

THE SABBATH AND LORD'S DAY;
A HISTORY OF THEIR OBSERVANCE IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.
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HISTORY OF THE SABBATH,

IN the preceding numbers of this series of Tracts, we have given an account of the institution of the Sabbath, and the reasons for believing it to be moral and perpetually binding, together with an examination of the authority for a change of the day. As the result of this examination, we have been driven to the conclusion, that the Sabbath was given to man in Paradise; that the fourth commandment was but a reinforcement of it; that the Scriptures do not authorize a change of the day of the Sabbath; and that, therefore, the seventh day of the week ought now to be observed by all men. But there are many persons who admit the early institution of the Sabbath, and the absence of any authority from the Scriptures for a change, yet suppose that the example of the early Christians, and the sayings of "the Fathers," warrant them in observing the first day of the week, to the neglect of the seventh. For the benefit of such, we now come to consider the history of the Sabbath since the establishment of the Christian Church. By consenting to do this, it is not meant to admit, that if a regard for the first day of the week can be traced to near the time of the Apostles, it is necessarily of apostolic authority; for it is affirmed by St. Paul, that even in his time "the mystery of iniquity had begun to work." We believe that "the Holy Scripture contained all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man;" and we cannot admit, therefore, that the early existence of the practice is sufficient to give it divine authority, unless sanctioned by the inspired writings. In order to establish the claims of the first day of the week to be the Sabbath, two things are indispensable: 1. To prove from the Scriptures that the seventh day (which all acknowledge to have been originally the Sabbath) has been abrogated. 2. To show from the same source that the first day has been appointed in the place of the seventh. It is not sufficient to prove that a religious regard was early paid to the first day. There is an important distinction between the Sabbath and a religious festival; the former requiring abstinence from all ordinary labor, and devotion of a whole day to the public and private duties of religion; the latter requiring only the commemoration of some important event, and allowing the time not occupied in the public celebration of it to be devoted to labor or amusement. That this distinction was understood to exist between the regard for the seventh day and that for the first day, seems evident from the fact that in the early history of the church no Christians are charged with abandoning the Sabbath, while we are assured that after the meetings on the first day of the week they went about their ordinary labor. This apparently innocent regard for the day on which Christ first appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, it is believed, has given rise to the whole apostasy from the Sabbath. The following pages are designed to show the steps by which it was brought about.

The Sabbath in the Apostolic Church.

Before entering upon the history of the Sabbath, as it is derived from uninspired records, it is proper to inquire how it was regarded by Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

That Jesus Christ embraced the observance of the Sabbath among other duties enjoined in the Decalogue, is evident from Matt. 5:17:—"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill; for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." He here declared the precepts of this law, without distinction, to be permanent and unchangeable. Had he commanded his disciples to keep the Sabbath, by enacting a new precept, it would have been equivalent to saying that he considered it in the light of a ceremonial and expiring institution, which, in truth, it was not. He therefore most wisely enforced all those precepts as inseparable, unchangeable, and unrepealable. And he plainly said, in the connection referred to, that no person is worthy of a place in his church, who will break any one of these commandments, or teach others to do so. In all his subsequent allusions to this subject, he speaks of the Sabbath as an ancient and well-established ordinance, founded in the nature and fitness of things, made for and adapted to the uses of mankind. (Mark 2: 27.) His example was in strict conformity with his teachings on this subject. His "custom" was to go to places of public worship, and to preach the Gospel on the Sabbath. His disciples, being educated in the observance of the Sabbath, could have entertained no doubts as to its perpetuity, nor have reasons to suppose that Christianity relaxed their obligation to observe it. It is very certain, that during the whole time that our Lord was with his disciples before his death, he gave no intimation to them that the duty of keeping the Sabbath was to be in any wise affected by his death; and we find that after this event, the disciples "rested the Sabbath day, according to the commandment." (Luke 23: 56.) Further, our Savior himself, when speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, an event not to take place until forty years after his death, tells his disciples to pray that their flight might not be on the Sabbath day. It is difficult to conceive why this day should be spoken of at so late a period, unless it was to continue.

The same views respecting the sacredness of the Sabbath seem to have been entertained by the Apostles, after the resurrection of Christ, that they held before his death; and they appear to have occupied that day as they had formerly done, in attending places of public worship, and preaching the Gospel. See Acts 13: 14, 42, 44, where it is said, "They came to Antioch, in Pisidia, and went into

the synagogue on the Sabbath day." After Paul had preached Christ as the true Messiah, " and when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath." "And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." Or, see Acts 16: 13, where, " on the Sabbath we went out of the city, by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made." Or Acts 15: 21—" For Moses, of old time, hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath day." This last passage is given by St. James as a reason why they should write to the Gentile converts only that " they abstain from things offered to idols," etc. From this it is apparent that the custom was common, both to hold meetings on the Sabbath day, and for the Gentile Christians to attend those meetings. If it was not common, the reading of Moses would not benefit them. If it was common, then they kept the Sabbath.

St. Paul, in 1 Thess. 2: 14, says to the Thessalonians, "For ye, brethren, became followers (imitators) of the churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus." And as these Gentile Christians were followers of the churches in Judea, so they were ensamples, or patterns, to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. (Ch. 1: 7.) As to the character of the churches in Judea touching the Sabbath, we need only to consult Acts 21: 20. It is there asserted, that there were many thousands of the Jews who believed, and that they were all zealous of the law. And the context shows that they were zealous of even the ceremonies of the Jewish ritual. Hence we infer, that there was uniformity with the Jewish and Gentile Christians, in the observance of the Sabbath, and that the whole apostolic church religiously kept it.

Notwithstanding the Sabbath continued to be observed until the sacred canon was closed, it has been quite common, since the Reformation, to refer to certain passages of Scripture as indicating that the first day had been, or was to be, substituted for the seventh. It is said that Christ's meeting with his disciples on the evening of his resurrection day indicates that it was to be religiously regarded thereafter. Those who make such use of this circumstance seem to overlook, what it is very important to remember, that two of the disciples traveled from Jerusalem to Emmaus and back on that day, a distance of fifteen miles, and a part of this in company with the Savior. This fact alone shows that it could not have been regarded as a Sabbath. Nor is there anything in the circumstances of the meeting to indicate it. The disciples were not all present, and those who were present had assembled for other reasons, without any expectation of seeing the Master.

The meeting "after eight days" affords no help. Who can say positively that this expression means a week? Or, granting that it does mean a week, what does the passage make for the religious character of the first day? Jesus met his disciples on one occasion when fishing, and was seen of them forty days. Now, if his meeting with them proves the day of that meeting to be a Sabbath, a fishing day would be such, and the whole forty.

In regard to those two places, (Acts 20: 7, and 1 Cor. 16: 2,) where the expression "first day of the week" occurs, they make nothing for the sanctification of the day, since there is no hint of any such thing. The meetings there spoken of were for special purposes, and nothing was done at either which might not with perfect propriety have been done on any day. It is not quite certain that the passage, " They came together to break bread," refers to the Lord's Supper. Indeed, both St. Chrysostom among the ancients, and Calvin among the moderns, deny that it was to celebrate the Supper, and refer it to a friendly meal.

The text, Rev. 1: 10, where St. John was "in the spirit on the Lord's Day," is likewise not a good proof text. That reference is there had to the first day of the week, is by no means certain. There are some who refer it to a much longer period—to the gospel era; while others, among whom is Bede, refer it to the day of judgment. The fact that none of those who early mention the Lord's Day refer to this passage, is much against it. In these circumstances, it would not be safe to draw conclusions in regard to practice therefrom. Indeed, none of the earliest writers found the observance of the Lord's Day upon the Scriptures,

Observance of the Sabbath from the time of the Apostles to Constantine.

