations, we shall continue the course pursued throughout the previous part of the discussion, and consider the question altogether apart from Scripture. The subject will come before us in a civil, rather than a strictly religious aspect. And though we intend to confine our attention more especially to *general principles*, the application of these to questions of public interest will be briefly indicated as we proceed.

Recreation is necessary for the physical welfare of the community. It is especially necessary for the health of the working-classes. This is universally admitted. The grand question in dispute is, whether time for this recreation shall be taken from the six days of labour, or from the one day of rest. Those who advocate recreation on the Sabbath never seem to contemplate the possibility of having it on any other day of the week. How do they reason? They have but one argument. It is this: recreation is necessary; therefore it is necessary on the Sabbath. It is a duty; therefore it is a Sabbath duty. They

succeed admirably in proving the premiss which nobody denies, but they fail to shew how it warrants the conclusion. The *impossibility* of obtaining recreation on any other day of the week *is assumed.* In one aspect of the case, this may be quite legitimate. It may be impossible for working men to secure for themselves recreation on any of the ordinary days of labour. As matters are at present, the alternatives may be, either recreation on Sabbath, or no recreation. But these writers do not profess to be apologizing for the working man taking recreation on the Sabbath ; they come before the public, and they come before Government, asking for the sanction and support of Sabbath recreation. In so far as their object is to bring recreation within the reach of all, they are to be commended for its public advocacy. But the question presents itself, Why do they plead for this recreation *on the Sabbath?* It is granted that recreation cannot be obtained for the people generally, without the concurrence of the public, or a legal enactment. It is the duty of the public, then, to take measures for securing this object ; or, if this can be effected only, or effected better by Government, *it* is bound to take the necessary steps for its accomplishment. But when the advocates of Sabbath recreation come forward, and ask the public, or Parliament, to afford not only the liberty, but *the*

means of recreation on the Sabbath, they are obviously bound to assign sufficient reasons why recreation should be given on the *Sabbath*, rather than any other day. This they have never done, and we believe never can do. Let it be observed that the question is not, Is it lawful for the labouring classes, as matters are at present, to take recreation on the Sabbath? but, What is the duty of the public, and of the State, in order to bring recreation within their reach? In accordance with the religious convictions of the people of this country, the Government secures a general intermission of labour on the first day of the week; but it has appropriated no special time for recreation. It is granted by all with whom the present argument is conducted, that no portion of Sabbath time should be given up to anything else than religion, except on the grounds of necessity or mercy. On this hypothesis, all who advocate Sabbath recreation, are bound to shew that these grounds exist in the present case. Let it be remembered that the plea of necessity or mercy, urged by the working man as an excuse for his taking recreation, cannot avail the public or the Government in giving or countenancing it. The labouring man may say, "I take recreation on the Sabbath, because it is impossible for me to get it at any other time;" but the public or the Government cannot say, "We give recreation on the Sabbath, be-

cause we cannot give it at any other time." Even the *possibility* of its being the duty of the State to afford the means of recreation on the Sabbath, must depend on its being shewn that it *cannot*, or *ought not*, to afford such means on any other day. If either of these points can be made out, the question as to the duty of the Government with respect to Sabbath recreation will be left open for further discussion; if not, the question must be considered as closed—no good reason can be given for trenching upon Sabbath time—it cannot be morally right for the State to give or countenance Sabbath recreation. That the State *cannot* secure a time for recreation, as it has secured a time for rest and religion, no man in his senses can suppose; and it is not easy to see on what grounds any one can assert that this would be *morally wrong*. Are the whole six days occupied with duties of greater importance than the duties of religion, so as to make it *wrong* to give recreation on any of these days, and *right* to give it on the Sabbath? Such a supposition is plainly absurd. Religion is the highest duty of man. When the alternatives presented are to make a cessation from labour on some of the days of labour, or to curtail the time devoted to religion, what enlightened or reasonable man can hesitate a moment in deciding which of these ought to be adopted? Does not the plea

of necessity plainly imply that recreation *ought not* to be given or taken on the Sabbath, if it can be got at any other time? Who can affirm that, as a public matter, it is impossible to obtain recreation on some of the ordinary days of labour? There is no good ground on which it can be argued that the religious duties of the Sabbath ought to be dispensed with to afford an opportunity for recreation which may, and should be had, on some other day. How can the obligation of one duty cancel in any degree the obligation of another? Each should have its own, and all its own time. It is plain, then, on the hypothesis of a religious Sabbath, that popular recreation should be afforded not on the Sabbath, but on some other day; and its public advocates, in seeking to obtain it from the public or Parliament, are morally bound not to ignore, or contradict this dictate of reason and conscience. It is not our business to shew how the State may best secure time for recreation on another day than the Sabbath. It may require a specific time to be given up by all on a certain day; or, it may permit that time to be given up on the day most convenient to each trade or profession; or it may allow those who choose, to distribute that time over all the six ordinary days of the week. Whatever may be the best mode of giving the time, the mere possibility of doing this involves its moral obligation.

Holiday recreation being universally admitted to be necessary for the public welfare, it is plainly within the province of Government to secure an intermission of labour for this special purpose. It is as clearly the right and the duty of the State to take up and carry out this matter, as it was its right and duty to pass a "Ten Hours Factory Bill." The labouring man has a *civil right* to some period of time for recreation on some lawful day; just as he has a *civil* or *moral right* to an intermission of labour on the Sabbath for the purposes of religion. Those who admit the necessity of recreation to the labouring classes, and yet do nothing to obtain this for them on one of the six days of labour, are chargeable with doing these classes a civil, as well as a moral injustice. They refuse to yield a civil right to which the working man is entitled on some lawful day; and they expose him to a strong temptation to violate his conscience, and throw off the restraints of religion on the Sabbath. It is a setting aside the right of the community to recreation altogether, to substitute for this, as some do, a right of recreation *on the Sabbath.* In this way it is cheated out of its right by an adroit pretence of securing that right.

In a leading article of the "Times,"* the writer says: "Any man absolutely needing locomotion, re-

* Nov. 11, 1854.

freshment, and even moderate recreation on that day, has as much right to it as the ox or the ass to be drawn out of the pit, or the sick to be healed." Now, if the reference here be to cases of emergency or absolute necessity, we assent most cordially to the statement; but if the absolute need spoken of arise out of the previous six days' labour, and recur as regularly as the Sabbath, we dissent from it entirely. If the latter is the meaning of the writer, he has omitted to shew that either there is no absolute need of recreation on the other days of the week, or no man has a right to it except on the Sabbath. Unless this is done, the argument has no force. Look for a moment at the illustration. To make the cases parallel, the ox or the ass would require to have been in the pit all the previous week, and it would require to be shewn that it was duty to allow it to remain there six days, and then to draw it out on the seventh. We cannot estimate very highly, either the generous benevolence of those who say nothing about the need of recreation during the *six* days of *labour*, and yet call out loudly for it on the *one* day of *rest*; or the moral perspicacity of such as can perceive *a right* which exists *always* only on one day out of seven. Who could admire the tender-hearted compassion of the man who should permit an ox or an ass to remain in a pit during all, or any of the ordinary days of

labour, though he should draw it out on the day of rest and worship?

