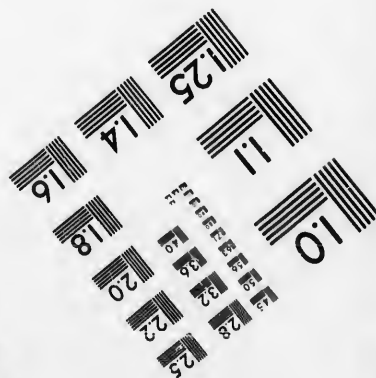
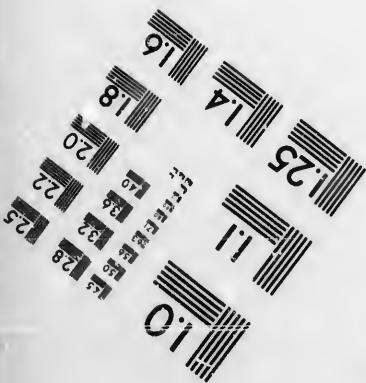
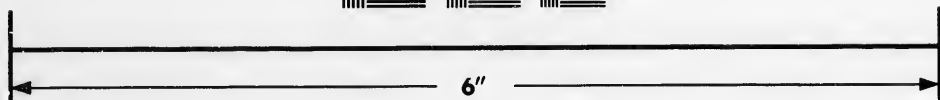
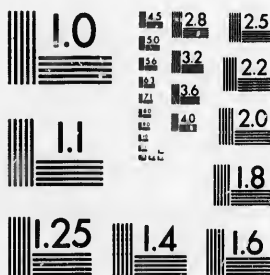


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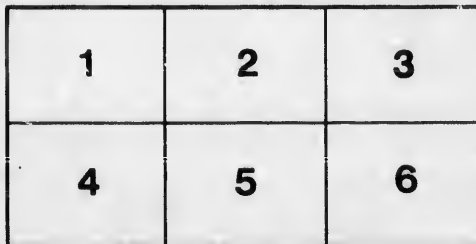
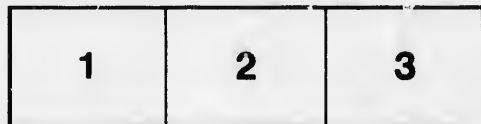
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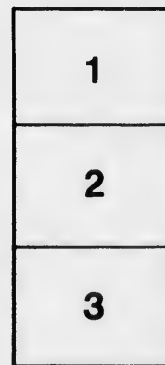
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**WARNING**

TO

**ICE-HUNTERS:**

A

**SERMON**

ON THE

**PROFANATION OF THE SABBATH;**

*Preached at Trinity,*

PREVIOUS TO THE DEPARTURE OF THE VESSELS

ENGAGED IN THE SEAL FISHERY,

1832.

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**St. John's:**

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*"Let every Minister be careful to observe, and vehement in reproving, those faults of his Parishioners of which the laws cannot, or do not, take cognizance."*—Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

MY DEAR PARISHIONERS!

The prevalence of Sabbath-breaking by those who are engaged in the Seal Fishery is generally known, and among serious Christians is generally lamented; and it is with the hope of correcting this besetting sin that I publish, and present to you, the following Sermon.

That there is an awful indifference to religion among the young men in this neighbourhood, cannot be denied; and I am persuaded that the one great source of this distinction is to be traced to the evil communications which annually transpire in the voyage to the Ice; and it often happens that the young leave their homes in comparative innocence, to return the habitual and fearless transgressors of God's positive commands, and the impudent scoffers at "every thing that is pure and lovely and of good report." It is in this expedition, that, tempted by the prospect of gain, and strengthened by the example of hardened offenders, our youth first learn to pollute the Lord's day at sea, and then fill up the measure of the evil, by bringing with them the moral contagion to the shore; and every thing that comes under my own observation brings me to this conclusion—that, so long as this sin continues to reign, we cannot hope to become a society of true Christians, or look for the blessing of God upon our land.

With these convictions, I should be wanting both in duty and affection did I leave any thing undone by which the evil might be diminished; and I feel myself bound, by my solemn engagements at the altar, to reprove the sin and to warn you of its danger. The same feeling leads me to entreat all who are in authority, and all who are possessed of influence in society, to do their utmost to wipe away this mildew from the Christian character of our fishermen; lest by their supineness or neglect they become the partakers of other men's sins, and the sharers of other men's condemnation.