Thus far we have been guided by the inspired Scriptures, and we think they prove beyond dispute, that the Christians of the apostolic age had received no new doctrine concerning the Sabbath, but continued without any change to devote the seventh day of the week to the duties of religion. But we now enter a period in which the history of the Sabbath must be derived from other sources. It may be difficult to trace exactly every step which has been taken, as the histories of the early ages are very defective on many subjects. They have come to us, to a considerable extent, through the church of Rome; and since she claims to have changed the day of the Sabbath, it is not to be expected that testimony against herself would be very faithfully preserved. In pursuing our sketch, we shall follow the best lights we have to guide us.

After the period described in the Acts of the Apostles, Christianity soon became widely spread in the Roman empire, which, at that time, extended over most of the civilized world. But as it receded from the time of the Apostles, and the number of its professors increased, the church became gradually less spiritual, and more disposed to deck the simple religion of Jesus with mysteries and superstitious formalities; and the bishops or pastors became ambitious of their authority over the churches. Those churches, even in Gentile cities, appear to have been composed, at first, principally of converted Jews, who not only observed the weekly Sabbath, but also the feast of the Passover, adapted particularly to Christian worship; respecting which, there was much contention. In the meantime, converts were greatly multiplied from among the Gentiles and were united with those from the Jews, who, without reason,

considered themselves entitled to some distinction as the original founders of the gospel church, and as being better informed in the writings of Moses and the prophets, having been in the habit of reading them every Sabbath in the synagogues.

About three years after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, according to the common account, Judea was invaded by the Roman armies, and Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed, as our Lord had predicted. By this awful calamity, it is supposed that most of the churches in Judea were scattered; for they fled their country at the approach of their enemies, as they were taught by Jesus Christ to do. (Matt. 24: 16.) This war resulted not only in the breaking up of the nation, and the destruction of a great portion of the people, but also in bringing a general odium upon the Jews wherever they were found; so that even the Christians of Judea suffered what our Savior taught them to expect, (Matt. 24: 9,) " And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." These circumstances, added to the enmity which formerly existed between the Gentiles and the Jews, produced a prejudice which had its influence in the church in bringing into disrepute, and in fixing a stigma upon, whatever was regarded as Judaism. " The doctrines of our Savior and the church, flourishing from day to day, continued to receive constant accessions," says Eusebius, " but the calamities of the Jews also continued to grow with one accumulation of evil upon another." The insurrectionary disposition of the conquered Jews in the reign of Trajan, in the early part of the second century, and the calamities that followed them, seemed to confirm the opinion that the Jews were given over by the Almighty to entire destruction. But their calamities increased in the reign of Adrian, who succeeded Trajan, in whose reign the revolt of the Jews again proceeded to many and, great excesses, and Rufus, the lieutenant governor of Judea, using their madness as a pretext, destroyed myriads of men, women and children, in crowds; and by the laws of war, he reduced their country to a state of absolute subjection, and the degraded race to the condition of slaves." The transformation of the church in Jerusalem is thus described by Eusebius: "The city of the Jews being thus reduced to a state of abandonment for them, and totally stripped of its ancient inhabitants, and also inhabited by strangers; the Roman city which subsequently arose changing its name, was called Aelia, in honor of the emperor Aelias Adrian; and when the church was collected there of the Gentiles, the first bishop after those of the circumcision was Marcus." Thus was extinguished the Hebrew church in Jerusalem, having had a succession of fifteen pastors; " all which," says Eusebius, " they say, were Hebrews from the first. At that time the whole church under them," he adds, " consisted of faithful Hebrews, who continued from the time of the Apostles to the siege that then took place."

This church, which heretofore held the first rank in regard to its influence, being now composed entirely of Gentiles, and stripped of its apostolic character and influence, could no longer successfully oppose the growing ambition and influence of the bishops of the church in the metropolis of the empire.

Up to this period, and for some time after, there does not appear to have been any change in the sentiments or practice of the church, in any place, relative to the Sabbath; but from what is related by subsequent writers, which will be noticed in its place, it is certain that it was observed by the churches universally. This fact is so generally acknowledged by those acquainted with the history of the matter, that we need refer to only a few passages in proof.

The learned Grotius says, in his Explication of the Decalogue, " Therefore the Christians also, who believed Christ would restore all things to their primitive practice, as Tertullian teaches in Monogamia, kept holy the Sabbath, and had their assemblies on that day, in which the law was read to them, as appears in Acts 15: 21, which custom remained till the time of the council of Laodicea, about A. D. 365, who then thought meet that the gospels also should be read on that day."

Edward Brerewood, Professor in Gresham College, London, in a Treatise on the Sabbath, 1630, says: " It is commonly believed that the Jewish Sabbath was changed into the Lord's Day by Christian emperors, and they know little who do not know, that the ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed by the eastern churches three hundred years after our Saviors' passion."

At what time the first day of the week came into notice as a festival in the church, it is not easy to determine. The first intimation we have of this, in any ancient writer of acknowledged integrity, is from Justin Martyr's Apology for the Christians, about A. D. 140. He is cited as saying, "that the Christians in the city and in the country assembled on the day called Sunday, and after certain religious devotions, all returned home to their labors;" and he assigns as reasons for this, that God made the world on the first day, and that Christ first showed himself to his disciples on that day after his resurrection. These were the best, and probably all the reasons that could then be offered for the practice., He also speaks of Sunday only as a festival, on which they performed labor, when not engaged in devotions, and not as a substitute for the Sabbath. From this author we can learn nothing as to the extent of the practice; for though he says this was done by those " in the city and in the country," he may have intended only the city of Rome and its suburbs, since Justin, although a native of Palestine in Syria, is stated by Eusebius to have made his residence in Rome. Nor can we determine from this, that he intended anything more than that they did thus on the Sunday in which the church of Rome, a short time after this, is known to have closed the paschal feast, which was observed annually.

It is contended, however, that mention is made of keeping the first day previous to Justin. The first intimation of this kind, it is believed, is from an apocryphal writing, styled the Epistle of Barnabas; but to this epistle it is objected, that there is no evidence of its genuineness. Eusebius, who lived near the time when it was written, mentions it as a spurious writing, entitled to no credit. Dr. Milnor says it is an injury to St. Barnabas to ascribe this epistle to him. Mosheim says it is the work of some superstitious Jew of mean abilities. And we think it has but little to recommend it besides its antiquity. Barnabas' theory for observing the first day, rests upon

the tradition that the seventh day was typical of the seventh millennium of the age of the world, which would be purely a holy age, and that the Sabbath was not to be kept until that time arrived; and he says, " We keep the eighth day with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead."

The citations from Ignatius, are as little to the purpose. In the passage of which most use has been made, he did not say that himself or anyone else kept the Lord's Day, as is often asserted. His own words are, that " the prophets who lived before Christ came to a newness of hope, not by keeping Sabbaths, but by living according to a lordly or most excellent life." In this passage, Ignatius was speaking of altogether a different thing from Sabbath-keeping. There is another quotation from him, however, in which he brings out more clearly his view of the relation existing between the Sabbath and Lord's Day. It is as follows: " Let us not keep the Sabbath in a Jewish manner, in sloth and idleness; but let us keep it after a spiritual manner, not in bodily ease, but in the study of the law, and in the contemplation of the works of God." " And after we have kept the Sabbath, let everyone that loveth Christ keep the Lord's Day festival." From this it seems that he would have the Sabbath kept first, as such, and in a manner satisfactory to the strictest Sabbatarian, after which the Lord's Day, not as a Sabbath, but as a festival. Indeed, with this distinction between the Sabbath and a festival before us, it is easy to explain all those passages from early historians which refer to the first day. We shall find them to be either immediately connected with instructions about such seasons as Good Friday and Holy Thursday, or in the writings of those who have recommended the observance of these festival days.

It is also said that Pliny, Governor of Bithynia, A. D. 102, in a letter to Trojan, states that the Christians met on the first day of the week for worship; but by no fair interpretation of his words can he so understood. He says, in writing about those of his own province, " that they were accustomed to assemble on a stated day." This might be referred to the first day, if there were credible testimony that this day was alone regarded at that time; but as there is no evidence of this, and as the Sabbath is known to have been the stated day of religious assembling a long time after this, it seems more proper to refer it to the Sabbath.

