

verted Gentiles, is in the original that which properly denotes service at the altar. In short, the persons named are represented as exercising the priest's office; and, therefore, what was said of them could not possibly refer to anything peculiar to the Jewish priesthood, which was strictly confined to the family of Aaron, but must certainly have been spoken of that royal priesthood, composed of every tribe and kindred of men, who continually offer up, by Jesus Christ, spiritual sacrifices to God. But there is the very reverse of any necessary limitation of this kind, in regard to the mention which is made of the Sabbath. It is placed among those duties which are common to all ages and all dispensations; and the expression used to describe the duty, "Keep the Sabbath from polluting it," is such as unavoidably to imply a strict and literal observance of the day of sacred rest. So that the argument drawn from this passage, in support of a Christian Sabbath, remains in all its force; and the pious observance of it is held up to our view, as both a clear evidence of a sound Christian state, and an essential part of God's worship and service in Gospel times.

3. Another argument, precisely similar, is afforded by Isa. lviii. 13, 14:—

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

This prophecy does not contain such definite marks as the preceding one, by which we might at once determine, to the satisfaction of every reader, its immediate reference to Gospel times. That it does refer, however, if not exclusively to these times, at least not less to them than to other times, or rather to them mainly, will scarcely be doubted by any one who considers the connection in which the prophecy stands, as both preceded and followed by predictions undoubtedly pointing to Gospel times, and who duly weighs also the words themselves, in which the prophet here celebrates the Sabbath.—The observances of the ceremonial worship were, indeed, strictly binding upon the Jewish worshippers, and, therefore, inseparably connected with their interest in God's favour and blessing, so long as the dispensation stood to which they belonged. But still they were in themselves a yoke heavy to be borne, and imposed only till the time of reformation—observances not absolutely, but only relatively good, and so inferior to the higher parts of the law, that, apart from these latter,

God could take no pleasure in the other. But how different is the idea here given us of the Sabbath! All solemnity, honour, and delight to the pious heart; and in itself so precious, that the due observance of it, as required by God, should certainly bring along with it the highest tokens and blessings of his love! This, surely, does not savour of a ceremonial institute, itself of inferior value, and, like all of its class, soon to pass away into oblivion!

We think no person, who candidly considers what has now been advanced, can fail to conclude that the testimony of the prophets, concerning the Sabbath, is in perfect accordance with the testimony of the law. They both ascribe to the Sabbath a place in the ordinances of God very different from that assigned to those institutions of which the use was inferior and temporary; and clearly teach, that as the appointment of a Sabbath, coeval with the birth of time, had only been formally announced at the giving of the old covenant, so it should survive the existence of that covenant, and continue to the end of time, through the ages of that new and better dispensation, which was to provide for the highest well-being of man, both in time and in eternity.—*Alliance Tract.*

THE DOMESTIC INFLUENCE OF THE SABBATH.

To begin with those parties whose piety, if simple and devoted, is likely, by the divine blessing, to diffuse itself over the whole domestic circle, it is impossible to overlook the influence of the Sabbath on parents themselves, both as regards their own spiritual prosperity, and their fitness for discharging the momentous duties which they owe to their offspring. It is too apt to be forgotten that the bond which unites human beings together as husbands and wives, is not only the nearest and dearest, but the holiest of all earthly ties. It is selected by God himself to shadow forth that ineffable and indissoluble union which subsists between the church and her Redeemer Lord; it is a rare and precious relic, amidst all the imperfections that adhere to it, of the estate of primeval innocence and bliss; and in alluding to the connection between the duties of the married life, and the use of means and ordinances, it is striking, that almost the only other peculiarity of paradise which has survived the ruins of the fall, is to be found in that gracious appointment which perpetuates the *keeping of a Sabbath to the people of God.*

And close, indeed, is the connection that subsists between the right and holy observance of this primitive institution, and the right and holy fulfilment of conjugal obligations. To husbands and wives having the light of the gospel to guide them, it is the plainest of all requirements that they live as heirs together of

the grace of life, helping and encouraging one another in the way that leads to heaven. But how willingly will all testify, who know the thing experimentally that but for the stated return of the day of holy rest, with its quietness, its sacredness, and its seasonable aids and opportunities, the things that remain would soon sicken and die! Not that I mean to insinuate—far be the thought from every Christian husband and wife—that it is not both binding and attainable on other days to walk together as in the Lord's holy presence, and to supplicate together His gracious and effectual benediction. Nay, the mutual and holy obligation lies on them continually to care for one another's souls, to watch over one another in love, to take sweet and holy counsel together for the godly upbringing of their offspring, to bear one another's burdens in that strength which God alone can impart, and to seek from Him the Sanctified use of every comfort and of every trial. And evident, most evident it is, that this cannot be attained without the daily reading of God's word, maintaining of spiritual converse, and bowing together at the footstool of the throne. But still, in the overwhelming majority of instances, the daily opportunities for these are comparatively brief, imperfect, and interrupted. To this the experience of thousands—sincerely desirous if they were otherwise—will readily and abundantly testify; to say nothing of the undeniable fact, that but for the full flood of Sabbath opportunities, under the scorching influence of worldly cares and temptations, these precarious brooks by the way would speedily disappear and be forgotten. And it is only when the hallowed morn returns, that those who have been harrassed and exhausted, and sometimes even tempted to relinquish their efforts, can court upon sure and satisfying opportunities of helping one another to make up their spiritual way, and to recover their spiritual strength and comfort. Then it is that, the world's din being hushed into a blessed silence, they can listen with holy composure to the still small voice of divine wisdom and consolation, and without hindrance or interruption repair often to the footstool, and linger together there. Then it is that, with glad and thankful hearts, they walk to the house of God in company, and having beheld the beauty of the Lord, and been satisfied with his goodness in the secret of his tabernacle, they return with renovated faith and patience to discharge their respective obligations, and to bear one another's burdens. And then it is that, after the public service is over, being furnished out of God's own house, and having bread to eat which the world knoweth not of, they are able with singular advantage, to confer together about their doubts and their dif-