Let it not be urged as an excuse that the Lord's day would still be abused, although the work of slaughter should cease: Doubtless there are some men who would squander away the leisure of the Sabbath in sloth and sensual conversation; but this is not a necessary consequence; and I feel assured it would serve not a little to



correct such impiety, were the most serious persons in every vessel to make a noble stand against this abominable practice, and give themselves to the Word of God and Prayer: and let it never be forgotten that every man who professes the faith of Christ and the hope of a Christian, is bound to discountenance, both by precept and example, every thing that may dishonor the name of Christ, or bring discredit upon the character of a Christian.

The Book of Common Prayer will afford you the best means of profitably spending the Sabbath; and by the services appointed for the day you may be present in spirit with those dear friends to whom your absence, and the dangers to which you are exposed, are subjects of deep anxiety and fervent prayer. Let that Book, and the Word of God, be the cherished companions of your Sabbath hours,—and you will reap from them a more substantial happiness than from all the pleasures and the gains of an unlawful occupation.

I now cast this little Tract, as "*bread upon the waters;*" and trusting to the blessing of God, I will pray that I may "*find it after many days,*" in the improvement and happiness of all committed to my charge.

I am,

Your affectionate Friend and Pastor,

WILLIAM BULLOCK.

TRINITY, 1832.

*Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.—ISAIAH 56. 2.*

**I**T is the recorded declaration of a wise and pious English Judge,\* that he always found the whole week influenced by the manner in which he spent the Lord's day; and there can be no doubt, it was one of the merciful purposes for which the first day of the week was hallowed, that the heart might be sanctified, and the hands strengthened for the duties of all the rest: the experience of devout men in every age would furnish us with the same witness, if such witness be necessary to confirm that which has been spoken by the Divine Judge of all the earth, and who by the mouth of his prophet has pronounced the blessedness of man, who "keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it."

It is the full conviction of my heart that much of the misery and wickedness in this land, springs from an abuse of the Lord's day; and as it continues to be a besetting and a crying sin, it is binding upon me, as your Pastor, and as the messenger of the Lord, to shew you the evil and to premonish you of the danger. To this end let us consider,

The duty and the advantage of rightly observing the Christian Sabbath.

In addressing myself to a christian people, it ought not to be necessary to use many words to prove it a duty to "*keep holy the Sabbath day,*" for there are few things in religion upon which christians so

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\* Sir Matthew Hale.

universally agree: but, while we all allow the law to be good we do not all use it lawfully; and although continually bidden to remember to keep holy the Sabbath day, and continually praying that God would incline our hearts to obedience, there are too many who neither value the institution nor comply with its sacred obligations. I pray the God of all wisdom that I may be enabled to set the subject before you in its clearest and most affecting light, and that all who now hear (or shall afterwards read this discourse) may see its importance and devoutly regard it.

The institution of the Sabbath is old as the creation of the world, when God was pleased to make his work a pattern of our own, and having "*in six days made the heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein, he rested the seventh day and hallowed it.*" Thus the gracious Creator had no sooner made man than he gave him a day of religion and of rest, to remind him of the mercies of creation and to keep alive the knowledge and worship of God. When Israel became a separate people, the observance of the Sabbath was made a positive law;—we find it among the special commandments traced by the mysterious hand of God upon the two tables of stone delivered to Moses, and it stands between the love and reverence we owe to God our heavenly Father, and the affection and respect due to our dearest relations in the world—between the third and the fifth commandments. Throughout the law, there are frequent admonitions to "*sanctify the Sabbath,*" and the violation of it was among those grievous sins which brought the judgments of God upon the land of Israel; so it is written by the pious Nehemiah, "*I contended with men, and said, what evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath day.*" To the