The working-classes, then, are entitled to a period for recreation on a working-day. This civil right has no connexion, and ought not to interfere, with their moral right to a day of rest for religious purposes. Hence, if this civil right is not voluntarily yielded by the public, it must be the duty of Government to take active measures to secure it. And it must be the duty of all who have the best interests of the community at heart to unite, not in seeking to meet, or rather to evade, a civil right by abridging a moral one, but in seeking to secure both these rights in all their entireness. When this object has been gained, the discussion as to Sabbath recreation may cease, for its necessity will no longer exist. So much for things as they *ought to be;* let us now look at things as they *are.*

On the supposition that matters continue as at present, and no special and general provision is made for the recreation of the people on a lawful day, what is the duty of the individual, and the duty of the nation with respect to Sabbath recreation?

Has the working-man a *moral right* to take recreation on the Sabbath, even on the supposition that he cannot get it at any other time? This is an important question; but it is not our object here, to

attempt giving it an answer. It is the social and civil aspect of the subject that we propose shortly to consider.

Has an individual, then, a *civil right* to take recreation on the Sabbath? It is granted at once that he has such a right; but it is also maintained that it is limited by several very important restrictions. In general, it may be remarked, that this right ceases, if the recreation interferes in any way with the rights of others, or their religious privileges. But let it be observed more particularly, that this right is wholly of a *negative* character. When we speak of a right on the one side, it is implied that there is a duty on the other. In the present case, the utmost extent of this duty is to permit the individual to seek recreation for himself. No man has a right to ask any other man to help him to obtain recreation on the Sabbath. So far from this being the case, it may be shewn that it must be morally wrong to ask any aid from others to obtain Sabbath recreation in the general and well-understood sense of that term. All such assistance is *labour*, properly so called. On the day of rest, one man obtains recreation at the cost of another man's labour. This we hold to be essentially *selfish*. In the great majority of cases, the individual, for his own *pleasure*, compels or bribes another to sacrifice his privilege of *necessary rest*. In the most

favourable case possible, one seeks his own *health* at the expense of the health of another. What right have I to ask another to labour, when the State says, and every reasonable man says, he ought to rest? If my conscience tells me I ought to take recreation on the Sabbath, it must also tell me that I ought not to require the labour of others for this purpose. As a member of society, it is my duty to be content with such recreations, as lie within my reach, independent of all assistance. This would have been the case, even though the Sabbath had been a mere civil institution. Still more is the justness of this restriction apparent, when we consider the Sabbath as a day appropriated to religion. It will not be very difficult to shew, that the aid thus required not only implies an unjust exaction of labour, but also tends to pervert the morals of society. Let it be remembered that labour is lawful only on the grounds of necessity or mercy. It is granted that no one can be justified in doing any work on Sabbath, unless he is convinced that it is a work of necessity or mercy. The application of this simple and obvious principle is very generally overlooked. It is almost universally deemed sufficient if the conscience of him who *causes* the work is satisfied, and it seldom occurs that the conscience of him who *does* the work ought also to be satisfied. Unless this is done, how can the work be

lawful? How can the conscience of the individual who does not perform the work, answer for the conscience of him who does? This has a wide and general application. It includes much more than recreation. Whatever be the purpose for which labour is asked, unless the individual who requires it can make it plain to others that it is morally obligatory, he has no right either to ask or take assistance. Now, is it not a notorious fact, that not one out of a hundred of those who are at the present time engaged in Sabbath labour, is convinced that the labour required of him is demanded on *moral grounds?* It has sometimes occurred to us that it would furnish a very simple and a very useful criterion, in many cases, were works of necessity and mercy defined, as those works which an enlightened and generous nature would feel bound to perform *without remuneration.* If there be *moral* reasons calling for labour on the Sabbath, the moral obligation must remain, though the labour should not be remunerated. I am surely bound to discharge a moral duty to another, independent of his money, or even his gratitude. It would be curious, were it possible, to ascertain how many of those who at present labour on the Sabbath would continue to labour, if their remuneration was withdrawn, and no condition of Sabbath labour involved in the tenure by which they hold their situa-

tions. No reasonable man would expect, more than a very small minority, to see it to be their positive duty to continue their Sabbath work independent of all pecuniary considerations. We should like to see this criterion applied by all our railway and steam-navigation companies. How many of these would consider themselves *morally bound* to keep trains running, or steamers plying, *if these did not pay!* And supposing the directors and shareholders of these companies to change places with their servants, how many of them would feel *bound* to deprive themselves of the day of rest, and to labour *for nothing!* Let it be observed, we do not say that the labour required on the Sabbath on sufficient grounds should not be remunerated; we are only applying a test to discover what are really works of necessity, and therefore lawful and obligatory. We repeat, unless the work be such as to convince those who are employed in performing it, as well as their employers, that it is morally obligatory, it must be unjustifiable. No one can have a right to ask such service, or even to accept it when offered. The Sabbath labour which is not freely yielded to the dictate of conscience must be extorted either by compulsion or bribery. No labouring man will work on the Sabbath for the mere love of labour. The charge of compulsion is denied, since, in all cases where Sabbath labour is required,

the persons were aware of this when they made their engagements; and they have perfect freedom to obtain greater liberty of conscience by resigning their situations. Now, without dwelling on the injustice thus done to the more conscientious and scrupulous part of the community, it will not be difficult to shew that all *systematic* labour on the Sabbath has a most injurious influence on the morality of the people generally—is, in truth, a system of bribery. It is a matter of fact that, with few exceptions, the labour of the Sabbath is performed not from *moral* considerations, but simply as a part of the week's labour, without which the week's wages cannot be obtained. This being the case, and such labour being made a condition on which the situation is obtained and held, there is a bribe offered to a considerable number to violate their consciences whenever such a situation is vacant. The individual who gets the situation has possibly to surmount some conscientious scruples before he can accept of it. But the demoralizing influence is not confined to him alone. There are probably ten or twenty applicants for the situation; and it might cost several of these a mental struggle, terminating in a moral fall, before they could reconcile themselves to Sabbath labour. This descent on the moral scale is not recovered, and it prepares the way for another. The evil propagates itself. Those who

labour must defend their conduct, and endeavour to bring over others to their views. In this way the young, and all whose moral principles are not fully confirmed, are exposed to strong temptations to disregard the dictates of conscience. On this ground, we affirm it must be morally wrong for an individual, or a company, or the public, to exact or countenance *regular* Sabbath labour. Even in cases where the employers are satisfied of the legitimacy of the labour, if it is generally regarded by the employed as ordinary labour, the former cannot be justified in seeking to gain their object by a process which tends directly to the demoralization of general society. Whether meant so, or not, it is in reality *bribery* on a large and general scale.

