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History of the institution  
of the Sabbath day











# HISTORY

OF THE

## INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH DAY,

ITS USES AND ABUSES :

WITH

NOTICES OF THE PURITANS, QUAKERS, ETC.

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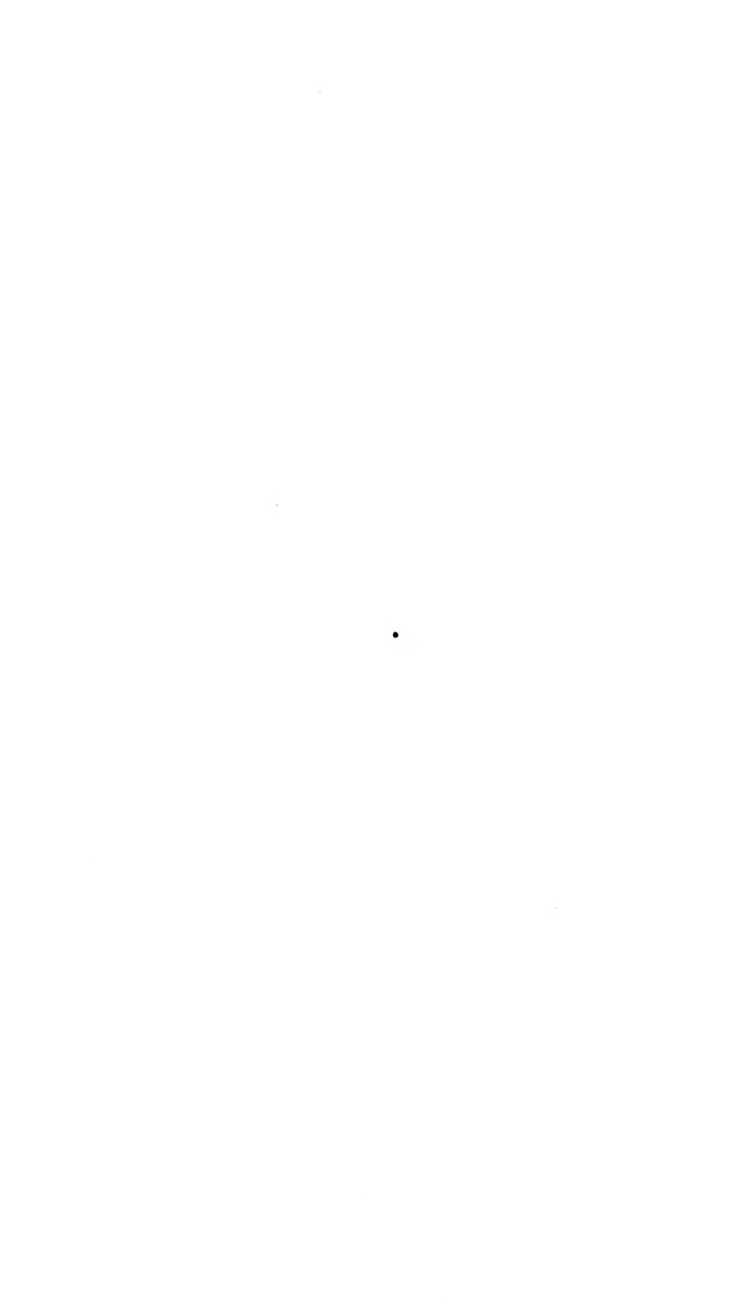
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## P R E F A C E.

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The first edition of this work having been long since exhausted, without exhausting the demand for it, a part of the present edition has been re-written, and considerable evidence added.

I have received from Robert Cox, Esq., of Edinburgh, his work entitled "Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties, considered in relation to their Natural and Scriptural grounds, and to the principles of Religious Liberty." Also a pamphlet, entitled "Sabbaths;" an inquiry into the origin of septenary institutions. Both works exhibit great research; and I am indebted to them for various extracts.

Since the following pages were printed, several of the annual police reports of our large cities for the year 1858 have been published.

In New York, called the City of Churches and of Palaces, there were 61,455 arrests for criminal offences, 49 cases of which were for murder; in addition to this, there were 121,597 vagrants lodged in the station houses, and this in a city peculiarly abounding in Sabbath Laws, Sabbath Schools, and Associations for the observance of the Sabbath—filled with clergymen, with wealth and benevolence; the arrests having more than doubled in ten years. In Massachusetts it is stated that the criminals have trebled in the last fourteen years. The account says, “That the criminals are not made from a foreign, but from the home-made article,” and that unless there is a practical reformation, before half a century is over “we shall be ruled by the criminals themselves.” (See New Bedford Mercury.) In Philadelphia, for the last year, the arrests were 22,367, being less than the average for several preceding years. These numbers, though official, are of too uncertain a character to be any criterion as to the relative proportion of



crime, but they all alike indicate a radical defect in the systems of reformation that are pursued. These crimes and this misery are not necessary attendants upon city organizations; they are mostly produced by man himself, and are, in the same degree, under his control. As the common law, interpreted by wise men, is the most valuable of all law; so is common sense, interpreted by truth and wisdom, the most valuable of all sense. Yet in the reformatory systems of the day, common sense is laid aside for Sabbath enactments, which it is vainly believed are sufficient to reform the world, and for theological dogmas, which, above all else, have ever been the cause of crime, and suffering, and degradation. True to their own nature, they bring forth fruit according to their kind. These melancholy records of crime in our large cities, are alike interesting to the statesman and the moralist. The statesman may read in them the presages of revolution and bloodshed; moralists may see how little they comport with the vain boasting of our country; and all alike may understand how incompetent the present means of reformation are to accomplish the end proposed. The Mas-

sachusetts account states, "That in the past fourteen years efforts for reforming criminals and punishing crime have been more active than at any previous time, and yet crime has trebled."

# HISTORY

OF THE

## INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH DAY.

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### CHAPTER I.

Preliminary Observations—General Principles—Violations of Sunday Laws—Extracts from Sunday Publications—Septenary Institutions not Universal—No Sabbath in the Patriarchal age.

“No man,” says Southey, “was ever convinced of any momentous truth, without feeling in himself the power as well as the desire of communicating it.”

Whether this be universally correct it is not needful to inquire, but a very careful consideration of the historical facts connected with our theological literature, on the subject of the Sabbath, has resulted in a conviction that it is false, anti-Christian in its nature, immoral in its tendency, and unworthy of the intelligence of an enlightened people. This subject I now propose candidly to consider, with as much brevity as the circumstances will permit, without fear and without affection.

An institution, which for the last two centuries has been the subject of conflicting legislation, which has been by turns cherished and rejected by respectable men, about which judges in their official capacity have been unable to decide whether it was an ecclesiastical or a civil institution, upon the proper observance of which scarcely any two men agree, and which has been made the occasion of severe penalties, may well claim an impartial narrative of the facts connected with its history.

The Constitution of Pennsylvania, in language as plain as can be written, guarantees to all, liberty of conscience; the amended Constitution of the United States restricts Congress from making any law "respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." (Article 3d, Amend. Const. United States.) Most of the individual States have corresponding constitutional provisions, yet except in the young commonwealth of California, the judges have not had independence enough to save the people from oppression, on account of enactments regarding the first day of the week. The Jews and Seventh-day Baptists have both been persecuted by sectarians who differed from themselves, and many other eminently pious persons have been fined and imprisoned for their scruples relative to this particular day, and this by laws that are absolutely believed to be unconstitutional. The States of this Union furnish

on no other case legislation so conflicting as that regarding the Sabbath. The learned and the simple are alike ignorant of what the law is, because it is made by the courts in the most arbitrary manner, to suit the particular case under consideration.

In the State of Pennsylvania, some of the Supreme Judges, in their official capacity, have decided, that if these laws were of an ecclesiastical nature they were void, because the Legislature has no authority to enact laws of that character; other Judges, with equal confidence, have declared that if they were merely civil enactments they were void, because the Legislature has no right to impair civil liberty. In one court the Judge has ruled, that a man could not recover for the hire of a horse to be used on Sunday. In some cases, contracts made on Sunday were held to be void, in others they have been confirmed.

There are no laws in the statute book so openly violated; those who should enforce them set them at naught, and the whole community, almost with one accord, disregard them. The *New York Tribune* of Nov. 20th, 1858, has the following remarks:

“The Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Police, just issued, announces the humiliating fact that 19,902 complaints for the violation of the statute against the Sunday liquor traffic have been lodged with the District Attorney, *not one of which has been prosecuted.* Is the law an obsolete affair? On the

contrary, it is a part of the statute under which the Metropolitan Police force was organized. District Attorney Hall, in his "instructions to patrolmen," says he is 'charged by law with a duty whose disobedience renders him liable to a prosecution for misdemeanor himself.' Eighteen months have gone by, and twenty thousand out of the millions of actual violations of the statute, are filed in the Attorney's office—unheeded."

The reason of this manifold neglect is obvious; such laws conflict with the principles of human nature. The outskirts of our towns and cities are filled as well with the aged as the youth, taking that manly exercise on Sunday which nature calls for, in defiance of all law. Thus, from very childhood, men are made familiar with legal offences, because legislators, in their weakness and sectarianism, in opposition to the New Testament, lay upon the people burthens which they are unable to bear. (Acts xxv. 28.)

The extraordinary pretensions of those who petition year, after year, for still further coercive laws for the observance of the Sabbath, may be gathered from the following extracts, taken from late publications:

"Give up the Sabbath—blot out that orb of day—suspend its blessed attractions—and the reign of Chaos and old night would return. The waves of our unquiet sea, high as our mountains, would roll and wash from West to East, and East to West,

South to North and North to South, shipwrecking the hopes of patriots and the world.

“The American character, and our glorious institutions, will go down into the same grave that entombs the Sabbath; and our epitaph will stand forth, a warning to the world.”\*

An address by the Rhode Island Sabbath Union says :

“Violating the Sabbath, now rife through the land, must be done away, or the consuming judgments of God, which he has denounced on the nations that dishonor his day, will lay waste our goodly heritage, and overspread it with the blight of his anger.”

A highly respectable Sabbath convention uses this language :

“Property earned or increased by Sabbath desecration is soon squandered, so that the profligate and beggared son trudges in rags, where a Sabbath-breaking father rode in his chariot.”

Another of these degraded papers is in these words :

“A wonder in three worlds.

“Are you a Sabbath-breaker? I hope not, but if you are, you are that wonder.

“You are a wonder in heaven; there all are so happy that they wonder how you can profane that blessed day. If you die a Sabbath-breaker, where they are you can never come.

\* Rev. Lyman Beecher.

“You are a wonder upon earth. All true Christians enjoy such holy pleasures on the Lord’s day.

“You are a wonder in hell. Demons and lost souls are so miserable that they are astonished at you,” etc.\*

Upwards of twenty respectable men in New York, a committee “on the religious and civil relations of the Sabbath,” declare that “the observance of the day is of paramount importance to the purity and perpetuity of our free institutions;” that “it is a blessed day,” that “it is the type of heaven,” “vital to the prosperity of true religion,” etc.

If these things are true, it is important that they should be known and understood. To truth, every reflecting mind should yield, let that be what it may.

Some of these extracts it would be as presumptuous to deny as to affirm. No intelligent man would presume to decide what is going on in other worlds; but so far as they can be understood, in connection with the most authentic historical and moral evidences respecting the Sabbath, every word is believed to be false—false in principle as in fact, and it indicates a vitiated taste, injurious alike in those who utter such sentiments and in those who believe them to be true, which is calculated to retard that refinement and enlargement of mind that are essential to the well being of society. Let us not deceive ourselves; God is not

\* Issued by the American Tract Society, No. 20.



mocked ; such as we sow, such shall we reap. Every false principle in morals produces fruit after its kind. Every attempt to preserve order through erroneous principles, is but sapping the foundation on which true order rests. Hence it is, as history will demonstrate, that coercive enactments relative to the first day of the week have resulted in evil instead of good. Those nations, and those periods of time, in which the Sabbath laws have been most severe, have been uniformly marked by an increase of moral offences. The power of man cannot prevent it ; grapes do not grow of thorns, or figs of thistles.

The observance of Sunday is by many so associated with piety and religion, that they reject any attempt to investigate the authority on which its supposed sanctity reposes. They contribute liberally to expose the superstitions of pagan nations, but cling with tenacity to those of their own.

Nothing could be more foreign to my feelings than to promote any erroneous views. I seek to cherish, not to impair, the beautiful simplicity of the Christian religion ; to show that it exists not in form but in spirit ; but I am not prepared to believe that idolatry, in any of the various shapes it assumes, is beneficial to the human character.

The timid may be alarmed at any attempt to lessen the sanctity attached to what is termed the Sabbath ; but it must be obvious that every improvement in the

morals of society must be the effect, not of a Sunday religion, but of an every-day practice of virtue; and those efforts should not be disregarded which tend to demonstrate that every day is alike holy.

The historical evidences respecting the Sabbath, if men seek truth, are too plain and direct to admit of dispute. The schoolmen said to Galileo, "If nature is opposed to the Bible, then nature is mistaken, for the Bible is certainly right." Thus it is that truth brings no conviction to minds which are filled with their own preconceived opinions, superstition and prejudice.

To be prepared to learn, is one of the greatest of human attainments. To minds thus prepared, and such there are in every community, words fitly spoken are like indexes to mark sensations, and to confirm sentiments which are already believed to be true, and thus they do their work. To sectarians I need not speak; excellent as they may be in their private characters, they seek not truth, but to be established in their own preconceived opinions; to these they sacrifice truth, and in many cases they are dearer to them than life. Yet with all there is a certain conviction, that in the end truth will prevail. It is this which gives zest to all our hopes, and animates all our expectations, even in moments of despondency.

There are two points of view in which the history of the Sabbath should be considered. First, as a civil

institution, as a day of rest and relaxation. Second, in its theological and ecclesiastical aspect.

Those alone who reject its ecclesiastical character, are prepared to appreciate it as a civil institution. Divest it of its superstition, and it assumes a beauty that it never had before. Of this I shall treat hereafter. My principal object is to consider the subject as one of an ecclesiastical character.

A true history of the institution will show: 1st. That its alleged sacredness derives no support from the septennial division of time.

2d. That the patriarchs kept no Sabbaths.

3d. That the Sabbath was a local ceremonial institution of the Jews; that it never had application to any other people, not even to the Gentiles who lived among them.

4th. That keeping one day more holy than another is contrary to the spirit and to the letter of the New Testament, at variance with the practice of the early Christians, and with the principles of the Christian religion.

5th. That the observance of the Sunday, as practiced in these United States, is one of the superstitions of the day; and as such, it has been injurious to the morals of the people, and increased moral depravity.

1.—*As to the septennial division of time.*

The strongest argument of the Sabbatarians for the observance of the Sabbath is, that God has established

it as a primeval institution for religious purposes; and they refer to the 2d chapter of Genesis, wherein it is stated that the heavens and earth being finished, God rested on the seventh day from all his works, and blessed and sanctified the day.

In this account of creation, Nature speaks one language, the Bible another; shall we put aside those unchangeable marks of a creation long anterior to that recorded, to be guided by records written when or by whom no one knows.

The account in the book of Genesis can only be considered as an allegory calculated to please children and ignorant men. In its literal sense it is entitled to no confidence. Were it even true, it does not warrant the conclusion which has been drawn from it.

It is evident that it was written thousands of years after it was alleged to have happened, whether by Moses or Ezra, or whomsoever else, one fact is probable, it was written after the establishment of the Sabbath among the Hebrews, and the inference is irresistible that thence the Sabbath has taken its peculiar type.

Whether the institution may derive any authority or not from this particular text, would be of little consequence, if it could be shown that the division of time into seven days, for holy purposes, was primeval, ordered by God, of universal observation, or in other words a law of nature.

It has been very hastily assumed by sectarians that

this is so. The division of time into seven days is of great antiquity; it is found among the Hebrews and all people connected with them; it is traced through all the languages of India, in Arabia, in Syria, in the sacred books of the Veda, in the Sanscrit, the language of the holy writings of Hindostan, and probable had its origin in the lunar festivals of "new moon days, half moon days, full moon days," &c. Yet extensive as this septennial division of time is, it is doubtful whether it is now, or ever has been, observed by one-half the population of the globe: and this is evidence drawn from the most authentic history, that the Sabbath was not a primeval institution, of universal appointment. No traces of it have been found in North or South America, in Australia, in the Polynesian Islands, in China, or among the Mongolian races composing the vast population of Eastern Asia, from Thibet to Java. The ancient Mexican calendar shows a nicer adjustment of civil to solar time than any that has been found in the world besides, since more than five centuries must elapse before the loss of an extra day. It had a week of five days, and their months were periods of twenty days; it is a very curious coincidence that this division of time corresponded with that of Western Asia and China, and it is equally remarkable that this should also correspond with the Sothiac period of the Egyptians, wherein the annual

season and festivals returned precisely at the same point in 1461 years.\*

The curious searches into archaiology place these facts upon the most reliable authority, yet they find no traces of a weekly Sabbath. In Mahommedan countries, where prayers are said five times a day, and where the rituals of their religion are severe, though they have the seventh-day division of time, it is not held sinful to attend to business after the intervals of worship: thus in all Hindostan, after their seventh-day festivals, the business of the week is resumed as usual.†

There are divisions of time existing in their own nature or in the appointment of God, obvious to all. Such are the regular return of the sun and moon to their appointed place in the heavens, day and night, evening and morning, summer and winter. These are not partial in their character, but universal, dispensed alike to all the world.

No one mistakes that season of rest which God has appointed to all flesh. In the fulfilment of this rest, the bird returneth to its nest and the beast lieth down in his lair. And there is not a man on the wide expanse of earth that can pass by this rest and live. Even the insect understandeth his appointed season, and ceaseth from his labor.

\* See Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. i. page 102.

† *Inquiry into the Origin of Septenary Institutions.*

Can any reflective mind be so biased as to pretend that the first day of the week, carrying with it no particular marks, bearing on its character no peculiarities, should be a day appointed by God for religious observances, in which no labor should be done?

Who among us, on any one occasion, has witnessed little children, the peculiar favorites of heaven, untrammelled by sectarianism, ceasing from their gambols, because the first day of the week had come? Who has seen the bee laying aside its industry and stopping its work? Do the birds and the beasts retire to their nests? No such thing has ever occurred, and herein we witness the perpetual and universal law of the universe. The law of nature is the law of God.

May we not rather believe that the weekly division of time has been made by man for his own special convenience, like the division of the years into months, and the days into hours; that it has been created by human laws, is not universal but partial in its character, and is subject to the powers which created it. Thus the ancient Greeks divided the months into decades or periods of ten days. The Romans had neither decades nor periods of seven days, but divided their months into three parts, called the Kalends, the Nones and the Ides. Thus, Brutus stabbed Cæsar at the Ides of March.\* These were all subject to change, and were done away as the Jewish calendar prevailed.

\* Plutarch's Lives, Cæsar.

And this too, in its turn, will cease to exist, whenever society shall believe that its convenience will be promoted thereby. Night as a season of rest is universal and unchangeable. But the seventh-day rest of man has no fixity, and every attempt to give it a character which it does not deserve, is not only injurious to the day itself and to its proper offices, but imparts injury to all who partake therein.

The universality of the institution and of the septennial division of time, being essential to the proof of its divine origin, these being found to be false, the argument fails.

An institution founded in the nature of man, and needful to his perfect development, and yet unknown to one-half the inhabitants of the earth, is so utterly irreconcilable with the justice and mercy of God, as hardly to be entitled to a moment's consideration.

These are the truths of history, and they tend entirely to abrogate all reliance upon the institution of the Sabbath-day, founded upon the law of nature. This is confirmed by the history of the patriarchal age, the most ancient of all histories, as recorded in the Bible. It embraces a period of upwards of 2000 years, in which we have the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants.

This history is not without a record of its religious rites, some of them very remarkable; there are ac-



counts of covenants of the Lord with his people, the erection of altars, of prayer, and of sacrifices, yet with all there is no record of the observance of the Sabbath-day. On the contrary, the evidence is as conclusive as any thing of the kind can be expected to be derived from such ancient history, that there were no Sabbaths in the days of the patriarchs. The word is not found in the book of Job, probably the most ancient of all books; neither in Genesis; but they mention customs that are irreconcilable with it. There were marriage feasts that lasted for seven full days. See Judges xiv. 12; thus also in Genesis xxix. a feast of a week was to be made for the marriage of Jacob with Rachel. Again, at the funeral obsequies of Jacob, seven full days were spent.

Those who recollect the continual recurrence to the Sabbath that is found in Jewish history, "to-day is the Sabbath of the Lord," "to-morrow is the Sabbath," &c. will readily believe that if the Sabbath had been founded at this period, it would have been mentioned in the account of festivities, each of which must have embraced one Sabbath.

Irenæus and Justin Martyr, men eminent for their piety, who lived in the first ages of the Christian era, have united in the opinion that no Sabbath was observed in the patriarchal ages.\*

\* See Bailey's Dictionary. Translation of Justin by the Bishop of Lincoln.

Eusebius says expressly, that no Sabbaths were observed by the ancient patriarchs, yet he adds that they excelled in piety, righteousness and all virtues.†

It should be considered conclusive upon this subject, that in the orders given to erect a tabernacle or place of worship to the east of Eden—in those to Cain and Abel relative to sacrifice—to Noah to sacrifice on coming out of the Ark, and to abstain from eating blood, and when the institution of circumcision was described, not one word should have been said respecting the Sabbath.

An attempt has been made to remove the objection which arises from this omission, by asserting that from the notoriety of the custom it was unnecessary, and from the circumstance that circumcision was not named from the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan, down to the circumcision of Jesus Christ. But this argument the whole of the 17th chapter of Genesis completely refutes. All the circumstances therein detailed evidently show that it had not been commonly used before that time. If the observance of the Sabbath had been a common thing, like circumcision, it would have been named without further notice, as circumcision is named when Jesus is circumcised. The difference in the treatment of the two cases is manifest. We thus consider the argument that the Sabbath derives no authority from the septennial division of time, or from the patriarchal age, conclusive.

† Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, folio, 1607, page 7.

## CHAPTER II.

Laws of Moses—Sabbath an institution peculiar to the Jews—  
 Observed by them as a day of rest and recreation—Labor  
 strictly forbidden—Feasting and cheerful enjoyment encour-  
 aged—The Hebrew interpretation of the term holy.

We come next to the consideration of that period of time in which the Sabbath day became a distinct, positive legal, institution of the Jews. The law is explicit: "Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord; whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." Exodus xxxi. 15.

There are several reasons given by the Jewish laws for keeping holy the Sabbath day.

*From the Decalogue of Exodus.*

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."—xx. 11. Again—"Verily, my Sabbaths ye shall keep, as a sign between me and you throughout your generations. \* \* \* Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death, for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people."—Ex. xxxi. 13.

*From the Decalogue of Deuteronomy.*

"And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day."—v. 15.

These reasons being essentially different, no certain reliance can be placed upon either.

There is still another reason given by Apion, an Egyptian author, and professor at Rome, in the reign of Tiberius; it is this: "That travelling had induced boils or ulcers on the Hebrews, and hence the rest of the seventh day became necessary on their journey.\* That these ailments being called sabbatosis in the Egyptian language, hence the Egyptians called the seventh day of the week by the term Sabbath." Josephus, in his work against Apion, makes strong objections to this statement, yet it seems highly probable that a long journey in a warm climate would have this effect, and cause a necessity for periodical days of rest. We give the history as we find it.

The works of Justin Martyr mark the commencement of what has been termed ecclesiastical history. He says, "The ceremonial law was in truth given to the Jews on account of the hardness of their hearts; as a mark of God's displeasure at their apostasy, when they made the golden calf in Horeb." All its ordinances, its sacrifices, its Sabbaths, the prohibition of certain kinds of food, were designed to counteract the inveterate tendency of the Jews to fall into idolatry. "If," says Justin, "we contend that the ceremonial law is of universal and perpetual obligation, we run the hazard of charging God with incon-

\* Josephus against Apion; Works, 4th vol.

sistency, as if he had appointed different modes of justification at different times; since they who lived before Abraham were not circumcised, and they who lived before Moses neither observed the Sabbath nor offered sacrifices, although God bore testimony to them that they were righteous.”\*

Beausobrè, an eminent French protestant, in his introduction to the New Testament, expressly admits, and gives his reasons for his opinion, that the Sabbath was not instituted until the time of Moses.”†

It was 215 years from the time Jacob and his retinue settled in Goshen, in Egypt, until the period when the Israelites finally left that country. During all this time there is no mention of the Sabbath day. It is first spoken of in the wilderness, on their journey to the land of Canaan, when they had manna given to them for food. On the sixth day they found twice the quantity as on any other day. The account speaks of it as so extraordinary a circumstance, that all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. They seemed to be altogether at a loss to know why it should be thus; they had then been on their journey more than forty days, and it is evident that this astonishment would not have been manifested if

\* The works of Justin Martyr. I have made use of the translation of the Bishop of Lincoln, in his “Account of the Writings and Opinions of Justin.” Page 22.

† *Horæ Sabbaticæ*.

they had been familiar with the institution. Afterwards, at Mount Sinai, it was more expressly spoken of; but all the evidence goes to show, that it was never known as an institution before this period.

The prophet Nehemiah says, "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, \* \* \* \* and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes and laws by the hand of Moses, thy servant." Chap. ix. 13, 14.

The Bishop of Lincoln, in speaking of Selden's work, "*De Jure Naturali*," says, that he has collected all that can be found on the interesting subject of the institution of the Sabbath. His investigations show the most extensive research. The work is old and of rare occurrence, and appears to have been written without sectarian bias.

He takes the same view of the subject, and says the institution was first given to the Jews at Marah, in the wilderness, after leaving Egypt. That it was a sign between God and the Jews, and that the Jewish writers maintained that it is not binding upon Gentiles. Exodus xxxi. 15, 16, 17.

Paley, after having examined the subject with great care, says :

"So far as Scripture history can be relied upon, it was at Mount Sinai, in the wilderness, that keeping a Sabbath was first made a law to the Jews, and it was repeated at different times, "Six days may work be

done, but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy unto the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant."

"It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed."\*

Again: "Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land."†

After seven Sabbath years there was still to be another year of rest, called the year of jubilee, in which liberty and restitution were to be proclaimed.

This has always seemed to me the most beautiful part of the Jewish policy. No matter how unwise or unfortunate (as the term is) families or individuals may have been, the jubilee year restored to them their possessions.

\* Exodus xxxi. 15, 16, 17.

† Lev. xxv. 3, 4, 5.

If Christians are bound to observe the Jewish Sabbath, they are bound also to observe the Sabbatical year and the year of jubilee.

Many of the laws of the Jews appear enlightened, some of them trifling, and others we are unable to understand. Among them we find the following: "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together." "Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture wherewith thou coverest thyself."\* And others of the same character.

These laws were no doubt applicable to the Jews, but while we know so little of their policy we are unable to understand them.

The particular kind of cultivation that obtains in parts of several States in this Union, requires that the land should have rest every third year. They neither sow nor reap, nor gather its produce. It is as complete a Sabbath of rest to the soil as ever was observed in the land of Judah, and probably from the same cause.

In the lower parts of Maryland and Virginia, where they exhaust the soil by cropping without a corresponding nourishment, they give it rest every third or fourth year. This is analogous to what occurs in the animal creation; give a man unceasing work and he will perish, and the reason for the establishment of a

\* Deuteronomy xxii. 11, 12.



Sabbath-day among the Jews, would perhaps be found in the necessity of rest on their journey, in their diet, or mode of employment. They fed upon food less savory than that of the present day; acrimonious fruits and vegetables have been succeeded by those of a bland and nutritious character. Man can no more be worked beyond the nutriment that he receives, and the powers of nature, than a horse or an inanimate machine.

No one at this remote period can decide, why the Sabbath was instituted. The septenary lunar festivals of India, Chaldea and Egypt, were public holidays.\* Little doubt can remain, that this was the primary source of the Jewish Sabbath. We have before referred to the opinion of Apion, the Egyptian historian, that it was induced by the prevalence of disease among the Hebrews in their journey through the wilderness: this idea is strengthened by a critical observation of the Jewish laws; it was not a day of religious solemnities, but simply a day of rest, relaxation and rejoicing. The Jewish laws have no application to us. We were never servants in the land of Egypt. *He* brought us not thence, neither our forefathers, "through a mighty hand and stretched out arm." It is not esteemed to be a sign to us, that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh he rested and was refreshed, Exodus xxxi.

\* Septenary Institutions, page 54.

17. We recognize in the divine harmony no exhaustion, and of course no refreshing; we read the beautiful sentiment of Christ upon this subject: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" we recognize it alike for its beauty and its truth, and yet we are to be dragged back to acknowledge musty records which if they are true, tend to degrade all that we know and all that we believe of the efficacy of the Divine power.

In Exodus xxxi. 13, 14, also in other places, the Sabbath is as expressly confined to the children of Israel as words can make it: "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between *me* and *you* throughout *your* generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." "It is holy unto you." "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." The same ideas are expressed in Exodus xxxv. 2, 3, Leviticus xxiii. 3, and xv. 25. In consideration of these passages, it is not easy to understand how any unbiased mind can, for a moment, believe that an institution so expressly commanded for the Israelites, should be intended to apply to the whole world; or how Nehemiah, in the text already referred to, could have spoken of the Sabbath as first made known to them when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, if it had been known before, or had been designed for any other people.

The prophet Ezekiel says, "Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness; and I gave them my statutes and showed them my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them. Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."\*

The Bible refers, in many instances, to the vices of the Gentiles; but among these it is never once intimated that they had neglected the observance of the Sabbath day. The reason seems obvious; the law in regard to the Sabbath had no application to them.

Besides every seventh day, there were nine other days, on which the Jews were required to abstain from all servile labor. The Sabbath of atonement, as it is called in Scripture; the first day of the feast of Tabernacles; the eighth day of the same, both called sabbaths in the Old Testament; the first day of the Passover; the seventh day of the same; the first and seventh day of the feast of unleavened bread; the day of the wave offering, and the first day of the Seventh month. There were also the daily sacrifice, meat and drink offering, the sacrifice of the new moon, &c. On all these days labor was alike prohibited.

The Rabbins have enumerated more than thirty

\* Ezekiel xxi. 10, 11, 12.

different acts as unlawful for the Jews on the Sabbath day. They were forbidden to sow or reap, to kindle a fire or to extinguish it, to expose any thing for sale, to write or scratch out; and many other things too numerous to mention. A fresh wound was not to be bound up on the Sabbath day; if a Jew fell down in the dirt, he was not to rise up; if he was overtaken on a journey, no matter where, he was not to stir from the spot; if he fell into a pit, he was not to be removed.

The day was observed with different degrees of severity by the various sects of the Jewish nation, and at different eras. There is a story of one Rabbi Solomon, who having fallen into a pit, a Christian wished to extricate him, when he is said to have exclaimed :

“ Out of this slough I will not rise,  
For holy Sabbath day I prize.”

On the following day, being Sunday, he desired to be assisted, but the Christian, in his turn, replied :

“ 'Tis Sunday, Solomon, you know,  
You therefore, must remain below.”

The Essenes, the strictest sect of the Jews, carried matters so far, that that they would not perform those common offices of nature, which involved any degree of labor. See Prideaux's Connection, page 348, edition 1718, and which is copied from Josephus, vol. ii. chap. 12.

One prominent feature was everywhere apparent, an entire relaxation from labor ; no cooking was permitted, but still it was a day of feasting, and not of fasting ; of joy, and not of austerity.

The text says expressly, "Whosoever doeth any work on the Sabbath day, he shall be put to death." Now the Jewish law is either binding on Christians or it is not. If it is, the penalty for disobedience is plain and direct ; he shall surely be put to death.