We will mention but one more of these misinterpreted citations, and this is from Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, who lived a little after Justin. His letter to Soter, bishop of Rome, is cited as saying, " This day we celebrated the holy Dominical day, in which we have read your epistle." As given by Eusebius, it is thus: " Today we have passed the Lord's holy day," etc. The only ground upon which this phrase can be referred to the first, day, is, that this day was at that time known by the same title that God has given to the Sabbath, (see Isaiah 48: 13,) of which there is no proof. Therefore it is not just to cite this passage as evidence of the observance of the first day at that time.

It is, indeed, a well-known fact, that the first day has come into very extensive use among the great body of Christians, as the only day of weekly rest and worship. The origin of this practice does not appear, however, to be as ancient, by some centuries, as many suppose; nor was its adoption secured at once, but by slow and gradual advances it obtained general notice in Christian countries. This is frankly admitted by Morer, an English Episcopalian, in his Dialogues on the Lord's Day, p. 236. He says, "In St. Jerome's time, (that is, in the fifth century,) Christianity had got into the throne as well as into the empire. Yet for all this, the entire sanctification of the Lord's day proceeded slowly; and that it was the work of time to bring it to perfection, appears from the several steps the church made in her constitution, and from the decrees of emperors and other princes, wherein the prohibitions from servile and civil business advanced by degrees from one species to another, till the day got a considerable figure in the world." The same author says, on the same page: " If the Christians in St. Jerome's time, after divine service on the Lord's day, followed their daily employments, it should be remembered, that this was not done till the worship was quite over, when they might with innocence enough resume them, because the length of time and the number of hours assigned for piety were not then so well explained as in after ages."

It is probable that no other day could have obtained the same notice in ancient times as the first day of the week did; for there were circumstances, aside from the resurrection, that had an influence in promoting its observance. It was at first a celebration of the same character as the fourth and sixth days of the week, and the annual festivals of saints and martyrs. These celebrations were comparatively unobjectionable, when not permitted to interfere with a divine appointment; but when they were made to supersede or cause a neglect of the Sabbath, they were criminal. In respect to these days of weekly celebration, Mosheim, when remarking upon this early period, and the regard then paid to the seventh and first days, says, " Many also observed the fourth day, in which Christ was betrayed, and the sixth day, in which he was crucified." He adds, " The time of assembling was generally in the evening after sunset, or in the morning before the dawn."

The respect which the Gentiles had for the first day, or Sunday, while they were Pagans, contributed much to render its introduction easy, and its weekly celebration popular, among such materials as composed the body of the church of Rome in the second, third, and fourth centuries. The observance of the first day of the week as a festival of the Sun, was very general in those nations from which the Gentile church received her converts. That an idolatrous worship was paid to the Sun and other heavenly bodies by the Gentiles, the Old Testament abundantly testifies; and this kind of adoration paid to the Sun in later times, is as plainly a matter of historical record. Thomas Banfield, an English writer of the seventeenth century, quoting Verstegan's Antiquities, p. 68, says: " Our ancestors in England, before the light of the Gospel came among them, went very far in this idolatry, and dedicated the first day of the week to the adoration of the idol of the Sun, and gave it the name of Sunday. This idol they placed in a temple, and there sacrificed to it." He further states, that from his historical reading, he finds that a great part of the world, and particularly those parts of it which have since

embraced Christianity, did anciently adore the Sun upon Sunday. It is also stated by Dr. Chambers, in his Cyclopaedia, that " Sunday was so called by our idolatrous ancestors, because set apart for the worship of the Sun." The Greeks and the Latins also gave the same name to the first day of the week. Dr. Brownlee, as quoted by Kingsbury, on the Sabbath, p. 223, also says, " When the descendants of Adam apostatized from the worship of the true God, they substituted in his place the Sun, that luminary which, more than all others, strikes the minds of savage people with religious awe; and which, therefore, all heathens worship." Attachment to particular days of religious celebration, from habit merely, is well known, even in our own day, to be very strong, and powerful convictions of duty are often required to produce a change. This was no doubt well understood by the teachers of Christianity in those times. Dr. Mosheim, when treating on that age, says, "that the leaders imagined that the nations would the more readily receive Christianity when they saw the rites and ceremonies to which they had been accustomed established in the churches, and the same worship paid to Jesus Christ and his martyrs which they had formerly offered to their idol deities. Hence it happened, that in those times, the religion of the Greeks and Romans differed but little in its external appearance from that of Christians."

Prejudice against the Jews, was another influence against the Sabbath, and in favor of the first day. This was very strong, and directly calculated to lead the Gentile Christians to fix a stigma upon every religious custom of the Jews, and to brand as Judaism whatever they supposed had any connection with the Mosaic religion. Hence it was that in those times, as often occurs in our own, to produce disaffection and disgust to the seventh day as the Sabbath, they spoke of it and reproached its observance as Judaizing. This feeling in relation to Judaism led Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, in Egypt, in the fourth century, who with his people then observed the Sabbath, to say, in his Interpretation of the Psalms, "We assemble on Saturday, not that we are infected with Judaism, but to worship Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath." In a community of Christians whose religion was formal, and whose celebrations were designed more to act upon their passions and senses than to improve their hearts or to conform them to divine requirements, a more powerful argument could scarcely be used against the Sabbath day, or one that would more effectually promote the observance of the first day, which was raised up as its rival. Dr. Neander says distinctly, " Opposition to Judaism introduced the particular festival of Sunday very early."

The observance of the Passover, or Easter, by the early Christians, aided the introduction of the first day as a religious festival in the church, if it was not indeed the direct cause of it. This feast was held by the Asiatic Christians, who began it at the same time the Jews began their Passover, and ended it in like manner, without regard to the particular day of the week. The church of Rome does not appear to have observed it until the latter part of the second century, when, in the time of Victor, bishop of Rome, it seems that it was observed by the Roman and western churches. Victor insisted upon the fast being closed on the first day of the week, on whatever day it might commence; and he claimed the right, as bishop of Rome, to control all the churches in this matter. " Hence," says Eusebius, " there were synods and convocations of the bishops on this question, and all (i.e. the western bishops) unanimously drew up an ecclesiastical decree, which they communicated to all the churches in all places, that the mystery of our Lord's resurrection should be celebrated on no other day than the Lord's day, and that on this day alone we should observe the close of the paschal feasts." The bishops of Asia, however, persisted for a considerable time in observing the custom handed down to them by apostolic tradition, until, either by the threats of excommunication which were made, or by a desire for peace, they were induced partially to adopt the custom of the western churches. This change was made, as we are told, " partly in honor of the day, and partly to express some difference between Jews and Christians." But the question does not appear to have been fully settled; for we find Constantine, in an epistle to the churches, urging them to uniformity in the day of the celebration, wherein, after a strong invective against the practice of the Jews, he says, "For we have learned another way from our Savior, which we may follow. It is indeed most absurd that they should have occasion of insolent boasting on account of our not being able to observe these things in any manner unless by the aid of their instruction." " Wherefore, let us have nothing in common with that most odious brood of the Jews." By this contest an important point was gained for the first day, although it was but an annual celebration. The Sabbath, however, does not appear to have been laid aside in any place, but continued to be the principal day of religious worship throughout the whole Christian church.

At what time the first day began to be observed weekly, we have no particular account; but from the favor it received from the bishops of Rome, and some of the Christian fathers, at the close of the third and beginning of the fourth century, we suppose it had then become a practice in Rome and some of the western churches.

This brings us to near the close of the third century. And here it ought to be noted, that Lord's Day, or Sunday, was not the only holy-day of the Church during these three centuries. Ori gen (as quoted by Dr. Peter Heylyn in his History of the Sabbath) names the Good Friday as we call it now, the Passover as he calls it there; the feasts of Easter and of Pentecost. And anciently, not only the day which is now called Whitsunday or Pentecost, but all the fifty days from Easter forward, were accounted holy, and solemnized with no less observance than the Sundays were. Of the day of the Ascension, or Holy Thursday, it may likewise be said, that soon after, it came to be more highly esteemed of than all the rest. Such was the estimation in which the Lord's Day was held. It was on a level with those other holy days which are now disregarded by the body of the Protestant Church. It is to be remembered, farther, that the term Sabbath was applied exclusively to the seventh day of the week, or Saturday. Indeed, wherever, for a thousand years and upwards, we meet the word Sabbatum in any writer, of what name soever, it must be understood of no day but Saturday.