Israelites, the observance of the Sabbath was so important a part of religion, that it pleased the Almighty to guard it with the strictest prohibitions; and in the Book of Numbers† we have the account of a signal judgment inflicted upon an individual for an infringement upon it—the abuse which that man offered to the Sabbath, was far from the most enormous, but the punishment was death! It is true, indeed, that *we* are not required to observe a Jewish Sabbath: but, is the day of rest less important to christians now that it has received the sanction of our Blessed Lord and Savior, who by his example has taught us to keep the Sabbath holy, and has fully instructed us that the only works permitted upon that day, are works of mercy and necessity? To the devout Jew, the observance of the Sabbath was to commemorate the work of creation, and his deliverance from Egyptian bondage; and he rested from his labor and glorified God who had bestowed such mercies upon man: and have not christians a loftier motive to keep holy the Lord's day, now, that we thereby commemorate the resurrection of our Savior from the dead, and the redemption of the world from the bondage of sin and death and hell? "*The Sabbath was made for man;*"—it is alike necessary to his present peace and his future happiness, and without it he would be a miserable slave and altogether corrupt: It is necessary to the very existence of pure religion; and whenever it is neglected the people become brutish in knowledge and abominable in their lives: only set aside the Lord's day, and you put out the lamp of truth, and destroy the shewbread of eternal life:—Take away from christians the respect due to Sunday, and you relax at once the fidelity and the hope of man—you remove from him the greatest blessing that sweetens the cup of human life, and expose him to the dreadful

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† Numbers, xv. 35. 36.

loss of that "*rest which remaineth for the people of God!*" But, as it is universally acknowledged that the Lord's day should be a holy day, I shall not occupy you longer upon the duty of observing it, but, shall endeavour to point out the manner in which it *may* be, and in which it frequently *is*, polluted.

The Prophet Isaiah has set this subject in a very clear light, in the Fifty-eighth chapter of his sacred work; where, as in the text, a gracious promise of happiness and prosperity is made to such as sanctify the day of rest,"—*who call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; who cease from doing their own works, and finding their own pleasure, and speaking their own words.*" To act in any manner contrary to these things is to pollute the Sabbath.

It is true, that there are many who are guilty of polluting the Lord's day, who do not altogether disregard it; for there are many, who, although they comply with the custom of setting aside their common employments, and of dressing themselves in their Sunday attire, yet grudge the Almighty so much time from their worldly pursuits. There were men in the days of the Prophet Amos, who complained of the weariness of that rest which God bestowed upon them for the refreshment of their bodies and the improvement of their souls, and they said "*when will the Sabbath be gone, that we may set forth wheat?*" There are men, even among christians, whose estimate of the Lord's day is extremely low—men who look upon it as a mere intrusion upon their worldly business, and instead of calling it "*a delight,*" they are grieved that they cannot "*find pleasure and exact all their labors.*" The reason of this cold and reluctant service is too plain to be denied—they care more for the things temporal than for the things eternal; they value more the gains of the earth than the treasures of heaven. If the mercies of the Gospel and the promises of Jesus Christ have their proper costliness in our eyes, and

if the salvation of the soul obtains a proper consideration in our hearts, we must "*esteem the Sabbath a delight,*" and look forward with gladness to its periodical return, that we may serve God with a more undisturbed spirit, and take a nearer view of that promised land, which is to be the christian's everlasting rest. Instead of which it is frequently the most miserable day of all the seven, and brings with it nothing but weariness and discontent; and worldly men slumber away the sacred hours which should be consecrated to the honor of God; or wait in eager expectation for the moment when, by the custom of the world, they may again "*sacrifice unto their net and burn incense to their drag*"—when they may follow without restraint those occupations which are altogether earthly, and from which alone they receive delight. This is to "*pollute the Sabbath,*" and to dishonor the blessed Being who has bidden us remember to keep it holy.

But this is done yet more rudely by those who disdain alike the laws of God and man, and with unblushing wickedness "*do their own works.*" I have already said, that we are not hindered doing works of mercy, or of reasonable need; for both of these we have the example of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, who, by His mighty power, frequently healed the sick and relieved the miserable, and who held His disciples blameless, when, to satisfy their hunger, they had plucked the ears of corn upon the Sabbath day. But this liberty of the Gospel is too often used as a cloak for profaneness, by sinners, who pretend necessity where no necessity exists. The aged and the young, the sick and the destitute, must be ministered unto, and no respect for the Lord's day will justify the neglect of them: we are also permitted to save the brute beast from perishing, or any other property from ruin: against these things there is no law; and in these cases, especially, "*the Sabbath was made for man.*" No