These remarks have a general application, but they apply with special force to Sabbath recreation. What can be more inconsistent than to suppose that it can ever be a moral duty for one man to labour for another man's recreation on the day of general rest? Surely if any one needs recreation on the Sabbath, and assistance to obtain it, it is the labouring man. His claim to such assistance cannot be weakened by the circumstance that he is unable to pay for it; and yet who ever dreams that it is a *moral duty* incumbent on his fellow-labourer to work for his recreation without receiving any reward for his labour? Moral

obligation seems to be invisible till it is brought within the range of human vision by means of a *metallic* reflector. Necessity and mercy are called into existence by a *pecuniary* spell. If we *must* have some labouring for the recreation of others on the Sabbath, then let us have a *rational and humane* arrangement, by which those who do not labour on the other six days of the week shall work on the seventh, for the benefit of those who labour all the six days of the week, and ought to rest on the seventh. If the directors and proprietors of railways and steamers do not feel themselves bound personally to labour for the recreation of the classes who most of all need it, how can they expect those employed by them to see any *moral obligation* lying upon them to work for the recreation of others who require it less than themselves ?

The very utmost that can be granted to the advocates of Sabbath recreation is, that they be permitted to *help themselves* to recreation. The right is wholly *negative*. To ask the working man to labour on Sabbath for one's own recreation is purely *selfish ;* and the whole *system* of Sabbath labour has a most pernicious influence on the morals of society. On these grounds, it must be the duty of the public, of the private company, and of the private individual, wholly to abstain from requiring or using the labour

of one portion of the community, or even a single individual, for the purpose of affording to others an opportunity of recreation.

But while the right can only be of a negative character, even this is liable to another very important and imperative restriction. It is limited by the obligation to maintain a *decorum* becoming a religious day, and essential to the religious liberty of the great mass of the community. The individual is bound to take no recreation which may put any hinderance in the way of his fellow-citizens observing the Sabbath according to the dictates of their consciences, and gaining the important benefits which its quiet and decorous observance is fitted to secure. This is a duty which he owes as a member of civil society. A denial of this duty strikes at the roots of religious liberty. The principle involved is spiritual despotism in the germ. Look at the case. The conscience of one man *permits* him to take recreation on the Sabbath; the conscience of another *forbids* him to take recreation, and *enjoins* him to observe the duties of religion. In the one case, conscience *tolerates* recreation; in the other, it *binds* to the performance of religious duty. Each of these individuals ought to respect the conscience of the other. As the latter has no right to prohibit the former from taking recreation, so the former, in availing himself of the

permission of his own conscience, is bound to put no hinderance in the way of the latter, in complying with the *positive command* of his conscience. The individual who takes recreation on Sabbath, is plainly bound as a moral being, by his relation to society, to take care not to do anything tending to disturb the quiet of the day—to offend the feelings of others—or in any way to hinder that tranquillity of mind which is so indispensable to the rational and acceptable performance of the duties of a religious Sabbath. So much in reference to the duty of the individual; let us now look at the subject in connexion with the State.

The Sabbath is a *national* institution. In speaking of it in this aspect, however, let it be remarked, that we hold as firmly as any, that the religious duties incumbent on the Sabbath lie wholly beyond the province of civil government. The arm of the law has no power, and it has no right to compel the performance of a single religious duty. For the observance of the Sabbath as a strictly religious institution, the individual is responsible only to conscience, and the Lord of conscience. But it does not follow from this that it is incompetent for the State to uphold and protect the Sabbath as a national institution. We cannot subscribe to the following sentiments: "The man who, on a Sunday, is compelled to put on an

outward seeming which does not correspond with his inward feelings, is made to LIE before God and man; and for the Sabbath hypocrisy of which he is guilty, Sabbath legislators are responsible."* Now, if by this be meant that the State has no right to compel the performance of Sabbath duties, such as reading the Bible, or attending on public worship, the statement has our hearty concurrence. But if it be meant, as we suspect it is, that the State is wrong in taking active measures to secure a general cessation from labour on the Sabbath, and the observance of a *public decorum* becoming the great ends of the day, we as cordially raise our protest. We do not advocate Sabbath legislation as obligatory *in order to preserve and extend religion*, but the duty of the State to protect the Sabbath can be shewn to rest on other grounds. Its maintenance as a day of rest to afford an opportunity for the performance of religious duties, is unequivocally demanded by the principles of religious liberty; and it is as clearly the duty of the State to *protect conscience*, as to protect life and property.

As a national institution the Sabbath may be considered in a twofold aspect. It may be viewed as a simple intermission of labour—a day of physical rest; and it may be regarded as an intermission of labour

* Westminster Review, October 1850, p. 202.

for religious purposes—a day of physical rest as an opportunity for spiritual exercise.

In the first of these aspects, the national arrangement, securing a general cessation from labour, is made *for the public good.* On this ground it may, and should be enforced by the coercive power of law. The general utility of a weekly day of rest is now so universally admitted, as not to require either argument or illustration. "It may safely be affirmed," says one, "that the expediency of intermitting public labour, one day in the week, is on all sides readily admitted, and that in no quarter does there exist any desire to see the existing regulation on this point materially altered or repealed."* Again, "As a political regulation, it may, without any infringement of the principles of religious liberty, be enforced on all men without regard to their private religious opinions."† There seems to be entire unanimity, that, apart from religion altogether, it would still be the duty of a wise and humane Government to *compel* the regular intermission of labour. In this case the policy and humanity of the Government must be in the precise ratio of the *rigour* with which the law is enforced; for those whose circumstances most imperatively demand physical repose, are the very persons who are in the greatest danger of being de-

* Modern Sabbath Examined, p. 3. † *Ibid.* p. 5.

prived of the day of rest. Do we not find a confirmation of this statement in the present history of Sabbath labour? We believe we understate the fact, when we say, that not less than a *million* of our fellow-countrymen, all of the hard-working class, are engaged willingly or unwillingly, in labour of a *public* kind on the Sabbath. Who can suppose that a *tithe* of these are employed in *bona fide* cases of necessity and mercy? If the law be universally admitted to be a good and humane law, why should it not be fully carried out; more especially when those who suffer by the laxity of the executive, are just those whose cases the law, on the present supposition, was framed more particularly to meet? In the name of these myriads of Sabbath workers, humanity calls aloud to the State to step forward, and say to them in accordance with its own law, "You shall not work on the day of rest." An appeal can here be made to those who would make the Sabbath a mere holiday, as well as to those who would maintain its religious character. They grant that the whole community ought to enjoy a weekly day of rest. If they are consistent, then, they will unite with others in seeking to evoke public sentiment, and legislative authority to put an entire stop to Sabbath labour. Why should there be a *million* of Sabbath slaves in our midst, when the mind of the whole nation is made up that

they ought to be set at liberty? Why should their *selfish* employers be permitted to rob by compulsion or bribery so many of the sons of toil of their weekly respite from labour? It is the duty of all to call upon the Government to administer fully and fairly this wise and beneficent law—to see that the weekly remission of labour meant for the whole nation, be enjoyed by the whole nation—to take care that a humane institution do not, through its neglect, fail in accomplishing its beneficent ends *in the most necessitous cases.*