The Sabbath from the time of Constantine to the Reformation.

We have seen how the matter stood until the commencement of Constantine's career. The Sabbath was generally observed, while the Lord's Day was regarded as a festival of no greater importance or authority than Good Friday or Holy Thursday. No text of Scripture, or edict of emperor, or decree of council, could be produced in its favor. But from this time forth may be found emperors and councils combining to give importance to the Lord's Day and to oppose the Sabbath.

An important change in the regard paid to the first day was produced soon after the accession of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, in the early part of the fourth century. When he became master of Rome, he soon gave himself up to the guidance of the Christian clergy. According to Jones' Church History, " He built laces of public worship; he encouraged the meeting of synods and bishops; honored them with his presence, and employed himself continually in aggrandizing the church. He was scrupulously attentive to the religious rites and ceremonies which were prescribed to him by the clergy. He fasted, observed the feasts in commemoration of the martyrs, and devoutly watched the whole night on the vigils of the saints," and showed great anxiety for uniformity in the doctrines and observances of religion in the church. He was, therefore, exactly suited to the wishes of the Roman bishop and clergy, in establishing, by his imperial authority, what they had no Scripture to support, and what their influence had hitherto been insufficient to effect, viz. a uniformity in the celebration of Easter and the first day. In 321, Constantine first published his edicts enjoining upon his subjects these superstitious celebrations.

Eusebius, in his Life of Constantine, says: " He appointed as a suitable time for prayers the Dominical day, which then was an especial day, and now is undoubtedly the very first. His bodyguard observed the day, and offered on it prayers written by the Emperor. The happy prince endeavored to persuade all to do this, and by degrees to lead all to the worship of God; wherefore he determined that those obeying Roman power should abstain from every work upon the days named after the Savior, that they should venerate also the day before the Sabbath, in memory, as seems to me, of the events occurring on those days to our common Savior." He says again, " An edict also, by the will and pleasure of the Emperor, was transmitted to the Prefects of the provinces, that they thenceforth should venerate the Dominical day; that they should honor the days consecrated to the martyrs, and should celebrate the solemnities of the festivals in the churches, all which was done according to the will of the Emperor." And, as quoted by Lucius, he says, that he admonished his subjects likewise that those days which were Sabbaths should be honored or worshiped.

Sozomen, in his Ecclesiastical History, b. 1, c. 8, says, " He (Constantine) also made a law that on the Dominical day, which the Hebrews call the first day of the week, the Greeks the day of the Sun, and also on the day of Venus, (i.e. Friday,) judgments should not be given, or other business transacted, but that all should worship God with prayer and supplications, and venerate the Dominical day, as on it Christ rose from the dead, and the day of Venus, as the day on which he was fixed to the cross."

Dr. Chambers says, "It was Constantine the Great who first made a law for the observance of Sunday, and who, according to Eusebius, appointed that it should be regularly celebrated throughout the Roman empire. Before him, and even in his time, they observed the Jewish Sabbath as well as Sunday, both to satisfy the law of Moses, and to imitate the Apostles, who used to meet together on the first day." He adds, " Indeed, some are of opinion that the Lord's Day mentioned in the Apocalypse is our Sunday, which they will have to have been so early instituted." "By Constantine's laws, made in 321, it was decreed that for the future the Sunday should be kept a day of rest in all cities and towns; but he allowed the country people to follow their work. In 538, the Council of Orleans prohibited this country labor.

To give the more solemnity to the first day of the week, (as we learn from Lucius' Ecclesiastical History,) Sylvester, who was bishop of Rome while Constantine was Emperor, changed the name of Sunday, giving it the more imposing title of Lord's Day.

It cannot be doubted, that the laws of Constantine did much to make the first day conspicuous throughout the empire, as all public business was forbidden upon it. They changed its character from a special day, in which, as a weekly festival, all kinds of business and labor were performed in city and country, to be, as Eusebius says, the very first. This imperial favor for the first day operated against all who conscientiously regarded the Sabbath from respect to the fourth commandment, in obedience to which the seventh day had always been observed; and if it had produced a general abandonment of its observance, it would not have been very surprising, considering the influence of court example, and the general ignorance and darkness of the age. This, however, does not appear to have been the case. The Sabbath was still extensively observed; and to counteract it the Council of Laodicea, about A. D. 350, passed a decree saying, "It is not proper for Christians to Judaize, and to cease from labor on the Sabbath, but they ought to work on that day, and put especial honor upon the Lords' Day as Christians. If any he found Judaizing, let him be anathematized."

But this did not produce any material change, for Socrates, a writer of the fifth century, who resided at Constantinople, makes the following remarks upon the celebration of the Sabbath at the time he wrote, A. D. 440. He says, " There are various customs concerning assembling; for though all the churches throughout the whole world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath day, yet the Alexandrians and the Romans, from an ancient tradition, refuse to do this; but the Egyptians who are in the neighborhood of Alexandria; and those inhabiting Thebais, indeed have assemblies on the Sabbath, but do not participate in the mysteries, as is the

custom of the Christians. At Caesarea, Cappadocia, and in Cyprus, on the Sabbath and Dominical day, at twilight, with lighted lamps, the presbyters and bishops interpret the Scriptures. At Rome they fast every Sabbath."

This account of the manner of celebrating the Sabbath in the fifth century, is corroborated by Sozomen, in his Ecclesiastical History, b. 7, c. 9. He says, "At Constantinople, and almost among all, the Christians assembled upon the Sabbath, and also upon the first day of the week, excepting at Rome and Alexandria; the ecclesiastical assemblies at Rome were not upon the Sabbath, as in almost all other churches of the rest of the world; and in many cities and villages in Egypt, they used to commune in the evening of the Sabbath, on which day there were public assemblies."

In regard to fasting on the Sabbath at Rome, referred to by Socrates, it ought to be said, that from the earliest times to the fourth century, the practice had been to observe the Sabbath as a holiday. But the Church of Rome, in its opposition to the Jews, made it a fast day, that the separation might be marked and strong. In the eastern churches they never fasted upon the Sabbath, excepting one Sabbath in the year, which was the day before the Passover. But in the western churches they celebrated a fast every week. It was in reference to this that Ambrose said, "When I come to Rome, I fast upon the Sabbath; when I am here, I do not fast." Augustine also said concerning this, "If they say it is sinful to fast on the Sabbath, then they would condemn the Roman Church, and many places near to and far from it. And if they should think it a sin not to fast on the Sabbath, then they would blame many eastern churches, and the far greater part of the world." This Sabbath fasting was opposed by the eastern church; and in the sixth general council, held at Constantinople, it was commanded that the Sabbath and Dominica days be kept as festivals, and that no one fast or mourn upon them. The practice of fasting, therefore, was chiefly in the western churches, about Rome.

It is perhaps difficult to determine exactly the relative importance attached to the seventh and first days of the week at this time. Sufficient may be found, however, to assure us, that the Sabbath was observed, and that no one regarded Sunday as having taken its place. This is shown by the provision of the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 365, that the Gospels should be read on that day. It is shown by the action of a Council in 517, (mentioned in Robinson's History of Baptism,) which regulated and enforced the observance of the Sabbath. It is shown by the expostulation of Gregory of Nyssa, "How can you look upon the Lord's Day, if you neglect the Sabbath? Do you not know that they are sisters, and that in despising the one you affront the other?" And as sisters we find them hand in hand in the ecclesiastical canons. Penalties were inflicted by the councils both of Laodicea and Trullo, on clergymen who did not observe both days as festivals.