"While the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death ; all the congregation shall stone him with stones, without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died ; as the Lord commanded Moses.\*"

We have here the law and the penalty ; if the law is binding, it is in the whole, and not in parts. Break the Sabbath, gather a few sticks, and thou shalt be put to death.

It would be a new thing in jurisprudence for people to be allowed to take one part of the law, that

\* Numbers xv. 32-36.

suit their own convenience, and reject the rest; they must take the whole or none. Yet sectarians, who pretend to sustain the Sabbath day, say the law for its observance is binding, yet that the penalty does not attach to it. I leave it to them to reconcile such discrepancies.

But this is not all; after having rejected the penalty which awaited its violation, they attach to it another, which is not to be found in the text—that is, everlasting misery. Retribution in a life to come, is not one of the penalties denounced for a violation of the laws of the Old Testament. The Jewish policy was altogether of a temporal and outward nature; the doctrine of a future state is not to be found in the Mosaic code.

Warburton, one of the most learned bishops of England, has proved this truth, as he thinks, conclusively, in a large work of several volumes.\*

Thus it will appear that these zealous sectarians are moulding the Scriptures relative to this institution, taking from it in one part, and putting on in another, to suit their own unhallowed prejudices.

The Bible also says, “Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the Sabbath day.” I ask these sectarians, who are unsparing in their denunciations of those who do not observe the Sabbath as a holy day according to their own opinions,

\* Divine Legation of Moses.

whether they are quietly eating their meals, drinking their tea and coffee, made by fires kindled in direct opposition to the decree relative to the Sabbath day?

The command to the Jews, contained in the Decalogue, to observe the Sabbath day, related entirely to the Jewish Sabbath, which was the seventh day of the week; and if it is binding, it is the seventh day that should be kept. To pretend that that command was fixed and unchangeable, and yet to alter it to please the fancy of men, is in itself ridiculous. But, considering that the precepts contained in what is called the Decalogue, are believed by many people to have an authority which does not belong to the other Mosaic laws, and to be of perpetual moral obligation, binding upon Christians, I may observe, that the ten commandments furnish within themselves conclusive evidence that they do not belong to the Christian code.

The third commandment is in these words: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." The simple meaning of this is, that thou shalt not profane thine oaths.

Among the Jews all the public testimonies were ratified by an oath. In a discourse concerning public oaths and the lawfulness of swearing, by Doctor Gauden, Bishop of Exeter, there is the following passage: "It is clear, then, some swearing is morally

lawful, agreeable to the express law of God; even in the third commandment, in which we are not only forbidden to profane the name of God, but the affirmative also is included, as sanctifying his name by swearing, if in doing thus upon just occasion, private or public, we sin not against any moral law.”\* Whether the sentiment is true or false, it is evident that this commandment was expressly alluded to and condemned by Christ in his Sermon on the Mount: “Ye have heard that it has been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool.”† † Persons who are curious upon this subject, may see that biblical writers refer to these two parts of the Scriptures as being connected together. If the declaration of Christ does refer to it, and I think there can be no doubt of it, sectarians of the present day, in attempting to make the ten commandments a moral law of perpetual obligation, are violating one of the plainest and most positive precepts of Jesus Christ.

“Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land,”—this is Judaism, but not Christianity. Christianity is pursuing virtue for virtue’s sake. There is hardly a Christian of any refine-

\* Discourse Concerning Public Oaths, p. 27.

† Matthew v. 33, 34.



ment of feeling, that would be willing to acknowledge that he honored his father and mother that his days might be long in the land. Many generations ago, there appeared at Alexandria a woman with dishevelled hair, bearing a pitcher of water in one hand, and a torch in the other, making this exclamation: "I will burn up the heavens with this torch, and extinguish the fires of hell with this water, that man may love his God for himself alone."\*

Again: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

Is this a moral law of perpetual obligation, binding upon Christians, and which we are continually violating by making to ourselves the likenesses of every thing on the earth, and under the earth, that is worthy of observation? After the captivity, many of the Jews gave to this a strictly literal sense, without applying it to idolatrous observances. Mohammed, under the influence of Jewish traditions, prohibited sculpture and painting, except the representation of trees and things without soul.†

Some sects make images and bow down to them, and think that therein they do God service.

The same outward nature of the Jewish laws is

\* Percy Anecdotes.

† See Septenary Institutions, page 35.

again exemplified in the declaration, "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me."

The homely primer distich,

In Adam's fall  
We sinned all,

has been repeated a thousand times in a thousand ways, by the most learned as well as the most ignorant; but whatever men say to the contrary, all seem practically to reject the idea, that as respects the great ends of existence children suffer for the sins of their forefathers, who lived perhaps hundreds of years before them. It may have a physical application, but it makes no part of the Christian code.

And is it Christianity to repeat the idea, "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God?" This language suited Moses, but it does not so well apply to us.

I have thus far assumed the ten commandments to be literally correct, but this is by no means probable. About the period of the Christian era, the Hebrew text was known to be greatly corrupted. At the time of Origen, in the third century, there were no ten commandments, but the *quinary* division prevailed, after the fashion of the Pythagoreans. At a later period the Talmudic Mishnu commences, and then the Gemara; each of which proves the increase of textual

errors. This is also proved by the most notable writings, Saint Jerome and others.\*

There are those that appear to believe that the ten commandments derive much authority from having been written, as it is stated, by the finger of God, on tables of stone.

In the peculiar language of the Hebrews, even the minute concerns of making fringes and ornaments, were, as it is said, wrought by the immediate direction of God; and the writing on stone was a usual affair. Many of the ancient temples, which date as far back as the Jewish period, have inscriptions of various kinds still existing written on tables of stone; and it has become one of the great arts of archaiological science to decipher them; that properly considered, the Sunday observances of the present day derive no authority from this source.

Did any doubt remain, the third chapter of Second Corinthians, by the apostle Paul, referring expressly to these tables of stone, calls them (as they surely are) "the ministration of death," saying that though they were glorious to the children of Israel, the veil has been done away in Christ and they are glorious no longer.

Even these Sabbath laws, so explicit and absolute, were rejected by the Jews themselves, when they had occasion therefor. Their enemies took advantage of

\* See Types of Mankind, p. 627.

them and slew them by hundreds and thousands, men, women and children being burned in their caves without resistance. Thereupon, Matthias a priest of the order of Joarib, a citizen of Jerusalem, taught them that unless they would fight on the Sabbath day all of them would perish; they took his advice, rejected their Sabbath laws, fought and conquered. Thus, according to the Jews themselves, they were not universal laws, but were laws for peace and not for war; and though a poor man was to be stoned to death for gathering a few sticks on the Sabbath day, the whole nation could fight and conquer when there was occasion therefor.\*

There are immutable truths contained in the ten commandments, but they belong to those universal principles that are found among mankind the world over, and that existed before the Bible was written. Their spirit pervades the Old as well as the New Testament—they are intuitive in their nature—they are the foundation of all order, of all law, of all truth. Were it possible to do them away, moral society would come to an end. We believe in them, not because they may be written in the ten commandments, or in the New or the Old Testament, but because they carry their own evidence, bring conviction to every bosom; and it shows the degraded nature of sectarianism, that it should attempt to place among these universal moral

\* Antiquities of the Jews, vol. ii. p. 169.

truths, the local Mosaic law, to observe the Sabbath day; a law so partial and limited in its nature, that upon the details of its application, the Jews themselves, for whom it was instituted, could not agree. The laws of morality pervade the Koran of Mohamet and the Pandects of Justinian. Shall we thence take these for our text books, and be bound thereby?

The term rejoicing, which so often occurs in connection with the Sabbath, is thus defined: "Thou shalt bestow thy money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink: thou shalt eat thereof before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy household," Deuteronomy xiv. 26.

An attentive consideration of the Jewish laws respecting the Sabbath would manifest much more common sense, than the definition which sectarians of the present day give to them. *They* required a day of rest, and they obtained it. *We* ask for a day of rest, (for mankind is essentially alike in every age,) and we obtain a day of ascetic gloom and severity. Among the Hebrews there were those, who, like sectarians of the present time, were disposed to pervert the day to purposes of gloom for which it never was designed, and instead of making it a period of rejoicing, they had "solemn meetings" and "many prayers;" these are characterized as an iniquity and an abomination, in these emphatic words: "The new

moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." In place of these, there is this beautiful admonition: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow," Isaiah chap. i.

Words could scarcely be more impressive, or more distinct, in opposition to the pretended sanctity of the Sabbath day, and it is entirely consistent with the whole Jewish policy, in making it a day of relaxation and rejoicing, and not a day of solemnity.

At one period the Jewish laws were entirely lost; for the account of finding them I refer to 2d Chronicles xxxiv. and to 2d Kings xxii., also to Josephus, book 10, page 153. It appears they were missing for a period of three hundred and fifty years. Lost is a fiction in law, often used to change titles and to alter successions, when in reality there is no evidence that any title has ever been had; and it seems highly probable that at this period, in the reign of Josiah, the Pentateuch was promulgated for the first time. This I leave to the curious.

Historians construe the word "holy"\* into a meaning of solemnity, even of gloom, fasting and prayer. It was not so considered among the Hebrews. Nehemiah

\* Quarterly Review, for October, 1850.

gives the following precise instructions how a day was to be kept "holy unto the Lord:" "Go your way: eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy unto our Lord: for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

"And all the people went their way to eat and to drink, and to send portions, and to *make great mirth*, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them," Nehemiah viii. 10, 12.

Doctor McCrie says of the ancient Jews, "that so far from converting the day thus redeemed from ordinary toil into a day of ascetic gloom, they devoted it more than any other day to carnal ease and festive indulgence. The Sabbatine rules enjoin the sons of Abraham to prepare for the feast. The costlier the viands and wine were, the more honor was done to the Sabbath; the festal cup was to circulate freely, marriages were frequently celebrated on the Sabbath, and the evening was occasionally spent in music and dancing."\*

Dean Milman, in his History of the Jews, says "that in latter times the Sabbath became a day of public instruction in the principles of law and of social equality among all classes. Rich and poor, young and old, master and slave, met before the gate of the

\* Memoirs of Sir Andrew Agnew, page 194.

city and indulged in innocent mirth, or in the pleasures of friendly intercourse.”†

The celebrated scholar Lightfoot says, “that the Jewish tables were generally better spread on the Sabbath than on any other day.”‡

Among the various festivals instituted by Moses, there was but one to which sorrow was attached; this was the mourning festival of the autumnal equinox; and this was observed on a tenth and not on a seventh day.

The passover, the most solemn festival of the Jews, was a feast and not a fast; a lamb was to be roasted, the whole of which was to be eaten before morning.

From all these facts no doubt can exist that the Sabbath was an institution peculiar to the Jews, and to them alone. We shall proceed to show that it has no relation to Christians.

† Murray's Family Library.

‡ Exercitations on St. Luke.



## CHAPTER III.

## SABBATH OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

All the authority for the observance of the Sabbath begins and ends with the Old Testament. The New Testament does not sustain the institution, either as a day of rest or recreation, or as a day of religious rites.

Sectarians have alleged that authority is given in the New Testament to change the day from the seventh to the first day of the week, and hence they have designated it as the "Christian Sabbath," a term which originated with the Puritans, and for which there is no authority in ecclesiastical history. The Sabbath was established by the Jewish laws; it was expressly directed to be held on the seventh day of the week, beginning on the evening of the sixth day, now called Friday, and continuing till the evening of the seventh day, when it ceased. If we are Jews let us then observe the Sabbath according to the Jewish rites. The first reason that is given for the change from the seventh to the first day is this: that Christ met his disciples on the first day of the week, after his resurrection, and thus sanctified it. In considering this subject it is needful for us to understand the

Jewish computation of time, "the evening and the morning were the first day;" and the express law of Moses says, "from even until even shall you celebrate your Sabbaths." There are many different modes of computing time; we begin our day at 12 o'clock at night, nautical men at 12 o'clock at noon; some nations begin the day at sunrise, and the Jews at 6 o'clock in the afternoon. The first account of the meeting of Jesus with his disciples after the resurrection, is in John xx. 19: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

It is expressly stated that the resurrection took place early on the morning of the first day of the week, and the evening of that day, according to the Jewish computation of time, (and we have no right to adopt any other,) was not the first day, but the second day of the week.

I am not aware that it is of the slightest consequence to my argument, whether this meeting was on the first, second, or any other day: but the texts upon this subject have been so singularly perverted by Sabbatarians to prove their own particular doctrines, that I have deemed it proper to be thus critical.

Purver's translation of the Bible, John xx. 1, uses this language: "Afterwards, on the first day after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalen comes in the morning," &c.;

and in verse 19th it says, "When it was therefore the evening of that day, on the first after the Sabbath, the doors being shut," &c. This still confirms the same point, that this meeting was not on the first day of the week.

The Puritans, upon their arrival in New England, decided, upon solemn debate, that the Mosaic law should prevail; and, of course, that the evening of the first day, on which Jesus met the disciples, was not a part of the Christian Sabbath; and it is not generally observed as such in New England at the present period.

The second meeting of Jesus with his disciples is stated to have been eight days after this, which, according to the usual computation, was on the second day of the week; and hence it is not true, as is assumed, that Jesus met the disciples again on the first day. The text, John xx. 26, is explicit on this subject; and it thus clearly appears, that neither of the meetings of Jesus with his disciples after his resurrection was on the first day of the week; and the authority which sectarians wish to derive from this circumstance for the peculiar observance of the first day, and which is the result of a forced construction of Scripture, is altogether wanting. The learned Doctor Adam Clark, in his Commentaries, referring to the 26th verse, and quoting "after eight days," says, "It seems likely that this was precisely on that day se'nnight on which Christ had appeared to them before; and from this we

may learn, that this was the weekly meeting of the apostles." Such perversions of plain, direct language, are met with on almost every page, wherein Sabbatarians undertake to show the necessity of the observance of the first day of the week, as a day of religious exercises. The object is the maintenance of their own particular opinions; if they speak the truth, the Scripture does not support them. It is not alone in the writings of Doctor Clark that this perversion is to be found; Paley and others adopt the same view, pretending that eight days after the evening of the first day of the week, is again the first day.

There is still another passage, (1 Corinthians xvi. 2,) on which Sabbatarians rely to make out their case: "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come." This text, which says that they are to "lay by in store as God has prospered them," has this meaning, that they are to reckon up their accounts on the first day for the week preceding, and is directly opposed to a sanctification of that day.

If these texts prove any thing, it is the reverse of what is attempted to be drawn from them. But there are two other points connected with the resurrection, which are worthy of all observation from men who claim to adhere to a strict literal construction of the Scriptures, and which show conclusively, that so far from particularly sanctifying the first day of the week,

Jesus left, in his conduct, the most express testimony against it. We read in Luke xxiv. 13-15, that upon the first day of the week, two of his disciples went to a village called Emmaus, "which was from Jerusalem about three score furlongs," \* \* \* \* that "while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near and went with them."

A Sabbath day's journey was seven furlongs and a half.\* It thus appears that the journey was about eight times the distance of what was allowed by the Jewish laws, or nearly eight English miles. This distance is also sustained by Josephus,† and it was travelled directly from Jerusalem, where he had been accustomed to meet his disciples. Even Bethany, where it is said he led his disciples out, and lifted up his hands and blessed them, was fifteen furlongs, or two Sabbath day's journeys from Jerusalem.‡

I am aware that there is little probability that those whose opinions are already formed will be willing candidly to examine the foregoing texts with a steady eye to truth; but I may ask reasonable men to judge for themselves, and the result will be, that there is no authority for the substitution of the first day of the week in place of the Jewish Sabbath; and I shall show hereafter that there is no authority for the continuance of that as a holy day.

John the Divine speaks of being in the spirit on

\* Clark's Notes on the Scriptures, Acts i. 12.

† See War, book vii. section 6. ‡ Clark's Commentaries.

the Lord's day; and hence in the limited views that are taken of it, and to establish particular sectarian notions, it is pretended that the visions that he had at the isle of Patmos were on the first day of the week, and that this is a proof of the sanctification of the day. If that day were called in Scripture the Lord's day, there might be some reason in the application; but it is not called so in any part of the Bible. It is much more natural to suppose that it is so spoken of as a particular period of illumination of mind, than as having relation to any particular day. The word *day* is used in many parts of the Scriptures without application to any precise period—thus: "To-day, if ye will hear his voice," &c.—"Abraham desired to see my day," &c. The word *day* in these instances has no relation to any particular period of time; and it is not necessary to suppose that all the visions of John the Divine, as recorded in the book of Revelations, were seen on the first day of the week; it is much more likely that they embraced many days, perhaps weeks and months.

It is even doubtful whether the term "Lord's day" did not arise from the customary heathen addresses to the sun, "god of day."

Higgins, in his "*Horæ Sabbaticæ*," states that "every one of the ancient nations called the sun Lord or Master;" using the word "*Dominus*," or its equivalent term.

Even the authenticity of the Revelations themselves

has been a matter of great dispute among the learned. Many of the ancient churches did not receive it. It is not among the canonical books referred to at the council of Laodicea. Luther rejected it, and there have been long continued disputes, not only as to the time, but respecting the author by whom it was written. It shows most conclusively the feebleness of the Sabbatarian cause, that it should rest its authority for the change from the seventh to the first day upon such evidence. It is in truth no evidence! The New Testament furnishes none, and it is for this reason that these feeble texts are resorted to.\*

There are six texts on which the Sabbatarians rely to prove the divine institution of Sunday. They are John xx. 19; John xx. 26; Acts ii. 1; Acts xx. 6, 7; 1 Corinthians xvi. 1, 2, and Revelations i. 10. Those who are curious may read them for themselves; it is sufficient for me to say that the Sabbath is not mentioned in any one of them, neither is there even a remote reference to it as an institution that was to be observed by Christians.

The whole of the New Testament teems with evidence of the truth of the opinions that I have expressed. I could appeal to sectarians to establish this, but that they may be said not to believe in the Scriptures, and they would not be willing to submit

\* See Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, also Ency. Brit., article Apocalypse.

the subject to the candid observation of disinterested men. A belief in the Scriptures would be, in their plain obvious doctrine, in giving to each word and sentence the explanation which was consistent with the rules of grammar and common sense, without prevarication or deception of any kind, and without any reference to the truth or falsehood which might be supposed to be involved in it. Such a belief in the Scriptures would not suit sectarians; it would often prove too much or too little for them; it would at once put an end to Sabbath conventions. The views they promulgate cannot be sustained upon any other principle than a disbelief in the doctrines of the New Testament. Every respect is due to the opinions of men of truth and candor, however much they may be at variance with their own; but those of the Sabbatarians are entitled to the less respect, because they seem unwilling to listen to the truth upon the subject. They have often been refuted, but still they repeat their assertions, sustaining them by perversions of texts. Men of deep, abiding prejudices cannot believe the truth, however plainly it may be brought before them; and it seems a hopeless task to make any appeal to them. They reply not by argument, but by opinion and denunciation.

To others I may say, and I wish them to examine the subject carefully for themselves, that there is not one verse or text contained in the whole canon of the New Testament, which recommends or inculcates the



observance of the first day of the week, or any other day, as one of peculiar holiness, or as a day to be devoted to religious exercises. There is not one word said against Sabbath-breakers, nor a single text that gives the slightest idea that it was deemed unlawful by Christ, or his immediate followers, to do any work on the first day of the week, that was proper to be performed on any other day. There are some of the Jewish laws expressly revived by the apostle Paul:—that we shall abstain from blood, and from things strangled, &c. See Acts xxi. 25, and xv. 28. But among these, the laws relative to the Sabbath day are entirely omitted. It is singular enough that sectarians should pay no attention to this positive prohibition of the apostle; that they should eat blood and things strangled whenever it suits them to do so; that they should reject what has been revived by the apostle, and revive what has been expressly rejected by him. See 2 Colossians 16, 17. “Let no man judge you in respect of the Sabbath day.” It proves what I have adverted to above, that sectarians do not believe in the Scriptures.

I shall quote some of the texts upon this subject; but I may here remark, that the total omission to inculcate the observance of any particular day, is in itself proof against it. There are abundant instances in which the observance of the moral law was inculcated both by Christ and his apostles, but that one thing, upon which so much stress is now laid, is entirely omitted.

Upon all suitable occasions, Jesus opposed the superstitions of the Jews respecting the Sabbath day. In treating upon the subject we must steadily bear in mind the great importance attached to the Sabbath in the Jewish policy. And no reasonable doubt can exist, that if he had considered the day one of holiness and importance, some occasion would have presented itself, wherein his feelings might have been manifested. None such occurred, and it is a natural presumption that none such was required.

It is contended by Sabbatarians, that Jesus "religiously observed the Sabbath day;"\* they make assertions which they are unable to prove. He not only did not sanction the observance of the day, but his doctrine, his precepts, his example, show directly the reverse. Let the texts be carefully examined, that the truth may prevail.

He travelled, as I have before stated, on the first day of the week; thus giving, by his conduct, after his resurrection, direct evidence that he did not regard what is now called the Christian Sabbath. He also travelled on the Jewish Sabbath;† it might have been what was called a Sabbath day's journey, which was permitted to the Jews, though it does not appear so by the text.

I ask these sectarians how it is, that, with the

\* See proceedings of the Harrisburg Sabbath Convention.

† Mark ii. 23.

New Testament in their hand, and taking that for their guide, they can condemn people for doing just what Jesus did?

He visited on the Sabbath. I have examined several translations relative to the account of this, recorded in Luke xiv. 1. The venerable Charles Thomson, secretary to the Continental Congress, told the author of these pages, that he had written every line in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelations, five different times with his own hands, in order to make his translation perfect. He takes a broader ground than any of the rest, and uses these words, "Observing how eager the guests were for the first places at the table, he addressed them," &c. In verse 12, his translation says, "Then he said to him who had invited him," &c.: one translation says, "He went to eat bread;" another, "to eat victuals;" another, simply "to eat." The distinctions are not material, but the text altogether shows this, that Jesus was invited on the Sabbath day, to a feast at the house of one of the chief Pharisees; that the company was so large that different rooms were opened, and that there was what would be called in this country *a rush* to get seats at the table. As there is not the slightest intimation, that the invitation of this company on the Sabbath day was improper in any way, it is sufficient, in connection with other things of the same character,

to show how little dependence is to be placed upon the statements of these Sabbatarians.

I have before me one of their publications, which says, "Visiting and travelling are enormous profanations of this holy day." I have stated that Jesus visited, and that Jesus travelled; they cannot controvert it; and if their position is true, it is Jesus Christ,—and I record with great sorrow, such an instance of degraded sectarianism proceeding from a respectable Sabbath convention,—I say if their position is true, it is Jesus Christ who has set the example of profaning the day.

The Jewish law says, "Take heed to yourselves and bear no burden on the Sabbath day;\* yet in direct contradiction of this, the man who was healed was directed by Jesus to take up his bed and walk on the Sabbath day; and it is stated that the Jews sought to kill him, because he had thus broken the Sabbath. There are other instances of the same character, all directly opposed to the doctrines of the Sabbatarians.

Besides these negative proofs, there are a variety of positive texts in the New Testament, which seem to forbid, not only the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, but which cover the whole ground, and object to the observance of any one day as a day of peculiar holiness. It would take many pages to recount them all; I quote some of the most material.

\* Jeremiah xvii. 21, 22.

“But now after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.”\* Again: “Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come.”†

As to the words, “The Sabbath was made for man,” which seems to be a very favorite quotation, for the want of any thing better, if Sabbatarians would not garble the whole context, it would show that it was part of an absolute reproof to the Jews for their superstitious regard to the day.

I subjoin the whole of it, that there may be no mistake.

“And it came to pass, that he went through the cornfields on the Sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungered, he and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God, in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the show bread, which is not lawful to eat, but

\* Galatians iv. 9-11,

† Col. ii. 16, 17.

for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”\*

I add also the following from John, to which I have before alluded: when Jesus had directed the man whom he had cured to take up his bed and walk, the Jews said unto him, “It is the Sabbath day, it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.” “And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them: My father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his father, making himself equal with God.”†

I have given all the evidence that I find in the New Testament upon the subject. It will be seen that not even as a day of rest was the Sabbath observed; or the Jewish laws respecting it sustained by the early Christians.

Without any of these testimonies, it might be believed, *a priori*, from the nature of the doctrine promulgated by Christ and his apostles, that keeping one day more holy than the rest was incompatible with the precepts they taught. Their views were of a much holier and more enlarged character. It was not to days, or times, or ceremonies, that they directed their followers, but to truth, which existed in-

\* Mark ii. 23-27.

† John v. 10, 16-18.

dependent of them. And there is evidence, that no Jewish Sabbath, no Christian Sabbath, or Lord's day, was observed with peculiar holiness by the early Christians.

The whole tenor of the New Testament inculcates this idea—not that the Sabbath was to be broken down in the spirit of licentiousness or irreligion, but that every day should be elevated, so as to be equal to it in holiness. Such is the language of the New Testament, such the voice of nature and of truth.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### SUNDAY OF CONSTANTINE.

After the lapse of so many centuries, the exact usages of the early Christians may not be distinctly known, but one thing is evident, that there was no particular sacredness attached to any one day. The following fact seems conclusive respecting the opinions of the apostles on this subject.

The first ecclesiastical council that was held after the Christian era by the Apostles themselves, in reference to which of the laws of Moses should be binding upon Christians, rejected the observance of the Sabbath day; the Apostle Paul, writing to the Gen-

tile converts, says, "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.\*"

There is one remarkable circumstance relative to their public assemblies. If not altogether, they were to a great extent, held in the evenings, or before daylight. In the account of the first meeting of Jesus with his disciples, after his resurrection, it is mentioned that it was "at evening;" it is added, "the doors being shut for fear of the Jews." So in the letter from Pliny, to which I shall advert, the meetings of the Christians are said to have been before daylight. Tertullian often mentions the nightly meetings of the Christians. There are other repeated notices of the same thing. Some of these meetings might have been the result of a fear of persecution; but the constant practice, in so many countries, together with the knowledge that the converts were persons almost entirely among the laboring classes of the community—men who contributed to their necessities by the labor of their own hands—leads to the conclusion, that, during the daytime, they were working at their usual employments. This is confirmed by Justin Martyr, when he reproaches the Jew for spending the Sabbath in idleness, and by the Jew who says, that the Christians keep no Sabbath, to which also I shall refer hereafter.

There is no doubt that the early Christians held re-

\* Acts xv. 28.



ligious meetings. A letter from Pliny to Trajan, contained in Book X., Letter 97, says, that “the Christians whom he had examined, declared that they had made it a practice, on a stated day, to meet together before daylight to sing hymns with responses to Christ as a God, and to bind themselves by a solemn institution not to do any wrong act.” This letter, which bears the marks of authenticity, has been pronounced a forgery by Dr. Semler, of Leipsig, and other learned German critics. Admitting it to be true, it proves nothing; it does not speak of the first day of the week, and alludes only to the Christians in Bithynia.

The works of Justin Martyr are still more explicit, though written at a later period. He says, that “they met together on Sunday; that the memoirs of the apostles and writings of the prophets, are read as long as circumstances will admit;” and it is otherwise mentioned that the poor were provided for, and that there were regular feasts of charity—“sober repasts.” There is incontestable evidence, that worship was celebrated in a different manner in different countries, that the early Christians not only assembled on the first day of the week, but also on the fourth, sixth and seventh days.\*

In some parts, especially in the eastern countries, Saturday was appointed for religious meetings, not, as it is stated, because they were infected with Juda-

\* Mosheim, 1st vol.

ism, but to worship the Lord Jesus Christ, as is expressly affirmed by Athanasius and others.\*

The proof that any peculiar sacredness was attached to any particular day, is altogether wanting. On the contrary, it will be shown hereafter, that no distinction between days was made by the early Christians, until the church became corrupt.

Many of the ceremonies of the church, a considerable proportion of which have come down to us, had their origin in the superstitions of the Pagans and the Jews. Mosheim, speaking of the first century, says, that the Christian religion was peculiarly commendable on account of its beautiful and divine simplicity; and that many of the external rites were adopted, that they might captivate the senses of the vulgar, and refute the reproaches which had been cast upon the Christians, by the Pagan priests, on account of the simplicity of the worship; and because they had no temples, altars, victims, priests, "nor any thing of that external pomp, in which the vulgar are so prone to place the essence of religion."

The works of Justin Martyr are the first of an ecclesiastical character, on which implicit reliance is placed by all. Accomplished in the learning of his age, his life and his death were marked by sincerity in the cause of truth.

There is preserved in his works a dialogue between

\* See Cave's *Primitive Christianity*.

himself and Trypho, a learned Jew, in which the Jew objects to the Christians, that they did not observe the Sabbath day. The Jew says to Justin, "The Christians, though they boasted of the truth of their religion, and wished to excel all other people, differed in nothing from the heathen in their manner of living, because they neither observed the festivals, nor the Sabbath, nor circumcision." To which Justin replies, "There is another kind of circumcision, and you think highly of that of the flesh. The law will have you keep a perpetual Sabbath, and you, when you have spent one day in idleness, think you are religious, not knowing why it is commanded.

"As, therefore, circumcision began from Abraham, and Sabbath, and sacrifice, and oblation, from Moses, which it has been shown were ordained on account of your nation's hardness of heart, so, according to the counsel of the fathers, they were to end in Jesus Christ the Son of God."

"Do you not see," he says to Trypho, "that the elements are never idle, nor keep a Sabbath? Continue as you were created, for if there was no need of circumcision before Abraham, nor of the observance of the Sabbath, and festivals, and oblations before Moses, neither now is there likewise after Christ."\*

Again: "If any among you is guilty of perjury,

\* I have copied the above from a work called "Sunday Police." The translation has been compared, and found correct.

or fraud, let him cease from these crimes; if he is an adulterer, let him repent, and he will have kept the kind of Sabbath pleasing to God."

In his dialogue, page 241, Paris edition, Justin says, "A greater mystery was annexed by God to the eighth than the seventh day." This mystery he afterwards states to be the command to circumcise on the eighth day, which was a type of the true circumcision from error and wickedness;" and for several other reasons which may therein be referred to. Justin Martyr was supposed to have written within fifty years of the death of some of the writers of the New Testament, and his evidence may be considered to be conclusive, that no one day was considered more holy than another by the early Christians.

The first decree for the observance of the first day of the week, called Sunday, was the result of that corrupt union between church and state, which has so often been productive of the most injurious effects to the cause of vital religion.

It was promulgated by Constantine the Great. I extract it entire, as it is extant in the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, under the head of *De Feriis*. Lib. iii., Tit. 12.

In the *Life of Constantine*, by Eusebius, it is called "The Salutary Day;" and as a matter of course, Eusebius, who was bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, gives the Emperor great praise for the enactment of the law. It is as follows:

3. *Imp. Constant.*

Omnes iudices, urbanæque plebes, et cunctarum artium officia venerabili die solis quiescant. Ruri tamen positi agrorum culturæ libere licenterque inserviant: quoniam frequenter evenit, ut non aptius alio die frumenta sulcis, aut vineæ scrobibus mandentur, ne occasione momenti pereat commoditas cœlesti provisione concessa. Dat. Nonis Mart. Crispo 2, & Constantino 2. Coss. 321.

It will be observed that this law only speaks of Sunday as a day of rest, and that it applies only to judges, town-people and tradesmen. I subjoin the literal translation.

“Let all the judges and town-people, and the occupations of all trades, rest on the venerable day of the sun; but let those who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture; because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines, lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by the providence of Heaven.”

The character of Constantine is well known. He was the second Roman Emperor\* that embraced the

\* Constantine is frequently spoken of as being the first Christian Emperor. Philip, who was crowned in the year 246, was the first. (Eusebius, edition 1607, page 3; also, chronology in the same work.)