greater license is given by the Gospel ; no greater license, therefore, can be taken ; and to "*buy and sell and get gain*" upon the Lord's day, is, in the worst sense of the word, to *pollute* it. In great measure this wicked custom has ceased among us ; but, enough of it yet remains to dishonor God and provoke His indignation ; and especially by those whose dealings inflame the lusts and passions of mankind, and who, regardless alike of their country's law and the prohibitions of God, keep open their houses for mirth and drunkenness upon the Lord's day. It is in these houses that men most effectually pollute the Sabbath ; and they make them the haunt of licentious pleasure, and evil conversation—where the young may be snared in wickedness, and the thoughtless be edified in sin. But, the pollution of the Sabbath is not confined to these children of Belial who hold sacred things in contempt, and bid defiance to the vengeance of heaven—there are a great many works done on the Sunday which ought not to be done, by persons who pass for christians in the world : Such is that profane custom, so prevalent among seamen, of making the Sabbath a day for sailing ;—and such also is a practice which I have detected among the fishermen of preparing on the Lord's day all that may be necessary for carrying on the business of the week. All these things are unholy intrusions upon the stillness and solemnity of the day set apart by God our Creator, for rest and religion ; but far above all these, in impiety and in danger, is the practice of carrying on the work of slaughter on the Ice !—My brethren, let me speak to you with affection and with seriousness upon this subject ;—it may be, that we shall not meet again in this world, and before we separate I would fain bear my testimony once more against this crying sin, which may for ever ruin you and entail a bitter curse on your posterity—the profanation of the Lord's day. Again, my brethren,

as the watchman of the Lord, I lift my voice against this abominable sin, and I admonish you of its folly and its danger: Oh! if there is any one thing, which above every other pollutes the Sabbath, it is that against which I am now warning you; and I can compare it to nothing better than the profaneness of Esau, who basely bartered away his birthright for a mess of pottage; and they who continue to transgress, will never inherit the blessing. Let no man deceive himself with the hope that such a sin will ever pass unpunished. Could I lift up the curtain that at present hides from our eyes the eternal world, and shew the misery of condemned and out-cast spirits, there would be testimony sufficient to alarm the boldest Sabbath-breaker in the world; but, this is not permitted; and God has given us a more gracious monitor, and by his holy word exhorts us to take heed, lest we also come to that place of torment!

All true Christians lament the prevalence of this evil; and even among those who actually commit it, there are not many to be found, who do not acknowledge the thing to be wrong; but, then they plead the temptation. And is temptation to be an *excuse and an argument* for the commission of crime? If there were no temptation there would be no sin—if there were no temptation there would be no blessedness for the man “*who keepeth his hand from doing any evil.*”—And what are these temptations?—The fear of ridicule, and the fear of loss. As to the first of these, it is the predestinated fate of “*all who will live godly in Christ Jesus,*” and he is no true christian who cannot endure it: Reproach we must expect, and reproach we may glory in, since it has ever been the lot of those who will not “*follow the multitude to do evil;*” and what is more, the lot of our contradicted, mocked, and martyred Savior, who in the prospect of such temptation has given his disciples this kind and awful warning,—“*and*



*I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear,—Fear Him, who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: Yea, I say unto you, fear Him !”*

And then as regards the fear of loss, that man is a heathen in principle, who thinks he shall suffer harm from obeying the author of every good gift, and the dispenser of every blessing:—Trust the providence of God, my brethren, and obey Him in faith of his promise, that to those who “*seek first the kingdom of God, all other things shall be added.*” I appeal to your own experience, if those who most “pollute” the Sabbath are not, in general, the poorest and most wretched among you; the thing is so notorious that it seems to have passed into a proverb that “*Sunday work never prospers;*” but suppose it should—suppose all could be saved which is thus earned in iniquity—what then? Can even all purchase peace of mind, or preserve an unupbraiding conscience, or bribe the majesty of Heaven?—And, to close the argument—after a few days or a few years of sinful drudgery, “*what will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?*”