Again, is it either reasonable or just to permit the orderly and obedient subjects of the Government to be placed at a disadvantage on account of the grasping avarice of those who contravene the spirit, and even the letter of the law? Why should the best members of the community, who conscientiously abstain from all labour on the Sabbath, be called on to make a sacrifice for the aggrandizement of those who refuse to obey the law, and will not do their part in carrying out a measure calculated in a very high degree to promote the best interests of the nation? At the present time, in the half of London visited by the City Mission, there are above 14,000 shops regularly open on the Sabbath. Is this fair? Ought such a state of matters to continue? Is it not the obvious duty of a *just* Government not merely to

check, but entirely to suppress such sordid and illegitimate traffic? The State is clearly bound to protect the loyal subject against the illegal practices of those who set the law at defiance. Except in a few necessary cases, *justice* demands the entire suppression of Sabbath *traffic*, just as we have seen *humanity* requires the entire prohibition of public Sabbath *labour*.

It has already been shewn that no individual has a right to ask any other individual to labour for his *recreation*. It must now be further apparent that it is the duty of the State to prohibit all recreations involving Sabbath labour or Sabbath traffic. This course is absolutely necessary for the protection of the working man, and it is in the strictest harmony with the principles of moral right. The individual gets the very utmost he is entitled to, if he is allowed to seek recreation for himself; and it comes within the province of Government to see that the rights of others are not invaded by the transgression of this limit.

But while the physical welfare of the community, independently of religion, requires the strict maintenance of a periodical remission of labour, it has been shewn in a preceding chapter that a general arrangement leaving some day free *for the purposes of religion*, is a plain dictate of reason and conscience. Such an arrangement cannot be obtained

or secured without the positive or negative support of the Government; and therefore it must be its duty to maintain and protect the Sabbath, or, at the very least, to recognise and respect it in every legislative enactment, as a day devoted to religion. A religious Sabbath has been shewn to be obligatory on natural principles, and it cannot be right for the State to ignore or set aside the dictate of natural religion.

But apart from the moral rightness of the Sabbath institution, the simple fact, that as a religious day it is acknowledged to be obligatory by the great majority of the people is a sufficient reason why it should be left entirely free to religion by the Government. A national recognition of a religious Sabbath is indispensable to religious liberty in this country. In this aspect the continuance and protection of the weekly Sabbath are as plainly required from *an enlightened and liberal* Government, as they are required, in a purely civil aspect, from a *wise and humane* Government. All civil government is based on a moral foundation. The natural rights which it is the great end of the State to secure to all the members of the community, derive all their authority from conscience. Now, it cannot be right for Government, called into existence for the express purpose of carrying out certain dictates of conscience, to place any obstacles in

the way of any individual's complying with the dictates of his own conscience, except when these happen to be inconsistent with the principles of right, which the State has been created to apply and enforce. The supreme authority which binds the State, ought to be acknowledged by the State, as having supreme claims on the individual. The fundamental principle in man's moral constitution is, that he ought to obey the requirements of conscience; and it cannot be the duty of a Government to ignore this principle, but rather to guard it in all its integrity, as a primary law of nature. Without the protection of conscience, there cannot be full religious toleration. And it seems a sacred duty incumbent on every Government, not merely to abstain from all interference with the individual conscience, except where this is demanded by a regard to the rights of others, but also, *under the same condition*, to take such measures as are indispensably necessary to make it *possible* for any portion of the people, and more especially if this portion be a large majority, to carry out their conscientious convictions. This cannot be regarded as an intrusive meddling with religion or conscience; it is simply a carrying out of the principle of *non-interference*—a plain and direct corollary of *toleration*. No sane man will now deny that it is the duty of Government to *permit* all its subjects to follow

out the dictates of their own consciences when these do not interfere with the rights of others. It seems as unquestionably the duty of Government to *protect* the weak against the strong, and not permit the latter to prevent the former from acting out their moral convictions. It would, of course, be unreasonable to expect the State to interfere in every case that should arise. But when the matter is of a public and general nature, involving the conscientious convictions of a great proportion of the community, it cannot surely be beyond the province of the Government to prevent the moral tyrant from trampling under his feet the consciences of others. The national recognition of the Sabbath as a day appropriated to religion can bind no man's conscience; but it seems to come very clearly within the province of Government, even on the principles of the most rigid voluntaryism, to leave the Sabbath free, and to see that others leave it free to all who are morally bound to its religious observance. The observance of the Sabbath as a religious day has been fully shewn to be a strictly *moral* duty; and the obligation to observe it, either on this ground or on others, is admitted by the great majority of the people of this country. Taking our stand, then, simply on the ground of liberty of conscience, we say, it is the duty of the Government, in its own measures, to recognise and

respect the right of the people to appropriate the Sabbath entirely to religion; and to take care that in everything of a public nature, this shall also be done by all its subjects. It seems equally plain, that while the State, on the one hand, should not permit those who observe a religious Sabbath to prevent others from acting according to the liberty granted them by their own consciences; on the other, it should not permit the latter to use their liberty in such a way as to prevent the former from gaining fully the great objects of a religious Sabbath. It has already been shewn, that even the individual who can conscientiously take recreation on the Sabbath, is under a moral obligation not to take such recreation as shall put any obstacle in the way of others carrying fully out their *positive* religious convictions. On what ground can such a person expect the State to protect him in transgressing the plain dictate of social duty? Full toleration is granted to him, if he be allowed to follow out the permission of his conscience to the point where it interferes with the convictions of others; and full toleration is not granted to others, if he be allowed to proceed further.

There are some who assert the Sabbath to be a mere political institution, and insist that it shall be devoted in such a way as shall tend in the highest degree to promote the *physical* good of the community. But

so long as the present law continues, and so long as the day is generally recognised as given for religious purposes, every act of the Government which assumes the Sabbath to be a day intended, solely or principally, for the *physical* benefit of the people, must be grossly inconsistent, and directly opposed to the principles of religious liberty. The very same reasons which made it imperative on Government to secure liberty of conscience to all by yielding the Sabbath to religion, call upon it to maintain the *religious character* of the day. Let us not be misunderstood. We do not ask the State to enforce any religious observances; but we do ask, and we have an unquestionable right to ask, that the State shall not do anything contrary to its own law, or ignore the conscientious convictions of the great bulk of the community, either by a direct act of its own, implying the Sabbath to be a mere political arrangement, or permitting any for profit or pleasure publicly to outrage the *main object* for which the day of rest has been provided. The rights of conscience not only demand that the State secure a general intermission of labour for religious purposes, but also that it remove every public obstacle tending to prevent the decorous observance of the time thus secured, or to neutralize its moral and religious influence on the community. All this, and perhaps a little more, is freely granted

even by the "*Times.*" "The proper observance of Sunday is one of those things that must necessarily come under the law of the land. That has never been disputed by any reasonable person who thinks about the matter. As little can it be doubted that the nature of the observance must be dictated with a proper regard to the public convenience, and *the purposes of the day.* Those purposes are the periodical rest which experience shews man to require, both for the refreshing of the mental and bodily powers, and also an opportunity for those religious acts and meditations, which cannot but be much assisted by quiet and freedom from the ordinary business of the world."* A fair application of the principles contained in this quotation, would lead not only to the suppression of all ordinary traffic, but to the prohibition of all public recreations, as inconsistent with the decorum so becoming a religious Sabbath, and so necessary to a conscientious and profitable observance of the worship of God, by the religious part of the community.