Christian faith; he presided at the council of Nice, that council of bishops which undertook to decide which part of the New Testament should be considered canonical, and which rejected. He was, in some respects, a great man; but his domestic life is marked by such atrocities, as would seem to render him unfit to be a judge in any matter pertaining to religion. The voices of sycophants have sung his praises, because he embraced the Christian religion. Yet this man, in the very year that he presided at the council of Nice, murdered the husbands of his sisters, Constantia and Anastasia. He murdered his sister's son, a boy only twelve years of age, under the most frivolous pretext.\* In the year that he issued his decree for the observance of the Sunday, he murdered his familiar friend, Sopater; and the year before, destroyed his wife, Fausta, by putting her in a bath of boiling water. These, though not all the atrocities he perpetrated in his own immediate family, are sufficient to show the character of the man; and sectarians may have all the benefit they can derive from the knowledge that it was this man, stained with the blood of his own domestic circle, that issued the first decree in a Christian country, for making any distinction between Sunday and any other day in the week.

The sun in the heavens was the apotheosis of Con-

\* Taylor's Diojesis.

stantine; hence, naturally came the transfer of holiness to a day which should bear the name of Sunday. It is this decree, and not the New Testament, which forms the basis of the "Sunday Sabbath," or the "Christian Sabbath," as sectarians call it. It should be called "The Sunday of Constantine." This decree of Constantine was not effectual in closing the courts; other laws of like character were passed by Theodosius and others, and finally, in the year 456, the Emperor Leo directed that the spectacle of wild beasts at the theatre should be closed on Sunday.

The decree is in these words: "Not to infringe the rest of that holy day, we do not suffer any one to indulge in obscene pleasures. Let this day witness no theatrical representations; no combats of the circus; no doleful exhibitions of wild beasts."\*

Sylvester, who was Bishop of Rome whilst Constantine was Emperor, in order, as it is stated, to give more solemnity to the first day of the week, changed its name from Sunday, which Constantine had given it, to the more imposing one of "the Lord's day." See Lucius' *Eccl. Hist. Cent. 4*, p. 740. *Bamp. Eng.* p. 98.

As the church became ceremonial, symbols of religion and festivals were appointed. They commenced at an earlier era than the reign of Constantine; but it was then for the first time that the State

\* Col. L. 3, Tit. 12.

became a party in them, and lent its power to make the Christian religion one of splendor and consequence in the world, so as to captivate the Pagans who had been used to the imposing forms of heathen worship.

Christmas had been appointed a festival to commemorate the nativity of Christ; Easter,\* as an annual mark of his resurrection; Whitsunday, and others of like character, for particular periods. Among these, was the first day of the week. Fasting had been introduced as a penance; but this was so directly in opposition to a day of rejoicing, that a variety of church edicts were passed, prohibiting fasting on that day. But even in this thing, there appears to have been no particular sanctity attached to the day. I have said before, that meetings for worship were held on different days in different countries, and the same practice prevailed when a weekly festival was more distinctly established.

Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, who lived but a few years after the edict of Constantine was issued, when he was consulted upon the subject of there being no uniformity of days, advised that people should be governed by the usages of countries where they were.† But whether the festival was held on

\* I am aware that the term *Easter* occurs in the New Testament. It is considered an interpolation, and that it derives its name from the goddess Eostre, worshipped by the Saxons.

† Cave's "Primitive Christianity," chap. vii. page 114.



Saturday or Sunday, fasting was positively prohibited. The Motanists, a sect who arose in the second century, were remarkable for the greatest severity in their lives and doctrines. They had many absurd tenets, among which were laws of great strictness for fasting, but they excepted the first day of the week out of their austerities.\*

The first man that was executed in the Christian era, by the secular power, for heresy, was Priscilianus. It was done at the instance of some of the bishops. One of the charges against him was, that he kept the Lord's day by fasting. A council of the church was assembled on the fourth of October, 381, in reference thereto, which expressly anathematized all such as fasted on that day, whether by mispersuasion or superstition.

In the epistles of Ignatius to the Philippians, it is stated, "that he is a killer of Christ who fasts on the Lord's day, or on Saturday;"† and there is a variety of evidence to show that the Sunday was considered to be a day of relaxation, of joy, and rejoicing, rather than of gloom. The Pharisaical doctrine, which is now so prevalent, of keeping that day with strictness, was, among the Christians of this early period, counted to be a great wickedness. Eustathius renewed the practice of keeping it as a

\* Eusebius, Mosheim and Howell's Ecclesiastical Histories.

† Howell's Ecclesiastical History, folio, vol. iv.

fast day, and it was again condemned by a provincial synod, held at Gangra, in Paphlagonia, which decreed, that "if any, upon pretence of abstinence, fasted on the Lord's day, he should be anathema."

One of the canons of the council of Nice decreed, that praying by kneeling should be especially interdicted on the day of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, because it indicated fear and sorrow, on a day in which the whole church exults and rejoices."\*

In the fifth century, Mosheim says, "to enumerate the rites and institutions which were added in this century to the Christian worship, would require a volume of considerable size;" and again, in the next century, "the cause of true religion sunk apace, and the gloomy reign of superstition extended itself in proportion to the decay of genuine piety. This lamentable decay was supplied by a multitude of rites and ceremonies."† Among these, the canon of the mass was for the first time established. Almost as a necessary consequence of this departure from the truth, an edict was passed by the council of Orleans, in the year 538, to enforce more strictly the observance of the first day of the week.‡ Country labor, which had been left open by the edict of Constantine,

\* 16th Canon of the Council of Nice.

† Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. 6th and 7th centuries.

‡ Encyclopedia, article Sunday.

was interdicted. Still it was declared, that to hold it unlawful to travel with horses, cattle and carriages, to prepare food, or to do any thing necessary to the cleanliness or decency of persons or houses, savored more of Judaism than Christianity; and the council of Laodicea enjoined that men should abstain from work if possible; but if any were found to Judaize, that is to say, to keep the day with great strictness, "they were to be censured as great transgressors."\*

Whilst, in the corruptions of the church, they thus increased their laws relative to labor on that day, it is everywhere apparent that they rejected the idea of the Jewish strictness; and it is equally apparent that the church had become extremely ceremonial. Thus, at the council of Gangra, before referred to, an edict was passed, that "if any should take upon him, out of the church, privately to preach at home, and making light of the church, shall do those things that belong only to the church, without the presence of the priests, and the leave and allowance of the bishop, let him be accursed."† These things are connected together, and they are equally the effect of a ceremonial religion. It would take volumes to recount them, and they are all alike separated from that beautiful simplicity inculcated

\*Encyclopedia Brit., Art. "Sabbath."

† Cave's Primitive Christianity, chap. vii. page 110.

by Jesus Christ, which was the daily and hourly practice of virtue.

It is stated by Morer, that in the fifth century, the Christians, after divine service, followed their daily employments. "It was not done," he says, until the meeting or service was quite over, when they might with innocency enough resume them, because the length of time, and the number of hours assigned for piety, were not then so well understood as at present." (See Dialogue on the Lord's day.)

In the funeral oration for the Lady Paula, St. Jerome says, "She, with all her virgins and widows, who lived at Bethlehem in a cloister with her, upon the Lord's day, repaired duly to the church or house of God, which was nigh to her cell; and after her return from thence to her own lodgings, she herself, and all her company, *fell to work*, and every one performed their task, which was the making of clothes and garments for themselves and for others, as they were appointed."

St. Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople, recommended to his audience, after impressing upon themselves and their families what they had heard on the Lord's day, to return to their daily employments and trades.\*

There is a letter from St. Gregory the Great, inserted in the canon law, in which he says, "What

\* Burnside on the Sabbath, p. 16.

shall I call them but the preachers of Anti-Christ, who, at his coming, will make men abstain from all work on the Sabbath, and on the Lord's day? I have been informed also, of the preaching of certain evil-disposed men, who say no one should bathe on the Lord's day. If, indeed, it is a question of bathing through a spirit of sensuality, we do not allow it on any day whatever; but if a person resort to it for some useful purpose, we do not forbid it, even on the Lord's day."

There were other attempts to solemnize the day, which are not mentioned in ecclesiastical history; and, so far as they can be traced, they appear to have been most apparent wherever people most departed from the simplicity of the gospel. Thus it is mentioned of the Saxons, by Bacon, in his Notes on Selden, that when they first settled in England, they began their Sunday on Saturday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and held it until Monday morning; during which time they refrained from their usual occupations of hunting, &c. Many of their laws are still preserved, showing them to have been an extremely superstitious people, and Hume says they were worse than the ancient Britons.

I may remark that the Roman laws upon the subject of Sunday are extant in the "Corpus Juris Civilis," collected by Dionysius Gothofredus. There is at least one distinct notice that the enactments were made at

the instance of the clergy; and Warburton, himself a bishop, in his work upon Julian, referring to the severities that were exercised towards the popular clergy, at the period succeeding Constantine, says, "It cannot be denied, that their turbulent and insolent manners deserved all the severities that were put upon them." Sabbatarians may object to these laws, as having resulted from a church more or less corrupted; but they are left in this dilemma, to accept them or none. They have been the foundation of all our laws relative to the observance of Sunday—they have been revised, and modified, and changed, according to the caprices of particular periods of time, but they rest upon no other foundation than ceremonial union between church and state.

According to Heylyn, it was many ages after Christianity was received in Great Britain, before they paid any respect to the first day of the week.

All the amusements and labor, common in other parts of Europe, had been allowed in England. By act of Parliament, festival days included Sundays: and a law was passed, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in these words: "All pastors, vicars and curates shall teach and declare unto the people, that they may, with a safe and quiet conscience, after their common prayer, in time of harvest, labor upon the holy and festival days, and save that thing which God hath sent; and if, for any scrupulosity or grudge of conscience, they abstain from working on that day,

that then they shall grievously offend and displease God.”\*

The Parliament of England met on Sundays until the time of Richard the Third, in the year 1483.

Many of the kings were crowned on Sunday, among whom were Rufus, Stephen, Henry II., Richard I. and John. Richard I. was crowned twice,—once in the beginning of his reign, and again upon his return from the Holy Land,—and both times on Sunday. The daughter of Henry II. was on Sunday crowned Queen of Sicily, at Palermo. King John was first inaugurated Duke of Normandy, and afterwards crowned king, each event transpiring on Sunday.

The first law of England made for the keeping of Sunday, was in the time of Edward VI., about 1470. “Parliament then passed an act by which Sunday and many holy days, the feast of All Saints, of Holy Innocents, &c., were established as festivals by law. This provided also, that it should be lawful for husbandmen, laborers, fishermen and all others in harvest, or any other time of the year when necessity should require, to labor, ride, fish, or do any other kind of work, at their own free will and pleasure upon any of the said days.”†

In the morning of Sunday, the churches and chapels were opened; the after part of the day was devoted to rational enjoyments; this was not confined to the Roman Catholics. The Waldenses and other

\* *Horæ Sabbaticæ.*

† Heylyn.

mystics, also rejected the sacredness of the day, and all the eminent reformers, to whose writings we have had access, except only such as have been connected with the puritan movement, have opposed this Sabbath doctrine. Luther in his "Instruction to Christians how to make use of Moses," says, "The law of Moses belongs to the Jews, and is no longer binding upon us. The words of Scripture prove clearly to us that the ten commandments do not affect us; for God has not brought us out of Egypt, but only the Jews. We are willing to take Moses as a teacher, but not as our law-giver, except when he agrees with the New Testament and with the law of nature. \* \* \* \* No single point in Moses binds us. \* \* \* \* Leave Moses and his people alone. Their work is done. He has nothing to do with me. I listen to the word which concerns me. We have the gospel." \* \* \* \* In his "Explanation of the Ten Commandments," he says, "We must remark at the outset, that the ten commandments do not apply to us Gentiles and Christians, but only to the Jews. If a preacher wishes to force you back to Moses, ask him whether you were brought by Moses out of Egypt? If he says, No! then say, How then does Moses concern me, since he speaks to the people that have been brought out of Egypt?" \* \* \* \* In another passage of the same work he says, 'We must stop the mouths of the factious spirits who say, 'thus says Moses;' then do you reply, 'Moses does not concern us; if I accept Moses in one commandment,



I must accept the whole Moses; in that case I should be obliged to be circumcised, and to wash my clothes in a Jewish manner. Therefore, we will not obey Moses, or accept him. Moses died, and his government terminated when Christ came.'"\*

I make the following extracts from the institute of John Calvin, the founder of the Presbyterian church:

"But it cannot be doubted that every thing was abolished at the coming of Christ our Lord. For he is the reality, at whose presence all types vanish; the substance, at whose sight shadows are forsaken; he, I say, is the true fulfilment of the Sabbath. Being by baptism buried with him, we have been grafted into a share of his death, that, being partakers of the resurrection, we should walk in newness of life. Therefore, the apostle in another place says, that the Sabbath was the shadow of something future,—that in Christ is the body; that is, the solid, real substance, which in that place he has well explained. This is content, not with one day, but with the whole course of our life, until, being wholly dead to ourselves, we are filled with the life of God. Far, therefore, from Christians ought to be the superstitious observance of days."†

\* See Michelet's *Life of Luther*, translated by Hazlitt; also Hengstenberg.

† Translated for this work from a Latin copy in the Philadelphia Library.

In another place he says, The false prophets have said that nothing was abrogated but what was ceremonial in the commandment, while the moral part remains—to wit: ‘the observance of one day in seven;’ but this is nothing else than to insult the Jews by changing the day, and yet mentally attributing to it the same sanctity, thus retaining the same typical distinction of days as had place among the Jews.”\*

Melancthon, in the Augsburg Confession of Faith, has these sentences :

“For they who think the observance of the Lord’s day has been appointed by the authority of the Church, instead of the Sabbath, as a thing necessary, greatly err. The Scripture allows that we are not bound to keep the Sabbath; for it teaches that the ceremonies of the law of Moses are not necessary after the revelation of the gospel. And yet, because it was requisite to appoint a certain day, that the people might know when to assemble together, it appears that the Church appointed for this purpose the Lord’s day, which for this reason, also, seems to have pleased the more, that men might have an example of Christian liberty, and might know that the observance neither of the Sabbath nor of any other day is necessary.”

Zuinglius, the Swiss reformer, expresses the opinion that it is lawful for any man, after divine service, to pursue his labors.

\* Institutes, vol i. 459 and 466.

Martin Bucer, one of the most eminent reformers of the sixteenth century, says Heylyn, "Goes further yet, and doth not only call it a superstition, but an apostacy from Christ, to think that working on the Lord's day in itself considered is a sinful thing."\* Bucer was one of the most eminent men of the Reformation. Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, gave him an invitation to come over to England, where he became a great favorite with Edward VI. He was buried at Cambridge with great pomp. Five years afterwards, in the reign of Queen Mary, his remains were dug up and publicly burnt. He composed many works on the Evangelists and Gospels, and considered it a sinful thing to omit working on Sunday.

Knox, the eminent Scottish reformer, wrote before the Sabbath excitement in Scotland. His confession in 1560, in which the works that are reputed "good before God," to use his own words, are recounted with great minuteness, is altogether silent upon the duty of keeping holy the Sabbath day. This may be considered conclusive that he was not a Sabbatarian, and it is known that theatrical diversions were permitted on that day, in Scotland, until after his death.

In the year 1516 Erasmus characterized the tendency towards Judaism as a pest the most dangerous to Christianity.†

It may be observed that the Romish Church as-

\* Bucer on Mat. p. 181.      † Erasmus, Epistles, p. 207.

sumed that Sunday and all festivals were under the control of the Vatican, and that the sanctity of the day derived no authority from the Jewish laws.

The Episcopalians, though denying the authority of the Pope, took essentially the same ground.

Paley; Heylin, chaplain to King Charles the First; Wheatly, D. D., of Oriel College, Oxford, and many others, have been conspicuous in resisting the superstition.

Bishop White, so favorably known for many years in Philadelphia, in his work on the Catechism, pages 64 and 66, says, "That any employment conducive to the public weal, which cannot be suspended without defeating the object, such as gathering the harvest on Sunday, &c., may be allowed on Sunday."

Again, in his lectures he says, "The blessing of the seventh day is mentioned in the twelfth chapter of Genesis, at the closing of the act of creation; but this is thought by some to have been done without any intimation of an appointment in Paradise, and only to account for its being made to the children of Israel in the wilderness. *Certain it is*, that we meet with no instance of an actual hallowing of the Sabbath, until we reach the 16th chapter of Exodus: and the manner of the giving and the receiving of the institution, carries strong appearances of its not being familiar to the Israelites. This seems not easily to be accounted for, if it had been observed by their

patriarchal forefathers, of which, also, there is *not a hint in their history.* \* \* \*

“In regard to its duration, it appears evident, that so far as regarded the authority of the injunction to the Israelites, and unless some new obligation can be shown, the institution ceased, even in relation to Jewish converts to Christianity, at the destruction of their religious polity, and that *it was never extended to the Gentile Christians*; of this there shall be given but one proof, it being decisive to the point. It is in the 2d chapter of Colossians:—‘Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days.’ Here the Sabbath is considered as *falling with the whole body of the ritual laws of Moses.* And this may show the reason, on which the church avoids the calling of the day of public worship, ‘the Sabbath.’ It is never *so called* in the New Testament: and in the primitive church, the term ‘*Sabbatising*’ carried with it the *reproach* of a leaning to the *abrogated observance of the law.*” \* \* \*

Thomas Arnold, D. D., Professor in the University of Oxford so late as 1840, speaking in favor of recreation, says, “If the railway enables people in the great towns to get out into the country on Sunday, I should think it a very great good.” (See his works, second English edition, 204–206:)

To copy the sentiments of the eminent ecclesiasti-

cal writers upon this subject, would swell our pages beyond what is needful for this work, and I content myself with one further extract from "The British Critic, Quarterly Theological Review, and Ecclesiastical Recorder:"

"The Jews, who, in this respect at least, may be admitted to be the best interpreters of their own law, uniformly maintained, that the Sabbath, like circumcision, was given *exclusively* to them, as the sign of the covenant which God had made with them; that it belonged, in no sense, to the Gentiles; and that it was not *lawful* even for the proselytes of the gate to observe it. 'It is a *sign between me and the children of Israel forever.*' Exodus xxxi. 17. 'Moreover, also, I gave them my Sabbaths to be a *sign between me and them.*' Ezek. xxi. 12. 'And hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a *sign between me and you.*' Ezek. xxi. 20. When that covenant, of which the Sabbath was a *sign*, was abrogated, the *Sabbath itself was of course abrogated with it. This is confessed*; but it is said, that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is transferred, in the Christian church, to the first day of the week. We ask, by what authority? and are much mistaken, if an examination of all the texts in the New Testament, in which the first day of the week, or Lord's day, is mentioned, does not prove that there is no divine or apostolical precept enjoining its observance, nor any certain evi-

dence from Scripture that it it was, in fact, so observed in the time of the apostles.”

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## CHAPTER V.

### PURITANS OF ENGLAND, ORIGINATORS OF THE TERM CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

From the advent of Christ throughout the Apostolic and Middle ages, one feeling and sentiment prevailed respecting the first day of the week,—an entire rejection of the Jewish doctrine regarding it. In this, as we have seen, Christ and the apostles, various ecclesiastical councils, the eminent reformers, Church and State, all with one accord participated. Adopting the spirit of the decree of Constantine, they made the Sunday a day of rejoicing, a day of rest, where it was most convenient to rest, a day of labor, where that was most proper, without attaching any superstition to it.

A change came over the British nation, in the sixteenth century, through the influence of the Puritans. As an organized body they are now extinct; but at that period they embraced a great variety of heterogeneous people. There were the Millenarians, who required that all government should be abolished in order to prepare the way for Christ's second coming; the Levellers, who asked for an equal division of

property; the Antinomians, who insisted that the obligations of morality should be suspended, that the elect might reign; the Republicans, who were intoxicated with their own saintly character; others who desired the extinction of the whole system of English jurisprudence. A considerable party declaimed against tythes.\* These and many others were classed under the general name of Puritans. Many of them were known by the name Sabbatarians, from their calling the first day of the week Sabbath instead of Sunday.

We do great injustice to the truth of history by confounding together, the different classes of Puritans among whom there were greater differences than between Protestants and Catholics. They were united for a common object, the destruction of the Catholic religion, and the Episcopal Hierarchy, which they believed to be closely connected with it. When these ends were gained, though intermixed, they were no longer one people, and finally centered in three great divisions, the Independents, the Presbyterians and the Brownists. Each of these gained supreme power: the two former in England, the latter in America. Of these, the Independents, with Cromwell at their head, were the most liberal, and we do them injustice by ascribing their forbearance to either the Presbyterians or the Brownists. Neither of them had any true conception of civil or religious liberty. With

\* Hume's History of England.



one heart and spirit they all united against the Roman Catholics.

Cromwell wrote in favor of liberty of conscience without understanding it. Henry Vane, the younger, was deemed to be a curse to New England, where at one period he acted as Governor, because of his liberal sentiments.\* Yet in England he was at the head of the Covenanters against the Roman Catholics; and this alone marks not liberty of conscience, but an uncertain and limited toleration. Toleration is not liberty of conscience, but a proclamation of the power to abridge it; a government that has power to tolerate has also the power to do it away, as was the case in the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

The Puritans declared unequivocally the supremacy of their interpretation of what they called the word of God, in opposition to all traditions and human constitutions; that the form of government ordained by the apostles was aristocratical, according to the constitution of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and was designed as a pattern for the churches in after ages; and that the standard of uniformity, and which was to be supported by the sword, was not liberty of conscience and freedom of profession, but the "decrees of provincial and national synods."†

It was Dr. Bound, one of the rigid Puritans, who

\* Mather's *Magnalia*.

† Neal's *History of the Puritans*, London edition, vol. i. p. 136.

applied the name Sabbath to the first day of the week. About the year 1595, he published a book upon the subject, particularly decrying the Romish festivals, in which he stated that the Church of Rome had joined many other days to the seventh day, making them equal, if not superior, as well in the solemnity of divine offices, as in restraint from labor; that the commandment for sanctifying every seventh day in the Mosaic Decalogue, is natural, moral and perpetual, and that the church had no authority to sanctify any other day.

This new Sabbath doctrine, as it was called, of Bound's, met with violent opposition from the Episcopal and other churches. Archbishop Whitgift condemned the book, and Rogers, another clergyman, said, "that it was the comfort of his soul, and would be to his dying day, that he had been the man and the means by which the Sabbatarian errors were brought to the light and knowledge of the State."\* To counteract this doctrine, the book "Concerning lawful sports, to be used on Sundays after divine service," which had been heretofore issued, was republished by King Charles I., with an order that it should be circulated through all the parish churches. This allowed of all kinds of diversions on Sunday; and the king declared that it was done "out of pious care for the

\* Neal's Hist. Puritans, London edition, 1768, vol. i. p. 495 and vol. ii. pp. 238-39.

service of God, and for suppressing of those humors that oppose truth, and for the ease, comfort, and recreation of his majesty's well deserving people."\* The bishops recommended these recreations, "as bringing the people more willingly to church, as tending to civilize them, and to compose differences among them, and as serving to increase love and unity."\* The Puritans violently opposed them; many of the clergy refused to read the king's orders in their churches. The animosity was very severe, and was carried on for many years. The whole argument of the Sabbatarians rested upon the Mosaic code. It serves to show the error of trying to make the consciences of men depend upon State laws. What is sanctioned in one age is condemned in another, from the particular caprices of those who may happen to be in power.

It is stated that every passage in the Bible, whether relating to the legal Sabbath, or to the spiritual Sabbath of the soul, was tortured to prove their position; and this was carried to such a length, that chief justice Popham commanded these books to be called in, and neither be printed nor made public for a time to come.

This is the origin of the term Christian Sabbath, a name which has not generally been adopted among

\* Neal's Hist. Puritans, London edition, 1768, vol. i. p. 495; and vol. ii. pp. 238-39.

Christians; and it ought never to be adopted, because, applied to a day, it is a falsehood.

The Puritanical zeal upon the subject appears to have had no other foundation than the attempt to gain power by destroying festivals which were sustained by the Romish and Episcopal churches. Pretending to consider themselves peculiarly the church of Christ, their fanaticism was directed against every thing which they had not themselves created.

They carried their enmity against churchmen so far, as to regard it as profane and superstitious to eat mince-pies at the period of Christmas. They objected to the day as a festival, to establish other festival days of their own; they declaimed against human learning, challenging the professors from Oxford to prove that their calling was from Christ, and set up theological schools to disseminate their own doctrines. They denounced, as we have seen, innocent diversions on Sunday, to appoint by act of parliament, when they had the power, another day in its place; and their whole history leads to but one conclusion, that if they could best have gained their point by abolishing the Sabbath, instead of enforcing it, they would have done so. They rejected the doctrines of the early Christians, and the opinions of Calvin, without considering that a day made holy by them, had no more authority than a holy day created by the church of Rome.

Their doctrine gave great offence to the younger part of the community, who had been used to consider Sunday as a day of rest and of innocent amusements; and to satisfy them, the second Tuesday in every month was appointed in its place by act of parliament.\*

In the excited state of the public mind against the Catholic church, this scheme had a wonderful influence with the people. Many ways had been tried for several years to suppress these festivals, but they were all in vain, till this new Sabbath doctrine was brought up.

The contagion spread, to a limited extent, in those countries where there was an opposition to the Romish see. Frederic V., Prince Elector of Palatine, in an early period of the 17th century, under the influence of the English clergy, for the first time, ordered what was termed religious service, to be held in the afternoon of the first day of the week, in the Calvinistic churches of Germany. The same influence prevailed in the Low Countries, where, by the constitution, divine offices had been absolutely prohibited on the afternoon of that day.†

Books were issued by the royal authority at a later period, licensing particular sports and amusements on the Sunday. As the Puritans gained power, the House

\* Hume's History of England, vol. vii. page 33.

† Heylyn's History of the Presbyterians.

of Commons, without any consultation with the king, directed that these books should be burnt by the hangman, which was done.

They finally consummated their work by beheading the king, and assuming all the power of the government.

The existing abuses might have been sufficient to change the religion of the State, but they were not sufficient, nor is any thing sufficient to warrant corruption of another kind—deception, cant and hypocrisy. The Puritans were horrified at the sight of a surplice, a ring, or a cross, while the great principles of humanity, justice, mercy, and truth, were violated. Under their rule the whole nation became convulsed with the most frivolous disputes. It was not only the great leading doctrine, “That saving grace is not given, or communicated, to all men, and that those who are not predestinated to salvation shall necessarily be damned,”† that distracted the country, but the government itself was thrown into violent convulsions respecting the use of the surplice, the rails placed about the altar, the ring in marriage, the cross in baptism, and other rites which Hume calls mean and contemptible. But they were not contemptible, if they involved *principle*.

By the Puritan book of discipline, the minister was not allowed to baptize children by the names of

\*Heylin's History.

† Nine articles of Lambeth in Hist., Presbyterians, p. 342.

Richard, Robert, &c., which savored of paganism; they were to use Scripture names, such as Obadiah, Zephaniah, Hezekiah, &c., which are so common among the descendants of the Puritans at the present day: and to the same source are we indebted for such names as Deliverance, Virtue, Fear, Hope, Charity, Thankful, Consolation, The Lord is Near, and a variety of others of the same character.

The name of the Speaker of the Long Parliament was "Praise-God Barebones." The names of a jury, in Sussex, are thus given in Broom's Travels:—Accepted Trevor, Redeemed Compton, Faint-not Hewitt, Make-Peace Heaton, God-Reward Smart, Hope-for Bending, Earth Adams, Called Lower, Kill-Sin Pimple, Return Spelman, Be-Faithful Joiner, Fly-Debate Roberts, Fight-the-good-Fight-of-Faith White, More-Fruit Fowler, Stand-fast-on-high Stringer, Graceful Herding, Weep-not Billing, Meek Brewer.

The Puritans ordained, that not only labor and amusements should be interdicted, but that all traveling should be stopped; May-poles, which appeared like heathenish vanities, should be removed; no barber should be allowed to shave a man on Sunday; no tailor to carry home a suit of clothes; no one was allowed to sit at his own door, to walk the streets, or to enjoy the fresh air in the open fields. It is said to have been preached from the pulpits, that to do any ser-

vile work or business on the Lord's day, was as great a sin as to kill a man ; that to make a feast, or to dress a wedding-dinner, was as unlawful as for a father to take a knife and cut his child's throat.\*

Laws of this nature, more or less severe, are everywhere intermixed with the Puritanic discipline ; they were, in the true sense of the word, a Sabbath-keeping people ; it formed one of the most prominent traits of their character ; and if there is a page of history that can exemplify the peculiar effect of a Sabbath-day religion, it is to be found in the recorded account of the Puritans.

Hume, in his *History of England*,† says, “Their whole discourse and language were polluted with mysterious jargon, and full of the lowest and most vulgar hypocrisy.”

Whether allowance is to be made or not for the opinion of a royalist author, it is certain, that their conduct seemed to threaten the destruction of the social fabric. They were called democratic in their principles, and they certainly resisted arbitrary power. They resisted it in order to gain it for themselves, and they gained it but to abuse it. They obtained an ascendancy in religion to open rivers of blood, and to establish ridiculous innovations.

Heylyn, in his *History of the Presbyterians*, says

\* *History of the Presbyterians*.

† Vol. vi. page 390.



of them, "More goodly houses were plundered and burnt down to the ground, more churches sacrilegiously profaned and spoiled, more blood poured out like water, within four years space, than had been done in the long course of civil wars between York and Lancaster. With all which spoil and public ruin, they purchased nothing to themselves but shame and infamy, as may be shown by taking a brief view of their true condition before and after they put the state into these confusions."\*

A few years completed the sovereignty of the Presbyterians in Great Britain. They were out voted and out generalled by the Independents, who, with Cromwell at their head, obtained the control of the British Empire.

The Presbyterians were established by law in Scotland. The Brownists had been banished first to Holland, and thence emigrated to America, and these comprise the whole number of those who maintained that ascetic severity regarding Sunday, which is the object of our inquiry.

We have said, in our prefatory pages, that the tendency of the Sabbath superstition was to impair the morals of the people. We have traced the history of the institution through all its phases up to the period of the Puritans. We have given to no text, to no history, an interpretation which it does not warrant; and we think the candid inquirer will readily

\* Heylyn, 469.

arrive at the conclusion, that the Sunday of England and the Sunday of America, with its gloom and asceticism, rests upon no adequate foundation, is a belief without evidence, and as such, may be properly termed a gross superstition.

Admitting that this reasoning is correct, it will hardly be denied that superstition is injurious to the human character, and the Sabbath forms no exception to a universal rule. History confirms this conclusion, in England, Scotland, and America. We shall proceed to show that moral offences increased at the period when the observance of the Sabbath was most rigidly enforced, and we may learn from analogy that universally, other things being equal, an enforced ascetic observance of Sunday, or of any other sectarian rites, is injurious to society.

First, respecting its effect in England. William Penn thus characterizes this period: "Oh, the unheard-of hypocrisy of that age! Sycophants in grain, enough to poison the whole world with their flatteries, whose interest was their conscience, and power their religion; devotion only serving to stalk their stratagems to promotion; but the just God has swept them off the stage, and their sun is set and shall never rise more."\*

We make the following extracts from Hume's History of England:

\* Folio Works, vol. ii. p. 86.

“The gloomy enthusiasm which prevailed among the Parliamentary (Puritan) party is surely the most curious spectacle presented by any history, and the most instructive, as well as entertaining, to a philosophical mind. \* \* \* \* Though the English nation be naturally candid and sincere, hypocrisy prevailed among them beyond any example in ancient or modern times.” \* \* \* \* “Your friends, the Cavaliers,” said a Puritan to a Royalist, “are very dissolute and debauched.” “True,” replied the Royalist, “they have the infirmities of men, but your friends the Puritans have the vices of devils.”\*

Macaulay says, “Those passions and tastes which had been sternly repressed (by the Sabbatarians) broke forth with ungovernable violence as soon as the check was withdrawn. Men flew to frivolous amusements and to criminal pleasures, with the greediness which long and enforced abstinence naturally produces. Little restraint was imposed by public opinion. For the nation, nauseated by cant, suspicious of all pretensions to sanctity, and still smarting from the recent tyranny of rulers austere in life and powerful in prayer, looked for a time with complacency on the softer and gayer vices.”†

D’Israeli says, “The ascetic penances (of the Puritans) were afterwards succeeded in the nation by

\* Hume, vol. vii. p. 331, 332.