How the first day of the week, or Lord's Day, was observed in the early part of the fifth century, we may learn from the words of St. Jerome. In a funeral oration for the Lady Paula, he says: "She, with all her virgins and widows who lived at Bethlehem in a cloister with her, upon the Lord's day, repaired duly to the church, or house of God, which was nigh to her cell; and after her return from thence to her own lodgings, she herself and all her company fell to work, and they all performed their task, which was the making of clothes and garments for themselves and for others, as they were appointed."

St. Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople, "recommended to his audience, after impressing upon themselves and their families what they had heard on the Lord's Day, to return to their daily employments and trades."

Dr. Francis White, Lord Bishop of Ely, speaking of this matter, says, "The Catholic Church, for more than six hundred years after Christ, permitted labor, and gave license to many Christian people to work upon the Lord's Day, at such hours as they were not commanded to be present at the public service by the precepts of the church."

In the sixth century efforts were made to prevent this labor. The following promulgation of a synod held by command of King Junthran, of Burgundy, will show the condition of things, and the means used to improve it: "We see the Christian people, in an unadvised manner, deliver to contempt the Dominical day, and, as in other days, indulge on continual labor."

Therefore they determined to teach the people subject to them to keep the Dominical day, which, if not observed by the lawyer, he should irreparably lose his cause, and if a countryman or servant did not keep it, he should be beaten with heavier blows of cudgels. The council of Orleans, held 538, prohibited the country labor on Sunday which Constantine by his laws permitted. According to Chambers, this council also declared, "that to hold it unlawful to travel with horses, cattle, and carriages, to prepare food, or to do anything necessary to the cleanliness and decency of houses or persons, savors more of Judaism than Christianity." According to Lucius, in another council held in Narbonne, in France, in the seventh century, they also forbid this country work.

Early in the seventh century, in the time of Pope Gregory I., the subject of the Sabbath attracted considerable attention. There was one class of persons who declared, "that it was not lawful to do any manner of work upon the Saturday, or the old Sabbath; another, that no man ought to bathe himself on the Lord's day, or their new Sabbath." Against both of those doctrines Pope Gregory wrote a letter to the Roman citizens. Baronius, in his Councils, says, "This year (603) at Rome, St. Gregory, the Pope, corrected that error which some preached, by Jewish superstition, or the Grecian custom, that it was a duty to worship on the Sabbath, as likewise upon the Dominical day;" and he calls such preachers the preachers of Antichrist.

Nearly the same doctrine was preached again in the time of Gregory VII., A. D. 1074, about five hundred years after what we are now speaking of. This is sufficient to show that the Sabbath was kept until those times of decline which introduced so many errors in faith and practice. Indeed, it is sufficient to show, that wherever the subject has been under discussion, the Sabbath has found its advocates, both in theory and in practice.

According to Lucius, Pope Urban II., in the eleventh century, dedicated the Sabbath to the Virgin Mary, with a mass. Binius says, "Pope Innocent I. constituted a fast on the Sabbath day, which seems to be the first constitution of that fast; but dedicating the Sabbath to the Virgin Mary was by Urban II., in the latter part of the eleventh century." About this time we find Eusebius teaching the doctrine that the precept for the observance of the Sabbath is not one of the commandments, because it is not at all times to be observed according to the letter; and Thomas Aquinas, another Romish ecclesiastic, saying, "that it seems to be inconvenient that the precept for observing the Sabbath should be put among the precepts of the Decalogue, if it do not at all belong to it; that the precept, 'Thou shalt not make a graven image,' and the precept for observing the Sabbath, are ceremonial."

The observance of the first day was not so early in England and in Scotland as in most other parts of the Roman Empire. According to Heylyn, there were Christian societies established in Scotland as early as A. D. 435; and it is supposed that the gospel was preached in England in the first century by St. Paul. For many ages after Christianity was received in those kingdoms, they paid no respect to the first day. Binius, a Catholic writer, in the second volume of his works, gives some account of the bringing into use of the Dominical day [Sunday] in Scotland, as late as A. D. 1203. "This year," he says, "a council was held in Scotland concerning the introduction of the Lord's Day, which council was held in 1203, in the time of Pope Innocent III.," and he quotes as his authority Roger Hoveden, Matth. Paris, and Lucius' Eccl. Hist. He says, "By this council it was enacted that it should be holy time from the twelfth hour on Saturday noon until Monday."

Beethus (de Scottis, p. 344) says, "In 1203, William, king of Scotland, called a council of the principal of his kingdom, by which it was decreed, that Saturday, from the twelfth hour at noon, should be holy, that they should do no profane work, and this they should observe until Monday."

Binius says that in 1201 Eustachius, Abbot of Flay, came to England, and therein preached from city to city, and from place to place. He prohibited using markets on Dominica' days; and for this he professed to have a special command from heaven. The history of this singular document, entitled, A holy Command of the Dominical Day, the pious Abbot stated to be this "It came from Heaven to Jerusalem, and was found on St. Simeon's tomb in Golgotha. And the Lord commanded this epistle, which for three days and three nights men looked upon, and falling to the earth, prayed for God's mercy. And after the third hour, the patriarch stood up; and Akarias the archbishop stretched out his miter, and they took the holy epistle of God and found it thus written."

[We give some extracts from this epistle, partly as a matter of curiosity, and partly to show the credulity of our ancestors, and the means by which they were awed into what was to them a new religious observance.]

I, the Lord, who commanded you that you should observe the Dominical day, and ye have not kept it, and ye have not repented of your sine, as I said by my gospel, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away; I have caused repentance unto life to be preached unto you, and ye have not believed; I sent pagans against you, who shed your blood, yet ye believed not; and because ye kept not the Dominical day, for a few days ye had famine; but I soon gave you plenty, and afterwards ye did worse; I will again, that none from the ninth hour of the Sabbath until the rising of the sun on Monday, do work anything unless what is good, which if any do, let him amend by repentance; and if ye be not obedient to this command, amen, I say unto you, and I swear unto you by my seat, and throne, and cherubim, who keep my holy seat, because I will not change anything by another epistle; but I will open the heavens, and for rain I will rain upon you stones, and logs of wood, and hot water by night, and none may be able to prevent, but that I may destroy all wicked men. This I say unto you, ye shall die the death, because of the Dominical holy day and other festivals of my saints which ye have not kept. I will send unto you beasts having the heads of lions, the hair of women, and tails of camels; and they shall be so hunger-starved that they shall devour your flesh, and ye shall desire to flee to the sepulchers of the dead, and hide you for fear of the beasts; and I will take away the light of the sun from your eyes; and I will send upon you darkness, that without seeing ye may kill one another, and I will take away my face from you, and will not show you mercy; for I will burn the bodies and hearts of all who keep not the Dominical holy day. Hear my voice, lest ye perish in the land because of the Dominica] holy day. Now know ye, that ye are safe by the prayers of my most holy mother Mary, and of my holy angels who daily pray for you. I gave you the law from Mount Sinai, which ye have not kept. For you I was born into the world, and my festivals ye have not known; the Dominical day of my resurrection ye have not kept; I swear to you by my right hand, unless ye keep the Donut-day and the festivals of my saints, I will send pagans to kill you.

Provided with this new command from heaven, "Eustachius preached in various parts of England against the desecration of the Dominical day, and other festivals; and gave the people absolution upon condition that they hereafter reverence the Dominical day, and the festivals of the saints." And the people vowed to God, that thereafter they would neither buy nor sell anything but food on Sunday.

Then, says Binius, the enemy of man, envying the admonitions of this holy man, put it into the heart of the king and nobility of England, to command that all who should keep the aforesaid traditions, and chiefly all who had cast down the markets for things vendible upon the Dominical day, should be brought to the king's court to make satisfaction about observing the Dominical day."