At present, the religious part of the nation is subjected to much annoyance and moral injustice on the Sabbath. Steamers ply on our rivers freighted with excursion parties. Railway-trains scour the country in every direction. Omnibuses and cabs crowd the streets of many of our large cities. There are hun-

* "Times," Nov. 11, 1854.

dreds of thousands of shops open throughout the country, and more than a *million* of individuals are engaged in ordinary public labour. And as if the many outrages of the Sabbath at present perpetrated were not sufficient, Government seem disposed to justify all these, and open up the way for a thousand more, by taking positive measures increasing the public hinderances to the religious observance of the day, and tending directly and inevitably to break down its religious character. The language of the "Times" on this subject is well worthy of the careful consideration of our legislators. "What should be, as it has been called, the 'rest of Heaven,' is perverted into something quite the contrary; and the better class of people who have been taught by their forefathers, and not less by the State, that the Sabbath is a day to be observed with great sanctity, abstraction, and quiet, justly complain that they are not protected, but rather hindered, in the observance of a lawful institution. Viewing the law on the one side, and the practice on the other, one cannot but be struck with a great inconsistency, pressing hard on those who desire to follow their duty and the law, and then find themselves discouraged, impeded, and even rendered ridiculous, by standing few among many. Certainly this is a state of things that should not be endured. Conscience itself is not

always consistent and strong, but it is a great evil when the law is still more illusive and weak. Indeed, the power of religion and moral obligation is altogether apt to be weakened by the spectacle of a State, which does not know whether to say a thing or not; which lays heavy burdens on the tender-minded and scrupulous, and is itself the first to fly from the responsibility it has created or enforced."*

But the measures with respect to the Sabbath at present in contemplation by the Legislature, are justified on the ground that they will tend to the moral elevation of the lower classes of the community. The Crystal Palace is to compete successfully with the gin palace. Museums and galleries of art are to empty the haunts of intemperance and vice. It is easy for the social reformer in his enthusiasm to picture all this to his imagination. But to the reflecting mind, accustomed to measure calmly and accurately the adaptations and proportions of causes to effects, does it really appear that the means proposed are at all adequate to secure the end? On taking a comprehensive view of the matter, it is not easy to discover how, on the whole, the use of such means *on the Sabbath* would have even a *tendency* to ameliorate the condition, or improve the morals of any class of the community. Nay, to very many who

* "Times," Nov. 11, 1854.

have studied human nature, and are not in the habit of drawing rash conclusions, it seems very plain that the opening of such places on the Sabbath will do very little to draw away from the haunts of dissipation those who at present frequent them, and instead of being useful in preventing many from acquiring evil habits, will open up a smooth and easy bye-path, by which multitudes will be seduced *into those very places* from which the grand object is to deliver them. He must be a very ignorant, as well as a very sanguine person, who imagines that the influence of the Crystal Palace can do much to reform the characters of those who are already profligate and dissipated. And even though this were the case, these are the very classes of persons who would not enter the great "Reformatory Sunday School." The Sabbath visitors of the Crystal Palace, and all other places of a similar kind, must be drawn from the ranks of the sober and industrious. There is a moral certainty that hundreds and thousands will be tempted away from the church and the domestic circle contrary to the convictions of their own consciences. Leaving religion out of the account altogether, and looking at the matter in a merely civil aspect, the utmost possible enjoyment and physical benefit that could be secured would not compensate for the deterioration of public morals which would inevitably ensue. Have our rulers cal-

culated the strength of the temptation they would place in the way of the young, ay, and of the old too, to resist their religious convictions ? Are they aware of the necessary connexion between the corruption of conscience and the corruption of morals ? Surely not, else they would never think of purchasing physical recreation even to the largest number, at such a moral expense. So far from proving a "Reformatory School," an open Crystal Palace on the Sabbath would be the very reverse—it would resemble the head of Medusa, rather than the philosopher's stone. Even on the supposition that many would be drawn away from the haunts of vice in the metropolis, would not a vastly greater number of those who would never darken the threshold of a beer-shop in London, enter it at Sydenham for the purpose of refreshment ? Even granting that in some cases a visit to the Crystal Palace might be the result of a triumph of conscience, and the first step in a course of reformation and improvement, would there not be an immensely greater host of cases in which such a visit would be the consequence of a defeat of conscience, and the first step towards moral degradation ? The opening of such places of recreation on the Sabbath would only widen the social whirlpool, and render the motion at its circumference gentler and more seductive—would only make the descent to the rapids

more gradual and imperceptible, and therefore more dangerous.

But even granting, for the sake of argument, that the opening of these places on the Sabbath would be followed by all the benefits anticipated, the principle on which this is advocated is wholly unsound. Such Sabbath recreation as would be afforded is not affirmed to be *right in itself*, but only much the less of two evils, one of which is alleged to be necessary. The main argument used is not, that Sabbath recreation generally, is necessary, and therefore lawful; but that this recreation, though not in itself right, is very much better than dissipation, and a choice being necessary, the former ought to be preferred. Now let it be observed, that the evils in question are *evil actions*. Can it be the duty of any one to do the least evil of two bad actions, or to urge any other person to do so? It is not at all plain, how it can be my duty to do what I can to induce another to do *any* thing that is wrong. Even for the public good, it cannot be right either for an individual or a Government to violate the dictates of morality. Would it, for example, be my duty to tempt ten or a dozen men to steal, in the hope that *one* of these *might* be prevented from committing murder, it being very plain, that so long as he was engaged in theft, he could not at the same time be engaged in murder?

The thing is glaringly absurd. Is it less absurd to admit that recreation at the Crystal Palace is not *in itself* lawful on Sabbath, and at the same time suppose it to be right to allure tens of thousands to Sydenham, in the hope that a few hundreds, at the very utmost, *may* be induced to leave off their rioting and drunkenness in the metropolis? Can a moral agent ever be shut up to the necessity of performing one of two bad actions, or can it ever be the duty of any other individual to make him believe that he is shut up to this necessity by persuading him to perform the less heinous? Are there no more than two alternatives? Is there no third course, having the important recommendation of being in itself morally right? Is there not a far easier, more direct, and less objectionable method of emptying the beer-shops than by opening the museums and galleries of art? Does it never occur to our philanthropic statesmen, that immensely more misery and crime would be prevented by simply shutting up all gin palaces, beer-shops, and public-houses from Saturday night till Monday morning? This can violate no man's conscience, and being demanded by the public good, can infringe no man's right. And if there are many who would, nevertheless, make "brutes of themselves," he would be a dreaming visionary who would expect that such persons would be preserved rational

beings though a crystal palace or museum were opened at the end of every street.