† Macaulay’s History of England, vol. i. p. 179, 5th edition.

an era of hypocritical sanctity, and we may trace this last stage of insanity and of immorality, closing with impiety." \* \* \* \* Without inquiring into the causes, even if we thought we could ascertain them, of that frightful dissolution of religion which so long prevailed in our country, of which the very corruption it has left behind still breeds in monstrous shapes."\*

Were it needful, I might produce much further historical data, all tending to one issue, that in proportion as forms, rites and dogmas were made of primary importance, so were the morals of the people corrupted. All those severities which were enacted in England, were renewed in Scotland under the influence of the Presbyterians. From evening to evening the Sabbath was to be celebrated; no persons were allowed to walk in the streets; pecuniary fines, close and rigorous confinement and corporal punishment, were the penalties for disobedience. Margaret Dixon was fined eight marks for having "spits and roasts" at the fire in time of "sermon."†

These proceedings were connected with severe prosecutions of those who differed from them in religious opinions.

The National Covenant was subscribed in 1580, and renewed in 1639, at the very period of the Sabbath

\* *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. vi. p. 275, &c.

† See Wodrow's *Biographical Collections*, vol. ii. *Selections from the Records of Kirk's sessions*, page 21.

excitement. It ordains, "that all papists and priests shall be punished with manifold civil and ecclesiastical pains, as adversaries to God's true religion."\*

The morals of Scotland may be gathered from the following extracts.

Cromwell, when he invaded Scotland, says in a letter to the Lord President of the Council of State, dated 25th of September, 1650, "I thought I should have found in Scotland a conscientious people, and a barren country; about Edinburgh it is as fertile for corn as any part of England; but the people generally (are so) given to the most impudent lying and frequent swearing, as is incredible to be believed."\*

On the 17th of February, 1650, it is recorded, "much falsehood and cheating at this time was daily detected by the Lords of the Session; there was daily hanging, scourging, boring of tongues, so that it was one fatal year for falsehood as daily experience did witness; and as for adultery, fornication, incest, bigamy, and other uncleanness and filthiness, it did never abound more nor at this time." In 1653 there is the following item: "The growth of sin of all sorts, particularly pride, uncleanness, contempt of ordinances, oppression, violence, fraudulent dealing, and that under the rod, the most part of the people

\* Act xxiv. 2d Parliament, King James VI.

† Carlyle's Cromwell, vol. i. p. 72.

growing worse and worse, and revolting more and more.”\*

It was in 1595, as we have stated, that Dr. Bound published his Sabbath book before referred to; thus it appears that at the time these extracts were written, the Sabbath doctrine had had a full and almost uninterrupted sway for more than half a century, and the facts appear to be conclusive, that in Scotland, as in England, the superstition made society worse instead of better.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### PURITANS OF NEW ENGLAND.

The full development of the Sabbath excitement was reserved for the Brownists of New England, their original and proper name. To call them Puritans, the term usually employed, though strictly correct, leads to confusion, because that was a generic name applied to all Nonconformists, among whom there were many other organizations, some of them much larger than the Brownists; such as the Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Antinomians, Quakers, &c.

Robinson, their pastor in Holland, advised them to change their name to Congregationalists, which they did. To use this term would be to identify them with the present inhabitants of New England, who are in

\* Pages 3, 4 and 101.

many respects a distinct people. Much error arises from the want of a proper understanding of the term Puritan. Many of the New England writers are deficient either in intelligence or honesty, in confounding them with the Independents, a more liberal class of Puritans.

The Brownists owed their origin to Robert Brown, who was one of the first to recommend the independent system of church government, to which they have mostly adhered. He also recommended that laymembers should be at liberty to speak in their meetings. If we recollect right, Brown boasted of having been committed to thirty prisons, and it was believed that he only escaped execution by his connection with the British Ministry. Thacker and Capper, two ministers of the Brownist persuasion, had been hanged in England for dispersing books against the Common Prayer; and in 1591, Greenwood, Barrow and Penry, were also put to death for being Brownists; besides this they suffered other severe persecutions.

The Brownists gained nothing by experience. Suffering, which softens most men, softened not them. It seems difficult to imagine how a people who had earnestly claimed liberty of conscience for themselves, could have become the bitter, unrelenting persecutors of others. Yet such was the fact.

In England, the Puritans had been restrained to a certain extent by the Roman Catholics and the Epis-

copalians. In the wilderness of America there was none to molest them; they claimed it as being peculiarly *their* country; they controlled the government, and there was no hindrance to a full experiment of their doctrine respecting Sunday. In Great Britain it was so much mixed up with politics, with the struggle for supremacy in the British Empire, that it is difficult to decide what may be due to each. In this country the subject was greatly freed from these influences, and hence the lesson is the more impressive.

In a Boston Sabbath work, speaking of the great advantages of keeping holy the Sabbath day, it is said, "The manner in which people keep the Sabbath will be a test of their character, an index of their morality and religion."\* We have in the Puritans of New England one of the fairest tests that the world can afford; and, in so interesting an inquiry, it is due to the cause of truth and justice, that their characters should be carefully considered as an index, according to the Boston writer, of what may be expected from a Sabbath-keeping people.

I am not aware that the pages of ecclesiastical history furnish any examples of intolerance, so severe, so uncalled for, as those of the Puritans of New England.

Persecutions had been often more extensive and en

\* Permanent Sabbath Doctrines, No. 1.



during, but the settlers of New England were few in number, and of the same race as their victims.

They derived all their power from charters granted by the British crown, which prohibited their transcending the British laws, yet these were of no avail. They persecuted by turns the Antinomians, the Roman Catholics, the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Quakers, and not least, the poor unhappy, defenceless Indians.

It was this people that brought the Sabbath superstition to the American colonies, now these United States.

It has become the custom in New England to eulogize their Puritan ancestors, and to claim for them the establishment of civil and religious liberty in this country. This is partaken of by many respectable orators, who seem disposed to make the public believe that it is true. It is not true, let the story be told by whom it may; civil and religious liberty are the effect of causes which did not exist among the Brownists of New England. The Sabbath doctrine, the philosophy of authority, was incapable of producing them. In morals, as in physics, events are involved in the causes from which they spring, and it argues great ignorance of the principles of human nature to suppose that such a thing was possible.

Oakes, President of Harvard College, said in the year 1673, that "he looked upon toleration as the first-

born of all abominations." (See Belknap's History of New Hampshire, vol. i. p. 71.) And Hutchinson writes, toleration was preached against as a sin in rulers, that would bring down the judgment of Heaven on the land. Mr. Dudley, one of their eminent men, died with a copy of verses in his pocket, written with his own hand; the two following lines, which made part of it, may be considered as the Puritan creed in New England:\*

"Let men of God in court and churches, watch  
O'er such as do a toleration hatch."

Before we can believe that civil and religious liberty was established in New England, these sentiments must be erased, and the facts connected with the settlement of the colony be obliterated.

The history of the early settlements in this country involves considerations of deep and peculiar interest.

It is well known that there have long been two systems of philosophy respecting the origin of our ideas; one, the sensuous theory espoused of latter time more particularly by the celebrated John Locke, which traced all our ideas to the senses and to reflections growing out of them. The Sabbath doctrine of the Puritans is founded upon this theory. The Sabbath as a day of holiness, having no existence in nature, is derived from authority which man has obtained through his eyes and his ears. This sensuous theory was the basis of the system of the Brownists,

\* Hutchinson's Hist. vol. i. p. 75.

and it was put forth in all its strength in the colonies of New England.

The second system embraced the philosophy of intuitive ideas, that there were spiritual influences not dependent upon the senses, which man learned in the secret of his own soul; that, however, valuable outward information might be, however animating and encouraging, as showing a community of feeling in kindred minds, yet that this was not the place of our rest, that there was a higher life, a spiritual element which was alone the test of truth, and which was to be only understood and comprehended in the secret recesses of man's own mind.

The elementary principles from which these two systems flow, were openly avowed and maintained by several of the different colonies of this country. They were in direct opposition to each other. Though neither of them was carried out to its legitimate issue, yet there were broad lines of distinction in the colonies that are worthy of the careful consideration of a philosophic mind; because, so far as either of them may be proved to have been wrong or right from the data which these histories present, we may find some evidence to sustain correct principles for the government of society.

The one was a system of authority, adhered to by the Brownists. The second, a system of intuitive ideas, which formed the elementary principle of the Quakers.

In the early settlement of this country, the Quakers controlled the governments of Rhode Island, of New Jersey, of Pennsylvania, of Delaware, and of the Carolinas.

The historical facts before us, which are seldom furnished, so far as they go, may be considered a test of the power of human learning on the one hand, and of the spiritual element on the other, as a means of refining and purifying society. This is the more interesting when it is considered that the popular religion of the day is founded upon the doctrine that man is to learn religion from his fellow-man; that through the means of Bibles and priests, prayers and psalm singing, many of them ostentatious in the highest degree, and all within the control of man, known and understood only by the outward senses, man is to learn religion; to use a Scripture figure, they are ladders by which he is to climb into the sheep-fold, not by the door appointed by heaven, but in some other way.

It is a subject of regret, in examining this question that the histories of the early settlers of New England, instead of being reliable, are in many cases misrepresentations. Bancroft, the most philosophical of our historians, speaking of his narrow escape from deception by Martin, in his account of Carolina, says, "It is not history which is treacherous, but hasty

writers who are credulous and careless.”\* Yet he has committed the same error.

History is lost upon us if we fail to read its precepts, and to be benefited by its example. To accomplish this we require truth and not error. To torture it in order to eulogize the past, is to do positive wrong to the present and to that which is to come. It may be doubtful, whether a plain unvarnished history of the settlement of New England is to be found, and this alone can furnish a true basis for our argument.

Instead of suppressing the truth, it should be published, how sad soever the picture might be, as suggesting the deepest and most profound reflections upon the character of man and the nature of the human mind.

The following extracts will show how little reliance is to be placed upon the New England authorities.

Everett says, “we are indebted to them, (the Puritans,) for two great principles, one of which is the separation of Church and State.”† Bancroft says, “An entire separation was made between Church and State.”‡ This was said of Salem, when they were rebuking the Baptists and expelling the Episcopalians.

Justice Story says, “The fundamental error of our ancestors, an error which began with the very settlement of the colony, was a doctrine which has since been happily exploded, I mean the necessity of a union between Church and State. To this they clung as the ark of their safety.”§

† Everett's Orations, page 225.

‡ Bancroft, vol. i. page 348.

A letter from James Cud-

§ Story's Miscellany, p. 66.

\* See vol. ii. p. 162, note.

Again, speaking of the settlement of Plymouth, Bancroft says, "A wide experience had emancipated them from bigotry; and they were never betrayed into the excesses of religious persecution, though they sometimes permitted a disproportion between punishment and crime."\*

\* Bancroft, vol. i. 322.

worth, dated in December, 1658, says of Plymouth, "As for the state and condition of things among us, it is sad, and like to continue so.

The Anti-Christian persecuting spirit is very active, and that in the powers of this world he that will not whip and lash persecute and punish men that differ in matters of religion, must not sit on the bench, nor sustain any office in the commonwealth."\*

This man had been a magistrate and commission officer in the colony.

"The history of the world is the world's tribunal."—*Schlegel*.

The Brownists were brave men in their way, of individual worth, staunch, courageous, patient and enduring. Without intentional wrong, they acted wrongly under wrong influences. The Chief Justice of Boston, after condemning many innocent men to death, declared that he had done so in the fear of the Lord. There is no reason to doubt it. Conscience is swayed by education, and is in itself but the proof of sincerity. The Chief Justice, wise and learned as he may have been, was influenced by the authority of the Jewish laws, without bringing them to the test of his own

\* Besse's Sufferings of the Quakers, vol. ii. p. 191.

inward feelings. Serious persuasions are always to be respected. He was conscientiously right, but wrong in his elementary principles. Like the superstitions of the Papists, so finely characterized in the epigram of Swift :

“ Who can believe with common sense,  
A bacon slice gives God offence ;  
Or how a herring hath a charm,  
Almighty vengeance to disarm ?  
Wrapt up in majesty divine,  
Does He regard on what we dine ?”

The application is different, but the principle is the same. The actions of men and of societies depend upon their elementary principles ; if these are correct, conscientious convictions must be correct also. The elementary principle of the Brownists were not correct, and thence proceeded those marked errors which have been adverted to ; were these principles unchangeable, men's conduct would be as fixed as that of an inanimate machine. It is the power of volition that constitutes the man,—the ability to change those influences by which he is governed ; and in the accomplishment of this are embraced the refinement and advancement of the human family.

A knowledge of physical things comes by observation, but the spiritual faculties have no type on earth, and are to be traced to no other source than the impress of the Divine mind on the mind of man. Des Cartes and Malabranche, two of the most eminent

philosophers of the seventeenth century, destroyed their books, and rejected authority, that they might thence entirely depend upon their own convictions for the attainment of truth. The Puritans of Boston relied upon books and upon authority to gain the same end. There is a principle of common sense, of Divine intelligence, which is superior to all authority. This the Brownists rejected, blindly yielding themselves up to the government of laws, adapted to a different people in a distant age.

The Jews, feeling the beneficent influence of the Divine power, without a corresponding intelligence, believed themselves to be a peculiar people, the especial favorites of heaven. Hence their extermination of those who thought differently from themselves. A like influence and want of intelligence persuaded the Puritans that they also were the favorites of Heaven, the true Israel of God, that he had delivered all other people into their hands, and the supreme authority of the Mosaic code and of the ten commandments followed almost as a matter of course. They called it religion, but however animating social communions may be, in which kindred minds seem, as it were, to mingle together, every organization from the Jewish Sanhedrim to the present day, let it bear what name it may and be established for what purpose soever, is but a civil compact, created by the sympathies of society, and is not necessarily religious because it bears that name. It was from this system that the Brownists received



their bigoted superstition. It was a system of types and shadows, of forms and ceremonies, the natural tendency of which, while it made one day more holy, was to profane every other day of the week.

Of course, the more men have of such a religion as this, if religion it may be called, the worse they are; and there is evidence to show that the ministers and elders were more rigorous and severe than the common people. The source of religion is in man's own bosom; when he departs from that, he is cast afloat on the great ocean of uncertainty, and he takes up with any doctrine which may coincide with his own preconceived opinions.

There are sentiments and feelings to be developed within us, as exalted as ever existed in any other people. We refer to ancient sages, and to the philosophers of other generations, but what sources of truth had they that we have not?

The laws of all countries necessarily take their type from the character of the people: those of one nation can never be exactly adapted to another, because no two were ever under precisely the same circumstances.

The only true foundation for the laws and ordinances of men, is that sense of justice and truth which can alone adapt them to our respective situations. It is that which purifies and elevates every in-

dividual, so far as he adheres to it ; and as it elevates individuals, it perfects nations.

Locke, the great writer on the human mind, always professed religion, and yet his doctrine went to destroy it. He travelled far to find some nation destitute of religious belief, by which he could establish his theory, but he found none. In place of that sublime science, the study of the man within, inhabiting, in the whole scope of the intellect, a world more extensive than the world without us, his doctrine taught that we were to look to the senses for the knowledge of truth, that it was there alone that it was to be found.

It was this false principle that blinded the eyes of the Puritans, so that they were unable to distinguish right from wrong. They thought they were Christians, while they were worse than barbarians.

We see an apple fall to the ground, under the unchanging laws of gravity, without seeming to consider that the laws of mind are equally immutable.

The Puritans laid claim to the greatest holiness ; some of them even went so far as to say that Jesus Christ was the first Puritan. The good men among them were made so, not by what they called their religion, but in despite of it ; and this applies to every individual who is seeking for religion through the medium of the senses. They advocate the idea that there is nothing in the mind that has not been in the senses. This was the doctrine that Locke and Hobbes,

and men of that school, tried to establish, to which Leibnitz, the German philosopher, made this reply: "Nothing except the intellect itself;" and no man, however acute, has been able to deny this position. But whether or not, it has little bearing to the practical man, who may easily understand that we can have no real knowledge of truth, virtue, and godliness, from the opinions of other men.

The doctrines of the Brownists were never fully carried out: so far as they led the minds of men to the senses, to the eye, or the ear, as the source of truth, they naturally led to the destruction of all religion. This influence was continually checked by that grace of God which the priest denied to be his rule, but which was still operating to save them from further degradation.

A religion of ordinances is in its nature a persecuting religion, and that of the Sabbath forms no exception; fanatical men use it to accomplish their own selfish purposes. Among the Jews it was often diverted from a day of rest to a day of persecution; thus a poor man was stoned to death for gathering a few sticks on that day, and Jesus Christ was condemned for being a Sabbath-breaker. We have seen the effects of the superstition in England and Scotland; in this country, where the laws were still more severe, the effects were more deeply marked. Each of the individual colonies of New England, Plymouth, Massachusetts, New Haven, Connecticut, with the

exception of Rhode Island, had severe enactments relative to the first day of the week.

Following the institutions of Moses, the first draught of the laws in Massachusetts, by Cotton, made profaning the Lord's day a capital offence. The punishment of death was erased by Winthrop; but they totally refused to make any alteration in that part which forbade persons from walking in the streets or fields on that day.\*

In Connecticut the laws were thus: "No one shall run on the Sabbath day, or walk in his garden, or elsewhere, except reverently to and from meeting."

"No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair or shave on the Sabbath day."

"No woman shall kiss her child on Sabbath or fasting days."

"The Sabbath shall begin at sunset on Saturday."

"If any man shall kiss his wife, or wife her husband, on the Lord's day, the party in fault shall be punished at the discretion of the Court of Magistrates'.†

At this period, in America, and we may hope for the last time, in the history of the world, the Sabbatarians controlled the government of a State with undisputed authority. They had learning without intelligence, knowledge without wisdom. The supersti-

\*Hutchinson's Hist.

† Blue Laws, pp. 206, 122 and 130.

tion which enacted these laws, acted and re-acted upon itself, and its fruits, and those resulting from a strict observance of the Sabbath, were directly at variance with the promises that are now held forth by the Sabbatarians, and to which we have heretofore referred. The facts are so curious and conclusive, as to be worthy of a calm and attentive consideration.

These Sabbath laws, interfering as they did with the inherent rights of man, and with that divine harmony which is essential to his well-being on earth, were connected with the most bitter and unrelenting persecutions. In less than ten years from the settlement of Boston, Roger Williams, one of their own ministers of Salem, was persecuted, and had to flee the colony for his opinions upon baptism; and Anne Hutchinson, a woman of superior abilities, tinctured with Antinomian doctrine, was charged with holding meetings in her own house, and was banished among the Indians, where she was murdered with nearly all her family.

Vane, the fourth Governor, an Independent, Coddington, Winthrop, and others, Episcopalians, soon followed. Coddington, in a letter to Ralph Fretful, says, that he with other magistrates resisted the power of the priests for several days, to save Hutchinson and Wheelwright; at length, he says, the priests got the ascendancy, they were condemned;\* many others left the colony.

Some Baptists who came from Rhode Island to visit

\* Besse's Sufferings of the Quakers.

a sick friend, and held a prayer-meeting in the house, were publicly whipped for the offence; and it does not appear that any of the sects that came in contact with the Brownists, of Boston, escaped with impunity.

Men were fined for not attending their churches, and whipped if unwilling to pay their fines.

By an act, dated so early as 1647, a person only suspected of Popery was to be banished, and if he returned, was liable to be hung.

In the year 1600, by another law, the penalty against the Papists was "perpetual imprisonment or death," and it allowed those who were suspected to be apprehended "without warrant."\* The Catholics kept out of the colony, and escaped the penalty.

The law against the Quakers was still more severe; not only were they banished upon pain of death, but the most cruel indignities and sufferings were heaped upon them; the tools of the mechanic were taken from him; the plow and the oxen were seized at the moment when the farmer was putting in his seed or taking in his harvest; the cow that gave nourishment to the little children was taken away, and the cattle from the field to pay fines, which they had no right to impose. A law was passed authorizing not only stripping and scourging men and women in the open streets, but cutting off their ears and boring their tongues for no other crime than being Quakers. Hored Gardner, a Friend from Rhode

\* Elot's Massachusetts Laws, p. 134, quoted by White.

Island, was publicly whipped, and no protection was given to her poor innocent infant clinging to her breast but the arms of its agonized mother.

These were the tender mercies of a Sabbath-day religion. After she had thus suffered, she knelt down and prayed for her persecutors, and this was deemed fanaticism.

We would willingly give to our forefathers the benefit of an apology which they often claim, that these peculiar hardships of the Quakers were the result of their own extravagant behaviour. As they claim it, it is not true. The first Quakers that came to New England, were Mary Fisher and Anne Austin. While yet on ship-board, before they had had the opportunity to commit any overt act whatever, they were arrested, were brought on shore by an officer deputed for the purpose, taken to prison, their books and papers seized and ordered to be burned by the hangman, and they to be transported out of the colony. This was the first salutation which the Quakers received. The order signed by the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, directed the jailor to open their trunks and chests as often as he thought necessary.

A still greater indignity was offered them; they were stripped to a state of nudity and examined to discover whether they had teats, tokens by which they could nourish witches. And this, it will be ob-

served, was before these or any other Quakers had committed any act whatever in the colony.

At this period, the whole moral atmosphere, both of Old England and New England, was tinctured with fanaticism, and the Quakers certainly did not escape the infection. Yet the fanaticism of the Quakers was an infringement of morals, the fanaticism of other Puritans was manifested in the abridgement of the civil and religious rights of man. The fanaticism of the Quakers of New England never manifested itself till after they had been goaded on almost to madness by intense sufferings; after these cruelties had been continued for a period of nine years, two, as it was stated, innocent and modest women appeared partially unclothed, one in the congregation of Newbury, the other in the streets of Salem, taking this mode almost in fits of desperation, as they declared, to testify against the cruelty and immodesty of the authorities, in stripping and whipping females in the public streets. One woman appeared with blackened face, clothed in sack-cloth and ashes, to foretell the appearance of the black-pox among them. These were the excesses that were committed. There were other trifling offences with which they were charged. Like the members of the Third Estate in the French National Assembly, they declined pulling off their hats, to make obeisance to men whom they considered



no better than themselves, and this was deemed a great crime.

Their only real offence was that they were Quakers, and their sufferings were the result of pure unmixed bigotry, intolerance and superstition.

The general law of the province says of the Quakers that "they frequented meetings of their own, in opposition to our church order"—that "they held horrid opinions"—that "they denied the established forms of worship"—and were "in opposition to the orthodox opinions of the godly."\* This is the sum of all the charges which were made against the Quakers, and for which they were made to suffer so severely.

As a matter of true history, I subjoin two warrants, which will speak for themselves.

BOSTON, *September* 16th, 1668.

"To the Marshal-General, or to his Deputy: You are to take with you the Executioner, and to repair to the House of Correction, and there see him cut off the right ears of John Copeland, Christopher Holder and John Rouse, Quakers, in execution of the sentence of the Court of Assistants, for the breach of the law entitled Quakers."

"EDWARD RAWSON, *Secretary.*"

"To the Constables of Dover, Hampton, Salisbury,

\* See "An Act made at a General Court, held at Boston, the 20th of October, 1658.

Newbury, Rowley, Ipswich, Wenham, Lynn, Boston, Roxbury, Dedham; and until these vagabond Quakers are carried out of this jurisdiction, you and every of you are required, in the King's Majesty's name, to take these vagabond Quakers, Anne Coleman, Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose, and make them fast to the cart tail, and, driving the cart through your several towns, to whip them upon their naked backs, not exceeding ten stripes apiece on each of them, in each town, and so to convey them, from constable to constable, till they are out of this jurisdiction, as you shall answer it at your peril, and this shall be your warrant. Per me,\*

“RICHARD WARDEN.”

“*Dover, Dec. 22nd, 1662.*”

Thus through the fiery zeal of these Puritans, these tender women were to be whipped through eleven towns, a distance of 80 miles. The account says, that on a very cold day they were stripped naked, from the middle upwards, and tied to a cart, and whipped, while the priest looked on and laughed. The sentence was executed through several towns, carrying them through dirt and snow half leg deep, till a clerk of one of the courts had the independence to say, “I am here to see your wickedness and cruelty, that, if you kill these women, I may be able to testify against you.” The only opposition to their release seems to have been from John Wheelright, the priest, who advised

\* Sewel's Hist.

the constable to drive on as his safest way. Soon after which, another priest said to them, "Ye have spoken well, and prayed well—pray what is your rule?" They replied, "The spirit of God is our rule, and it ought to be thine, and all men's to walk by:" to which he replied, "It is not my rule, and I hope never will be."\*

In England, calling religion to their aid, they held a prayer meeting of five hours' continuance,† to ascertain, as they pretended, whether they should cut off King Charles' head or not. The answer was according to their own prejudices, and the king was beheaded. They then thought it honorable to resist the arbitrary power of the king; but it was quite another affair when the Quakers objected to their own arbitrary proceedings, and asked for liberty of conscience for themselves.

They executed the king for objecting to liberty of conscience, and the Quakers, for pleading for it. There was no charge of immoral conduct against them; they were persons estimable in every way, but they had this unpardonable sin to answer for—that their faith differed from that of the Brownists; and for this alone they were hurried into the prisons, and condemned to death.

I copy these words from the warrant: "Because it appears by their own confession, words, and actions,

\* Hutchinson's History.

† D'Israeli's History of Charles I.

that they are Quakers, wherefore a sentence was pronounced against them to depart this jurisdiction on pain of death."\* One of these was Mary Dyer, a pious and exemplary woman, who came from Rhode Island. On going to the gallows, she used these words: "No eye can see, no ear can hear, no tongue can utter, and no heart can understand the sweet incomes or influence, and the refreshings of the spirit of the Lord, which now I feel."

After her two friends had been hung beside her, the halter put about her neck, and her face covered with a handkerchief, she was reprieved at the intercession of her son, and the next day wrote the following letter:

*28th of the 6th Mo. 1659.*

"Once more to the General Court, assembled in Boston, speaks Mary Dyer, even as before: My life is not accepted, neither availeth me, in comparison of the lives and liberty of the truth, and servants of the living God, for which, in the bowels of love and meekness, I sought you: yet, nevertheless, with wicked hands have you put two of them to death, which makes me feel, that the mercies of the wicked is cruelty; I rather choose to die than to live as from you, as guilty of their innocent blood: Therefore, seeing my request is hindered, I leave you to the righteous Judge and Searcher of all hearts, who, with

\* Sewel's History of the Quakers.

the pure measure of light he hath given to every man to profit withal, will, in due time, let you see whose servants you are, and of whom you have taken counsel, which I desire you to search into." All these appeals were vain—Mary Dyer was hung.\*

Two others, who were first sentenced with her and executed, were Marmaduke Stephenson, a respectable countryman of Yorkshire, and William Robinson, a merchant of London. Robinson being a man of learning, the offence was deemed the greater, and he was first condemned to be severely whipped, the constable being "commanded to procure an able-bodied man for the purpose."

The fourth victim was William Leddra. He was kept in a cold prison during the winter, chained to a log of wood, and on his trial he was brought into court with his chains and the log at his heels. The charges against him were, "that he owned those Quakers that were put to death, and that they were innocent;" "that he would not put off his hat in court;" "that he said thee and thou." Leddra replied: "Will you put me to death for breathing the air of your jurisdiction? I appeal to the laws of

\* The son of Mary Dyer came to the State of Delaware, and her descendants are among the most respectable inhabitants of the United States. The children of Louis M<sup>c</sup>Lane, late Secretary of the Treasury, are her descendants in the seventh descending line. Also Judge Milligan, of Delaware. Some of her personal trinkets still remain in the family.

England. If by them I am guilty, I refuse not to die."

They took no notice of his request, but endeavored to persuade him to recant his error, to which, as the account saith, "with grave magnanimity he replied," "What! to join with such murderers as you are? Then let every man that meets me say, Lo, this is the man that hath forsaken the God of his salvation!"

The day before Leddra's execution, he wrote a letter to his friends, beginning with these beautiful words :

*Most dear and inwardly beloved:—*The sweet influences of the morning star, like a flood, distilling into my innocent habitation, hath so filled me with the joy of the Lord, in the beauty of holiness, that my spirit is as if it did not inhabit a tabernacle of clay, but is wholly swallowed up in the bosom of eternity, from whence it had its being."\*

The innocent character of these victims is material, to show the unmixed nature of that bigotry which was the result of principles of intolerance, called religion, one of the prominent traits of which was a strict observance of the Sabbath day.

The fifth Quaker who was condemned to death in Boston, was Wenlock Christison. His execution was prevented by a mandamus from the king, forbidding them to proceed. It was brought to Boston by a ship-load of Quakers, and came from a quarter alto-

\* Sewel's History, p. 266, 267.

gether unexpected; the colonists sent a deputation to the king to avert his anger, but wisely concluded to obey his authority, and Christison, and twenty-seven of his friends who were imprisoned, were immediately released.

Bancroft, alluding to this transaction, has the tenderness to ascribe it to a conviction of the magistrates of their error. (See 1st vol. p. 458.) It was the mandamus that convinced them, and it led to a curious piece of etiquette. The King's messenger was a Quaker. Endicott, the governor, not knowing his business, directed that his hat should be taken off. On learning that he was a King's messenger, he ordered his hat to be given to him, and immediately pulled off his own, in deference to royal authority. These were the first and last capital convictions in the English Colonies of America, for opinions respecting religion.

It will be naturally asked, what right these persons had to impose themselves upon the government, and subject themselves to such cruel laws. To this it may be replied,—precisely the same right as their persecutors. In some parts of the colony there were a large number of Quaker settlers. In the town of Sandwich, nigh unto Plymouth, nearly the whole population were Quakers; they had a perfect right to be there; the charter gave to the Brownists no peculiar privileges; they were not an independent body, had no authority to exclude the Quakers, or to subject them to indignities of any kind, yet the latter could

not hold a religious meeting after their own manner, without being subjected to excessive fines ; and these Quakers who forfeited their lives, asked from their persecutors a repeal of these unrighteous laws. They were the champions of civil and religious liberty. They were buried in Boston common, where it is presumed their remains now repose, and the friends of civil and religious liberty might here erect a monument to their memory. Edward Shippen, at the time Mayor of Philadelphia, a highly respectable man, and from whom many estimable families are descended, and who was twice publicly whipped in Boston for being a Quaker, applied to the authorities for liberty to erect some token to their memory ; he found the spot, but his request was refused, and he was only permitted to place in the ground two posts. Tradition may still point out where their remains rest.

These executions were believed to be clear cases of murder, being contrary to the laws of England ; two of the actors in the tragedy, on going to England, found it necessary to secrete themselves from the father of Robinson, who was not a Quaker, in order to save themselves from a public indictment.

The execution of the Quakers was a crisis in New England affairs ; the English mind was shocked at the barbarity, and the General Court of Massachusetts, calling themselves “ your poor Mephibosheths,” came “ kneeling ” before the king, whom they called “ most



gracious and dread sovereign," supplicating him that their civil privileges and patent might not be taken from them. Their dread sovereign granted them a charter, but it was altogether a different affair from what they had heretofore had; it secured liberty of conscience to all except Papists; and as the mandamus in favor of the Quakers was brought to the colony by a Quaker messenger, this charter was brought by a reverend gentleman of the Church of England, with his surplice and common prayer-book, which had heretofore given such horror to the Puritans.

