

# THE SABBATH OBSERVER.

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No. 3.

"THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN."

JULY, 1853

### PROCEEDINGS RELATIVE TO THE SABBATH SINCE OUR LAST PUBLICATION.

THE early part of Summer is the season generally chosen for the great annual meetings of the various ecclesiastical bodies both in the old and new world, and on these occasions some one branch or other of the Sabbath question usually engages the attention of these bodies. The great proportion of these meetings have been held since our last; and it has afforded us the highest satisfaction to observe the growing interest in our cause, and the various steps taken with a view to the furtherance of Sabbath observance. It is altogether a misapprehension of the nature and design of Sabbath Observance Societies or Sabbath Alliances, to suppose that they, in any way, interfere with the proceedings of ecclesiastical bodies in their own peculiar spheres. So much is this from being the case, they are designed and admirably fitted to form valuable auxiliaries, collecting into one united phalanx the various sections of the visible church, and imparting to them a moral weight and influence which they could not, in their individual capacity, possess. The great body of evangelical Protestantism is sound respecting the morality of the Sabbath, and, agreeing on this common ground, they are in a position to go forth, unitedly, and to lift a stronger testimony against any one species of Sabbath desecration. From its very nature, the Sabbatic Institute stands more in need of united co-operation on the part of all professing Christians than any other, and Associations for this end cannot therefore be

too much increased. Let the various ecclesiastical Conventions or Conferences, or Associations, or Synods, or General Assemblies, do their part, lifting an unequivocal testimony to the moral obligations of the Sabbath. Let them be all as one man in great emergencies, whether the integrity or sanctity of the Sabbath is involved, or when any clamant violation of the fourth commandment is perpetrated or threatened to be perpetrated;—and what will not such a power, under God, accomplish?

### HALF A WEEK-DAY FOR THE WORKING CLASSES.

The principal topic that is at present engaging the attention of the friends of the Sabbath, and which has been brought under the consideration of some church courts, is the securing for the working classes half a week-day of entire cessation from physical toil, for the purpose of enabling them to enjoy healthful bodily relaxation, without any encroachment on the Sabbath. This movement, growing out of the agitation connected with the Crystal Palace, has met with a very favourable reception in all quarters. Those who would fain turn the Lord's day into a day of pleasure and amusement, throwing open all public places of resort, &c., and all out of tenderest regard for the worn-out sons and daughters of toil, cannot, with any show of consistency, bring any objections against this movement, and the strict sabbatarians who are in reality, the poor man's friend, cannot but wish it all success. If the Sovereign Proprietor of our time has allowed us six days of the week for our own employment, and if he has

challenged a special propriety in the seventh, it were surely alike unreasonable and ungrateful, if the overwrought in body or mind required relaxation, that the time necessary for such a purpose should be taken from the Sabbath. The Sabbath is, no doubt, intended to be a day of entire rest from all physical toil, from all worldly employments. But this is merely a mean leading to a certain end, namely, that we may rest in God, in the contemplation of his character, as exhibited in his works, and especially in the work of human redemption. To employ the physical rest of the Sabbath in the more healthful relaxation of the body, is to convert the means into an end, and what is this but literally to pervert the very object and design of the Institute. The time, then, for bodily relaxation, must be subtracted from the week-days, and what more befitting than that the afternoon of Saturday be devoted to this purpose. This was very generally the case in Scotland during its golden age of religion and morality, and in several places still, the warerooms are closed, the mills stopped, at an earlier hour on Saturday than on any other day of the week. The good intended by such an arrangement is however, in a great measure, frustrated, in consequence of the cessation from labour not being universal, many being forced to toil on for the accommodation of those who are set at liberty. Fully to accomplish the end, there must be an equality amongst all handicraftsmen: in other words, all must needs be set at liberty. This would prove an immense boon to the working population, and, by the