While, then, we cannot see much force in the arguments used for the opening of the Crystal Palace or any other place of amusement or recreation on the Sabbath, and are unable to discover how it would promote the public good, we protest against the opening of any such place on the Sabbath by Government, for the following reasons, most of which have been illustrated and proved in previous parts of the discussion :—

I. *It is morally wrong.* It has been fully shewn in a preceding chapter, that recreation ought not to be associated with the religious duties appropriate to the Sabbath. The entire day is due to religion. A religious Sabbath has been shewn to be a strictly *moral* institution. Can it be *right*, then, for Government to set aside the obligation imposed by natural conscience, and throw around a holiday Sabbath the sanction and authority of law ?

II. *It is an evasion of the civil right of the public to recreation.* The working classes are entitled to recreation on a lawful day, and it must be unjust, as well as morally wrong, for Government to cheat, or to help in cheating, them out of this right by appropriating any portion of the Sabbath to recreation, or by taking for granted in legal enactments that

it may be so appropriated. Let the working man have his right, and there will not be even a pretext of necessity for Sabbath recreation.

III. *It is a civil injustice of a still more fragrant character to all whom it will involve in Sabbath labour.* No valid claim, either civil or moral, can be advanced calling upon *any* one, and more especially the working man, to labour on Sabbath for the recreation of others. All classes, and more particularly the labouring classes, have a civil and indefeasible right to rest on that day, and it must be cruelly unjust to deprive them of this right, either by compulsion or bribery.

IV. *It is a moral injustice to the community.* First, It is a moral injustice to the servants who will be required to labour, and to the entire class out of which these are obtained. Many would be strongly tempted to violate their consciences, and many would actually do so, by accepting, or applying for, such situations. Secondly, It is a moral injustice to the whole community. There are tens and hundreds of thousands who could not visit such places without resisting their religious convictions. All past history has shewn human nature to be a weak, a very weak thing. Who can doubt that thousands would fall before the powerful temptation thus placed in their path by the Government of the

country? Is it fair in the State, which ought to be the guardian of public morals, to take so certain a way of corrupting the consciences of the people, and thus undermining general morality?

V. *It is inconsistent with full religious liberty.* The conviction of the great majority of the people of this country is that the Sabbath ought to be appropriated to religion. But Government, by the hypothesis, would make this a *physical impossibility* in the case of all who would be required to labour. Is this not religious tyranny? But further, would it not violate the decorum proper to a religious Sabbath, and put an obstacle in the way of the religious public following out as their consciences dictate the observance of the day? It cannot be right, or even consistent with full religious toleration to throw any hinderances in the way of those who wish to secure fully the moral and spiritual advantages of the Sabbath.

VI. *It is political tyranny.* The Government is representative. Its act is the act of the nation. A large proportion, if not a large majority, of the people are opposed to the opening of such places on the Sabbath. But the matter is not one which ought to be settled by a mere majority. A just and liberal Government will respect the consciences of the people. Now, the opening of such places in the name of the nation will violate the consciences of those who think this

sinful, while the permitting them to remain closed, as at present, cannot violate the consciences of those who regard it as merely *lawful*. The great majority of those who are not opposed to the opening of the Crystal Palace look upon it as *permissible*, only on account of the public reformation it is expected to accomplish. They regard it in the light rather of an experiment, than of a duty clearly and positively commanded by conscience. Ought Government, then, in legislating for the nation, to adopt a course which one part of it regards as merely *permissible*, and the other condemns as positively *sinful?* On whichever side the majority lies, it would be tyrannical, both in a religious and political point of view, for a representative Government thus to ignore the consciences of its constituents.

VII. *It is inconsistent with the law of the land.* It is the business of Government to administer the national Sabbath-law, or to repeal it if it be unjust or inexpedient. The latter has neither been proposed nor contemplated. Now, the law provides a weekly rest for the labouring man; and yet the Executive purpose to compel or bribe a considerable number of working men to labour on the day of rest. The law recognises the Sabbath as a day to be left entirely free to religion; and yet the Government propose to break down its religious character, and

appropriate a part of the day to recreation. Is this not grossly inconsistent and unconstitutional ?

VIII. *It is a bad example.* If the State open places of recreation to the public on the Sabbath, there cannot be a doubt that its example will be extensively followed throughout the country ; and if there is any truth in the points just noticed, this must be a bad, a *very* bad example. Government is obviously bound to pause and consider the consequences to which the adoption of the proposed course would inevitably lead.

Were we to consider the subject in a strictly religious aspect, and to appeal to Scripture, many more reasons might be adduced. These, however, are surely sufficient. The expectations so confidently cherished of great good as the result of such Sabbath recreation, we regard as delusive dreams. But though the opening of these places of resort were to empty every beer-shop and public-house in the land, in the face of such objections, *it could not be right.* The elevation of the lowest grades of society is the grand problem of the day ; and well does it deserve all the attention Government can bestow, and all the resources Government can legitimately command ; but it is an egregious mistake to suppose that the conversion of the Christian Sabbath, either in whole or in part, into a holiday, will do anything whatever

to bring about this great result. Nay, such a change would only multiply indefinitely the numbers of those who form the dregs of society, and sink still deeper in the mire of sensuality and wretchedness those who are already degraded. To exchange our religious Sabbath for a holiday would be to blot out the sun from the social firmament, and supply its place by an earth-lighted taper. We believe in the power of truth, and the progress of humanity; and for this very reason, we believe in the perpetuity of a religious Sabbath. It is the most powerful institution on earth for the elevation of man. Past history attests the fact. When everything else has failed, the Christian Sabbath has succeeded in clothing the moral waste with verdure and beauty. Let it be introduced into the darkest region of the earth, and the barbarian will lay aside his rudeness, and the savage his ferocity. Law will take the place of anarchy, and order arise out of confusion. Wherever it has gone, it has been the pioneer of light, and liberty, and happiness. And the history of the past will be the history of the future. The regeneration of the world, come when it may, will be effected in great measure by the Christian Sabbath. It will be the morning star of the Millennium. It can never be abolished. It may be despised, trampled upon, and, for a time, altogether crushed, but it cannot be destroyed. Its evi-

dence can never be disproved. The conscience of man attests its obligation ; the experience of the past bears witness to its benignant character ; and the Word of God invests it with Divine authority. So long as there is a conscience in man, a Bible on earth, and a God in heaven, it cannot perish. And it will be universal as well as perpetual. From east to west, and from north to south, it will yet be found witnessing for God, and showering down blessings upon man. The dawn of the weekly Sabbath, as it passes from meridian to meridian round the circumference of our globe, will yet say to each sleeper, "Awake and worship." The notes of evening praise chanted in the one hemisphere, will not have died away till they are caught up and prolonged in a morning hymn at the most distant part of the other. In the confident anticipation of the advent of a universal Sabbath, we may take up the words of the song in which the angelic choir celebrated the advent of its Divine Author, and say, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will towards the children of men."