Thus through the power of the king and the sacrifice of her life, Mary Dyer's prayer was answered,— "I will not accept my life at your hands until you repeal your unrighteous laws." The laws were repealed, and the Episcopalians, after being banished from the colony, were enabled to establish their regular service in Boston; the Baptists were no longer in dread of the whipping post, in coming to visit their sick friends; ears were no longer cut off, nor tongues bored; innocent women were in no fear of being stripped and whipped through the streets of Boston, tied to carts' tails, and the Quakers were permitted, from that time forward, to hold their meetings in peace; thus was the triumph of the constancy of the Quakers accomplished; and it may be added, that the fanaticism of the Quakers themselves ended with the occasion which had called it forth.

These are believed to be the truths of history, and it

is apparent that the people of Massachusetts, at the present day, are still feeling the benefits of the constancy and heroic martyrdom of the despised anti-Sabbath Quakers; they gained a freedom which they had never before enjoyed, with that expansion of mind which was its necessary consequence. Though superstition was too deeply ingrafted in their system to be at once done away, yet a higher degree of civil and religious liberty than they had heretofore known, was at once bestowed upon the colony.

It is not my purpose to enter into the subject of the right of the Quakers to settle in the colony, further than may be gathered from the following facts. The Great Charter of England contains these words :

First. "Every Englishman is born free."

Fourth. "No freeman shall be outlawed."

Fifth. "No freeman shall be exiled."

Seventh. "No freeman shall be taken, imprisoned, dissiesed, outlawed, exiled, or be destroyed of his liberties, freeholds, and free customs, but by the lawful judgment of his peers."

These are the words of the great charter of English liberty; and to give solemnity to the act, the archbishops and bishops of England, apparelled in high pontificals, with tapers burning, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and of the blessed apostles, and all martyrs, accursed in advance all those who should break this charter of English liberties.

We turn next to the royal charter, as granted to the Massachusetts colony. We give nearly its own words, as taken from Story's Commentaries, page 21.

"All subjects of the Crown, who shall become inhabitants of the colony, shall enjoy all the liberties and immunities of the natural subjects of England."

Again; they were permitted to enact laws and ordinances: "So as such laws and ordinances be not contrary or repugnant to the laws and statutes of this our realm of England."

If these enactments are true, then it must be evident that these Quakers had the same rights in the colony as their persecutors. If the Puritans of Great Britain are to be honored for successfully resisting the power of the Crown, and for their contests with bigoted and ignorant church hierarchies, still more the anti-Sabbath Quakers of New England should be honored, for resisting a church hierarchy as appalling and cruel as any that was met with in the old country.

It was not alone against the schismatics in religion that the zeal of the Puritans was directed. Children of tender age were believed to be possessed with devils, and nineteen persons were publicly executed in Massachusetts for witchcraft, protesting their innocence.

Herein, too, they neglected common sense, to be guided by authority. Moses had said, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live;" and they had no difficulty in finding subjects. Little children from nine

to ten years of age were suffered to give evidence against their parents, and women testified before the Court, that they had gone to witch meetings on broomsticks, riding through the air. It is well said by Chief Justice Marshall, in his *Life of Washington*,—“Never was there given a more melancholy proof of the degree of depravity always to be counted upon when the public passions countenance crime.”\* Were these people enlightened by their rigid Sabbaths, their abundant fasts, and ostentatious religious displays?

The conduct of the Brownists to the poor unhappy Indians was marked by a cruelty which was unknown in any other of the colonies. By forced treaties and treachery, they separated the Pequods from the Narragansetts, and then destroyed both in detail. Men, women, and children, were butchered or burned in their wigwams, in the most revolting manner. In Philip, the Sachem of the Wampanoags, they found a man of renown and high spirit, worthy of their confidence. He was hunted like a wild beast, shot down, his body quartered and hung upon poles, while his head was carried to Plymouth as a trophy, and there exhibited as a curiosity for twenty years; and his son, a child only nine years of age, was doomed to death in cold blood, and received banishment and slavery as a boon. Canonicus was the Grand Sachem of the Narragansetts, when the English landed at

\* Note 5 to first vol. *Life of Washington*.

Plymouth. Roger Williams calls him a wise and peaceable prince. He told Williams, "I have never suffered any wrong to be offered to the English. If Englishman speak true, if he mean truly, then shall I go to my grave in peace." The Englishman did not speak true; Miantinomi, his nephew, who succeeded him, was captured and executed, and Canonchet, the son of the brave but unfortunate Miantinomi, was the last Sachem of his race. He was offered his life by the English, upon the condition that he would treat for the submission of his subjects; this he indignantly rejected, and he was condemned to death for the crime of defending his country. When this sentence was announced to him, he replied in these heroic words: "I like it well that I shall die before my heart grows soft, or that I have said any thing unworthy of myself." These were the men who had the unhappiness to fall a prey to the New England Puritans.

One hundred and fifty friendly Indians, who had claimed and received the promise of protection, were marched from old Dartmouth, now in part New Bedford, to Plymouth, where they were embarked and sold as slaves. Thirty were carried out into Boston Bay, and thrown into the sea; two were pursued and murdered by the women of Marblehead, who discovered them as they came from church.\*

\* See Hutchinson's History; Drake's Book of the Indians, book 2, 106; Felt's Salem; Quite's Puritanism, page 420, 421.

Two innocent children of Lawrence Southwick, declining to attend meeting on account of some severities to their parents, were, for that offence alone, fined ten pounds, and having no visible estates, being minors, the General Court, under an order signed by Edward Rawson, Secretary, directed that they should be sold as slaves "to any of the English nations, as Virginia or Barbadoes, to answer the said fines." The execution of this sentence was only prevented by the greater humanity of a shipmaster, who refused to carry away such innocent children.

The account of these atrocities, so needful to a proper understanding of the spirit of Sabbath-day religion, and to which only a slight allusion is made here, may well cause the feeling heart to bleed.

Before the passengers in the *Mayflower* had made their formal landing at Plymouth, some of them being on shore, discovered some sepulchres of the dead, and a granary of corn; these they rifled, and gave God thanks that he had delivered this corn into their hands.\* These acts were returned by a shower of arrows from the poor Indians. Yet, ridiculous as it may appear, the first day of the week occurring, they deemed it their duty to observe it as a Sabbath, with great strictness: thus obeying the written precepts of Moses, while they violated moral integrity.

\* Journal of the proceedings of the Plantation settled at Plymouth.

Those who have read the pathetic account of their embarkation, in Holland, only a few weeks before; where it is presumed these individual men were present, and when the Dutch spectators themselves, standing on the shore, were drowned in tears, and even the shore itself seemed to respond to their vows, will hardly accuse them of any intentional wrong. Bending into each other's arms, they joined in solemn prayer, that God would have pity on his poor children, and go with them into that waste wilderness.

These events, seemingly so different, proceeded not from moral turpitude, but were the necessary consequence of those principles which had guided their life in other similar circumstances.

Another very curious illustration of their character was manifested in their attempt to bribe the king. Apprehending that their chartered rights were endangered, agents were appointed, and according to their never-failing practice, they held a day of fasting and prayer for the preservation of their patent, and the success of the agency. Thus fortified, they took another precaution; with prayers almost in their mouths, they tendered to the Lord Chancellor two thousand guineas, or ten thousand dollars, as a bribe, for his majesty's private use. This is related on the unquestionable authority of Chalmers, page 461, 462. And he adds, in justice to the other colonies, that

there is no evidence to show that they ever employed similar means. According to Hutchinson, the bait took, and was approved by the General Court.\*

They justified this act, also, by Scripture. A letter of Shirley, a Plymouth agent, to Gov. Bradford, says, in justification of bribes, "But as Festus said to Paul, with no small sum obtained I this freedom."\*

Even the civil laws, instead of being ameliorated, as might have been expected from persons professing so much, were made, in many cases, more sanguinary than those of England, having incorporated into them offences which were made capital by the Mosaic code. "To blaspheme the name of God;" "wilful perjury;" "to 'pon word, or to perform outward worship to false gods;" "burglary and theft on the Lord's day;" "denial of the books of the Old or New Testament," and a variety of other offences, were made capital. A child over sixteen years of age, "who smote or cursed father or mother, was to suffer death," according to the Mosaic code. For the offence of keeping Christmas day, there was a fine of five pounds. See Massachusetts State Papers, page 419. Also Hutchinson's History, Article Laws. And withal there was that absolute decline in the public morals which we have heretofore noticed as connected with the Sabbath excitement in England and Scotland.

\* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 303.

† Mass. Hist. Coll., 1st series, vol. iii. 70.



Mather's *Magnalia*, a book of unquestionable authority, thus describes this period :—

“There is a great and visible decay of the power of godliness amongst many professors in these churches. It may be feared that there is in too many, spiritual and heart apostasy from God.” “Litigious lawsuits have scandalously multiplied among us ;” “many people have sinned horribly, upon the presumption that they have sinned secretly ;” “secret murders have shamefully been discovered among us, and I believe that there are yet more to be discovered.” “There has been devilish filthiness committed among us.” “There have been church members among us, who have made no mean profession of religion ; these have gone on from year to year, in a trade of secret filthiness.” “I have known some wretched young men in several societies, who have been the chief debauchers of the society they belonged unto.” Many other particulars are recorded by Mather, second volume, page 342, etc., such as we think never existed in any other of the early colonies.

It will be recollected that this was a young country, far removed from the tumults and vices of Europe, where, if anywhere, purity of manners might be expected ; yet, so different are the facts, that it may be doubted whether, during all that part of the seventeenth century, comprising a period of eighty years,

in which these severe laws were enforced, there was a single day of repose to the new colonies; and let it be observed, during all this period, the strictest observance of the Sabbath was required and enforced.

The commonwealth of England was a failure; so also was the early government of Massachusetts; many of their irrational laws have been repealed, others have become obsolete by the lapse of time; the connection between church and state has been dissolved: and as these have successively given way, the State has been able to hold a position in the country which it never could have obtained under the old system of government. This contained in itself the seeds of revolution: had it not been subverted, its effect would have been to destroy the charter, and to deliver the colony to the Crown, to be governed by its arbitrary will. Yet, it is evident, to use the language of D'Israeli, that the errors of the Puritans still breed in monstrous shapes around us. The country has received from them the poison of an abuse of the first day of the week. And all the thanksgivings and fasts by law, which are spreading through the country, so childish to intelligent minds, may be traced to them.

The laws still in force in New England contain the principle that "a religious establishment of the Christian Protestant religion and public worship, ought to be maintained by legal coercion."\* And

\* *Dakes versus Hill*, 10 Pick. Rep. 333. See *Kent's Commentaries*, page 618.

Justice Story, with his New England predilections, has in the case of Smith and Sparrow, 4 Bingham, 84, 88, by following the fraud of the English judges introduced the Christian religion into the American Constitution, with which it has no connection, and cut off the Chinese, who are now settling in such numbers in California, the Jew, the Turk, etc., from those benefits which that instrument was apparently designed to confer upon all.\*

The poor Chinese are at this moment suffering under great disabilities in California; their oaths are refused in a court of justice; they cannot sue or be sued; they are thus placed out of the protection of the law, and at the mercy of every unprincipled adventurer who finds it his interest to rob them; and yet, as a whole, they are known to be industrious, and are believed to be a worthy and good people.

These things arise from the sectarian bias of judges, and for which their learning, great soever as it may be, is no compensation. The spirit of the Christian religion enters into the human mind, and thus pervades all our institutions. It is not subject to the control of men. It is beneficent and elevating in its nature. Sectarian Christianity is Sabbath Christianity,—persecuting, intolerant, and narrow-minded, and never was designed to make any part of our laws. To make religion dependent upon law, would be to

\* See Jefferson's letter to Cartwright.

impair it, if that were possible. It is only within the present century that intolerant religious distinctions have been removed from the Constitutions of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and that not without severe and long continued struggles.

In whatever country the religious element shall be most exalted, free from dogmas, and sects, and Sabbaths, that country will be most elevated in science, in the arts, in whatever is noble or good in the character of man. Schools and colleges cannot furnish this; on the contrary, as at present established, they retard it; all the good that they do is in the primary instruction of youth, and we are not disposed to undervalue this, yet it is not a compensation for the derangement of society, resulting from the inculcation of those principles which were so injurious to the Brownists, in the early history of the colony. They have, indeed, abandoned the Mosaic code; the Jewish laws are not held to be binding upon them, but their divinity schools send forth yearly hundreds of what they call pious young men, as we may believe, with every good intention, but deeply imbued with that idolatry, which, though different in character from that of their forefathers, is in spirit essentially the same. Though these things fail, yet there is no cause of despair; but there is cause for earnest inquiry by intelligent minds, whether more correct elementary principles will not slowly but surely, in

despite of all influences that may be brought against them, produce, as their inevitable result, a higher civilization, and an amelioration of the condition of society.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE QUAKERS.

THE foregoing chapter furnishes some imperfect sketches of the most remarkable events in the colonial history of this country. Many of them bear the character of religious movements. How far they may have been the effect of a genuine, but mistaken endeavor to do right, no man can determine. Religion is alluded to in these pages, in its popular sense. Though superstition may always be considered a burden upon society, a source of unhappiness to individuals, and often productive of the most dreadful evils, yet it would be presumptuous to deny, on this ground, genuine piety to the Brownists, or to claim it for others who adhere to a more philosophical and simple profession of faith. The cause of superstition in individual minds is not easily traced; the facts before us demonstrate, and it is sufficient for our argument, that the enactment of severe Sabbath laws, and

a strict observance of the Sabbath, are not calculated to refine society. They also prove that the morals of society have not been degraded, where the day has not been considered more holy than other days, but the reverse; for this obvious reason, that every superstition is injurious to the morals and well-being of man. On the one hand, there is a religion of ceremonies, deriving its authority from the Jewish code, of which the Brownists were the type; on the other, a professedly spiritual religion, founded on man's own convictions, the type of which is the Quakers.

No one has yet penetrated the power of the spiritual element in man. We witness the influence of the same Divine power in things around us. The trees bud and bring forth their fruit; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet they are arrayed in a glory greater than that of Solomon. Inasmuch as man, according to his capacity, is penetrated with the same influence, he also may be supposed to attain perfection according to his nature.

Of the innumerable organizations which bear the name of Christ, we know of but one, that rejecting all Sabbaths and festal days, all forms and ceremonies, except such as may be needful to accomplish the ends of existence, maintains the sufficiency of the power of God in the soul, to make men wise in this life, and to prepare them for a union and communion with the spirits of the just in the world to come.

Bancroft, in his History of the United States, says:

“The rise of the people called Quakers, is one of the memorable events in the history of man. It marks the moment when intellectual freedom was claimed by the people as an inalienable birthright. The principles of the Quakers contained a moral revolution. If it flattered self-love, and fed enthusiasm, it also established absolute freedom of mind, trod every idolatry under foot, and entered the strongest protest against the forms of a hierarchy.”

Words can hardly be more true than those of Bancroft. George Fox says, “Our religion stands wholly out of that, which all their religion stands in.” Address to the Royal Society. And Penington,—“Our religion stands in a principle that changes the mind.”

The religion of the Quakers, in their palmy days, stood in its own power, and had in it a strength which no other doctrine could impart; it was a doctrine of individualism, the first principle of which was obedience to God—that man should first know himself, his wants and capacities, that he might thence be qualified to understand the wants and capacities of others. It was in itself, a charter of human rights, superior to all written precepts, and embraced the very spirit of civil and religious liberty.

It seems, even at this late day, when the subject of organization has been deeply studied, not to be sufficiently understood, that the successful develop-

ment of every organization depends upon the harmony of its parts. The governments of Europe rely upon the sword, to reconcile their contradictions; a free government, with a reasonably virtuous people, needs no sword, provided each part dove-tail and fit to its fellow; without this, there is conflict and confusion. The beautiful, simple principles of the Society of Friends never were fully carried out; they were too ultra for the day, hence the Quaker difficulty in conducting the politics of Pennsylvania. A democratic government, with a hereditary Governor at its head, was a contradiction, and to this cause may be ascribed nearly all the difficulty that occurred in the government of the colony of Pennsylvania.

Other contradictions have been the fruitful source of schisms and revolutions in the Quaker society; departing from their original foundation, they have to some degree, like the Brownists, become men of authority, and have overlaid a beautiful elementary principle with dogmas, which, so far from having any connection with it, are absolutely in contradiction to it. From having the control of five of the early colonies of this country, they have ceased to influence the government of either. Acting faithfully upon contradictory principles, with the utmost individual integrity, they cannot maintain peace even in their own Society. A remarkable case in point, is the government of the United States; a more perfect



system can hardly be found, each part corresponding with the rest, requiring only a virtuous people to carry it into effect, with the exception of one fearful contradiction. The South may argue as they think proper, on the subject of negro slavery, but it never can be made to harmonize with the general principles of a free government; it is only suited to a despotism, to be ruled by the power of the sword. Those who framed the Constitution seemed perfectly to understand this,—none more decidedly than Mason and Washington, and other Southern members, yet instead of being abated, its evils are increasing. Every thing of a contradictory character, even down to Sabbath laws, whether in religious or civil society, is productive of evil.

In considering the doctrine of the Quakers, it is apart from their imperfections, discipline, and peculiarities, be they what they may. Falling far short of what might have been expected, yet so far as they have acted under the spiritual element, or under the influence of the divine light in their own souls, they have been the means of unfolding great principles of human nature, the inevitable effect of which has been the refinement and civilization of man. In every stage of their being, they have been anti-Sabbatarians, and their history will demonstrate that they have not been injured thereby.

New England furnishes one beautiful illustration

of correct principles without the aid of Sabbath laws, which cannot be too much admired. It is never alluded to, in their many celebrations, orations, and toast-drinkings. To allude to it might be a reproach and condemnation of the Brownists of Plymouth and Boston.

It was in the little colony of Rhode Island proper, distinct alike from the Narragansett country, which was called the King's Province, and from the Providence Plantations, which were under the government of Roger Williams, that the true principles of civil and religious liberty were first promulgated in British America. It will be recollected, that for a long period, Rhode Island, small as the State now is, was divided into three provinces.\*

William Coddington, who has been referred to before, a magistrate, and treasurer of Suffolk county, an Episcopalian, and who built the first house in Boston, after being banished from Massachusetts, found his way to the island of Rhode Island, where, in the year 1652, he was appointed by the Crown governor for life, though afterwards superseded. He embraced the great idea that there was an inward principle in man, which qualified him for self-government, and it was here that that "holy experiment," afterwards

\* The name of Rhode Island being applied as well to the general colony as to the particular island, in each of which there were at one time separate governments, has led to ambiguity in their early history. I give what I believe to be correct.

spoken of by William Penn, of man's ability to take care of himself, without Sunday laws, or coercive laws of any kind, was first tried. The result was one of the most curious which history can furnish. Different from all others of the New England colonies, there was no law to oblige people to go to what they called a place of worship, on Sunday, and liberty of conscience was said to be carried to an irreligious extreme. Their conduct to the unhappy natives was equally remarkable; they who were called Tawny Devils in Massachusetts, and believed to be unworthy of confidence, were found in Rhode Island to be wise and peaceful men. Canonius, Miantinomi, and Canonchet, grand sachems, were heroes in their way, and are said to have exhibited a fortitude and heroism equal to any in ancient or modern times.\* These Indians and their tribe were treated like men; their evidence was taken in the Courts, they were allowed to sit on juries, in all cases affecting themselves, and great efforts were made to ameliorate their condition. This kindness was met by a corresponding feeling on the part of the Narragansetts, and when war and bloodshed reigned around, Rhode Island remained safe.

When the Massachusetts and other colonies entered into a league against the Indians, and it was estimated that one-twentieth of the inhabitants were de-

\* History of the Narragansett Church.

stroyed, and one-twentieth of the houses burned, the little colony of Rhode Island remained undisturbed; not a house was burned, nor an inhabitant injured; nay, further, the colony was made an asylum for the oppressed. Those that were uninjured, found there repose; those that were injured, came there to die. This is one of the most beautiful pictures which the early colonial history presents, and is that of a non-Sabbath keeping people.

The Quaker views respecting government were these: that there was a divine spirit or principle in the mind of man, given to him by the Author of all good, the centre of all truth, of all spiritual intelligence, of all harmony, of all virtue, which, as it was the true governing principle of the individual man, might also be relied on as the governing principle of nations. All men, as with one accord, seemed to unite in condemning these views. The philosopher in his closet, and the priest at his desk, joined with the learned man and the ignorant man, in their attempt to bring them into ridicule. Priest Wilson, in Boston, when the poor Quaker women were being whipped through the streets, said to them, as we have related, that this spirit was not his rule, and he trusted it never would be; and the politicians in England told the king that such persons were entitled to no favor. Yet in Pennsylvania was quietly laid on an extended scale, without parade or ostentation, the

true democratic principle of government, which was to spread from colony to colony, to be adopted by the government of the United States, and finally, to threaten the strongest despotisms of Europe.

The unfaltering confidence of Wm. Penn in this Divine Spirit, his living experience of it in his own soul, gave him strength to proclaim it as the elementary principle of his government. He wrote various treatises to prove its universality, and being so, it was necessarily as true in politics as it was in morals. To borrow a figure from Scripture, it might seem that when Wm. Penn proclaimed his exalted views respecting government, his lips might have been "touched by a seraphim, with a live coal from off the altar."

His frame of government was not an affair of expediency, of patriotism, or of policy; none of these things moved him. In his confidential letters to his secretary, Logan, which embrace every subject of an unreserved character, and which are yet in existence, in his own hand writing, extending over a series of years, to the last letter he ever wrote, when the pen dropped from his hand, not a word escapes him which indicates a dishonorable mind.

No monument has been erected, no pæans have been sung, no orations have been made, no dinners eaten or toasts drunk, yet the early laws of the great colony of Pennsylvania are a permanent monument,

that there, civil and religious liberty, and the rights of man, were placed upon a safe and enduring basis.

It was, as Penn calls it, a "holy experiment" of the power of man for self-government; not a theory, but founded upon the elementary principles of humanity, in which those coercive laws which had grown holy from antiquity were at once removed, and man was left to think and to act as he might deem proper, with this only restriction,—that he should do no injury to his fellow man. In the midst of nations called savage and relentless, there was no sword or gun, or military establishment—there was not even protection against the pirates of the ocean. It was a bold experiment, and none could have made it but men of superior minds.

No one can rob Penn of his honor but by a violation of truth. His government resulted from no unworthy appliances—not from things around him, but from his knowledge of the nature of man, his wants and capacities; from the knowledge of himself, the only true source of human intelligence. Thus he at once cut loose from the popular idea of imputed sin, and elevated man to a dignity which under no other circumstances he could enjoy.

This was a moral revolution, the foundation of which was individual virtue, for which mankind are probably more indebted to Penn than to any one that

ever lived, and the extent of which no man can foresee; and yet, as we shall show, Penn was a decided anti-Sabbatarian.

It is a noble, but a costly victim, involving often our dearest prejudices, to offer on the altar of truth our own self-love. But until men do this, they might as well expect to sow their grain in the desert and reap a harvest, as to be able clearly to distinguish right from wrong. This was the victim that was offered by Penn and the early Quakers—their own self-love—their dearest prejudices—as a means of attaining truth.

It has been said in a former chapter, that the people of Massachusetts are now reaping the benefit of the constancy of the Quaker martyrs; it may also be said, that it is to the anti-Sabbath Quakers mainly, that the United States are indebted for those principles of civil and religious liberty, which are so much the pride and boast of our country. Let us calmly consider the facts before us; it is not by crying peace, that peace is obtained; but by establishing those principles from which peace flows as a necessary consequence. So, also, of civil and religious liberty; they come not at our bidding, but are the natural effect of causes already existing in the human mind. It was the Quakers alone who proclaimed and established that great truth, that there is a living principle imparted to man by the Divine Spirit, which

is the source of all true civil and religious liberty; "it is the truth alone that makes man free." They demonstrated this great idea in the government of Pennsylvania, not perfectly, indeed, but in a way in which it had never been demonstrated before. The early government of Pennsylvania was the admiration of the world; the wise man and the weak man, the believer and the sceptic, those who had condemned Penn and Fox as visionary enthusiasts, united in bestowing on it unqualified praise. The King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, and Voltaire, expressed their astonishment at its success; Peter the Great went to the Quaker meetings, where, understanding the language, which his officers did not, he interpreted to them what had been said, and commended it, adding, that if they attended to it, it would lead them to happiness.\*

Both Charles the Second, and James the Second, in their extremity, placed themselves under the care of Quakers, not because they were their friends, but because they were believed to be governed by true principles. In this critical moment, their faith did not forsake them; they uncocked their pistols to prevent bloodshed: though large rewards were at their service, yet following virtue for virtue's sake, they refused all compensation.

Jefferson alludes to the success of Pennsylvania, as



a reason why Virginia should abolish her church hierarchy. Lawrence Washington, as recorded in Irving's *Life of Washington*, p. 50, says, that the principles of Pennsylvania are the admiration of the world.

Five of the early colonies were under the control of the Quakers; excepting these, all the colonies of this country were persecuting colonies. Our last chapter refers to New England; in New York, though more limited, there were severe whipping and imprisonments; entertaining of a Quaker was subjected to a fine of fifty pounds; and a vessel that brought one to the province was forfeited.

In Episcopal Virginia there were several acts making it penal for parents to refuse to have their children baptized; it was also made penal for a master of a vessel to bring a Quaker into the colony; those already there were to be imprisoned, and the punishment of death was awarded if they returned the third time. Jefferson says, in his *Notes on Virginia*, "if no execution took place here, as did in New England, it was not owing to the moderation of the Church, or spirit of the Legislature." Page 233.

The two most liberal colonies were the Catholic colony of Maryland, and the Baptist colony of the Providence Plantations. Yet the liberty of conscience claimed to have been established by Lord Baltimore, and by Roger Williams, was but a feeble and partial toleration, existing to-day, but to be changed to-morrow, by the caprices of successive Legislatures.

Thus, in Maryland, there was a law which enacted that those who should reproach the Holy Trinity or any of the three persons thereof, should suffer death; and in the Providence Plantations, the Roman Catholics were excluded from the colony, by a law which existed more than a hundred years; besides these, in each colony there were many minor acts which violated liberty of conscience. Wm. Penn had several interviews with Lord Baltimore, pleading for the repeal of these laws; and George Fox appeared at a public meeting at Providence, saying, "You are the unworthiest men upon earth, if you do lose the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free in life and glory." See Bancroft's History.

It will be recollected that at the early period of which we speak, these were all the colonies, New Hampshire being absorbed into Massachusetts. That the anti-Sabbath Quakers were first in establishing those principles from which civil and religious liberty naturally flow, and then carrying them into effect, admits of no denial.\*

In Carolina, the Quaker principles were peculiarly vindicated. The proprietors of that province—for the two formed one colony in their early day—applied to the celebrated John Locke, to form a constitution for its government. He had written extensively

\* The Quakers at one time controlled the governments of Rhode Island, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and the two Carolinas. The other colonies were those of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Maryland and Virginia.

on the human mind, on toleration, and on government, and was supposed, above all other men in England, to be qualified for the task; he performed his work, and it was believed by the wise men of England to be a perfect model; yet in practice it was utterly worthless, and produced nothing but discord. The colony was relieved from its difficulties by electing John Archdale, a Quaker, of Buckinghamshire, as Governor, and it immediately began to thrive under his administration. Locke's constitution was abandoned, and the representatives voted Archdale an address of thanks, saying that "by his wisdom and labor he had laid a firm foundation for a most glorious superstructure." (Archdale's Carolina, page 18.)

In juxtaposition to Locke's constitution, we may refer to that of Penn, for the government of Pennsylvania. State after State, in this Union, has copied not only his ideas, but in many instances his words; and they remain recorded as an enduring monument to his memory.

Penn came to Pennsylvania, using this language:

"As to consecrated days and times, we boldly testify against them, as beggarly and Jewish." "He certainly little deserves to be styled an evangelical minister, who, instead of preaching the end of all holy days, feasts, new moons, solemn assemblies, and Sabbath days, is asserting and maintaining the abso-

lute necessity and service of them under the gospel.”\* Robert Barclay, the defender of the Quaker faith, writes thus: some one had said, “John was in the spirit on the Lord’s day, therefore the first day of the week ought to be kept;” Barclay replied, “how hangs this together? Prove that John meant the first day of the week. We read much in Scripture of the day of the Lord, which is the Lord’s day; but nowhere do we find it called the first day of the week, or any other natural day; for it is spiritual: and as God called the natural light, day, so he calleth the spiritual light of his appearance, day.” Again, “If ye keep one day for his resurrection, why not one day for his conception, another for his birth, another for the annunciation of the angel, another for his being crucified, another for his ascension? and then we shall not want holy days in good store.” In his Apology he says—“We, not seeing any ground in Scripture for it, cannot be so superstitious as to believe that either the Jewish Sabbath now continues, or that the first day of the week is the anti-type thereof, or the true Christian Sabbath.”† “We know no moral obligation by the fourth commandment or elsewhere, to keep the first day of the week more than any other, or as any holiness inherent in it.”

\* Penn’s Works, 2d volume, page 21.

† Apology on Sabbath.

The first section of the first law of the province of Pennsylvania, enacted at Upland, now Chester, within a few days after Penn's arrival in the province, and which is still preserved among the archives at Harrisburg, was a bold and fearless declaration in favor of civil and religious liberty. The second section says, that for the ease of creation, ordinary labor should be suspended on the first day of the week.

A quarter of a century afterwards, the first Sabbath law of the province was enacted. It, like the former, was accompanied by a broad declaration in favor of liberty of conscience. This latter law was rejected by the British Crown, as being too liberal for the British constitution. It interdicted ordinary labor, but directed that cook-shops, victualling houses, ferries, etc., should be kept open for the accommodation of travellers, and there was no restriction upon sports or recreations of any kind.

Thus things remained for a period of more than one hundred years, when sports and recreations were for the first time interdicted in Pennsylvania. Yet, to the disgrace of the State, by laws made by the judges themselves, to suit the occasion, the Seventh-day Baptists have been denied the rights which, to men of common sense, appear to have been guaranteed to all. I give the opinion of General Washington upon this subject.

On the 2d of October, 1798, at New Mills, Bur-

lington county, State of New Jersey, a Seventh-day Baptist, being indicted before a Justice of the Peace for working on Sunday, and fined, he appealed; during the trial at Court, an extract of a letter from Gen. Washington was produced by the Judge in his charge to the Jury, which was in answer to a Committee of a Baptist Society in Virginia, dated August 4, 1789, as follows;—

“If I had had the least idea of any difficulty resulting from the Constitution adopted by the Convention of which I had the honor to be President, when it was formed, so as to endanger the rights of any religious denomination, then I never should have attached my name to that instrument. If I had any idea that the General Government was so administered that liberty of conscience was endangered, I pray you be assured that no man would be more willing than myself to revise and alter that part of it, so as to avoid all religious persecution. You can, without any doubt, remember that I have often expressed as my opinion, that every man who conducts himself as a good citizen is accountable alone to God for his religious faith, and should be *protected* in worshipping God according to his own conscience.

Signed,      GEORGE WASHINGTON.”

The result was, acquittal by the Jury.

The principles of Pennsylvania, repeatedly declared and summed up by William Penn, were, that

“the object of government is to support power with reverence to the people, and to secure the people from the abuse of power.”\* I have before alluded to the anti-toleration principles in New England. The London Presbyterian ministers in their confession of faith, say, “The last error they witness against, and in which all agree, is called the error of TOLERATION, patronizing and promoting all other errors, heresies, and blasphemies whatsoever, under the grossly abused notion of liberty of conscience.”†

Penn says, liberty of conscience is the first step to religion. “I have written,” he says, “many apologies to defend it.” “No party could ever bias me to the prejudice of my country, nor any personal interest oblige me to her wrong.”