Binius relates many miraculous things that occurred on the Sabbath to those that labored after the ninth hour (i. e. after three o'clock in the afternoon) of the seventh day, or Saturday. He says, that upon a certain Sabbath, after the ninth hour, a carpenter, for making a wooden pin, was struck with the palsy; and a woman, for knitting on the Sabbath, after the ninth hour, was also struck with the palsy. A man baked bread, and when he broke it to eat, blood came out. Another, grinding corn, blood came in a great stream instead of meal, while the wheel of his mill stood still against a vehement impulse of water. Heated ovens refused to bake bread, if heated after the ninth hour of the Sabbath; and dough, left unbaked out of respect to Eustachius' new doctrine, was found on Mon-day morning well baked without the aid of fire. These fables were industriously propagated throughout the kingdom; "yet the people," says Binius, "fearing kingly and human power more than divine, returned as a dog to his own vomit, to keep markets of saleable things upon the Dominical day."

Mr. Bampfield, in his Enquiry, p. 3, says, "The king and princes of England, in 1203, would not agree to change the Sabbath, and keep the first day, by this authority. This was in the time of King John, against whom the popish clergy had a great pique for not honoring their prelacy and the monks, by one of whom he was finally poisoned."

Binius (Councils, cent. 13) states that King John of England, in 1208, in the tenth year of his reign, for not submitting to popish impositions upon his prerogatives, was excommunicated by the Pope, and his kingdom interdicted, which occasioned so much trouble at home and abroad, that it forced him at last to lay down his crown at the feet of Mandulphus, the Pope's agent. After he was thus humbled by that excommunication and interdiction, the king, in the fifteenth year of his reign, by writ, removed the market of the city of Exon from Sunday, on which it was held, to Monday. The market of Lanceson was removed from the first to the fifth day of the week. In the second and third years of Henry III. many other markets were removed from the first to other days of the week, which the King at first would not permit. He also issued a writ which permitted the removal of markets from the first day to other days without special license.

The Parliament of England met on Sundays until the time of Richard II., who adjourned it from that to the following day.

In 1203, according to Boethus, "a council was held in Scotland to inaugurate the king, and concerning the feast of the Sabbath; and there came also a legate from the Pope, with a sword and purple hat, and 'indulgences and privileges to the young king. It was also there decreed, that Saturday, from the twelfth hour at noon, should be holy." The Magdeburgenses say that this Council was about the observance of the Dominical day newly brought in, and that they ordained that it should be holy from the twelfth hour of Saturday even till Monday.

Binius says, "A synod was held in Oxford, A. D. 1223, by Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, where they determined that the Dominical day be kept with all veneration, and a fast upon the Sabbath."

According to Bampfield, the first law of England made for the keeping of Sunday, was in the time of Edward VI., about 1470. "Parliament then passed an act, by which Sunday and many holy days, the feasts of all Saints and of holy Innocents, were established as festivals by law. This provided also, that it should be lawful for husbandmen, laborers, fishermen, and all others in harvest, or at any other time of the year when necessity should require, to labor, ride, fish, or do any other kind of work, at their own free will and pleasure, upon any of the said days."

By such means as these, the observance of the first day was gradually forced upon the people wherever they owned allegiance to the Pope as head of the church, and the Sabbath was as gradually brought into contempt and disuse.

The process by which the change was effected appears to be this: By first obtaining an annual celebration of the first day at the close of the Passover, in honor of the resurrection; then a partial observance of the day weekly, it being generally so observed among the heathen; then obtaining for it the support of civil laws, ecclesiastical canons and penalties, and by giving it the title of Lord's day; then by requiring the consecration of the entire day. To abate and ultimately eradicate all respect for the Sabbath, it was first turned into a fast; then it was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, resting upon it was stigmatized as Judaism and heresy, and the preaching of it was called Antichrist; and finally the fourth commandment was pronounced ceremonial, and was effectually abstracted from the Decalogue. And thus, so far as the Roman church was concerned, the point was gained; and thus, probably, she performed her part in the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel, (7: 25.) "He shall think to change TIMES and LAWS; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

The cause of the Sabbath must also have been seriously affected by the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the seventh century, and the success of the Mahomedans in conquering the eastern division of the church. Mahomet formed the plan of establishing a new religion,

or, as he expressed it, of replanting the only true and ancient one professed by Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the prophets; by destroying idolatry, and weeding out the corruptions which the later Jews and Christians had, as he supposed, introduced. He was equally opposed to both Jews and Christians. To distinguish his disciples from each, he selected as their day of weekly celebration the sixth day, or Friday. And thus, as a writer of the seventeenth century remarks, "they and the Romanists crucified the Sabbath, as the Jews and the Romans did the Lord of the Sabbath, between two thieves, the sixth and the first day of the week."

We have thus traced the history of the Sabbath in the Roman church down to the thirteenth century; and we see that through the whole of this period, the seventh day everywhere retained the honor of being called the Sabbath, and that no other day had ever borne that title; that not until the remarkable letter found on St. Simeon's tomb, had it been asserted by any one, that the observance of the first day, Lord's day, or Sunday, was enjoined by the authority of Jesus or his apostles, nor was any example of theirs plead in its favor. Even then it was not pretended that the Scriptures required its observance.

There are some traces of the Sabbath among those Christians who separated from the Catholic communion, or were never embraced in it. The Greek church separated from them about the middle of the eleventh century, and had a larger extent of empire than the papists. According to Brerewood's Enquiries, p. 128, this church solemnized Saturday festivals, and forbade as unlawful to fast on any Saturday except in Lent, retaining the custom followed before their separation. The same author states that the Syrian Christians, who composed a numerous body in the East, celebrated divine worship solemnly on both the Sabbath and first day, continuing the custom of the Roman church at the time they separated from that community. Sandy's Travels, p. 173, speak of a Christian empire in Ethiopia that celebrate both Saturday and Sunday, "that they have divers errors and many ancient truths." The Abyssinian Christians, another numerous body, are represented as being similar in some respects to the Papists; and Purchase speaks of them as "subject to Peter and Paul, and especially to Christ," and as observing the Saturday Sabbath. They are also mentioned by Brerewood. Mosheim mentions a sect of Christians in the twelfth century, in Lombardy, called Pasaginians, charged with circumcising their followers, and keeping the Jewish Sabbath. Mr. Benedict considers the account of their practicing the bloody rite a, slander charged on them on account of their keeping the Jewish Sabbath. Binius says that in 1555 there were Christians in Rome who kept the Sabbath, and were therefore called Sabbatarii, and they are represented as differing in other respects from the Romanists. Many of the Armenian Christians are believed to observe the ancient Sabbath. Dr. Buchanan, in his Researches, when speaking of those of them who are settled in the East Indies, says, "Their doctrines are, as far as the author knows, the doctrines of the Bible. Besides this, they maintain the solemn observation of Christian worship throughout our empire on the seventh day."

Probably there has not existed a class of Christians since the times of the Apostles, who could more justly claim to be Apostolic than the Waldenses, formerly a numerous people living in the valleys of Piedmont; whither they retired, says Burnside, on the promulgation of Constantine's laws for the observance of the first day, in the fourth century; and where they remained, according to Scaliger and Brerewood, in the time of Elizabeth of England, in the latter part of the sixteenth century. They adhered firmly to the apostolic faith, and suffered severe persecutions from the Catholics. Robinson, in his History of Baptism, says, "They were called Sabbati and Sabbatati, so named from the Hebrew word Sabbath, because they kept the Saturday for the Lord's Day." They were also called Insabbatati, because they rejected all the festivals, or Sabbaths, in the low Latin sense of the word. The account the Papists gave of their sentiments in 1250, was briefly this; That they declared themselves to be the apostolic successors, and to have apostolic authority; that they held the church of Rome to be the whore of Babylon; that none of the ordinances of the church which have been introduced since Christ's ascension ought to be observed; that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot actually believe. They reject the sacrament of confirmation, but instead of that their teachers lay their hands upon their disciples. Jones, in his Church History, says that because they would not observe saints' days, they were falsely supposed to neglect the Sabbath also. Another of their enemies, an Inquisitor of Rome, charged them with despising all the feasts of Christ and his saints. Another, a Commissioner of Charles XII. of France, reported to him, "that he found among them none of the ceremonies, images, or signs of the Romish church, much less the crimes with which they were charged; on the contrary, they kept the Sabbath day, observed the ordinance of baptism according to the primitive church, and instructed their children in the articles of the Christian faith and commandments of God."

