

not by adducing it, that the authority of the Sabbath is attempted to be weakened, or set aside. The fourth commandment is too plain and palpable an evidence to be eluded: it meets the anti-sabbatarian at every turn: it must stare him in the face at every attempt to break away from the Sabbath law: it is evidence against his own attempt to convert the very commandment into an argument against itself, and in favour of a Jewish obligation. The argument for the authority of the Sabbath stands thus: it was instituted by God at the creation, and in commemoration of it, as well as for other beneficial purposes: that there is no mention made of it between the time of its first recognition, or appointment, and the time of Moses, is no argument against its existence during that interval, for a similar omission may be adduced after the time of Moses: it is inserted in the moral law, and everywhere it is represented in Scripture as bearing a moral character, and therefore of permanent obligation; so that it is as binding now as in the time of the Jews, and as binding as an *entire ordinance*, or as, *a whole day*, appropriated and set apart to the service of God. No ingenuity can destroy this argument, or weaken the conclusion, that the Sabbath is the Lord's, and is to be devoted to his service. And let it be remarked that it has all the authority of the other commandments and ordinances of God. Any infringement of the Sabbath is an outrage on God's law as much as the transgression of any other of the precepts of that law, and must have the wrath of God lying against it as much as any other transgression whatever. Accordingly, it is guarded by as weighty sanctions as any other of the commandments: nay, if possible, by more weighty sanctions than any of the rest. God appears as if he were peculiarly jealous of this day.—“When he means to intimate,” says the illustrious Calvin, “*that religion is to be subverted, he complains that his Sabbaths are polluted, violated, neglected and profaned: as though in case of that duty being neglected, there remained no other way in which he could be honoured.*” And it might well seem to God, if his day was neglected and dishonoured, that nothing else would be observed or hallowed; and accordingly, the way in which the Sabbath was observed might then, as the manner of its observance may still, be the criterion of the state of every other duty, or a symptom of the degree in

which God himself was, or is, esteemed. And just according to the degree of piety any where existing will be the degree of estimation in which God's Sabbaths will be held, and the sacredness with which they will be kept—We see in the words from Isaiah above quoted, in what manner God views the Sabbath day, how tenderly, if we may use the expression, he regards it, and what blessings he attaches to its faithful observance.

The change of the day from the seventh to the first does not affect the principle of the day itself, the authority of the Sabbath, as the day of God. That remains the same, and we find an adequate reason for the change in the event of which the day is now especially commemorative. All the reasons for the Sabbath remain as before, except what was purely ceremonial or typical, and we have the additional one that on the day on which it is now observed, the first day of the week, Christ rose from the dead, and triumphed over our spiritual enemies. If creation was worthy of being commemorated, much more surely that work in which the peculiar glory of God is displayed, his mercy in harmony with his justice! We have no express injunction for the change, but we have the most instructive reasons and significant examples in favour of it. Christ not only rose from the dead, but he repeatedly showed himself to his disciples on that day. The early christians met on that day for their religious exercises. We are expressly told, Acts xx. 7.—“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” And in 1st Cor. xvi. 1.-2., we read,—“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” It is called the Lord's day,* just as the sacrament of the supper is called the Lord's supper,† both expressions referring to Christ, the one to his death, the other to his resurrection. It has been thought, therefore, that ample warrant is thus obtained for the change from the seventh to the first day of the week. But

* Rev. i. 10.

† 1 Cor. xi. 20.