“Till I saw my friends, with the kingdom, delivered from the legal bondage, which penal laws for religion, had subjected them to, I could, with no satisfaction, think of leaving England; \* \* \* having in all this time never had either office or pension, and always refusing the rewards or gratuities of those I have been able to oblige.”‡ (Penn’s letter to Popple.)

\* Proud’s History of Pennsylvania.

† Neal’s Hist. Puritans, London edition, 1768, vol. i. pp. 136, 137, and vol. iii. p. 360.

‡ The character of William Penn, as is well known, has been the subject of obloquy from his youth. The present day has not been without its calumnies; they have alike proceeded from minds incapable of understanding him, and may be considered.

The first article of the Constitution of Pennsylvania was in these words: "In reverence to God, the father of lights and spirits, the author as well as object of all divine knowledge, faith and worship,

as tributes paid to men inferior to himself, as the price of superior excellence.

I am able to present a sketch of his character altogether unique—an extract from his will, in his own hand-writing, and comprising several folio sheets, which he executed on leaving America for the last time. One of the ancestors of the writer was a witness, and one of the executors. This will being superseded by another testament in England, which was carried into effect, this has come down unimpaired to the present day. I give the beginning and conclusion, omitting the body of the instrument. To the best of my knowledge, it has never been published. The conclusion is remarkable, as giving a sketch of his life, under his own hand, and being witnessed by the most respectable men, who, unquestionably, were well acquainted with Penn. It is in itself a refutation of the calumnies that have been circulated. The will is dated

*"New Castle, on Delaware, 30, 8th, 1701.*

Because it is appointed for all men once to die, and their days are in the hands of the Almighty their Creator, I think fit upon this present voyage to make my last will and testament. \* \* \* And now if ever I have done amiss to any, I desire their forgiveness, and for all ye good offices I have ever done, I give God who enabled me, ye honor and thanks, and for all my enemies and their evil reflections and reports, and endeavors to ruin me in name and estate, I do say, ye Lord forgive them and amend them; for I have ever, from a child, loved the best things and people, and have had a heart to bless the name of Almighty God, to do good without gain, yea, sometimes for evil, and to consume my own to serve others, which has been my greatest



I do for me and mine declare and establish, for the first fundamental of the government of this country, that every person that doth or shall reside therein shall have and enjoy the free possession of his or her

burden and infirmity, having a mind not only just, but kind, even to a fault, for it has made me sometimes hardly so just, by means of debts thereby contracted, as my integrity would have made me: and now for all my good friends that have loved and helped me, do so still, in my poor children, w<sup>t</sup> you can, and God Almighty be to you and yours an ample reward; you have my hearty and grateful acknowledgements and commemoration, who never lived to myself from my very youth, but to you and the whole world in love and service. This I ordain to be, and accordingly is, my last will and testament, revoking all other. Given under my hand and seal, the day and year above written."

WM. PENN. [SEAL.]

Sealed and delivered in ye presence of Richard Halliworth, Jos. Wood, James Logan.

Cobb, in his late work on Slavery, says "As a body, the Quakers or Society of Friends, were the first to take bold position as to the sinfulness both of the trade and the system." Elsewhere he says, "It is a mooted question whether William Penn himself did or did not die a slaveholder." I am able to give this question, which has been long in dispute, a satisfactory solution. I extract the following from this will:

"I give to my blacks their freedom as under my hand already, and to old Sam one hundred acres to be his children's after he and wife are dead, forever on common rent of one bushel of wheat yearly forever."

This will, as has been stated, was never carried into effect, and as they were not mentioned in the subsequent will, the blacks were not freed. Hannah Penn, several years after her husband's death, made inquiry of James Logan respecting these negroes.

faith, and exercise of worship towards God, in such way and manner, as every such person shall in conscience believe is most acceptable to God.”\*

These principles were declared at the period when the courts in Massachusetts exhibited the deplorable infatuation of condemning innocent persons to be hung as witches, and were carrying on bitter religious persecutions.

Such was the Anti-Sabbath doctrine of the Pennsylvania colonists. It was the result of those princi-

He replies under date 11th day of 3d mo., May, 1721, as follows :

“The Proprietor, in a will left with me at his departure hence, (being undoubtedly the will referred to above,) left all his negroes their freedom, but this is entirely private ; however there are very few left. Sam died soon after your departure hence, and his brother James, very lately ; Chevalier, by a written order from his master, had his liberty several years ago, so that there are none left but Sue, whom Letitia claims or did claim as given to her when she went to England, but how rightfully I know not ; these things you can best discuss ; she has several children : there are besides two old negroes, quite worn, that remained of three that I recovered near eighteen years ago of E. Gibbs’ estate of New Castle County.”

As the authenticity of these papers admits of no dispute, they prove that when William Penn died, several of his old servants in Pennsylvania were slaves ; it may be mentioned that at this period Negro Slavery was legalized by England and other European nations, and with the exception of Georgia, which was settled afterwards, and whose organic law prohibited it, it existed in all the American Colonies.

\* See Historical Register for the year 1723, pp. 107, 108.

ples which enabled them to endure the bitterest persecutions with unshaken constancy, without, in any one instance, plotting or contriving the injury of those who were oppressing them. They were beaten and abused, but they remained unchanged; they sought for no power or distinction among men; they yielded not to the government, but the government yielded to them. The conduct of Penn to the Indians was marked by the same benign spirit. The following is a letter that he wrote to them. It is delightful to contemplate such sentiments, proceeding as they did from the pure principles of peace.

*“London, the 18th of 8th mo., 1681.*

“My Friends,—There is a great God and power that hath made the world, and all things therein; to whom you and I, and all people, owe their being and well-being, to whom you and I must one day give an account for all that we do in the world. This great God hath written his law in our hearts, by which we are taught and commanded to love and help, and do good to one another, and not to do harm and mischief one to another. Now this great God hath been pleased to make me concerned in your part of the world, and the King of the country where I live hath given me a great province therein. But I desire to enjoy it with your love and consent, that we may always live together as neighbors and friends. Else what would the great God do to us, who hath made us not to devour

and destroy one another, but to live soberly and kindly in the world? \* \* \* \* I have great love and regard towards you ; and I desire to win and gain your love and friendship by a kind, just, and peaceable life ; and the people I send are of the same mind, and shall in all things behave themselves accordingly. And if in any thing any shall offend you or your people, you shall have a full and speedy satisfaction for the same, by an equal number of just men on both sides, that by no means you may have just occasion of being offended against them. I shall shortly come to you myself, at which time we may more largely and freely confer and discourse of these matters. In the mean time I have sent my commissioners to treat with you about land, and a firm league of peace. Let me desire you to be kind to them and the people, and receive these presents and tokens which I have sent you as a testimony of my good will to you, and my resolution to live justly, peaceably, and friendly with you.\*

“I am your loving friend, W. PENN.”

In the first law made by Penn are these words :

“No man shall, by any way or means, or in word or deed, affront or wrong any Indian, but he shall incur the same penalty of the law as if he had committed it against his fellow planter. All dif-

\* Proud's Hist. Pennsylvania.

ferences between the planters and the natives shall be ended by twelve men—six planters and six natives,” &c.\*

Coming among the Indians with feelings of hostility, the Brownists believed them to be a treacherous people, unworthy to be trusted.

The Quakers, with the olive branch of peace, found them kind and docile, easily to be entreated. These went in and out among them, never drew a sword nor fired a gun, and their dominion was everywhere one of peace.

I have seen an unpublished letter from James Logan, who had the principal direction of Indian affairs for nearly half a century, in which he says, “that whatever he might have been in other respects, to the Indians he was always kind, humane, and generous.” It produced an effect on them which has never been effaced to the present day. Previous to Jay’s treaty, the influence of the Quakers with the Indians was so great, that General Washington encouraged several distinguished members of the Society\* to accompany General Lincoln and others to Detroit, in the hope of being able to effect a peace: and I have in my possession letters from a Senator of the

\* The names of the commissioners were Governor Lincoln, Beverly Randolph, and Timothy Pickering.

The Quakers, John Parrish, William Savery, Jacob Lindley, John Elliott, Joseph Moore.

United States, during the administration of Jefferson, proposing that the Quakers should take the whole management of Indian affairs.

The facts relating to criminal law are equally remarkable; while, as we have stated, the laws of New England were made more severe, those of Pennsylvania were ameliorated.

While the laws of Great Britain recognised one hundred and sixty crimes punishable by death, the Quakers, on establishing their government, restricted the punishment by death to wilful murder.

Queen Anne refused her assent to this legislation, till then unknown in the British Empire. The colonists, however, retained and acted upon their own laws; they were again set aside by the British Crown; the Quakers persisted in their own views, and finally prevailed, and thus Pennsylvania became the pioneer in ameliorating the criminal jurisprudence of the world.

At this particular period, when Queen Anne was refusing her assent to the amelioration of the criminal code in this part of her kingdom, there was printed by her authority, in the liturgies of the Episcopal Church, of which she was the head, the form of the royal touch for the cure of the king's evil; and one of the bishops, who died in the year 1709, asserted its miraculous power in the lineal descendants of Saint Edward the Confessor.\*

It might seem from such facts as these, of which

\* Strickland's Queens of England, vol. 12, page 109.

there are many, that apart from man's spiritual nature he is degraded below the irrational creation.

The history of the Brownists and the Quakers, however imperfectly their principles may have been developed, exhibits in a remarkable degree the difference between a religion that had for a primary object the observance of the Sabbath day, and one that, without making any distinction, sought to do right every day in the week. I advert to the Quakers only to illustrate a principle; all that is valuable in their doctrines is common to the whole human family. Whatever men may think of their sectarianism, and of that there can be but one opinion, their exertions have tended to ameliorate the condition of society;\* and in this colony they resulted in a purer government than had ever been maintained before. They have proved that society can exist without war, when in all similar cases the sword was deemed absolutely needful; they have proved that society can exist

\*The ascendancy of the Quakers in the province of Pennsylvania ceased about the time of the old French war, when Braddock was defeated, after they had held it about seventy years, because they did not choose to imbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow men. A vast number of people had come into the province, who were aliens to the principles of peace; fighting was a necessary consequence, and they abandoned the government. The venerable Isaac Norris, a distinguished Quaker, for many years Speaker of the House of Representatives, solicited year after year not to be elected, but they refused all his entreaties, and continued to elect him until he would stay no longer.

better without than with an established clergy: they have proved, and are still proving, the errors that are promulgated by Sabbath conventions, and by Sabbatarians of every grade; and I may ask every candid and inquiring mind, whether views that produce such extraordinary results are to be easily abandoned or lightly esteemed.\*

It has been my lot to know many excellent and virtuous individuals, who practically carried these principles into effect. One, an eminent and distinguished minister in the Society of Friends, respected and esteemed by all, worked in his fields on that day as often as it suited him to do so, and frequently expressed the satisfaction he derived from it. It accorded with his sense of right, and I never heard of inconvenience or loss resulting to him or others from such a course.

The leading principle of the Quakers, so true and so exalted as it is, has been so much mixed up with sectarianism, with creeds, and peculiarities of discipline and of dress, the natural effects of imperfection, and perhaps inherent in the nature of sects, but which have nothing to do with religion, that the world seems never to have given them credit for what they really deserve.

Even at this day there are townships in which the Quaker influence has prevailed, where there is no one

\* See Works of Sidney Smith. Article Quakers.



willing to accept the office of magistrate, because there is no occasion for one. In one township there is no tavern, no magistrate, no constable, no clergyman, no lawyer. In another, thickly settled, it is said, there has never been a case of assault and battery since its first settlement, a period of more than a hundred years. These people, though they open their meeting-houses for public worship on the first day and other days of the week, in conformity with the practice of the early Christians, they are yet, as defined above, to use a modern sectarian term, "desecrators of the Sabbath."

If these facts can be sustained, the conclusion is irresistible, that so far as respects the Brownists and the Quakers, the position taken by the Sabbath conventions, and by many sectarians, "that man is purified by attending to the fourth commandment, and making one day more holy than another," is absolutely false.

I place in juxtaposition extracts from three remarkable addresses to King Charles II. on his restoration, in order to show the aspect of Sabbatarian and Anti-Sabbatarian doctrines, when they approach royalty. Either of them is too long to be inserted here, but I believe I preserve the spirit of each in the portions I have selected. They fully sustain the character of the two people as developed in these pages.

Each address alludes to the persecutions to which

their party had been subject, and seems to ask the interposition of the king.

The Puritans say :

“Most Gracious and dread  
Sovereign :

“May it please your majesty, in the day wherein you happily say, you now know that you are again king over your British Israel, to cast a favorable eye upon your poor Mephibosheths, now, and by reason of lameness, in respect of distance, not until now, appearing in your presence, we mean New England, kneeling, with the rest of your subjects, before your majesty, as her restored king. \* \* \* \* We present this scrip, the transcript of our loyal hearts, into your royal hands, wherein we crave leave :

“To supplicate your majesty for your gracious protection of us, in the continuance of our civil privileges. \* \* \* \*

“With a religious salutation of our prayers, we (prostrate at your royal feet) beg pardon for this our boldness, craving finally that our names may be enrolled among your majesty’s most humble subjects and supplicants.”

“To Charles II. King, &c.

“Robert Barclay, a servant of Jesus Christ, called of God to the dispensation of the gospel, wishes health and salvation. As it is inconsistent with the truth I bear, so it is far from me to use this epistle as an engine to flatter thee. \* \* \* To God alone I owe what I have, and that more immediately in matters spiritual ; and therefore to Him alone, and to the service of His truth, I dedicate whatever work He brings forth in me.

“Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity ; thou knowest what it is to be banished thy native country, to be overruled as well as to rule and sit upon the throne ; and being oppressed, thou hast reason to know how hateful the oppression is both to God and man.

“God hath done great things for thee ; He hath sufficiently shown thee, that it is by Him princes rule, and that He can pull down and set up at his

“To the King’s most excellent  
majesty.

“The humble supplication of  
the General Court of the  
Massachusetts Colony in New  
England.

“Dread Sovereign :

“If your poor subjects, who  
have removed themselves into  
a remote corner of the earth to  
enjoy peace with God and man,  
do, in this day of their trouble,  
prostrate themselves at your  
royal feet, and beg your favor,  
we hope it will be graciously  
accepted by your majesty. And  
that as the high place you sus-  
tain on earth doth number you  
here among the gods, so you  
will imitate the God of heaven,  
in being ready to maintain the  
cause of the afflicted, and the  
right of the poor, and to receive  
their cries and addresses to that  
end.”\*

pleasure. He hath often faith-  
fully warned thee by His ser-  
vants, since He restored thee to  
the royal dignity, that thy heart  
might not wax wanton against  
Him to forget His mercies  
and providence towards thee ;  
whereby He might permit thee  
to be soothed up and lulled  
asleep in thy sins by the flatter-  
ing of court parasites, who by  
their fawning are the ruin of  
many princes.

“God Almighty, who hath  
so signally hitherto visited thee  
with his love, so touch and  
reach thy heart, ere the day of  
thy visitation be expired, that  
thou mayest effectually turn to  
him so as to improve thy place  
and station for his name. So  
wisheth, so prayeth,

“Thy faithful friend and  
subject.

“ROBERT BARCLAY.”†

Considering the great hostility the Brownists had  
evinced towards royalty, that they had been instru-  
mental in the dethronement of King Charles I, these

\* Notes to Marshall’s Life of Washington, and Hutchinson’s  
History.

† Barclay’s Works.

epistles to his son may be considered as evincing the perfection of cant and hypocrisy.

Voltaire, in his letters concerning the English nation, says of this letter of Robert Barclay, "This epistle is not filled with mean flattering encomiums, but abounds with bold touches in favor of truth, and with the wisest counsels;" and he adds, "it was so happy in its effects, as to put an end to persecutions against the Quakers."\*

To this I add, as pertinent to my subject, the following extracts from two histories of Massachusetts and of Pennsylvania, each written about eighty years after the settlement of the respective colonies; they are believed to be entirely authentic:

Cotton Mather says of Massachusetts: "It may be that the wrath which we have had against one another has had more than a little influence upon the coming down of the devil in that wrath which now amazes us. Have not many of us been devils one unto another, for slanderings, for backbitings, for animosities? For this among other causes, perhaps, God has permitted the devils to be worrying, as they now are

Robert Proud, of Pennsylvania, says:—"The enjoyment of that rational freedom of thinking and religious worship, with the just and equal participation of natural and civil rights has been both the cause and the means of the extraordinary and so long continued prosperity and unparalleled felicity for which this province has been long so justly famed, above all other countries, at least in America, if not in the whole world;

\* See Bailey's Dictionary, vol. ii. page 657.

among us. But it is high time to leave off all devilism, when the devil himself is falling upon us; and it is no time for us to be censuring and reviling one another with a devilish wrath, when the wrath of the devil is annoying us."—*Mather's Book of Witches*, page 45.

a state, in some respects, so nearly resembling those Saturnian times in Italy, which, we are told, formerly produced the golden age, and so far actually realizing ancient fable to its inhabitants, perhaps, before any other people on the surface of the globe."—*Proud's History*, vol. ii. page 235.

I am quite aware that statistics are not to be implicitly relied upon; but by an account of the number of criminals in the different departments of France, the average appears to have been about one to six thousand inhabitants; in the north there was one criminal to 3984; in the south, one to 7584; in the centre, one to 8264.\* It will be observed this was among a non-Sabbath-keeping people.

In the State of Massachusetts, with its Sabbath-keeping habits, and where tithingmen are still employed to see that the day is observed, there was one convict for 2257 inhabitants. In the State of Pennsylvania, where the day is less observed, there was one in 3300. In Virginia, where it is probable there is still greater disregard to the day, there is one convict to 5673 inhabitants. The convicts on an average for five years in Virginia were 189 persons, and it is re

\* *Annales de Hygiene*, tome 9.

markable that the average is about the same whether we include the colored population or not.\*

Laing, in his "Notes of a Traveller," expresses his belief that the French, among whom Sunday is observed only as a festival devoted to social enjoyment, are a more honest people than the British. He says, "the beggar, though hungry, respects the fruit on the road-side within his reach, and that practical morality is more generally taught in France than in any other country in Europe."

Dr. Guthrie, in his plea on behalf of drunkards, says, he spent some five or six months in Paris; his avocations led him often through the worst parts of the city, and he saw but one drunken man, and no drunken woman. He adds: "we saw in one hour in London and Edinburgh every day more drunkenness than we saw in Paris in five long months."

These are curious statements, and though by no means conclusive, they are worthy of serious attention.

The facts connected with the early colonial history, to which I have referred, are the more interesting, because the present state of society cannot last forever. Crime, misery, and degradation, are stalking as at noonday before us, penetrating into our institutions and turning justice backwards. If these things are

\* See Governor McDonald's message on the colored population, American Almanac for 1846, and Prisons and Prison Discipline.

to increase faster than the ratio of population, which it is believed they now do, our republican institutions are at an end ; and our beautiful frame of government, the boast of our country, can exist no more.

Since the foregoing pages have been sent to the press, the New England annual festival to celebrate the landing of the Sabbatarian Puritans in Plymouth, has been held in Philadelphia. The following are two of the toasts :

“ Our Puritan Fathers—Hard as the rock that received them, stern as the shore that welcomed them, and sturdy as the forests that surrounded them. They sowed in tears the seed of that harvest of civil and religious liberty which we now reap in joy.”

“ Old Massachusetts—Mother of States and of ideas. Her leaven causes a brisk effervescence, and makes the whole country rise.”

I refer the curious reader to Besse's Sufferings of the Quakers, in which the names of one hundred and seventy Quakers are given who suffered deeply by the persecutions in New England.

I refer also to a work of upwards of 500 pages, called “ Puritanism, or a Churchman's Defence against its Aspersions,” by Thomas W. Coit, D. D. Also to a work by George Bishop, called “ New England judged by the Spirit of the Lord,” a work of 498 pages. Also to a work by John Whiting, called “ Truth and Innocency Defended,” a work of upwards

of 200 pages; Hutchinson's History, 3 vols. ; Mather's Magnalia, and other works.

These works furnish evidence that if there was any one principle that the New England settlers were more opposed to than others, as manifested both in word and deed, it was that of civil and religious liberty. Since the writer's recollection, the law authorized the imprisonment of men in Massachusetts for not paying a tax for the support of a Church hierarchy, with which they had no more connection than with that of the Grand Lama, and this law was carried into effect. Neither is Massachusetts, as is claimed, peculiarly the mother of ideas; these are the inspiration of God. "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding."

It is a subject of regret that the examination of principles connected with the Sabbath superstition should lead, even by remote implication, to things that are personal, with which they have nothing to do, but such deviations from correct historical facts only serve to show either the ignorance of the writers, or a disposition to evade the truth.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENT—THE DOCTRINE OF THE INNER LIGHT.

An apple falling to the ground suggested to Newton that the principle of gravitation was the conservative principle of the material world. It had with unerring certainty performed its office from the beginning of time, yet it was not till this late period that its power and influence were acknowledged. Gradually it swept away, never to return, the vortices of Germany, the Grecian peripatetic philosophy that had been in vogue for thousands of years, and all other systems that had preceded it, and established itself by universal consent, on the immutable basis of truth. Can any intelligent mind believe that the Father of Mercies has provided a conservative power to preserve and uphold all physical things, and yet has left man a prey to chance; made him dependent for truth, upon the Scriptures, which so late as the year 1536 Tyndale was burnt at the stake for translating into the English language, and which at a much later period were chained to the altars of the churches to prevent the common people from reading them; which the Roman Catholics forbid to be read except under their super-

vision, and which the Episcopalians believe should be accompanied by a prayer book formed by their own hierarchy?

Can any one believe that this book, ambiguous in its language, uncertain in its conjectures, is designed by the Almighty to be the rule of life for man?

The history of the Brownists is before us, and so far as history can prove any thing, it proves the error of such a conclusion.

The Newtonian philosophy, simple and natural as it is now acknowledged to be, was so earnestly resisted for a series of years, that it finally was introduced by stealth into the Universities of England. Yet great as were the contradictions and errors of natural philosophy, in mixing superstition and theology, and deducing from thence the most extravagant and absurd results, it may be doubted whether there were more absurd conclusions in physics than those which are embraced in the dogmas of the Christian world.

The triumphs of science are identified with the triumphs of true religion. The discoveries in Geology are placing Chronology upon a more certain basis than it ever had before, and the mind cannot rest upon any one scientific discovery without perceiving more and more the beauty of the Divine laws. In this there is great and increasing hope to the moralist, to the lover of truth and of vital religion, because, as certainly as true science is taking the place of that which in former ages was absurd and contradictory,

so assuredly, in the progress of events, moral science will feel the influence of the same renovating power.

At the present moment physical science is far in advance of intellectual science. This cannot last forever. Some Newton or Plato or Bacon, some apostle, some high-priest, will yet arise clothed with power and strength for the work he has to accomplish; or it may come by the silent but still powerful operation of truth in individual minds, but come it surely will; and as certainly as Newton's philosophy drove from the minds of men that of Aristotle, so also will moral philosophy be placed upon a basis which will extinguish forever all the dogmas which the Brownists promulgated, with their Sabbaths and superstitions, to replace them by principles which can never be overturned. Whenever this may come, and not before, we may look for a renovation in moral society, the fulness of which the mind can hardly conceive.

The existence of a spiritual element in man, as a guide to his life, would seem to be too self-evident to admit of doubt. The judge who appeals to the culprit in the dock acknowledges this principle; without it, instead of being a subject for punishment, he would be fit for the madhouse. It is the man within the breast, the intuitive feelings of his own heart, that alone is capable of adapting means to ends; not reason, which is but the deduction of things from each other; not conscience, which is liable to the fluctuations of

education : but reason and conscience enlightened by convictions which are found within. To trust our lives to the slow operation of reason, would be to destroy them. To trust our actions to the hasty persuasions of a prejudiced or sectarian mind, would lead to self-deception. Yet withal, amidst the passions and weaknesses that assail us, wherein we may not be able at all times to distinguish right from wrong, there is an underlying sense of truth, which gives strength to our purposes and a confidence to our lives which nothing else can bestow.

The time has been when philosophy was believed to be opposed to religion : gradually the supposed barriers have been broken down, investigations into the divine laws have been freely made, seeming contradictions have been removed, harmony has been found where there was supposed to be discord, and if not already acknowledged, every thing is tending to this issue, that there is nothing true in religion that is not true in philosophy, nor in philosophy that is not true in religion.

There is abundant evidence from the hesitations and waverings and uncertainties which marked the course of the Brownists, that better feelings were struggling within them : but unlike the plant in the partially darkened room, which, following the laws of Divine Providence, turns to every crack where the light of the sun shows itself, these men turned their

backs to the light, and thanked God that they had a higher and a better way.

It would hardly be too much to say that all the persecutions in the ecclesiastical world may be traced to this one fact, that men have laid aside the instincts of their nature, the evidences of truth which they find in their own bosoms, to be governed by the written precepts of older generations, imperfect and often grossly immoral, and which can never be a certain criterion to the men of the present day.

The senses, according to their nature, recognise all outward things; by them we know that a house is a house, and a man a man, but purely spiritual truths are not recognised by the senses, and cannot be received through their means. The senses take no cognizance of truth. The sense of beauty is wholly an intellectual perception. Taste, so nearly allied to beauty, is an affair of the mind. Who has seen with his eyes, joy, hope, or volition? These are spiritual subjects, which are recognised by our spiritual nature, and by that alone. They are intuitive, and are to be traced to the immediate revelation of God, and nothing to else. The metaphysical proposition so prevalent throughout the world, that all our ideas come from the senses, and that they are to be judged of by experience, is effect without cause, reaction without action, experience without basis, and as such is unphilosophical as well

as irreligious, and unworthy of the intelligence of a rational mind.

The mind without the senses cannot comprehend colors, neither can the senses without the mind comprehend truth. The one is physical, the other is intellectual and spiritual.

All that books or preaching can do, is to refer man to sensations which are already in his own soul—to awaken him to himself. Were it not so, all words would be as vain as if spoken to an inanimate object. Every thing spiritual we understand from the spiritual nature in ourselves, the divine by the divine; and just in proportion as the divine nature is awakened in man, so is he in communion with the Divine Mind, and can understand divine things. The converse also may be assumed to be true, that men conceive of sin in proportion as they are allied to its nature. Yet moral offences, outward in their character and recognised by the senses, are seen by all alike.

We enjoy a brilliant sunset by the sense of beauty which is within us; without this, the outward object would give us no pleasure. Words are like dictionaries, which give forms to our sensations and awaken the spiritual energies. The enjoyment which particular expressions convey is only because they meet concurrent sentiments with us.

We believe these to be unchangeable philosophical truths; and if so, they put an end to the popular

delusion that the Scriptures are the rule of life, and establish in its place that sublime idea of the constant omnipresence of God, comforting us in our affliction, and guiding us according to his own purposes through all the intricate scenes of our existence.

The world is perhaps more indebted to John Locke for this material philosophy, which looks to the senses as the source of all truth, than to any other person. I have found the following beautiful letter addressed to some Quaker women whom he had heard preach. It was written during the latter period of his life, when he was nearly seventy years of age, and may be understood as a refutation of that sensuous theory for which he has been so celebrated, and an admission of the beauty of that spiritual philosophy to which we have referred.

“*My sweet Friends*,—A paper of sweetmeats by the bearer to attend your journey, comes to testify the sweetness I found in your society. I admire no converse like that of Christian freedom, and fear no bondage like that of pride and prejudice. I now see that acquaintance by sight cannot reach that height of enjoyment which acquaintance by knowledge arrives unto. Outward hearing may misguide us, but internal knowledge cannot err; we have something *here* of what we shall have *hereafter*, to know as we are known, and this we with other friends were even

at first view partakers of; and the more there is of this in the life, the less we need enquire of what nation, country, party or persuasion our friends are, for our knowledge is more sure than another's is to us; this we know when we have believed.

Now the God of all grace grant that you may hold fast that rare grace of Love and Charity, that unbiassed and unbounded love, which, if it decays not, will spring up mightily as the waters of the sanctuary, higher and higher, till you with the Universal Church swim together in the ocean of Divine Love.

Women indeed had the honor first to *publish* the resurrection of the Spirit of Love, and let all the Disciples of Christ rejoice herein, as doth

Your partner, JOHN LOCKE.

*Gray's Inn, Nov. 21st, 1696.*"

Of the being and existence of God, no rational man doubts.

It has indeed been said that there are nations so degraded as to have no name for God or for Heaven. To understand the attributes of God is to know God. And if there is any nation or any people who know not good from evil, they must necessarily become extinct, because knowledge of good and evil is as needful to the existence of man, as the air that he breathes or the food that nourishes him.\*

Bancroft, vol. i. page 447, says, "Atheism is a folly

\* See Types of Mankind.



of the metaphysician, not the folly of human nature." Of savage life "Roger Williams declared that he had never found one native American who denied the existence of a God. "Men revolt against the oppressions of superstition, the exactions of ecclesiastical tyranny, but never against religion itself."

Not only the existence of God is deeply impressed upon the minds of men, but a conviction also of his omnipresence, as a necessary attribute to his sovereignty. Every man is a praying man. In his wants and desires, selfish indeed as they generally are, in his sufferings and distresses, his appeals and aspirations are unto God, and herein he recognises his omnipresence. Thus, Hagar when she was cast out of the house of Abraham, used these touching words: "Thou God seest me," and in the sorrows and sadness which overtake us there is deep consolation in the idea that we are the creatures of an ever present and beneficent Creator, who does all things well and wisely.

This omnipresence has been recognised by the masses of men in all ages and countries: it has also found its philosophical advocates among many of the most profound thinkers. The Pundits of Hindoostan, the most learned men of the East, introduce the Supreme Being as the immediate cause of every effect, however trivial. According to the Brahmins, all the motions of the universe are caused by the immediate agency of the Spirit of God.\*

\* Ency. Brit. 14, 574.

Malebranche, a French philosopher, one of the deepest and most acute men who ever lived, rejected all idea of discovering truth, (intellectual truth,) by the senses and laying aside all books, his favorite maxim was, that "He saw all things in God."\*

It was one of the beautiful ideas of Sir Isaac Newton that every motion from gravity or other inanimate sources, was identified with the continued volition of the Deity.

Dr. Samuel Clark observes, "All those effects which we commonly say are the effects of the natural powers of matter and laws of motion, of gravitation, attraction, and the like, are indeed (if we speak strictly and properly) the effect of God acting upon matter continually and every moment." (Works, vol. ii. 698, folio.)

Dugald Stewart on this subject says: "There are insurmountable objections to every other doctrine than that which supposes the order of the universe to be not only at first established, but every moment maintained by the incessant agency of one supreme mind; a doctrine against which no objection can be stated, but what is founded on prejudices resulting from our own imperfections. (Vol. iii. Stewart's Works, p. 442.)

Agassiz, in his present work on Zoology, has recorded corresponding sentiments respecting the spirit-

\* See Stewart's Philosophy, vol. iii.

ual nature of man, and his affinity to the Divine Mind.

“Do we not find,” he says, “in this adaptability of the human intellect to the facts of creation, by which we become instinctively, and as I have said unconsciously, the translators of the thoughts of God, the most conclusive proof of our affinity with the Divine Mind? And is not this intellectual and spiritual connection with the Almighty worthy our deepest consideration? \* \* It is surely not amiss for the philosopher to endeavor, by the study of his own mental operations, to approximate the workings of the Divine reason, learning from the nature of his own mind better to understand the infinite intellect from which it is derived. \* \* Who is the truly humble, but he who penetrating into the secrets of creation, recognises his glorious affinity with the Creator, and in deepest gratitude for so sublime a birthright, strives to be the faithful interpreter of that Divine intellect with whom he is permitted, nay, with whom he is intended, according to the laws of his being, to enter into communion.”\*

It may be said without fiction, that no man has ever seen his fellow man. He sees an extended body, with head and hands and feet, but the spirit that animates them, that gives them all their value, no eye hath ever seen. Yet this unseen essence, this spirit

\* Contributions to Natural History, vol. i. p. 8.

or whatever else it may be called, originates all the work in the material world, and there can be no doubt that so far as it is in unison with the Divine harmony, everything upon which it operates, from the lowest to the most exalted, is perfected. Natural and moral philosophy, all the different kingdoms of the animal and vegetable world, every art and every science, have their only sure basis in the Divine harmony, and this is manifested as perfectly in the dew drop on the spear of grass as in the ocean.

