

Lord of the Sabbath." Here, if anywhere, is the strength of the position of our opponents; and had the distinguished and amiable divine whose views, from a regard to truth and our country's welfare, we have been thus forced to impugn, been content to remove abuses and to promote a sounder spirit on that day, then had the Christians of Scotland, instead of being pained as now, been improved and indebted; but, alas! when the firm foundation of God's law is left, then the foot will slide.

But to the objection. That our Lord improved the spirit of the day, it may be admitted. He removed Pharisaic abuses, and inculcated a better observance. Moreover, He taught that it was right to do good on the Sabbath day, and, both by example and precept, He showed that the Sabbath was not broken by acts of necessity and mercy performed, and that its beneficial design, more than Pharisaical notions, was to be regarded, and our endeavor be to keep the day for the benefit of our fellow-men, as well as to observe it for the honor of God. But any relaxation of the obligation of the day, or introduction of a secular spirit, received no countenance from His action or instruction. How could it? He was made under the Sabbath command as under the other nine, and magnified it, that we might honor it, too,—not in the old Jewish spirit, which genders to bondage, but in the cheerful and holy one of the Evangelical Prophet, "Call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shalt honor Him"—(Is. lviii. 13.) But never is this compatible with running daily trains, posting books, and performing rounds of visits on that day. Wherefore we may conclude that our Lord taught a better observance than what was current in His day and previously, ameliorated the spirit, and restored the day to its proper use and beneficent design—(Matt. xii. 12); but neither relaxed, weakened nor set aside the obligation and authority of His Father's command—(Matt. v. 19). Nor can it be maintained that the Apostles did so, although Paul says (Col. ii. 16), "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days," evidently referring to Jewish festivals appointed in Lev. xxiii, for he is dissuading his converts from apostatizing to them, which "were but a shadow of good things, but the body was Christ." Hence he speaks against their sabbath days or festivals, but not against the one day in seven—the divinely-appointed Sabbath. Hence we conclude that there is no warrant given by our Lord and His apostles for that secularization of the day of rest which is now attempted, much less for the abrogation of all the commandments of the Decalogue as a law, old, worn-out, and abrogated; but that this day, divinely appointed and never repealed, although by apostolic authority altered from the seventh to the

first, together with the whole Decalogue, remains in force, in lustre and beauty, restored, brightened and improved for our observance to the end of time: And thus have I established my first proposition.

II. The second—the perniciousness of those views—I would illustrate as follows: Suppose a man, who has no reverence for God's laws, and consequently no regard for the Sabbath, to be told by learned divines that "now there is no command for keeping one day more than another, and that the matter is left to every man's taste or conscience, what will he do? If greedy of gain, (as the Railway Directors confessed this to be their motive), then he forthwith encourages running trains, sailing boats, fishing and shooting on that day; if fond of speculation in religion and licentious opinion, then he cries down the barriers, and that the Sabbath be regarded no more sacred than other days. And such is precisely the effect, as we might have supposed, which these unwarrantable views are having in Scotland. Commercial men now toast the health of the distinguished divine who first opened the breach,—a clear indication of the pernicious tendency. And Sabbath desecration has increased in connection with the Press, the Church, and the Railway. Nor need this be the least wondered at. Suppose I am to give forth—nay, more, to attempt to prove by learned argument, that the Seventh Command was now abrogated, being intended merely for the Jews; or that the Third is no longer binding, as it is not quoted in the New Testament among the commands;—am I to wonder at the result in immorality increased and profanation? Or suppose even that I should, at the same time, assert that, though these commands are done away, yet that purity and reverence, being moral, must be maintained, am I to be surprised that, the check being removed, and the sluice opened, the waters gush forth? Where the restraint of God's law is removed, there moral suasion, or opinion, or even the law of man, will not long have force; and if I have struck a blow at the foundation of the command, not all my reasoning or influence I can bring to bear will be of avail to stop the evil. No. I removed the effectual barrier when I removed the command, and now I cannot arrest the progress of the destroyer. How this applies, let such as have read the speech on the Sabbath question tell. It is there insisted that, though the Fourth Command be abolished, yet the love of Christ will preserve, and that is better than any law! I reply (1) the law and love of Christ are not against one another, and to represent them so is wrong. Christ ever honored His "Father's" law, and never intimated any abrogation of one of these commands, nor was His mission or death with a view to dispense with it, but to maintain it on a better footing and from better motives, as we have already shewn; where-