Then be wise, and act like men who look for the blessing of God, and the sabbatical rest in heaven. And are there none who will give heed to these repeated warnings? Hear, O Israel! are there none among the candidates for heaven, who will be obedient to heaven’s glorious King? Are there none among all who take the name of Jesus for their hope, who will shew, by their conduct at the Ice, that they are “*not ashamed of him or of his words?*” But, I will hope better things. There are some who are bound in a more especial manner to be examples to others—who having solemnly devoted themselves to God, in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, will reap a heavier judgment, if they are found

transgressors. And I trust there are many others who will go to their labor with the pious determination of making a stand against this most crying sin.—I ask the prayers of all christians for their success, that God will strengthen them for the trial, and that the most blessed Savior may be glorified in them :—I ask all christian parents, and christian wives, to use their most serious persuasions to prevent an evil which must put in jeopardy the souls of those they most fondly love, and threatens to bring down the judgments of the Lord upon our land.

The limits of a discourse will not allow me to say all I could wish upon this subject; yet I trust enough has been said to keep the hands of some of you from doing evil. If so, and they suffer for it, let them suffer as christians,—shewing, by their meekness and seriousness, that it is the love of Christ and the worth of their own souls which keep them from polluting the Sabbath. And be consistent, my brethren, and let the man who will observe the law of God in this respect, be careful not to violate it in any other, but “keep his hand from doing *any* evil.” If you abstain from the work of slaughter, let the Lord’s day be dedicated to its proper use—to serious meditation, to the Word of God, and prayer; and, above all, let every Christian who refuses to do the work, disdain to receive the wages; for they are the wages of iniquity, and, like the spoil of Achan,\* will only bring shame and trouble to the possessor! “If you sin, be sure your sin will find you out,” and bring you to sorrow and to ruin; if you are obedient, the blessing of God will be upon your labors,—and, according to his sure promise, “*you shall delight yourselves in the Lord, and he will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*” ‡

\* See Joshua vii.

‡ Isaiah lvi. 14.

And now, my brethren, I bid you Farewell.—  
 You are about to embark upon an enterprise of some  
 danger—an enterprise that will lead you far from  
 your best friends, and from the courts of the Lord's  
 house; but, you will be present with us in our  
 prayers to heaven for your protection, for your  
 success, and, above all, that you may be kept  
 “*unspotted from the world.*” Let us not, however,  
 separate without a distinct understanding: I can  
 make no compromise with crime;—I can speak  
 no peace to the violators of God's law—I can wish  
 no success to the hand that is about to do evil: It  
 is against a sore evil that I have now set myself to  
 speak: I have entreated you as your friend—I  
 have admonished you as your Pastor;—then hear  
 the conclusion of the whole matter: if you conti-  
 nue to be sinners against your own souls, you will  
 transgress with your eyes open to the danger—your  
 crime will be without excuse, and your punishment  
 without remedy!

You go down in ships to see the works of the  
 Lord and his wonders in the deep; and remember  
 that his eye is ever upon you, and you can no more  
 go from his spirit or escape his observation, than  
 you can still the stormy wind when it ariseth.—  
 Proceed, then, my brethren, to your labor as Chris-  
 tians, and “*keep your hands from doing any evil.*”  
 Be careful to avoid, not only the violation of the  
 Sabbath, but, every other vice to which you may be  
 tempted. Avoid drunkenness, and obscene conver-  
 sation and profane swearing;—be meek and gentle  
 to all men, and be obedient to those who are over  
 you, in things lawful and honest,—but you are not  
 called to yield obedience at the expense of your  
 peace of conscience, or the safety of your souls: in  
 such a case read Acts V. 29, and “*obey God rather  
 than man.*” So shall the name of our Lord Jesus  
 Christ be glorified in you; and while all good men  
 pray for your success, the angels in heaven will

rejoice at your triumph. No doubt, there will be some who will "*think it strange that ye run not into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; who shall give an account to Him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead?*" still look to the Savior of the world, and he shall befriend and comfort you; and whether it be little or much that he send to you, it will come with his blessing, and will enable you, like the first disciples of the Lord, to "*eat your bread with gladness and singleness of heart.*"

Once more, in all things lawful, I bid you God-speed;—and I solemnly pray the Almighty, that after a prosperous voyage, you may return in safety, with an unblameable conscience, to enjoy the blessings of the land,—the welcome of your families,—and the commendation of your Pastor, who calls you to duty only that he may promote your happiness, and whose "*heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that you may be saved.*"

FINIS.