Most sublime, indeed, is the idea that things that seem so arbitrary as taste, beauty and architecture, law, morals, and that which is above all others confused, metaphysics, have each a foundation, sure and steadfast, which, though unseen and unappreciable, no man can remove.

The plummet and square, held in the hands of an obscure mechanic, point to principles whose source is God. Any deviation from these in the building he may erect, is a deviation from the Divine harmony. The roof is needful for the foundation, and the foundation for the roof, the beam and the rafter are adapted to each other; and the humblest as well as the most elaborate structure has special proportions which are never deviated from with impunity.

Ruskin, the author of several works upon architecture, confirms the same idea in its application to the fine arts. He says, that it was only when the bull of Clement V. had excommunicated the Venetians and

their Doge, likening them to Dathan, Abiram, Absalom, and Lucifer, and when individual religion entered into all the concerns of life, giving a serenity of mind, and energy to all their actions,—it was then only that the fine arts flourished in Italy; as this declined, their spirit dwindled down, and the authors became copyists one of another.\*

The following remarks, by the same author, are so beautiful, that I cannot omit them:—

“ Though it may not be necessarily the interest of religion to admit the service of the arts, the arts will never flourish until they have been primarily devoted to that service—devoted, both by architect and employer; by the one, in scrupulous, earnest, affectionate design; by the other, in expenditure, at least more frank, at least less calculating, than that which he would admit in the indulgence of his own private feelings. Let this principle be but once fairly acknowledged among us, and however it may be chilled and repressed in practice, however feeble may be its real influence, however the sacredness of it may be diminished by counter-workings of vanity and self interest, yet, its mere acknowledgement would bring a reward; and with our present accumulation of means and of intellect, there would be such an impulse and vitality given to art, as it has not felt since the thirteenth century. \* \* \* The influence to which I refer

\* Stones of Venice, page 89.

would be the natural result of doing our best in all things." Again—"However mean or inconsiderable the act, there is something in the well doing of it which has fellowship with the noblest forms of manly virtue. \* \* \* Thus, every action, down even to the drawing of a line or utterance of a syllable, is capable of a peculiar dignity in the manner of it, which we sometimes express by saying it is truly done, (as a line or tone is true;) so also, it is capable of dignity still higher in the motive of it. For there is no action so slight, nor so mean, but it may be done to a great purpose, and ennobled therefore; nor is any purpose so great, but that slight actions may help it much, most especially that chief of all purposes, the pleasing of of God." Hence George Herbert,—

"A servant with this clause  
 Makes drudgery divine;  
 Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,  
 Makes that and the action fine."

Mozart, on being asked by Baron V——, as to his manner of composing, gave, in substance, this reply: "I would willingly pass over your request in silence, for my pen denies its service; still I will try. When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, my ideas flow best and most abundantly; whence and how they come, I know not, nor can I force them. If I continue in this way, it soon occurs to me how I may turn this or that morsel to account. All this fires my soul, and although the subject be long, it

stands almost complete and finished in my mind, as a beautiful picture. Nor do I hear the parts successively, but all at once. All this takes place in a pleasing, lively dream. What has been thus produced I do not easily forget, and this is, perhaps, the best gift I have to thank my Divine Master for.”\*

Hooker speaks in the following sublime strain of law, and which Sir William Jones says is the foundation of all human law. “Of law, there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her service the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage; the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all, with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.”†

It is a remark of Dugald Stewart, that the most important discoveries, both in moral and physical science, have been made by men friendly to the principles of natural religion. (Vol. iii. page 464 of Stewart’s works.) Natural religion is the intuitive religion of the heart; the true and only revealed religion; yet sectarians speak of it in opposition to what they term “revealed religion,” the source of which is the Scriptures, and which is conveyed to them by outward means, within the control of man; a doc-

\* See Life of Mozart.

†Life of Sir William Jones, p. 333.

trine from which flowed so much error and confusion to the early inhabitants of New England, and which is but a system of materialism and idolatry.

It is this vital religion that we speak of as being connected with every work of art. Every machine coming from the hands of man, so far as it is perfect, must be consistent with the religious element of man's nature. Without this, a house could not be built, or a machine constructed.

Men are so prone to become copyists, that they little consider the principles upon which they act, or the source of the intelligence which they possess, yet even the knowledge which a man has of his own existence, which seems above all others a self-evident truth, can have no other source than divine revelation to his soul. So far as we know, this knowledge is peculiar to man.

In Exodus xxxi. it is mentioned that "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have filled Bazaleel with wisdom and understanding to devise cunning works; to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting stones." And it may be assumed as an unchangeable truth, that in proportion as the mind of man is perfect, so will his works be perfect, be they what they may. No other conclusion can be arrived at, unless we deny the unalterable sequence between cause and effect.

In every work of art, there is a point of perfection in which each part will harmonize with every other



part. The mechanic congratulates himself, when he simplifies his work; its perfection is in the fulfilment of the divine laws; all that man can do is to trace out these laws, and in proportion as individual minds are in harmony with them, may they be relied upon as being better artificers, better lawyers, merchants, or mechanics.

Agassiz suggests that "those systems to which we have given the names of the great leaders of our science, are in truth but translations into human language of the thoughts of the Creator." May we not extend these ideas into every other science? Astronomy, geology, chemistry, botany, each has its own laws, traced by men, but originated and perfected by the Divine mind. As in science, so also in moral affairs. The desire of association appears to be inherent in man: what then more interesting than civil and religious government? In proportion as these approximate to the fulfilment of the divine laws, they approach perfection. There is a harmony for each consistent with itself, yet by a mystical communion, embracing in a universal harmony all science and all moral affairs, so that they become, as it were, brethren to each other. In its application to the spiritual nature of man, it is to be found by him in his own bosom, and there alone, and it may be assumed that those contentions which are witnessed in religious associations in a reasonably correct community, arise from the at-

tempts to harmonize contradictory and discordant elements. If these views are true, we have at once the origin and the natural remedy of evils which sometimes seem obscure. Without reaching the cause of the evil, we may ask for peace, but no peace will come. A Sabbath-day religion being, as we have shown, out of this universal harmony, its enforcement, instead of reforming the world, is productive of evil.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE SCRIPTURE—THE CLERGY.

THERE is perhaps no country upon earth so deeply interested in upholding correct moral sentiments as the United States. In most of the nations of Europe, and perhaps throughout the world, there are Emperors or Kings, Princes or Potentates, with supreme power, to hold in check the excesses of popular excitement. In this country, the sovereignty is in the people themselves; if they become degraded, it is easy to imagine that, from having the best, we may have the worst government in the world—a many-headed monster, combining a greater evil than the despotisms of foreign countries, evil as they may be; so that it becomes a more serious question here than elsewhere, to consider the best means by which society can be regulated and reformed.

In a country increasing so rapidly as the United States, the asylum of foreigners of every description, without accurate statistics it is not easy to arrive at any conclusion respecting the relative increase of crime; but there is at least a general sentiment that since the country became an independent nation, moral depravity has increased faster than population. There can be no doubt whatever that this is the case in political affairs: there is a want of moral integrity—a degradation in our government, such as never was known for many years after the period of the American Revolution; and it becomes a grave consideration how the problem of our government is to work itself out.

All may agree that correct elementary principles will inevitably produce fruit according to their kind, but the serious question occurs, how are these to be attained? in what way shall they be instilled into the minds of men? The historical evidences which have been referred to, may throw some light upon this intricate question. The colonies of Massachusetts Bay, from the period when the Puritans first landed, in the year 1620, till the revolution in 1688, were engaged in an effort to produce uniformity of opinion, under the mistaken idea that spiritual intelligence could be received through the senses. This philosophy still remains among us; it is taught in our schools, and preached from our pulpits, producing principles radi-

cally wrong, and dangerous to the well-being of society. The authority of the laws of Moses, which was adhered to by the Puritans, has greatly lessened, but the authority of the Scriptures generally, among those who profess to be the teachers of men, remains in its pristine vigor; and if our reasoning is true, such a doctrine is of incalculable evil to the morals and welfare of society.

From infancy, children are instructed that this book is "the word of God," the "revelation of his will, the guide of life," and with these preconceived opinions, false in their very nature, every effort to reform society fails.

No serious, intelligent mind would be disposed to lessen a proper regard for the Scriptures, as containing the oldest historical data, and the experience of pious and excellent men; they have in their vast compass a value which belongs to no other book; but there is a spirit that underlies them, which produced them, which existed before they were created, and which we may suppose will continue to exist when they shall be no more; and this is that principle which children should be taught as the guide of their life, which is ever present with them, and which contains in itself the elements of that reformation which society most needs. We are not questioning the devoted piety of those who think otherwise, but we desire to expose those influences which, in despite of every effort to reform the world, produce evil.

These are not visionary ideas. As we have stated in a former part of this work, their truth is practically demonstrated in parts of this country, where the idolatry of the Bible has but little existence. They are demonstrated in every individual who is adhering to his own perceptions of truth and justice, and it may be assumed that there are many such in every nation, kindred, and people under heaven.

It appears to be a self-evident truth, that every crime and every suffering that is induced by man, must have a remedy within man's control. Most of the evils under which men suffer, are the natural effects of derangements in society, arising from wrong elementary principles. It is stated, that in the city of New York, during the last year, 1858, there were fifty murders; assuredly, there is some remedy for a disease so appalling. If none other, a severe military despotism, to preserve order, is preferable to a mild republican government: or will sectarians believe that severe Sabbath enactments will cure the evil? On the contrary, experience teaches us that in their very nature they will increase it.

We have, at the present period, in this country, two remarkable instances of the errors and absurdities flowing from an authoritative religion. The Shakers in the East, are conducting their economy in a state of celibacy. Under the dictation of their assumed prophetess, Anne Lee, sustained and supported, of

course, by Scripture evidence, no marrying or giving in marriage is allowed among them. Under this system, they have for a long time sustained various establishments, seemingly in contradiction to the Divine laws. In the West, there are the Mormons, claiming that polygamy, or a plurality of wives, is the true economy of life. This also they sustain by the Scriptures; and there probably are few religious societies in this widely extended country, where it may be assumed that upwards of fifty different languages are spoken, and as many different sects exist, who are not contending respecting the dogmas they obtain from the Scriptures. The evils of an authoritative religion are not confined to Christianity. The burning of widows on the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands, so long practised in India, is to be traced to the uncertain dogmas of the Vedas, the sacred books of the Hindoos.\*

Foxton, an intelligent Episcopal clergyman, in his work on Popular Christianity, makes this remark:—

“We find in the Scriptures, every evidence of human infirmity, both in the writers and in the record, that can possibly be conceived, and yet we are to believe, on their authority, facts the most repulsive to common sense; that the order of nature was changed, and the law of gravitation suspended in the valleys of Palestine, and that God himself specially

\* See works of Ramohan Roy.

inspired them with false philosophy, vicious logic, and bad grammar. This is certainly the popular notion of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the great mass of the Christian world are at this moment, instead of worshipping God, worshipping the Bible—putting the assumed record of God's will before the 'inward witness' of his Spirit. But can such a belief as this long survive in an age of intelligent inquiry? A juster and more rational idea of God's dealings with us is fast spreading through the Christian world. The sublime philosophy of the gospel teaches us that the Spirit of God is poured upon all flesh. \* \* \* \* The human soul has sympathy and comprehension for the God dwelling within us, but the spiritual idea is degraded and lost by association with a material substance." (Popular Christianity, p. 73.)

In some beautiful remarks made by Robertson, the late incumbent of Trinity Chapel, Brighton, he is very distinct upon the subject, that the revelation of God, respecting things of a spiritual nature, cannot be received through the medium of the senses. "No revelation," he says, "can be adequately given by the address of man to man, either by writing or orally." "The highest revelation is not made by Christ, but comes directly from the universal mind; so that apostles themselves, and prophets, speaking to the ear, cannot reveal truth to the soul: no, not if

God himself were to touch their lips with fire. A verbal revelation is only a revelation to the ear.”\*

These extracts are worthy of more particular remark, as coming from that class of men, who from dwelling upon authority, and reverencing ancient dogmas, appear to be most ignorant on that subject which they profess to teach.

I touch upon the subject of the clergy with regret, because I am liable to be misunderstood; yet there can be no doubt that it is mainly through their influence that the Sabbath superstition is spread through the country. There are many individuals among them, humble-minded and devoted to the cause of truth, whose feelings I would not willingly wound; I would rather contribute to build them up than pull them down; but the system of paying men for preaching and praying is liable to great abuse. It is hardly possible, in the nature of man, that a class of society should be receiving pay for their services, and not be influenced thereby. In the nature of things, they will avoid such doctrines as are repugnant to those who give them bread.

Lord Brougham, in his speech on the Irish elective franchise bill, says, “Perjury ought certainly to be discountenanced, but *we* are not the persons to disfranchise for that offence, or we may disfranchise ourselves.” \* \* \* “How will the reverend bishops of

\* First Sermon.



the other house be able to express their due abhorrence of such a crime, who solemnly declare in the presence of their God, that when they are called upon to accept a living, perhaps of £4000 a year, at that very instant, they are moved by the Holy Ghost to accept the office and administration thereof, and for no other reason whatever.”\*

The first day of the week is the great harvest day of the clergy; hence so little reliance is to be placed upon any thing they say upon the subject. Where a deep pecuniary interest is at stake, evidence from the party concerned is not received in any Court in the United States.

The good and excellent men among them, do not change the effects of the system. In the Southern States, the established clergy uphold and justify slavery; in the North they condemn it. They are found in armies directly opposed to each other, asking blessings on each, and the inference is obvious that many of them would take either side of the Sabbath question, as their interest might dictate. A large number of young men are annually to be provided for, and it is a natural consequence that as the Sabbath supports them, they will support the Sabbath.

The clergy, from the time of the dark ages, (when churches and monasteries contained the learning of the world,) have had an influence to which they were

\* Morning Chronicle, April 27, 1825.

never entitled. In the present day, as they cannot control literature, they have been found willing to pervert it, to serve their own purposes, and to uphold their power.\* Hence in an inquiry for truth, great caution is to be observed in receiving statements emanating from them. This observation applies with peculiar force to their accounts of the morality and religion of Pagan nations. Their prejudices are so deep, and their interests so immediate, that it is scarcely possible that their statements should be correct.

A little inquiry will convince us, that whether in religion or literature, the clergy have always been behind the age: from them have emanated all the persecutions which have disgraced the name of religion: to them we may trace the opposition which has so often obscured for a time the light of science, and in many instances consigned its disciples—the benefactors of mankind, to imprisonment and a shameful death.

The spirit which persecuted Galileo, is not extinct in the present day: it has descended with the mantle of the priesthood, and its influence is felt in the opposition of the clergy to all attempts to enlarge the limits of human knowledge.

\* See speech of John Hare Powel, in the Senate of Pennsylvania. Also, "Dangers from Presbyterianism," p. 14. Also New York Observer, Saturday, November, 1844.

This alone is sufficient evidence that the religion of the clergy is not true religion; the latter is, in its nature, expansive and comprehensive. Emanating from perfect wisdom, it harmonizes with all that is true—every discovery in science affords additional proof of its doctrines. Religion has, in truth, all to hope, and the clergy have all to fear, from the expansion of knowledge. The pretensions of the one are founded in error and prejudice, while the other is based upon immutable and everlasting truth.

There is doubtless much learning among the clergy, but generally it is unfruitful and barren of any good result; it is oftener employed to gild ancient error, than to assist the candid enquirer.

Erasmus said, in his day "it was a matter of wit to be a Christian; that faith was rather in their papers than in their souls; that there were almost as many creeds as professors." What was true then is true now. The strength of a man's understanding, the power of his voice and his eloquence, are made the proofs of his Christianity.

Persons who make books their study, and hope to obtain religion from them, are liable above all others, to be led astray. We may learn from them the dogmas of different sects, and all the complicated affairs of church history; they are valuable, as containing the opinions of other men, and the records

of former generations; but out of their proper place they may come to be curses rather than blessings; and this without regard to the excellence of the books themselves. The latent springs of human action each man has within him, whether they be good or bad. The fragrance of the rose is of no value to such as have not the power of smell; man must first have truth within him, to know what truth is; people who pretend to derive wisdom from books, must necessarily be behind the age; and without better dependence than books for religion, we can neither understand nor appreciate it. An implicit reliance on written religion debased the Puritans, and the same evil influence is felt in the present day.

“The heart

May give an useful lesson to the head,  
 And learning wiser grow without his books.  
 Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,  
 Have oftentimes no connection. Knowledge dwells  
 In heads replete with thoughts of other men,  
 Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.

\* \* \* \* \*

Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;  
 Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.”

COWPER'S TASK.

Connected with the subject of the clergy, is the continued recommendation of the Sabbatarians to attend the churches. The different reports which I have read, bear conclusive internal evidence that they are

written by clergymen. They arrogate to the clergy powers which they never had, and assume for the ministry an influence which it does not possess. This is the natural effect of making a trade of preaching.

The national address speaks of the "privileges of an attendance on the instructions of an intelligent Christian ministry." I have no wish to destroy the churches; they harmonize in a degree with the state of society; but such a ministry, I conceive, is not to be found among the Sabbatarians. Calvinism, Episcopacy, Romanism, Puseyism, Unity and Trinity, sprinkling and baptizing, breaking the Sabbath, dogmas and rituals, often form the prominent subjects of their discourses. If a person of sound intelligence was to hear some of these sermons, he might ask whether the principle of Christianity made any part of the doctrine of the preacher. Churches are only objectionable on account of the doctrines that are promulgated in them. Making the distinction between days, leads to the greater error arising from the distinction between what they call secular and religious things. They have one God for Sunday, and another for the other six days. If it were not that a man returns day by day to his own bosom for the knowledge of right and wrong, sermons of this character would destroy by degrees every vestige of religion there is in the world. The very nature of their doctrines is often

at variance with the great principles of human nature.

Neal, himself a clergyman, in his History of the Puritans, gives the following account of their ministry in the early days of the Sabbath excitement. "The Puritan (or Parliament) clergy, were zealous Calvinists, and having been prohibited for some years from preaching against the Arminians, they now pointed all their artillery against them, insisting upon little else in their sermons but the doctrines of *predestination, justification by faith alone, salvation by free grace, and the inability of man to do that which is good*. The duties of the *second table* were too much neglected; from a strong aversion to *Arminianism*, these divines unhappily made way for *Antinomianism*, verging from one extreme to another, till at length some of the weaker sort were lost in the wild mazes of enthusiastic dreams and visions; and others, from false principles, pretended to justify the hidden works of dishonesty."

It may be supposed that the Sabbatarian ministry of the present day is better than this. A talented and distinguished Protestant clergymen of Philadelphia, gives the following account of it in the present year: "Congregations, instead of being taught from the pulpit to adorn their profession by all the lovely graces of the gospel, by kind and affectionate bearing in the world, by earnest and ever active endeavors to

secure for themselves and others the blessings of peace, were annoyed with inflammatory harangues upon the 'great schism,' and upon the 'abominations of the Roman church.' The Pope, and the Pope, and the Pope, was the beginning and end of sermons in certain churches; and women and children were frightened with the details of him at Rome."\*

This ministry, which is so much recommended, breathes habitually intolerance and sectarianism; it prays twice and thrice a day at Sabbath conventions; but it has been proved to have created riots and discord, and is in truth subversive of the morals of society.

In the last two hundred years, there has been, it is said, a constant and accelerated decrease of the clergy in Europe. In Denmark, in twenty years, they have decreased more than one half; in Russia, in thirty-three years, more than one-third; in England, in one hundred and thirty-three years, more than two-thirds, and it is stated that in six Catholic States there has been a decrease of eight hundred and fifty-five thousand of priests, monks, and nuns. There is cause for all this; the people believe that it is they who have been the principal promoters of all the absurdities that have been promulgated under the name of Christianity.

There is even reason to believe, that the clergymen as a class preach doctrines which they do not believe

\* "Dangers from Presbyterianism," p. 21.

themselves, but which they have derived from the formulas of the churches with which they are connected. Luther candidly says: "Often do I think within myself that I scarcely know where I am and whether I teach the truth or not." (Luther, Col. Isleb de Christo.)

John Matthei, the author of many writings on the life of Luther, has a curious anecdote touching the convictions of Luther. It is this: "A preacher called John Musa related to me that he one day complained to Luther that he could not prevail on himself to believe what he taught to others. 'Blessed be God,' (said Luther,) 'that the same thing happens to others as to myself; I believed till now that *that* was a thing that happened only to me.'" (John Matthei, Conc. 12. Quoted by Rev. J. Balmes in his works on Protestantism.)

Foxton, the Episcopal clergyman to whom we have already referred, thus writes:

"Of the ministering clergy I require alone, that they suffer, as far as possible, that "judgment should go by default," where they have no rational plea for the defence of an insignificant rite or obsolete form. If the Church will not speak the truth, let her at least be silent. If she will not inform, if she fears to enlighten the consciences of her hearers, let her at least cease to mystify and deceive them. The concession I require is far less than her bigoted supporters are will-



ing to believe, for her authority is hourly decreasing, and every attempt to restore it but hastens its decline. \* \* \* \* To the best and purest of her ministers, her cumbrous and antiquated machinery is daily becoming more and more an encumbrance and a snare, and the brightest ornaments of her communion are those who virtually renounce their allegiance to her laws. \* \* \* \* The clergy are simply called upon openly to profess what so many of them secretly believe. Let no honest preacher any longer continue to teach what he believes to be unreal and untrue, even though it be consecrated by the formularies of the Church. \* \* \* \* Every sect of Christians, almost every school of philosophers, acknowledge in some sense the doctrine of spiritual influences, of our allegiance to a power beyond the visible world, and the immortality of the soul.”\*

If it is true that the divine laws lie at the bottom of all things, even those of a mechanical nature ; if every department of natural and moral philosophy points to an ever present superintending Providence, may there not be an expanded field for pulpit eloquence, a thousand times more rational than the dogmas which pass under the name of Christianity.

If there is truth in the foregoing historical sketches, superstition, with its terrible persecutions, is the natural result of erroneous elementary principles

\* Popular Christianity, page 122 and 123.

which men receive from education. How important then is it to close the avenues by which these errors are instilled into the youthful mind; among these, Theological or Divinity schools hold a prominent place, and if our reasoning is true, they are an evil to the students themselves, who might otherwise be earning a respectable living; an evil to the clergy who thus imbibe a dependence on the musty records of other generations; above all they are an evil to the whole mass of society, in making men artificial and incidently increasing moral offences, and as such there can be no reasonable doubt that the public would be benefited if all such institutions were closed forever.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHAPLAINS—DAYS OF PUBLIC THANKSGIVING—SABBATH CONVENTIONS.

Chaplains were originally appointed by the ancient kings of France, as conservators of the relics of the saints. From the covering of these shrines came the name of chaplain. Their history is a curious one: the king and nobility having according to their rank a number of chaplains appointed for them by law, whose office was to pray for them, to officiate in their

chapels, to say grace, and to have the care of their souls.

It may be received as an axiom in government, that a legislature has no right to expend money for any purpose for which it has no right to lay a tax ; and if it is admitted the Congress cannot tax the people for ecclesiastical purposes, it will follow that it has no right to expend money to pay chaplains. The whole basis of the constitution is opposed to the principle. In Pennsylvania and some other States, the appointment of a chaplain would be a violation of the spirit of our laws. An usurpation of this kind was carried into effect in New York some years since, and created great dissatisfaction. There was no apology for it, either in the laws or customs of the State. To make it the more acceptable, the law stated, that the clergy of Albany, "without discrimination or preference," should be appointed to the office of chaplain. It altered in no respect the principle, but it led to this dilemma, that a colored orthodox clergyman claimed his equal right to pray and to be paid. White clergymen were willing to pray for the blacks, but for blacks to pray for the whites was an unheard of thing, which could, under no circumstances, be submitted to. It became a subject of negotiation, which resulted in a compromise, by which the black pastor was paid from the public purse, not for saying prayers for the legislature, as other chaplains did, but for *not* saying them.

These public prayers, so expressly forbidden by the New Testament, seem to me equally objectionable in principle and in detail. I know of no point of view in which they can be defended, but as a source of emolument to the clergy.

The employment of chaplains by our national and State legislatures may be considered to be at variance with the spirit of our institutions. The Constitution of the United States says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Here is another broad ground taken in favor of conscientious liberty; but this, so just and equitable to all, has given great offence to the Presbyterians, who are now deemed the principal Sabbatarians. In a general synod, held at Pittsburg, in the year 1834, they pretended to establish, not only the immorality of the Constitution, as they termed it, but that "it contained the infidel and anti-Christian principle, that Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the *free exercise thereof*." Every movement they make upon this subject evinces that the intolerance which marked the rise of the society is still rife in the present day.

John Adams, the elder, the great expounder of constitutional law in this country, when President of the United States, wrote to the Dey of Algiers, that "the Constitution of the United States was in no sense

founded upon the Christian religion." Leaving religion, of course, where it always ought to be left, to individual minds, and knowing no distinction among those who led a peaceable and quiet life.

The late envoy extraordinary to the court of China writes as follows: "Dr. Bridgeman is chaplain to the legation in title and fact. I have deemed it essential to have religious services performed at the residence of the legation every Lord's day, and shall adhere to the practice as long as my mission lasts." I presume this is the first time that such an affair was ever got up officially by any of the representatives of the United States in a foreign country.

The appropriation of money by Congress for such a purpose, is an innovation upon former practices, and may be considered an infringement of the Constitution of the United States. If John Adams' opinion is correct, it might be well, before agents and officers are selected to fill important stations in government, that they should learn that the Constitution is a civil contract, having no relation to religious rites. The Presbyterian synods may lament as they please over such a state of things, but "it is error alone that needs the support of government: truth can stand by itself."\*

Every law of a religious or sectarian character is so far a union of church and state; and however

\* Jefferson's Notes on Virginia.

plausible may be the pretext, religion is an affair in which the legislature has no right to meddle, and such a course is always injurious, and a violation of the constitution.

Days of thanksgiving and of fasts, appointed by law, are liable to the same objection, and are so far perverted from their professed office as to be made days of licentiousness ; they are suited to the ancient usages of New England, but are irreconcilable with the more expanded laws or practices of the Middle and Southern States.

Can it be believed, by any intelligent man, that people can give thanks because a day has been appointed for the purpose, and the hour has come? People are thankful when they have pure and thankful hearts—it is a feeling that flows spontaneously from the exuberance of their own emotions. The law may make men hypocrites, but it can never make them religious.

I have before stated, that, in the austerities of the Puritans relative to the first day of the week, another day of recreation was appointed by act of Parliament. Their zeal against Christmas, and other holidays, resulted in festival days of their own ; not only days for public thanksgiving, but fast days, were agreed upon by the Presbyterian assembly of divines, held at Westminster in 1645 ; and directions were also given how they should be held, how long they should continue,

and for the particular preparation of mind necessary thereto. This is believed to be the origin of the thanksgiving days of the Eastern States. Attempts to fill churches by civil enactments, (for it amounts to that,) are worse than useless: persons who advocate such measures, forget that there is no such thing as a religion of force; in fact, just so far as it is based upon force, its effect is, to add hypocrisy to a want of faith; my candid conviction is, that churches would be as well attended, and attended to better purpose, if every law on the subject was repealed, and the pretensions of particular days to exclusive sanctity were disclaimed forever.

The National Sabbath Address to the people of the United States uses this language: "However pure and healthful the fountain, if poison be cast into it, it sends forth only streams of death; and so will desecrated and polluted Sabbaths work our more speedy and dreadful ruin."

In the proceedings of the Harrisburg Convention we find the following sentence: "Property earned or increased by Sabbath desecration, reaches a second generation, accompanied by the impious parental lesson, that the claims of duty and human happiness may yield to the clamors of interest and convenience. Hence it is no wonder that such inheritances are soon squandered, so that the profligate and beggared son trudges in rags, where a Sabbath-breaking father rode

in his chariot." I ask myself how it is possible that deliberate assemblies sanction such language. Is it true, that the laws of nature are inviolate to those who desecrate the Sabbath, as well as to those who do not? If it is so, the conclusions to be drawn from these paragraphs are false, and it is not too much to say, that the enlightened men of those congregations knew that they were so.

Where are the nobility of England, the acknowledged desecrators of the Sabbath day, with their property preserved to their families from one generation to another for a thousand years?

It may be said that their estates have been protected by particular laws, but what are human laws to that power that burns a barn or sinks a steamboat, as a judgment upon Sabbath-breakers? Where is the Quaker property? instead of going down with this curse attached to it, it is preserved in a remarkable degree, from one generation to another.

But admitting that the parents had done wrong in working on the first day of the week, which I totally deny, who has delegated authority to these conventions to pass judgment upon their children, and to make them answerable for sins which they never committed?

Such sentiments, no matter how respectable the source whence they come, are degrading to human nature, and unworthy of enlightened assemblies.



Why should not perfect liberty of conscience be extended to all? Those who travel on that day have the example of Jesus Christ and the doctrines of the New Testament in their favor; there is no objection to persons staying at home on that day, if they prefer not to travel.

Turnpike roads are established by the same power and for the same purpose as railroads; but society would never suffer them to be subjected to sectarian influence.

The national address says, with some exultation, "It is not he who fears God, and keeps his Sabbath, that robs his neighbor or murders him." . . . . Every body knows that. "Nor is his place among the debased of his species in any respect or anywhere. . . . He will understand and value his political rights, and respect the rights of others. . . . The world has never witnessed the spectacle of an universal obedience to the Sabbath in any country, and its full power to bless a nation is yet unrevealed."

Were those who issued this address so blind, or so ignorant, or so prejudiced, as not to know that every statement herein is untrue? The Sabbatarians at one time wielded the power of the British Parliament; they enforced the observance of the day by every law that ingenuity could devise; they came to this country with both the civil and eccle-

siastical power in their hands. Every individual in the colony was of the class of Sabbatarians. Is there no truth in the histories that have been alluded to? Were the Quakers and the witches not hung? Who was it exercised such dreadful cruelties upon the defenceless aborigines of the country? Who was it made such despotic laws against the Roman Catholics, that it was death for a Catholic priest to remain in their territories? If history is true, the answer to all these questions will be, that it was the Sabbatarians. Who had such bitter quarrels and denunciations among themselves, that when they had only been settled a few years in the country, Vane, one of the most pious among these Puritans, left the country in disgust? In the contest, Cotton, and Winthrop, and Hutchinson, were prominent actors. The answer still is, it was the Sabbatarians. And it is the Sabbatarians that at the present day are issuing denunciations against some of the most respectable men in the country.

In one of the leading addresses of the convention, it is said, "No one can rebel against the Sabbath as a religious institution, without the most heaven-daring sin;" and another work, speaking of the Sabbath-breakers, says, "Judgment in due time lingereth not, and damnation slumbereth not."\* Such sentiments can only be sustained by falsehood. In every aspect

\* Boston Permanent Documents.

they are equally untrue. I have observed the management of extensive operations, where large numbers of people were employed ; I have worked on the first day of the week whenever it has suited me to do so ; I have employed others to do the same ; I have travelled and visited on that day ; I have done everything that I would do on any other day of the week. I have seen, times without number, children enjoying the innocent amusements of their kites and their marbles, and I have never seen the slightest loss or harm resulting from it, in any way whatever. So far as I have acted myself, I have done it with great peace and tranquillity of mind ; nay, to use a Scripture expression, if I had observed one day as more holy than the rest, the stones in the street would have cried out against me.

