

servance which has passed away. They would cast it among those rites and ceremonies which were peculiar to the Mosaic economy, and were abolished by Christ at his coming. But we utterly deny this. We confidently assert that the Sabbath had a place among the sacred institutes of divine appointment since the creation of man, and many ages before the Jewish economy was in existence, and is therefore of perpetual moral obligation.

2. The Sabbath should be regarded as holy. This day is peculiarly holy, because its Author and Proprietor is the holy one of Israel, who is of purer eyes than to look upon sin, and with whom is no unrighteousness at all; and also because it is set apart by God for holy purposes, and as commemorative of holy things. It is the hallowed day of God himself, all its duties and exercises are holy, and its language to us is "put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whercon thou standest is holy ground." Holiness unto the Lord, is inscribed in most legible characters upon the Sabbath. In the language of Scripture, such things as are separated from common purposes and appropriated to sacred services, are said to be holy. Hence the vessels of the Temple were holy vessels—they were consecrated for the sacred service of God by his own command—they were to be used only in his worship and service; and as we utterly abhor the daring impiety of Belshazzar in desecrating those holy vessels and using them in honour of his false Gods, so we must regard the profanation of the holy Sabbath, as exceedingly wicked and criminal.

The Sabbath, then, is "the holy of the Lord." It is his hallowed property—his sacred day which he hath solemnly commanded us to remember, to keep it holy. We ought to have the same regard for the Lord's day as for his holy word; and as every time we read or hear His word, we should do so with reverence and devout attention, receiving it as the word of God himself; so we ought to enter upon the holy Sabbath with peculiar seriousness and in a devotional frame of mind. We ought to enter upon it as a consecrated territory (if we may so speak) where we are placed more immediately in the presence of God, whose day this is.

3. We should regard the Sabbath as "honorable" that is, worthy of our high regard and veneration as the Day of God, and as a sacred monument designed to commemorate the glories of creation, and the finished work of redemption, worthy of being honoured and observed as a venerable Institute which is coeval with the creation of man, and is placed by the finger of God himself among the ten commandments of the moral law—that holy law which is of perpetual obligation, for heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass until all be fulfilled. The same divine authority which commands us "Thou shalt have no other God before me,"—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,"—"Thou

shalt not kill"—"Thou shalt not commit adultery," &c., says also "Remember the Sabbath day," &c. The one is just as morally binding as the others. You cannot escape the obligations of the law of the Sabbath, though you should go to the uttermost ends of the earth—though you should be on the bosom of the boundless ocean—though you should inhabit the solitary wilderness where no eye, save the eye of the all-seeing one would be upon you—you would be as much bound as ever to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," because this command is an essential part of the moral law of God, which is of perpetual obligation. It is true that we do not now observe the Sabbath on the same day of the week which was originally appointed; for after the resurrection of Christ, the Sabbath was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, in order that it might be thenceforward commemorative of the glorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus, who is Lord of the Sabbath. But this change as to the day (which is sufficiently warranted by the example of Christ and his apostles, and of the christian church from the earliest period) does not, and cannot, in the least degree, alter or diminish the moral obligation of the law of the Sabbath,—No, for it is the established Law of Jehovah, that in all ages from the creation of man until the end of the world,—the seventh portion of our time should be observed as the Sabbath of the Lord our God, which is to be kept holy.

4. We should call the Sabbath "a delight" that is, we are to regard it as a delightful season, as a precious privilege. We are to regard it with sacred pleasure, joyfully welcoming its return, reckoning it the best day of all the seven, and entering on all its duties and exercises with pleasure and alacrity. Yes, we ought to hail the Sabbath as the hallowed season which has been divinely appointed for our moral and spiritual improvement; when we are invited to lay aside the toils and cares of this world, and to attend to the all important interests of our immortal souls—a season which has been most wisely and mercifully appointed for the best interests of man. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath"—It was made, not to be a wearisome yoke or burden (as alas too many seem to regard it) but to be a precious boon and a sacred privilege to man. It is a blessed institution, even in a temporal point of view, affording a necessary periodical rest from the cares and labours connected with this world—affording rest in this respect, both to man and to the lower animals which are employed in his service. But in a moral and spiritual point of view, it is one of the greatest blessings ever conferred on this world of mankind, in as much as it is a *season of grace*—a day of salvation—a blessed means of sanctification and preparation for heaven, of which it is a sacred emblem; as the earthly Canaan was of the heavenly rest; and if the Sabbath was instituted even in paradise—if it was necessary for man in his primeval state of innocence, how much more necessary and important is it for man in his present

fallen condition! Now, seeing the Sabbath was made for the temporal and spiritual benefit of man, ought we not to regard it as a most precious privilege, and to make that improvement of it, for which it was graciously designed by our blessed creator? Shall we not call the Sabbath "a delight, the holy of the Lord and honourable"? Yes we ought! and were we thus entering into the spirit and the gracious design of this institution, the Sabbath would not pass away so heavily and so unprofitably as it does with too many; and there would be less formality and negligence connected with the private and public exercises of this holy day. Were we to regard the Sabbath as "a delight," we would take real pleasure in its various duties and exercises. Then there would be a most careful improvement of the sacred season, instead of wasting its early hours by sleep and self-indulgence. Then our prayers would be more frequent, more fervent, more copious. Then our study of the holy scriptures would not be that hurried and formal thing which is too common; and whether we read the Bible or any other good book, we would be concerned to derive spiritual instruction and edification therefrom. Then family worship would be religiously observed, and family instruction would be conducted by the parents with lively interest; and they would aim, not so much to fill the minds of their children with *speculative knowledge*, as to impress *their hearts* and to improve *their character*. Then, would the sanctuary be religiously attended, in the spirit of the devout Psalmist, when he said "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." Then too, we would be concerned to have our hearts rightly engaged in the service of God—there would not be so many wandering looks, or so many careless hearers of the Word—and other people, instead of throwing off the responsibilities of devotional exercises upon the individual who ministers to them, would feel their own personal responsibility, and they would heartily engage in the sacred exercises of prayer and praise. Their united offering and thanksgiving would be presented before the same throne of grace; and thus we might humbly expect the blessings which are promised to those who call the Sabbath "a delight."

WORDS FOR THE TIMES.

Let it be well understood, that however plainly we may write, we have no prejudice against trade and commerce. Merchandize is rapidly becoming the controlling power: feudalism has passed away. The power of *hereditary princes* has been becoming less and less: that of *merchant princes* greater and greater. We cannot but regard this as a providential arrangement. Commerce is binding the nations of the earth together by interlinking their interests. New facilities of transport are narrowing the size of our globe, and bringing once distant nations into near neighbourhood. We trust yet to see commerce more fully sanctified to the service of the Lord. But just in