EDINBURGH : T. CONSTABLE, PRINTER TO HER MAJESTY.

WORKS PUBLISHED

BY

THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.

PHOTOGRAPHS.—NOVELTY FOR PRESENTATION.

Now ready, at all Book and Print Sellers,

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE BY AN ANIMAL PAINTER. With Notes by a NATURALIST. TWENTY PHOTOGRAPHS, after Drawings by J. B. Imperial Quarto. Price £2, 2s.

TESTIMONY OF SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

"If any praise from me can add to the popularity of this charming work, I have great pleasure in repeating my sincere admiration for its extreme originality of conception and admirable accuracy of knowledge of the creatures delineated. Having studied animals during my whole life, perhaps my testimony as to the truth of the artist's treatment of the Scriptural Illustrations may have some influence."

Fourth Edition, small 8vo, cloth extra, with Frontispiece, price 6s.,

THE EARNEST STUDENT; being Memorials of the Life of the late JOHN MACKINTOSH. By the Rev. NORMAN MACLEOD, Minister of Barony Parish, Glasgow.

"Full of the most instructive materials, and admirably compiled. We are sure that a career of unusual popularity awaits it; nor can any student peruse it without being quickened by its example of candour, assiduity, and self-consecration."—*Excelsior.*

"A lesson to the rising generation, which cannot fail to improve all who ponder it well and earnestly."—*Britannia.*

"We close this volume with the feeling that we have almost lost a companion and friend in 'John Mackintosh.'"—*English Churchman.*

THE SHADY SIDE. By a Pastor's Wife. Price 1s.

"This little volume possesses an inexpressible charm, heightened by an interest often painfully attractive."—*Banner of Ulster.*

"We heartily recommend this touching tale to the attentive consideration of the whole Christian community."—*Caledonian Mercury.*

"The style of the writer is earnest, pathetic, and powerful."—*Belfast News Letter.*

"Besides conveying to us opportune information, the volume contains a pleasing picture of clerical domestic life, chequered by misfortune, and illustrated by the graces of temper and piety."—*Northern Standard.*

LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF MADAME DE LA MOTHE GUYON, together with some account of the Personal History and Religious Opinions of FENELON. By THOMAS F. UPHAM. Edited by a Clergyman of the Church of England. With a Portrait of MADAME GUYON, by R. J. LANE, Esq., A.R.A. Demy 8vo, cloth, price 10s. 6d.

THE MOSAIC RECORD IN HARMONY WITH THE GEOLOGICAL. Small 8vo, Price 3s.

"Death has been busy among our most distinguished masters of natural science, and it cheers us to see such a man as the author rising to occupy one of the vacant places, and to show that the race is not yet extinct."—*Witness.*

"This is a very charming little work, which has afforded us an hour's real pleasure, with much instruction."—*Church and State Gazette.*

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE INFINITE; with special reference to the Theories of SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON and M. COUSIN. By HENRY CALDERWOOD. Demy 8vo, price 7s. 6d.

"We welcome the appearance of this able essay, on a theme so interesting to every elevated mind. . . . It is the most independent metaphysical essay we have read for a long time. . . . It possesses perspicuity, which is the essential attribute of a philosophical style, and, moreover, unites clearness with condensation."—*North British Review.*

"Mr. Calderwood is at once temperate and lucid in the exposition of his views, and there is no taint of arrogance in his treatment of his illustrious adversaries . . . . This treatise will well repay perusal. It is written with equal vigour and elegance, and displays great subtlety of thought."—*Morning Post.*

BY THE COUNT AGENOR DE GASPARIN.

THE SCHOOLS OF DOUBT AND THE SCHOOL OF FAITH. *Translated by Authority.* Crown 8vo, price 5s.

"A valuable contribution to the literature of the Christian Evidences, and a masterly defence of the canonicity and divine authority of the Sacred Scriptures."—*Literary Gazette.*

"An able plea for the strictly Protestant interpretation of the Scriptures."—*Athenæum.*

"We know no book which furnishes so convenient a manual of the class of topics to which it relates, and we shall be surprised if it does not become very extensively popular."—*Dublin Daily Express.*

Crown 8vo, price 2s. 6d.

THE CONCESSIONS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL, AND THE CLAIMS OF THE TRUTH.

"Pre-eminently fitted to brace and invigorate the mind, and to give new life and energy to the love of truth and of high principle."—*Witness.*

THE DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE DEVELOPED IN THE FACTS OF THE BIBLE. With an Appendix, containing a Catechism on each Section, for the use of Families, Scripture Classes, and Schools. By the Rev. GEORGE LEWIS, author of "The Bible and Breviary; or, Ritualism Self-illustrated," &c., &c. Crown 8vo, cloth, price 5s.

"In this inquiring age there is need of a sound and judicious work which, in the compass of a few chapters, shall set out the realities of Divine truth, and the reasons for its credibility. This is the design of Mr. Lewis's book; and he has carried out that design with the soundest judgment and the most patient investigation."—*Bell's Weekly Messenger.*

"As a compendium of Christian truth for the use of parents and Sabbath-school teachers, and as a convenient cabinet of facts and arguments on the leading doctrines of Christianity for ministers of the Gospel, this work must occupy a high place."—*Banner of Ulster.*

GIFT BOOK FOR CHILDREN.

AUGUSTIN, THE HAPPY CHILD. From the French of MADAME CLARA MONNEROD. Small 8vo, Cloth extra, price 3s. 6d.

SAPPHO: A Tragedy, by FRANZ GRILLPARZER. Translated by L. C. C. Small 8vo, price 3s.

WORKS BY L. F. BUNGENER.—Authorized Translations.

In Two Vols., small 8vo, with Frontispieces, price 7s.,

FRANCE BEFORE THE REVOLUTION; or, Priests, Infidels, and Huguenots, in the Reign of Louis XV.

"A rich historical treat."—*Bell's Weekly Messenger.*

"Seldom has a more interesting story been submitted to the public for its edification as well as amusement, and we emphatically add, that it cannot be too widely read and studied."—*Church and State Gazette.*

VOLTAIRE AND HIS TIMES. In One Volume, uniform with "France before the Revolution," price 5s.

"This fascinating work should be in the hands of all who are interested in that memorable period in the History of France and Europe."—*North British Review.*

"The most skilfully minute anatomy of the mind and character of the Philosopher of Ferney that has yet been laid bare by the dissecting knife of the biographer or critic."—*English Churchman.*

HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT. With the Author's last Corrections and Additions communicated to the Translator. Crown 8vo, price 5s.