The Sabbath doctrines produced, as we have seen, discord and animosity in Old and New England, substituting cant and hypocrisy for the vitality of truth ; and so far as the people of these United States may be induced to adopt them, it may be considered to be both an individual and a national calamity.

We are told, by an unanimous vote of the Harrisburg Sabbath Convention, that if we withhold our contributions to the funds necessary to maintain the families of the missionaries, "we and our children must abide the fearful consequences here and hereafter."

People may honestly take different views of the same subject; but when writers descend to false reasoning and puerile statements, in order, as it would seem, to influence men who have not time to examine and reflect for themselves, they pursue a course in which honorable men would hardly be willing to follow them. This applies peculiarly to the proceedings of Sabbath conventions. The minds of the members seem to be deeply tainted with superstition and prejudice, and there is scarcely a statement they publish, which, in all its bearings, is strictly true.

One of the conventions recommends that the facts relative to "the voice of God in his providence," for violating the Sabbath, be collected and circulated. The Boston work enumerates a great number of cases of the kind.

It is at variance with facts, and the common sense observations of the age, that the judgments of the Lord are peculiarly heaped upon Sabbath-breakers. If there is any truth in these pages, Sabbath-breakers, as they are called by sectarians, are not worse than any other class of society. Even if they were bad men, the rain descends and the sun shines upon them, and the providence of God watches continually over them for good. The ideas promulgated upon this subject are calculated to operate upon the fears of the people, and appear to be founded wholly in delusion and superstition.

One man lost his barn by lightning, as a judgment for violating the Sabbath; another from a fire communicated from a gun; others failed; some were not equally successful in making salt who worked on Sunday; some did not succeed in fishing, and the like. Such reasoning may suit the superstitious, but it deserves very little attention from rational minds.

Perhaps some of the men who have promulgated these sentiments, have been themselves sufferers—have had their barns burnt, and been subjected to distress and difficulty of various kinds. Do these things never happen to those who keep the Sabbath? There are cars that have, for a number of years, started from Philadelphia as regularly on the first day of the week as on any other day. Have they been more subject to accidents on that day? Certainly not! In England, the rail road companies are compelled to furnish cars for Sunday use, in order to accommodate the working people who are at leisure on that day. When an attempt was made to stop some of the trains, it was brought before Parliament as a subject of complaint.

The National Convention, in its address to the people of the United States, degrades itself by saying, that we are warned by the “awful providences of God,” against the profanation of the Christian Sabbath. I hesitate not to say that the statement is not true.

*Respecting the inmates of our prisons.*

It is said that a large proportion of such persons did not value the Sabbath, and were in the habit of profaning it, and a false argument is founded thereon, that this is the principal cause of their errors. Men of depraved minds will naturally profane the Sabbath, but they equally profane every other day in the week. Pious and good men, who are opposed to the movements of the Sabbatarians, and object to Sabbath conventions, and whom they term “desecrators of the Sabbath,” are as much opposed, nay, more than sectarians are likely to be, to profaneness of any kind whatever.

As I have stated, the efforts of these conventions are directed against those who are peculiarly Sabbath-breakers—against men who are pursuing their lawful callings during six days, and are not, to use their own expression, “giving the seventh peculiarly unto God.”

“Six days of the week alone are the property of mankind for the performance of secular business—the seventh belongs to God, and whosoever does not devote one day in seven to the worship of our Heavenly Father, is a robber of God.” This sentiment is published as the third resolution of the National Sabbath Convention; it contains the shocking idea, that six days belong to man, and but one to God.

Can they show any instance of people who pursue the paths of rectitude, do righteously and justly on six days, and yet are licentious on the first day of the week? If they can, their argument on this subject may have some force. Have the inmates of our prisons been of this character? Surely not! I presume no such instance can be found, and yet they speak as if it were so.

Admitting it to be true, that the inmates of our prisons have been Sabbath-breakers, a charge which perhaps would apply to every person in the United States; what has first made them the violators of law but Sabbath enactments, which have no foundation in truth, and which are at variance with the very spirit of the Christian religion? Thus man himself makes sinners of his fellow men.

But let us look at the other side of the question. How many Sabbath-keepers are violating the moral law? How many are robbing the poor of their bread? Are these debased by keeping the Sabbath? There is as much argument on one side of the question as on the other.

The sentiment of putting no unnecessary burdens upon society, or of the injurious effects of counting that sin which is not sin, has been repeated by many wise men since the days of the apostle.

Milton says, "It is the height of injustice, as well as an example of most dangerous tendency in re-

ligion, to account as sin what is not such in reality."\*

"The laws of religion," says Montesquieu, "should never inspire an aversion to any thing but vice, and above all they should never estrange man from a love and tenderness for his own species."†

I also transcribe one of the maxims of Burke,—  
"Lawful enjoyment is the surest method to prevent unlawful gratification."‡

If these maxims are true, we may draw the conclusion that ascetic laws for the observance of Sunday are productive of moral evil. Laws may be enforced, but all other things being equal, if there is any one State in this Union where the Sabbath is more attended to than in the others, and I do not know that there is such a State, the morals of the inhabitants will, I believe, be found to be injured thereby.

I here close my remarks upon Sabbath conventions. What I have said has been in no unkind spirit; some among the members are my personal friends, and no one can deny that the assemblies in question have contained much individual virtue, respectability, and intelligence. Against their proceedings, however, I have felt called upon to protest, as a Christian and as a citizen. The fictions which they have brought

\* Treatise on Christian Doctrine, p. 231.

† Spirit of Laws, B. xxiv., Ch. 22.

‡ Burke's Works, vol. vi. p. 312. Ed. 1823.



forward are so monstrous, as to disgust any candid inquirer after truth ; the end which they propose to gain, is subversive alike of religion and good government ; they would destroy liberty of conscience, to gain which the world has seen so much suffering ; they would retard the progress of science and the arts, which can never flourish when the mind is enslaved ; they would establish a religion of rites and ceremonies, in place of the pure and simple doctrines of the Christian faith ; they would recall, in effect, the formal spirit of Paganism, to preside at the altars of a spiritual church ; they would debase religion to glorify themselves ; to gain such ends, they now invoke the aid of public opinion, and the power of the civil government ; should they succeed, they would establish a persecution as oppressive in its nature as any that deforms the pages of history.

## CHAPTER XI.

MAN CANNOT WORK UNCEASINGLY—CLOSING COURTS,  
NO REASON FOR CLOSING RAILROADS—ALL WHO HOLD  
ACCORDING TO REASON, CHRISTIANS—UNIVERSALITY  
OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION—CONCLUSION.

The great physiological truth, that man cannot work unceasingly, is brought forward continually to sustain the "Christian Sabbath" as a religious rite.

No truth is more certain than that there is a maximum to the labors of men and horses and inanimate machines which cannot be exceeded without injury.

A locomotive that has seventy miles to travel each day, will perform it with less wear and tear, less friction, less injury, both to the locomotive and to the railroad, by doing the work in seven hours than in six.

What is true of a locomotive is true of other machines: and it is true also of animals. There is an amount of labor which each will perform in a year, or in any other given time, and that will be accomplished with less injury by a regular division of it than in any other way. It may be true that a horse on a journey will be better for resting one day in

seven; but if so, it is only because the work has been too hard on the other six: so of man, one or two, or three days in seven may be highly necessary to him, as a relief from excessive toil; but it is from causes which in themselves are deviations from the laws of nature; and in attempting to apply a remedy, if we do not first understand the cause, we are liable to do evil instead of good.

In the concern which Sabbatarians profess for laboring men, would they encourage them to leave the confinement of the towns and cities, and ride out into the country? Would they wish them to have the pleasure of visiting their friends, and walking in the fields to enjoy rural scenery? These things for their physical enjoyment would seem to be most natural and proper. There were two instances in which the Sabbatarians had all power in their own hands, in both of which they abused it; they made the most severe laws against every species of rational enjoyment which a laboring man could desire, and which would be most in accordance with his physical nature. The same feelings exist now.

The clergy themselves appear to be the greatest offenders in this respect. I do not perceive the difference between making merchandise of the labor of a man's head, or of his hands. I do not say that either is wrong, but the principle is the same. Clergymen, who work on the first day, take the liberty of

judging whether they will rest on any other day or not. Many of them probably work every day in the week, but they deny that right to others which they take for themselves.

In this country almost every man is a working man. The judge who sits on the bench, and the merchant who writes in his office, may work as hard, nay, much harder, than he who carries a mattock and labors on the highway.

The one class would be most benefited by a day of rest, the other by a day of activity; and so far as our physical nature is concerned, if our judges and legislators, and all who lead sedentary lives, could be induced to ride out on the first day of the week, and take active exercise, society would be benefited thereby.

These are obvious truths, that can be understood by all. Yet it is proposed to bring the judge and the legislator from one sedentary employment to another; from the court and the legislative hall to the church; if that, as is sometimes the case, is a place of quietness and rest, still further to violate the laws of nature.

If the views upon this subject, taken by the Sabbatarians, are correct, it is one of the strongest reasons that can be given for the extension of a perfect liberty of conscience. The idle man, if he could be induced to do so, should go to work, the sedentary

man should ride out and take the open air in the country, and religious exercises should be put a stop to, because nature requires that one day in seven should be held purely as a day of rest and refreshment for the preservation of our physical frames.

No rule of conduct would be of universal application. It is a subject of deep regret that there should be licentiousness on any day; but the reformation which is so desirable, is least of all to be expected from the plans of the modern Sabbatarians. Even if they promised great good, there is one all-sufficient reason against them, that they are not founded in truth.

In Scotland first, in this country, and in England next, where the Puritan principles have prevailed, the first day of the week has been invariably perverted from a day of joy and rejoicing to one of gloom and superstition. It is in these countries, notwithstanding the great professions of concern for the physical nature of man, that nature has been most of all violated, by the denial of liberty of conscience to use the day of rest as would most promote health and happiness.

Men in some employments require to be relieved every eight hours; or to give it another division of time, to have two Sabbaths of rest in a week. I have known many other men, when the labor was less severe, whose occupations required that they should

attend to their respective duties twelve hours in the twenty-four, every day in the year. There was no decay of health and vigor, no exhausted energies, no prostration of body or of spirit, which Sabbatarians pretend to say is the inevitable consequence of not keeping the Sabbath day. Not one single instance of the kind has ever come under my observation, during a period of many years. In regard to intellectual occupations on that day, which it is stated will result in "less clearness of perception, power of description, and soundness of judgment," I may mention, that some of the best works that have ever been written in this country, works which have received great commendation in foreign lands for their literary and scientific character, have been composed almost exclusively on Sundays, in the leisure thence afforded from constant employment on other days in the week. The views which I have given on this subject are believed to be the only true ones; and the sentiments of the Sabbatarians, differing materially from these as they do, are certainly incorrect both in principle and in practice.

There are thousands of cases, in which men are required to work on the first day of the week, in the proper performance of their duty; the nurse in the sick room must work, the navigators of ships on the ocean, and the conductors on railroads. Each in his proper place is fulfilling his duty, by working on

that day, thus contributing to the welfare of his fellow men, and herein also worshipping God.

We defeat our object by requiring too much; let us get rid of the superstition, and the thing in the end will find its own level; it is the unnatural requirements that reacts and produce evil.

We would open to the people every means of rational enjoyment, and then we may come before them with confidence, and ask their aid to suppress every thing that is irrational and wrong; at present they are in arms against the observance of the day, because of its austerities; make no irrational requisition, and we make them our friends.

*Next, as to the arguments which are adduced in favor of closing railroads, because courts and the public offices are closed on the first day of the week.*

At the early period of the Christian religion, when that faith prevailed, all the secular power was in the hands of the Romans. Constantine, who first united Church and State, in the edict already referred to, interdicted the opening of courts on Sunday, which was afterwards confirmed by Theodosius, Valentinian and Arcadius, who published a law prohibiting arbitrations on holy days. In this prohibition, Sundays, their birth-days, and festival days, were all placed on the same footing. These edicts were still further enforced by Leo, in 466, who gives as a reason, "that adversaries might meet together on that

day without fear." The same law directed that the spectacle of wild beasts, the theatre, and other places of diversion, should be closed ; and a distinction was made, for the first time, between birth-days and Sunday.\*

Such were the imperial laws relative to closing courts on the first day of the week. There were, no doubt, many special usages, in different countries, upon the subject; and they seem to have been regulated by the caprices of those who held the power. In the reign of Alfred, bishops were the judges, and several parts of the New Testament were incorporated into the Saxon laws.† The closing of the courts has become a law by long usage, enforcing particular statutes upon the subject, and the practice is universally assented to and approved. It has a basis in our physical nature, which would in itself be imperative. I apprehend there is no employment so severe for a conscientious magistrate, as setting as a judge in our supreme courts, where there is no appeal. The stretch of thought and research which is required in cases often extremely intricate; the mists that are thrown around by advocates, whose business it is to tell their own side of the story; the elaborate opinions that are often to be written out, make it one of the

\* See *Corpus Juris Civilis*, where these laws are extant. Article *Ferii*. Also Howell's *Ecclesiastical History*, folio, vol. iii.

† See Hume's *Hist. Eng.*, reign of Alfred; also, Jefferson's *Letter to Castier*.



most onerous employments that are to be found. Instead of curtailing the relaxation of the judges, two days of rest in each week had better be appointed for them.

If there is no other reason why the courts should be closed, the usages of our forefathers, many centuries ago, should not be deemed authority for us, under circumstances entirely different. The first frame of laws in this province, made by William Penn, permitted all the civil affairs of government to be transacted on the first day of the week, "in cases of emergency:" and the legislature and civil officers of this State are at liberty to transact business on that day whenever it is required.

It ought to be considered a settled law of the land, that conscientious men are at liberty to work on the first day of the week, if they choose to do so. I think there can be no doubt that such is the law of this State, and that it would be so interpreted by enlightened and disinterested men.

It looks like a subterfuge and evasion, for the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to assume, that though the Sunday laws are not ecclesiastical, they are constitutional as civil enactments. Has the Constitution given to the legislature, or to the courts, any authority to say when men shall work, or when they shall be idle? No such thing can be found therein, even by inference. The right to interfere, if any there be,

is by prescriptions resting on a very uncertain and doubtful basis ; and yet upon this, the Jew and the Seventh-day Baptist are fined for working on the first day of the week. Such violations of the natural rights of man are calculated to lessen the authority of all law, and to impair the obligations of society.

The introduction of religion into the common law was an usurpation founded upon the "base falsehoods" of the law judges in England.\* This has been perpetuated in this country, and will continue to be the case, so long as people want confidence in the power of truth.†

There could hardly be a greater stigma cast upon the Christian religion, than the idea that it is not able to sustain itself without the power of the sword.

A very curious trial occurred a few years since in

\* See Jefferson's Letter to Major Cartwright. Jefferson's Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 393.

† The President of the College at Columbia, South Carolina, in a letter to a member of Congress, says, "This usurpation has been so completely put down by Jefferson, that it never can be repeated except for purposes of fraud." And he asks, in reference to the case, ("Smith and Sparrow, 4 Bingh. 84, 88,") "did Judge Story never read the Year Book cited by Mr. Jefferson, which shows the barefaced, wilful ignorance of the English bench? The Judge either has read Prisot's opinion, or he has not. If not, he is grossly ignorant; if he has, he has asserted what he *knows* is not law."

Pennsylvania. A man came before the court with his hat on. The Quakers, as a class, objected to the formal recognition of respect, where they felt none; and, preferring to show it by their conduct rather than by unmeaning forms, they steadily refused to pull off their hats in reverence to any court or body of men. This was so well settled, that if the man had been a Quaker, there would have been no question upon the subject; he was not a Quaker, but still he chose to keep his hat on, and the court ordered it to be taken off. For this offence, the judge was impeached before the Senate of the State, the impeachment was sustained, and he lost his office for this, and for this alone. The man pleaded that he had done no civil injury to any one—that the Constitution gave him a right to take his hat off or keep it on—and the high court of appeals sustained him in this position.

This may appear as a very small affair, but the Senate was right. Courts have no right to usurp legislative powers, and the more earnestly this is objected to the more harmonious will be the operation of our laws. The Sabbath laws of Pennsylvania are a perfect absurdity and a disgrace to the State; the judges of the Supreme Court cannot agree upon their interpretation, and the local courts and magistrates give them a construction to suit their own sectarian notions. It has lately been discovered that though an act itself is lawful, the peaceful means by

which that act should be accomplished is unlawful; the *major* does not, as in all other cases, include the *minor*. A railroad car which accommodates hundreds of travellers, pursuing their lawful calling, decided to be such by the Supreme Court, may be stopped on Sunday, because the driver of the car is pursuing only his ordinary labor, which is unlawful.

At almost every session of our Legislature, petitions are presented for further enactments relative to the first day of the week; they are referred to committees, and uniformly rejected. Still, while men's minds are prejudiced, there is no certain security for liberty of conscience. The Constitution may remain as it is; but laws are but cobwebs to a sectarian community.

Courts, that are to explain them, partake of the influence, and the people sustain them in it. At present, the most certain reliance for the preservation of liberty of conscience in this country, is in the antagonist principles of the different sects. It might seem to be a sad thing that caused religious sects to quarrel as they do, but thence arises safety to honest and enlightened men. Let them combine upon the subject of Sunday police, or upon any other point whatever, and the liberties of the country are in danger.

Those who are disposed to multiply penal enactments, seem not to understand their nature. Severities against doctrines, have so much augmented the evil, that persecutions have been called the seed of

the church. And it is probable that penal laws have often increased rather than lessened crime. In the reign of Henry VIII., there were hanged in England seventy-two thousand thieves and rogues, besides other malefactors, being about two thousand a year.\* Executions have been gradually decreasing, until they have become of rare occurrence. Laws have been softened, and the morals of the people have improved; it is probable that this improvement is to be ascribed in no inconsiderable degree, to the public being rendered less familiar with crime, through the amenity of the civil code.

Jefferson, in his Notes on Virginia, makes it a question, whether no law at all, or too much law, is the greater evil. He pronounces the latter to be the case; he founds his opinion on the Indian nations on one side, (amongst whom, he says, governed as they are by the moral sense of right and wrong, crimes are of very rare occurrence,) and the civilized nations of Europe on the other.†

Ordinances are of no avail unless supported by public opinion. The laws of Pennsylvania, so far as respects the abstaining from labor on the first day of the week, are effectual. Society universally assents to them; but of what avail are other provisions respecting Sunday. It is supposed there is double the

\* See Hume's History of England, vol. v. note, (MM.) p. 533.

† Jefferson's Notes, p. 138.

amount of licentiousness on that as on any other day. And if we multiply the statutes upon this subject, it is more likely to increase than to decrease crime.

Our canals and railroads are used by persons who believe they are enjoined to keep the seventh day of the week as a Sabbath, and by others who are conscientious in keeping every day as a day of holiness. These persons are all taxed to support them, and they can never be placed on a footing with other men, if their conscientious rights are not equally attended to.

Our railroads have been designed for public highways, under regulations necessary for their preservation, and the legislature has no more right to put any other restrictions upon them, than it has to interfere with our State or turnpike roads. Travelling on the first day of the week is expressly permitted by the laws of the State, and I am not aware of any difference in principle between travelling by water and by land. Sunday has been considered a lucky day for seamen to leave port, and raftsmen travel on the river by hundreds when the water suits them. I believe no idea is ever expressed that this is wrong. Why then should not the farmer take in his grain with equal propriety? The grain is ripe in the fields but a few days in the year. The raftsmen who depends upon accidental freshets is equally limited as to time; they stand upon the same footing. The law makes a distinction, which has no foundation in reason or

common sense. There are usually more days suitable for the raftsmen than for the husbandmen to take in his grain.

The edict of Constantine, and the old English laws, heretofore referred to, allowed all kinds of work in the harvest field.

If our government is, as is pretended, a civil compact, the propriety of any laws of this character may be questioned; they are, in fact, an incongruous mixture of church and state, warranted in some degree by old usages, but inconsistent with the nature of our institutions. They have one origin, a want of reliance on the power of truth. Having confidence in the influence of religion on the human mind—in its universality—in its sufficiency to sustain itself without the aid of the civil power, I should fear no evil from abolishing every law upon the subject.

The Sabbatarians would object to such a course, because they imagine that religion depends upon the observance of one day as the Sabbath. Not many years since, it was thought needful that religion should be supported by the power of the State. The opinion has prevailed still more generally that an established clergy is necessary. Experience has demonstrated that these ideas are unfounded, and that such institutions are not required.

The toleration act in England was only obtained after a desperate struggle with the power of the

clergy; and yet that act was fraught with unnumbered blessings, and enlarged, in every direction, the sphere of the human mind. At a later day, the corporation and test acts fell before the same liberal spirit, and in despite of the same opposition; in our own country, established church governments in Virginia and in New England, have been successively overthrown after every effort on the part of the clergy to sustain them.

While we have to lament the continued existence of so much bigotry and intolerance, it is pleasing to record these examples of progress. The day is, we may hope, not far distant, when all men will acknowledge the insufficiency of form and ceremony to illustrate a spiritual religion.

Sabbath conventions will then assume their place in history with other sectarian movements, which have attempted to repress the spirit of enquiry, and which, after a brief success, have become a mockery and a warning to succeeding generations.

Enactments on this subject are but a species of sectarianism upon a broader scale, the evils of which have been shown in many ways in this country.

A few years since, in the neighborhood of Boston, a Catholic seminary was burnt to the ground by a combination of zealous Protestants. The same thing has occurred in Philadelphia. Catholic seminaries have been destroyed, and the community was so cor-



rupted by sectarian influence, as to be unwilling to arrest the flames. The attempt is making to create another kind of sectarianism, not less intolerant, by casting odium upon those who observe the first day of the week after the manner of the early Christians.

The present constitution of Pennsylvania ministers, in a slight degree, to this sectarianism. It provides on this subject, "That no person who acknowledges the being of a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, shall, on account of his religious sentiments, be disqualified to hold any office, or place of trust and profit under this commonwealth." From this we are of course to infer, that persons who do *not* believe in a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, are incompetent to hold office.

This is, in fact, so far as it goes, a test act; it is wrong in principle, because a civil code has properly no concern with religion. Any interference by a civil power with the conscience, is generally of no avail; if effectual, it is tyranny. The interest both of religion and of good government is advanced by keeping them wholly distinct. They have separate provinces for their action—distinct duties to perform—and they are never combined without decreasing the efficacy of both. All history bears witness to the evils arising from a union,

in any form, of Church and State. The bitterest contentions, the worst persecutions, the most intense demoralization, which the world has ever witnessed, have arisen from this cause. We may fairly conclude, that in whatever degree it may be accomplished in this country, religion will become corrupt, and the seeds of contention and tyranny be infused into our government.

Some of the other States of the Union are, at present, much more intolerant than Pennsylvania. Here, though the principle is false, the practical operation of the restriction referred to above, is of little account. It can scarcely be called exclusive, because it is almost impossible that any one should come within its limits.

There never was a nation found, where the people had not a belief in God, and in a future state of rewards and punishments. The Egyptians first built altars and temples to religion; but before their erection, there is evidence of the universal belief in God among those who were called Pagans, and connected with it, a belief in future retribution.

There is no such thing as entire irreligion. Truth is as needful to our preservation, as blood to the physical frame; the whole fabric of society rests upon it. Every individual is, to a certain extent, a religious man; but what is called religion has been so long prostituted to the worst purposes, and

is so much connected with childish forms, that many excellent men turn from the name instinctively. That man is not to be found, who has no respect for truth and virtue; and he who recognises the attributes of God, believes in God, without regard to the name he bears.

There is but one religion in the world. The word comes from *religo*, to *bind anew*. There is no false religion; this, in its nature, is impossible. We are familiar with Catholicism, Episcopacy, and many minor sects; they are merely forms of church government, which have no necessary connection with religion. *They* rise and fall, but religion remains unchanged.

Justin Martyr, that eminent Christian father of whom I have spoken, says, "All who lived according to reason were Christians, even though they were reputed to be Atheists; for instance, Socrates, Heraclitus, and others among the Greeks; Abraham, Ananias, Azarias, Misael, Elias, among the barbarians." (Jews being so considered by the Greeks and Romans.) Whilst on the other hand, they who lived contrary to reason, were bad men, and enemies to Christ; that "whatever right opinions the Gentile philosophers entertained respecting the nature of the Deity, the relation in which man stands to him, and the duties arising out of that re-

lation, were to be ascribed to the reason (*logos*) implanted in their own bosoms.”\*

This is consistent with the doctrines of the New Testament—“He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; \* \* \* \* \* but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is *that* of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” These views are sustained by every sound principle of philosophy and common sense, and they introduce us into universal sympathy and brotherhood with the whole family of man.

The Esquimaux in the frozen regions of the north, and the Hottentot basking under the palm tree, beneath a vertical sun, so far as they are actuated by this *logos*, or, as Adam Smith calls it, “the man within the breast,” are as effectually saved from their sins, as Christians can be. The institution of a Sabbath has never come to them; but they understand the great moral principles of right and wrong as perfectly as we do. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, after travelling thousands of miles amongst nations which we deem barbarous, left behind him this sentiment: “I have seen human nature in almost all its forms; it is everywhere the same, but the wilder it is, the more virtuous.” See Fitzgerald’s Letters.

Plutarch, the great Pagan philosopher and his-

\* “Some account of the writings and opinions of Justin Martyr, by John, Bishop of Lincoln.”

torian, in his work against Coloteus, says, "Examine the face of the globe, and you may find cities unfortified, unlettered, without a regular magistrate, or appropriated habitations; without possessions, property, or the use of money, and unskilled in all the magnificent and polite arts of life. But a city without the knowledge of a God, no man can or ever will find."

Some of the doctrines of the ancient Platonists and Stoics appear to have been as pure as those of the Christian period. If all men, so far as they are actuated by the pure principles of religion, are Christians, according to Justin Martyr and the New Testament, (and we must believe this, unless we believe in two religions, or that they are cut off from salvation altogether,) it will follow that "the dispensations of the law and of the gospel," are to be referred rather to individual minds, than to any particular period of time; and that the opinions of Jews and Pagans concerning religion may as essentially exist with us, as they did before the coming of Christ. Mosheim relates, as has been mentioned before, that many of the ceremonies of Pagan worship were incorporated as symbols into the Christian church, to captivate the vulgar. They seem to exist almost in their pristine vigor in the present day; it must be evident to all, that image worship may be performed without the presence of idols.

Jesus left no writings behind him as a rule for others—he directed none to do so; but, in the most beautiful and touching language, he inculcated everywhere the practice of virtue and truth. Those who are not satisfied with this, will naturally inculcate the necessity of Sabbath days, and other idolatrous forms.

Christmas, as it is observed in Pennsylvania, presents an instance of a festival day, preserved from generation to generation by public opinion. The public offices, markets, and other places of the kind, are closed. People who are conscientiously scrupulous against observing the day, open their stores, and work as it suits them; no one is offended thereat; entire liberty of conscience is enjoyed. Many of the churches are opened and well attended; none are made offenders; and the cause of vital religion, in my opinion, would be promoted by putting the first day of the week upon the same footing.

This is a festival, flowing from the spontaneous feelings of the heart; and as such, is a day of repose and rejoicing. There is indeed a Christian Sabbath, which has no application to any particular time; but to that quiet rest, which is the result of conscious integrity, which no man can give or take from his fellow man; which applies to every individual—to the learned man and the ignorant man, to the prince and the beggar. This Sabbath is enforced by no law; it is interrupted by none of the ordinances of men; it is referred to abundantly, both in the Old and New

Testaments. Though they give it no name, men feel it, and understand it, in their every-day walks of life, in their intercourse with society, in attending to all the complicated duties of their existence. It belongs to no sect, to no church, to no nation or color—to no peculiar organization among men, but is the natural result of a mind purified by a fulfilment of the Divine laws.

## CONCLUSION.

These pages have been prepared without favor or affection towards any class of men, and amid engagements which have prevented a more elaborate view of the subject; but, so far as I have gone, I have endeavored simply to state the truth. I have examined several different translations of the Scriptures, both from the Hebrew and the Septuagint, with notes and annotations more extensive than the text; have traced, as far as my leisure would permit, various ecclesiastical histories, some of them voluminous and of ancient date; have paid considerable attention to the writings of the earliest authors in the Christian era, and to rare works, old and difficult of access, which treat upon this subject. I have read with care many of the publications of sectarians to sustain the institution; I have omitted nothing within my reach, and I have not found one shred of argument, or authority of any kind, that may not be deemed of a partial and sectarian character, to support the institution of the

first day of the week as a day of peculiar holiness. But, in the place of argument, I have found opinions without number—volumes filled with idle words that have no truth in them. In the want of texts of Scripture, I have found perversions; in the want of truth, false statements. I have seen it mentioned, that Justin Martyr, in his Apology, speaks of Sunday as a holy day; that Eusebius, Bishop of Cesarea, who lived in the fourth century, establishes the fact of the transfer of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day by Christ himself. These things are not true—these authors say no such thing. But there are none to contradict—the volumes are not at hand, and they pass for truth. I have seen other early authors referred to, as establishing the same point, but they are equally false—there is no such thing to be found in them. On the contrary, evidence has accumulated upon me as I have pursued the investigation, showing exactly the reverse. These statements are likely to be contradicted—they are contradicted every day, and that mostly by men who ought to know better, but they are true, however much men may deny them.

Having thus endeavored to follow the Sabbatarians through some of their devious wanderings, I come finally to consider the objection to their argument, which arises from the entire accountability of man.

This is a doctrine worth all the rest; books may perish, but this will endure forever. It is not limited



to one age or sect, but applies to every individual in the world ; as people attend to it, they understand the internal nature of truth, that it depends not upon the ingenuity of man—upon no books, however excellent they may be—upon no rules, which the most refined sects may establish.

This doctrine has been taught by all the sages of ancient and modern times ; it is taught in our books, in our schools and in our meeting-houses ; above all it is the teaching of our own bosoms. If, then, it is true, it leaves no room for one day or time to be more holy than another. We are born for active exertions ; without them we should perish ; and we perform our duty to God as well when we take care of our physical frames as when we perfect our moral character. There is no true ground for the distinction between secular and religious affairs. Every action of our lives is moral action ; everything involves religion.

There is a principle of harmony throughout the universe. In physical affairs, it may be traced from the order that marks the solar system, to the minutest insect that crawls on the ground. In all the operations of men, there is a striving after harmony, an effort after perfection. The child who makes his tiny coach, and the artificer of the splendid steamship, are actuated by the same principle ; it is this harmony, applied to mind, which forms the perfection of the human character ; so far as it prevails,

every man is a religious man, and every act of his life is an act of worship.

Everything that we do has relation to this great harmony of the world. We cannot fail to perceive that the greatest events hang upon the most trivial causes.

Shall these causes, on which so much depends, be considered of no account? or how shall we draw the line of distinction? It cannot be done, it does not exist. But we can cut the knot we cannot untie; make every day a day of religion, and feel that we are accountable for every action of our lives. So far as man does this, he comes into the universal harmony of truth. Let me not be told that these principles are adapted only to men of refinement; it is not so; they are applicable to all. All feel them according to their capacity, though they may never have thought of giving language to their sensations.

Feelings of this character, put an end at once to the distinction of sects and days; they embrace all the religion which exists in the world. The means which would be most likely to produce that reformation so much needed in society, would be to impress man with the idea that he is just as accountable one day as another; that the sanctuary of the Most High is ever open in his own bosom; that every place is God's temple, and that his altar should be erected in man's own heart.













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