

which after all the attempts to explain it away can we believe only be understood, as teaching the existence of these places of meeting throughout the land.

There are several other considerations connected with the Old Testament scriptures from which we might show that the sabbath was always a day of worship. But we must pass on to notice

Fifthly,—That there is abundant evidence that in the days of our Lord and his apostles the sabbath was observed as a day of religious service. The synagogue worship was then established in every part of the land. Nazareth had its synagogue, and every sabbath our Lord attended upon its services. Luke iv. 16, "He came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, and as *his custom was*, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." This was before he had set up any of the institutions of New Testament worship. He was made under the law and was now fulfilling all righteousness by observing its requirements, and in so doing was found regularly in attendance upon sabbath worship.

These institutions were not confined to Judea, but were established wherever the Jews were scattered in any numbers.—Wherever the apostles went they found synagogues of the Jews, to whom they first addressed the gospel message, so that James says, (Acts xv. 21) "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day." The phrase "of old time," is in the original "from ancient generations," and shows that it had been the practice from time immemorial, to meet for religious worship, in which the reading of the scriptures formed a part of the services.

Lastly,—There is no evidence that our Lord changed the character of the day by adding religious worship to rest from labor. Our Lord did much to expound the true character of the sabbath, but his efforts were almost if not entirely directed to vindicating its character as a day of mercy to man. His miracles which led to his utterances on the subject were all acts of mercy, and his teachings in com-

mon with them were designed to show that such works were consistent with the character of the day, or rather formed part of his duties. But even this he did not set forth as a change in the institution. It was merely a correction of the Pharisaic notions then prevalent, and in support of it, he appeals to the Mosaic law itself.—But nowhere does he say, the old law required merely rest, but to change its character to a day of worship.

It may be thought by some that it is not a matter of much consequence to us, whether the sabbath was observed as a day of worship under the Old Testament or not. But the question touches the very foundation of the sabbath, and indirectly of the whole derelogue. The church has hitherto maintained, and we think it easy to prove on scriptural grounds, that the ten commandments are the sum of God's moral law to man, and based on principles eternally binding. The sabbath as part of this law, we hold to be a precept founded on the great moral obligations rising out of man's relation to his Creator. But the view we are combating makes the fourth commandment not a law of a moral nature, not an institution connected with our highest duties to God, not even equal in dignity to a part of the ritual system delivered by Moses, but a command for physical rest, and thus a positive precept founded on man's animal nature temporary and having no moral basis in our duty to God. Such a view, though the author means not so, we unhesitatingly pronounce to be entirely subversive of the Sabbath law.

Our Foreign Mission.

Rev. Wm. McCullagh's Report.

Ancientum, New Hebrides, Dec. 25, 1865.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:—

As this is Christmas day I wish you many happy returns of it, and I avail myself of this opportunity to send my report by the *Kate Kearney*.

To Mr. Launcelet Dawson, Agent for Captain Burns of Sydney, we are much indebted for many and great kindnesses. The captains of the schooners belonging to captain Burns in these seas, are most