The Sabbath since the Reformation.

With the commencement of the Reformation, a new spirit of religious inquiry was awakened. Nearly every item of Christian practice was brought under review, and not dismissed until either approved or rejected. Among the subjects for discussion we find the Sabbath early introduced and thoroughly examined. There were three leading views then maintained by different classes of Reformers, which deserve particular notice.

1. One class of Reformers there was, who, dwelling alone on the sufficiency of faith, and the freeness of the Gospel, trembled at the thought of imposing rules upon men, and seemed to fear the term law. These declared, that the law of the Sabbath was abolished; that Sunday was no Sabbath, only a festival of the church, which had been appointed and might be altered at her pleasure. That we may not be thought in error here, as well as to give a full understanding of the opinions of that time, we will present the assertions of some of these men.

Bishop Cranmer's Catechism, A. D. 1548, says: "The Jews were commanded in the Old Testament to keep the Sabbath-day, and they

observed it every seventh day, called the Sabbath, or Saturday; but we Christian men are not bound to such commandments in Moses' law, and therefore we now keep no more the Sabbath, or Saturday, as the Jews did, but we observe the Sunday, and some other days, as the magistrates do judge convenient."

William Tindal says, in his answer to More, chap. 25: " We be lords over the Sabbath, and may change it into Monday, or any other day, as we see need; or may make every tenth day holy-day, only if we see cause why; we may make two every week, if it were expedient, and one not enough to teach the people. Neither was there any cause to change it from the Saturday, other than to put a difference between us and the Jews, and lest we should become servants to the day after their superstition."

Bullinger, on Rev. 1: 10, says: " Christian churches entertained the Lord's Day, not upon any commandment from God, but according to their free choice."

Melancthon says: "The Lord's Day, from the Apostles' age, bath been a solemn day; notwithstanding, we find not the same commanded by any apostolic law; but it is collected from hence that the observance thereof was free, because Epiphanius and St. Augustine testify that on the fourth and the sixth days of the week church assemblies were held, as well as upon the Lord's day."

The Augustan Confession, drawn up by Melancthon, and approved by Luther, says.: " We teach that traditions are not to be condemned which have a religious end, . . . namely, traditions concerning holy-days, the Lord's day, the feast of the nativity, easter, etc."

These passages distinctly do away with the Sabbath, and place the observance of the Lord's day on the ground of human authority. In the books of some early authors who adopted these views, may be found frequent references to a difficulty which drove them to deny the perpetuity of the Sabbath. Bishop White, in 1635, says: " If the fourth commandment, concerning the keeping of the seventh day, is moral and perpetual, then it is not such in respect to the first and eighth day; for this precept requires the observance of that one day only which it specifies in that commandment." In speaking of the Lord's Day, he says; " Every day of the week and of the year is the Lord's; and the Sunday is no more the Lord's by the law of the fourth commandment, than the Friday, for the Lord's Day of that fourth commandment is the Saturday."

From each of these quotations, it appears to have been felt to be inconsistent to admit the perpetuity of the Sabbath, without keeping the seventh day. But to come back to this ancient day, and keep it in company with Jews, seemed too great a change. Hence the abrogation of the institution was asserted, as the easiest way of escaping from the dilemma. John Milton, speaking of this difficulty, says: " If we under the Gospel are to regulate the time of our public worship by the prescriptions of the Decalogue, it will surely be far safer to observe the seventh, clay, according to the express command of God, than, on the authority of mere human conjecture, to adopt the first."

Another influence which led to the rejection of the Sabbath by these men, was the view of it which was held by the Romish Church. When the leaders of the Reformation separated from that church, it was claimed that all her festival days, including Sundays, were holier than other days, not only in relation to the use made of them, but to a -natural and inherent holiness wherewith they thought them to -De invested. In addition to this, many and hurtful restraints had been imposed upon the consciences of God's people, until these were days of punishment, rather than of holy pleasure and profit. Seeing these days perverted from their real design, and made the means of strengthening papal power, it is not surprising that they were dis-carded together. Anxious to escape one error, they fell into another equally dangerous.

2. But another class of Reformers, (probably somewhat fearful of the consequences of those lax notions to which we have just referred,) considering that the Sabbath was given in Paradise, rehearsed at Sinai, and placed among the precepts of the Decalogue, declared that it must be moral in its nature, and perpetually binding. But having admitted its perpetuity, and having rested its claims upon the fourth commandment, the way of explaining and enforcing the change of the day presented an obstacle to the spread of this view. How this was treated, let their own words answer. Dr. Bound, in 1595, says, " The fourth commandment is simply and perpetually moral, and not ceremonial in whole or in part." Richard Byfield, 1630, says, " The fourth commandment is part of the law of nature, and thus part of the image of God, and is no more capable of a ceremony to be in it than God is."

Afterwards he says, " The institution of the Lord's Day is clearly in the work of Christ's resurrection, as the institution of the seventh day was in the work of finishing the creation." " The resurrection applies and determined the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to the Lord's Day." Such was the course of reasoning adopted by this class of persons. Having established the morality and perpetuity of the Sabbath by means of Scripture, and brought the sanctions of the Word of God to sustain them, they apply all this to the support of an institution, the existence and time of keeping which is inferred from Christ's resurrection. It is easy to see what must have been the consequence.

3. There was another class among the disputants about the Sabbath, who endeavored, by strict adherence to the Scriptures, to escape the difficulties and inconsistencies into which others had been led. They contended for the early institution of the Sabbath, for its

morality and perpetuity as inferred from its being placed in the Decalogue, and for the seventh day of the week as an essential and necessary part of the commandment. Theophilus Brabourne, in 1628, says: "1. The fourth commandment of the Decalogue is a divine precept, simply and entirely moral, containing nothing legally ceremonial, in whole or in part, and therefore the weekly observation thereof ought to be perpetual, and to continue in full force and virtue to the world's end. 2. The Saturday, or seventh day of the week, ought to be an everlasting holy-day in the Christian church, and the religious observation of this day obliges Christians under the Gospel, as it did the Jews before the coming of Christ. 3. The Sunday, or Lord's day, is an ordinary working day; and it is superstition and will-worship to make the same the Sabbath of the fourth commandment." These opinions were vindicated by Brabourne in two volumes which appeared, one in 1628, and the other in 1632. They have never been answered to the satisfaction of many candid mind. It is true, an answer has been attempted. But this answer, laboring as it did mainly to prove that such doctrine "is repugnant to the public sentence of the Church of England, and to the sentence of divines who lived at the beginning of the Reformation," could not satisfy one who believed the Scriptures to be a sufficient rule of faith and practice. To these volumes might be added others, which appeared soon after, and to the results of which, living witnesses have testified from that day to this.

It was while the discussion just referred to was yet in progress, that King James, in 1618, published his Book of Sports for Sunday, in which is set forth, that "by the preciseness of some magistrates and ministers in several places in this kingdom, in hindering people from their recreations on the Sunday, the papists in this realm being thereby persuaded that no honest mirth or recreation was tolerable in our religion," wherefore, it pleased his majesty to set out his declaration, "that for his good people's lawful recreation, his pleasure was, that after the end of divine service, they should not be disturbed, lotted, or discouraged, from any lawful recreation, such as dancing, either men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreations; nor from having of May-games, Whitsun-ales, or Morrice-dances, and setting up of May-poles, or other sports therewith used; so as the same be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or let of divine service." This book was designed to counteract what was then called the Puritan notion, and may be regarded as expressing the opinion of the English Church at that time in regard to the sacredness of the day. It was re-published in 1636, by Charles, with how much real effect upon the practices of his subjects it is not easy to determine.

It is evident that a reaction in favor of the sabbatical institution had already commenced; and the earnestness of Puritanism on this subject, joined to the influence of Sabbatarianism, affected almost the whole body of the English Church. To Puritanism and Sabbatarianism belong the credit of having preserved to that country a regard for the day of rest, which raises it indefinitely above many other Protestant countries. Had Scriptural ground been taken, who can estimate the results which would have followed?