"A substantial, clear, painstaking piece of history. . . It is more pleasant to read, too, than the nature of the contents would lead us to expect; the author having a good deal of French historical vivacity, and occasionally something of D'Aubigné's picturesqueness of style. The work appears to be very well translated."—*Athenæum.*

TALES OF THE DESERT AND THE BUSH. From the German of FRIEDRICH GERSTAECKER. Small 8vo, Cloth, price 3s. 6d.

"Admirably well adapted for reading to a party sitting round a winter fire."—*Daily News.*

LORENZO BENONI; or, Passages in the Life of an Italian.

Illustrated by J. B.—Handsome 8vo, Cloth, gilt, 12s.
" " Crown 8vo, Cloth, gilt, 5s.
Cheap Edition, Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

"Worthy to be ranked among contemporary works whose season is the century in which their authors live."—*Examiner.*

"This work should be as extensively read as Uncle Tom's Cabin."—*Bell's Messenger.*

"On the score of style alone this volume is a remarkable curiosity."—*Quarterly Review.*

LOUISA VON PLETTENHAUS; or, The Journal of a Poor Young Lady. Translated from the German. With Woodcut Frontispiece, designed by J. B. Cloth, gilt edges, price 3s. 6d.

"A romantic and engaging story."—*Nonconformist.*

"Beautifully true to nature, full of the most touching pathos, most lovely Christian sentiment, and what is not always found in the same companionship, most thorough, sound, practical good sense."—*Youth's Magazine.*

NEW WORK BY MISS BREWSTER.

SUNBEAMS IN THE COTTAGE. By MARGARET MARIA BREWSTER. Third Edition. Crown 8vo, Cloth, price 3s. 6d.

"In reading the First and Second Series of her former publication, 'Work,' we felt as if Miss Brewster had said all that could be said on the subject. Instead of that, we find here her thoughts as fresh, as instructive as before, and in form still more attractive."—*Edinburgh Guardian.*

SELECT WORKS OF DR. CHALMERS.—Cheap Issue.—In 12 Vols., crown 8vo, 6s. each, to be published Quarterly,—also in Half-Volumes, price 2s. 6d., two to be issued each Quarter,—and in Monthly Parts, price 1s. :—to be completed in about 60 Parts.

Now Ready,

LECTURES ON THE ROMANS, in 2 Vols., Price 12s.

LIFE OF DR. CHALMERS, in 4 Vols. 8vo, price £2, 2s., and in 2 Vols. Crown 8vo, price 12s.

CONSTABLE'S MISCELLANY OF FOREIGN LITERATURE.

For our supply of the comforts and luxuries of life, we lay the world under contribution: fresh from every quarter of the globe we draw a portion of its yearly produce. The field of literature is well-nigh as broad as that of commerce; as rich and varied in its annual fruits; and, if gleaned carefully, might furnish to our higher tastes as large an annual ministry of enjoyment. Believing that a sufficient demand exists to warrant the enterprise, Thomas Constable & Co. propose to present to the British public a Series of the most popular accessions which the literature of the globe is constantly receiving. Europe alone,—its more northern and eastern lands especially.—offers to the hand of the selector most inviting and abundant fruits; Asia may supply a few rarer exotics; whilst in America the fields are whitening to a harvest into which many a hasty sickle has been already thrust, and from which many a rich sheaf may be hereafter gathered.

Fully aware of the extent and difficulty of such an effort, the Publishers will spare no pains to make the execution of their undertaking commensurate with its high aim. They have already opened channels of communication with various countries, and secured the aid of those who are minutely acquainted with their current literature; and they take this opportunity of stating, that even where no legal copyright in this country can be claimed by the author or publisher of a work of which they may avail themselves, an equitable share of any profit which may arise from its sale will be set aside for his advantage.

The Series will be made as varied as possible, that there may be something in it to suit the tastes of all who seek instruction or healthful recreation for the mind,—and its range will therefore be as extensive as the field of Literature itself: while, at the same time, it shall be the endeavour of its editors to select, for the most part, works of general or universal interest.

The Publishers are unable to state the exact periods at which their Miscellany of Foreign Literature will appear, but they believe that the number of volumes issued during the first year will not exceed *six*; so that taking the average price per volume as *Three Shillings and Sixpence*, the cost to Subscribers would not exceed *One Guinea*; while, by the addition of a *special* title-page for each work issued, those persons who may wish to select an occasional publication will be saved the awkwardness of placing in their library a volume or volumes evidently detached from a continuous Series.

Edinburgh: THOMAS CONSTABLE & Co.
London: HAMILTON, ADAMS, & Co. Dublin: JAMES M'GLASHAN.
And all Booksellers.

Constable's Miscellany of Foreign Literature.

Already Published, Vol. I., price 3s. 6d.,

HUNGARIAN SKETCHES IN PEACE AND WAR. By Moritz Jokai.

"Jokai is a highly popular Hungarian author, and this is the finest specimen of his works that has appeared in English."—*Athenæum.*

"Most vivid and truthful descriptions of Hungarian life."—*Leader.*

"The *chef d'œuvre* of one of the most popular writers of fiction in Hungary. The volume contains delineations of Hungarian life among the middle class, nobility, and even the Hungarian peasant, who is no less attractive in his way, is painted with faithful accuracy."—*Britannia.*

Vol. II., price 2s. 6d.,

ATHENS AND THE PELOPONNESE, with Sketches of Northern Greece. By Hermann Hettner.

"Hettner is a scholar, an historian, an archæologist, and an artist, and in a series of letters, or pages from a Diary, written in 1852, he tells us a sad story, in flowing and elegant language, and with an enthusiasm which proves his relish for the work."—*Globe.*

"Everywhere he shews himself to be an accomplished scholar and true artist, as well as an able writer. A more readable or instructive volume of Travels in Greece we have never seen."—*Morning Post.*

Vol. III., price 3s. 6d.,

TALES OF FLEMISH LIFE. By Hendrik Conscience.

"We shall look with a new curiosity at those fine old Flemish towns when next we visit them, and perhaps rest there for a day or two, inspired by the memories of the delightful book before us—a book which is to be enjoyed most by the Christmas fire, and which should be read aloud to the family circle, whom it will entrance while it is heard and improve when it is remembered."—*Critic.*

Vol. IV., price 3s. 6d.,

CHRONICLES OF WOLFERT'S ROOST, AND OTHER PAPERS. By Washington Irving.

On 10th February,

WANDERINGS IN CORSICA: Its History and its Heroes. By Ferdinand Gregorovius.

"It is our hope that the work of Mr. Gregorovius may obtain the compliment of translation. . . . . We are unwilling to forestall the interest which attaches to its description of the scenes of Napoleon's youth, and the anecdotes which with great diligence the author has collected on the spot, of his Corsican education and adventures. . . . . Mr. Gregorovius is a diligent and enthusiastic collector of the traditions of a heroic race, a man of strong feeling for the great and beautiful, and an able historian."—*Quarterly Review, December* 1854.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE & CO.

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO. DUBLIN: JAMES M'GLASHAN.

Date Due
