

they had made it by their traditions. "He said, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." It was made for man as man, and not as a sinner—for man before as well as after his fall. It was made for man as man, and therefore not for the Jews only. It was made for man as man, and therefore for men of all classes and characters—for all men in every age. In like manner, whatever sense may be put on the language of the Apostles regarding the Jewish sabbaths, it cannot possibly be construed to mean the abrogation of any part of the moral law, which they elsewhere plainly declare to be, in all points, "holy, just, and good." They condemn, it is true, the superstitious observance, common to the Jews and the heathens, of "days and months, and times and years." But we never find them condemning the religious observance of the weekly Sabbath—either of the ancient day, the seventh of the week, on which the holy women who came to the sepulchre, "rested according to the commandment," or of the Lord's-day the first of the week, to which it was transferred in honour of his resurrection. Besides, the Sabbath of the Lord differs, as it always differed, from all the ancient festivals.—Soaring far above all other days, it comes not within reach of the "holidays, the new moons, and sabbaths" or festival days of Judaism. It is the day which God hath blessed above all others. Nor has the benediction been recalled. Man was cursed, and destined to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow; woman was cursed, and doomed to bring forth her children in sorrow; the earth was cursed, and bringeth forth its thorns. But no curse alighted on the day of rest. Like the rainbow, God's witness in the heavens, it remains unchanged by the lapse of time, undimmed in its splendour, and unbroken in its form, an archway leading to the skies.

"For, faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still reveals thy span;
Nor lets the type grow dim with age
Which first spoke peace to man".

REASONS FOR THE DUE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

Such a day as the Sabbath, one would have imagined, would have been anticipated with delight, would have been welcomed with warmest affection, and would have been observed, throughout all its hours, with adoring gratitude,—with devoutest praise. Whatever might have been the arguments and appeals advanced to enforce obedience to the other commandments of the moral law, one would have thought that the Fourth Commandment, whether we consider the benignity of the appointment, or the temporal, social, moral, and spiritual advantages resulting from its sanctification, might have been safely left to itself,—to its own merits. But the Lord of the Sabbath, who is conversant with the most latent springs of human nature, who is thoroughly acquainted with the selfishness, worldly-mind-

edness, and ungodliness, that cling to the best, saw it to be needful to fence in this commandment with higher and holier considerations than all the others,—with stronger reasons,—with more powerful motives. A few of these we shall now place before our readers,—and we would notice

1, *The graciousness of the Command*—We allude not here to the benefits resulting to mankind,—to the whole creation, from this institution. We allude to the indulgence of the Almighty, in allowing us six days of the week for our own employment. His might have demanded the half of the week, nay, the whole six days for his worship, and left us only one day for our labour; but he has given almost the whole week to be occupied by man in his own pursuits, and has reserved only a small portion for himself. Can there be, therefore, anything more base than to attempt to deprive Him of this pittance of our time when God has granted us so much, to claim all. You brand the covetousness of Ahab with every mark of disapprobation, because when in possession of the whole kingdom of Israel, he was resolved to get the field of Naboth, though it was for no other purpose but to be converted into a garden of herbs. And how shall we characterize the conduct of the man, who, though he has six days of the week for his own employment, makes the most unhallowed encroachments on the Sabbath, occupying it in bodily indulgence, in the service of Mammon, or in the works of the Devil, what should be devoted to the service and worship of Him who is the proprietor of all our time, and who challenges a special propriety in the seventh day? Hear the thrilling words of the godly Mr. McCheyne on this point—"Oh, Sabbath-breaker, whoever you be, you are a sacrilegious robber! When you steal the hours of the Lord's-day for business or for pleasure, you are robbing Christ of the precious hour which he claims as His own. Would you not be shocked if a plan were deliberately proposed for breaking the fence of the Lord's table, and turning it into a common meal, or a feast for the profligate and the drunkard? Would not your best feelings be harrowed to see the silver cup of communion made a cup of revelling in the hand of the drunkard?" Surely we may well say in the words of Dr. Love, that eminent servant of Christ now gone to the Sabbath above, "Cursed is that gain, cursed is that recreation, cursed is that health, which is gained by criminal encroachments on this Sacred day."

2. Another reason for the due observance of the Sabbath, is to be found in the fact, of its being the day of blessing. In the account given of the institution of the Sabbath in Paradise, we read that, "God blessed the seventh day." He not only set it apart as a sacred day, but made it a day of blessing, and so has it been down to the present time, and especially, since the introduction of the Christian era, when it received the dignified designation of the Lord's day. It was the very day on which the divine Redeemer rose from the grave, that he appeared to the two disciples journeying to Emmaus, and made himself known unto them in another way than he doth unto the world. It was on the evening of the same day that he appeared to the eleven disciples, and greeted them with the salutation of that peace which the world cannot give, and which the world cannot take away—"And he breathed on them and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost" Again,

after eight days, i. e., next Lord's day, he revealed himself to doubting, unbelieving Thomas, and said unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed, blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." It was on the Lord's day, too, that the Holy Spirit descended in Pentecostal effusion, imparting not only miraculous gifts, but ordinary manifestations of his love and power. It was on the Lord's day that the beloved disciple, an exile in his sea-girt Isle, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and beheld such glorious visions, and received such heavenly revelations. And what shall we say more? In all succeeding ages, it has been on this day that the Saints of God have obtained the brightest Pisgah views of the heavenly Canaan, and of the King in his beauty. It has been on this day that the Ordinances of divine grace have been most efficaciously, most extensively blessed—that the Ministers of the sanctuary have realized more upon their own souls, of the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Peace, as well as handled the consciences of others—that the divine word has been felt to be a very lamp and light, discovering the thoughts and intents of the heart, and causing the proudest sinner to quake and to cry, "What must I do to be saved" And shall such a blessing be slighted by us? Shall not such a favour be esteemed by us as far more precious than gold or rubies, and carefully improved, by spending it in the spirit and practise of genuine devotion.

EXAMINATION OF MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTIONS AND POPULAR FALLACIES.

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1. Sometimes an aspect of harshness is attempted to be thrown around the Sabbath, and it is spoken of as a thing of mere arbitrary restraints. It is said, for example, why forbid the ingenious mechanic, who has been sweating over the anvil, or bending over the loom, or cooped up in the crowded factory, to give himself up on this day to amusement and recreation? Let him angle in the stream, or sail on the river, or explore the forest, or ascend the mountain, and inhale its breeze and expatiate in its sublime prospects; and let the rustic labourer, on the other hand, visit our cities, and enter our museums, and libraries, and picture-galleries. Must not that be a burdensome institute which interdicts such recreations, and must not those be wanting in all benevolence and sensibility, who would vindicate it from popular encroachment?—Such is the covert of assumed philanthropy, from which the Sabbath is not infrequently assailed. But, on what pretence is the Sabbath to be charged with trenching on the enjoyments of the artisan? What is it but the Sabbath that has secured for him a seventh day of rest, and fencing it round with a divine barrier, has said to tyranny,—This is the poor man's day, you may not wrest it from him; to secularity, you shall not buy it from him; to the poor man himself, you may not yield it up or sell it. Doubtless, it is most intensely to be wished that far more time were allowed to the hard-wrought masses of our population for bodily recreation and amusement, and in a state of society which the principles of the Bible thoroughly leavened and regulated, this would most certainly be secured. But are not the intelligence and morality of a people of infinitely more imper-