In Germany, according to Ross' "Picture of all Religions," observers of the seventh-day as the Sabbath were common in the sixteenth century, their numbers being such as to lead to organization, and attract attention. A number of these formed a church, and emigrated to America in the early settlement of the country. There were Sabbath-keepers in Transylvania, about the same time, among whom was Francis Davidis, first chaplain to the Court of Sigismund, the prince of that kingdom, and afterwards superintendent of all the Transylvanian churches. In France, also, there were Christians of this class, among whom was M. de la Roque, who wrote in defense of the Sabbath, against Bossuet, the Catholic Bishop of Meaux. But it is difficult to determine to what extent this day was observed in those countries.

In England we find Sabbath keepers very early. Dr. Chambers says, "They arose in England in the sixteenth century;" from which we understand that they then became a distinct denomination in that kingdom. They increased considerably in the seventeenth century; and we find that towards the close of that century there were eleven flourishing churches in different parts of that country. Among those who held this view were some men of distinction. Theophilus Brabourne was called before the Court of High Commission, in 1632, for having written and published books vindicating the claims of the seventh day. One Traske was about the same time examined in the Starr Chamber, where a long discussion on the subject seems to have been held. Nearly thirty years after this, John James, preacher to a Sabbath keeping congregation in the east of London, was executed in a barbarous manner, upon a variety of charges, among which was his keeping of the Sabbath. Twenty years later still, Francis Bampfield died in Newgate, a martyr to non-conformity—especially as one who could not conform in the matter of the Sabbath. It is needless to mention more names, or to speak particularly of Edward, Joseph, Dr. Joseph, and Dr. Samuel Stennett, John Maulden, Robert Cornthwaite, and others, who have written and suffered in proof of their attachment to this truth.

But the Sabbath met with great opposition in England being assailed, both from the pulpit and the press, by those who were attached to the established church. Many men of learning and talent engaged in the discussion, on both sides of the question. It is evident that the opposers of reform felt the difficulty of defending themselves against the strength of talent and scripture brought to bear in favor of the seventh day. The civil powers attempted to check the progress of all Dissenters by means of the famous Conventicle Act. By that law, passed in 1664, it was provided, that if any person, above sixteen years of age, was present at any meeting of worship different from the Church of England, where there were five persons more than the household, for the first offense he should be imprisoned three months, or pay five pounds; for the second, the penalty was doubled; and for the third he should be banished to America, or pay one hundred pounds sterling. This act was renewed in 1669, and, in addition to the former penalties, made the person preaching liable to pay a fine of twenty pounds; and the same penalty was imposed upon any person suffering a meeting to be held in his house. Justices of the Peace were empowered to enter such houses, and seize such persons; and they were fined one hundred pounds if they neglected doing so. These acts were exceedingly harassing to those who observed the Sabbath. Many of their distinguished ministers

were taken from their flocks and confined in prison, some of whom sunk under their sufferings. These persecutions not only prevented those who kept the Sabbath from assembling, but deterred some who embraced their opinions from uniting with them, and discouraged others from investigating the subject. At present the Sabbath is not as extensively observed in England as formerly. But the extent of Sabbath-keeping cannot be determined by the number and magnitude of the churches, either there or in other countries. For many persons live in the observance of the seventh day and remain members of churches which assemble on the first day; and a still greater number acknowledge its correctness, who conform to the more popular custom of keeping the first day.

At what time the Sabbath became the subject of attention in America, we cannot definitely say. The intolerance of the first settlers of New England was unfavorable to the Sabbath. The poor Christian who may have been banished to this country for its observance could find no refuge among the Pilgrim Fathers. The laws of Rhode Island were more tolerant than those of some other States, and observers of the Sabbath first made their appearance at Newport in 1671. The cause of the Sabbath has gradually gained ground in this country from that period; but it has found much to oppose its progress, even in Rhode Island. It was in opposition to the general practice of Christians, on which account an odium was put upon it, and those who have kept the Sabbath have been reproached with Judaizing, and classed with Jews. Besides this, they have ever been subjected to great inconvenience in their occupations, especially in cities and towns.

At no time does there appear to have been in this country any general excitement on the subject. The observers of Sunday have avoided as far as possible its discussion; so that those who have observed the Sabbath have had but little encouragement, as they have supposed, to try to extend their sentiments. But the propagation of their opinions has not depended exclusively on their efforts. The common English version of the Bible has been found in many instances a sufficient means of converting men to the truth. Churches observing the Sabbath have been formed in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, and in most of the Western States, embracing, as is supposed, a population of forty or fifty thousand.

Conclusion.

From the foregoing historical sketch, it appears that through the apostolic age, and for a long time after, the Sabbath was religiously observed by the church of Christ; and that not until the latter part of the second century was the first day introduced to religious notice as a festival of the resurrection; and then, probably, as an annual celebration at the close of the Passover only. It also appears, that it was a work of some hundreds of years to establish the weekly celebration of this day, even in the Romish church; and that this was not done without the aid of ecclesiastical and civil laws and penalties—the same instrumentalities used to bring the Sabbath into disrepute in the popular branches of the church. Thus it appears that the Romish clergy, and the princes under their control, have been the principal actors in bringing about the change from the Sabbath to the first day of the week.

For a long time before the Reformation the popular branches of the Christian church were literally without a Sabbath. Until after that period, it is not known that a single passage of Scripture was ever cited as authority for the celebration of the first day, even as a festival; the notion that the apostles observed it as a memorial of the resurrection, being of comparatively modern origin. When, however, the Reformers threw off the yoke of the Romish church, and protested against her corruptions, some of them could no longer be satisfied to let the observance of the first day rest upon her authority. They saw that they must either give it up as a human invention, or find some Scripture to support it. Hence the numerous theories which have been invented to justify its observance—theories which necessarily conflict with each other, as well as with Scripture, and are altogether unsatisfactory to inquiring minds.

The history of this matter shows us, that neither the adoption of the first day, nor the abandonment of the seventh, took place until the corruptions of the Catholic church in other respects had become so numerous and flagrant, as to drive from her communion many of her most conscientious and apostolic members, who still retained the observance of the Sabbath. The case of those sects in different ages of the church who have kept the Sabbath in connection with the first day, and practiced other things peculiar to the Romish church, furnishes additional evidence that the observance of the first day was adopted while the Sabbath was retained, and consequently that the first day was not adopted as a substitute for the Sabbath, which it ultimately displaced. The permitting of labor on the first day in the earlier ages of the church, and the canons of Councils and Synods and the edicts of Princes to bring about a general conformity in this respect, together with the slow progress made, even in Catholic countries, evince in the strongest manner that it was viewed in no other light, even by its warmest advocates, than that of a human institution, and one that could be enforced by human authority only. As such it was looked upon by enlightened and conscientious Christians in every age, who would not make void a commandment of God through a tradition of men.

In the light of these facts, we are led to the conclusion of Dr. Neander, set forth in his Church History, that "the festival of Sunday was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intention of the Apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday." As a "human ordinance," the observance of Sunday has long been and is now considered by many. While they consider it in this light, it is not to be expected that they will render it that sacred regard which the Sabbath claims, and must have in order to our safety and its usefulness.

What, then, shall be done? Shall we allow an institution of so much importance to rest upon mere human authority? To such a proposition every friend of the institution ought to say, No. To set it adrift, or to attempt to enforce it upon such authority, would be to

withdraw from it the high sanction which it once had, and expose it to certain contempt and neglect. There is but one course dictated by wisdom and prudence. If we would save the Sabbath from threatened destruction, we must come back to the law as it was originally given, place the institution under the care of the Lawgiver, and enforce its claims by his authority. We must join the commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," with the explanation of it, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," and united they shall stand. Let this be done, and we need not fear. The Lord of the Sabbath is pledged for its safety; and he will cause those who "call the Sabbath a delight, holy of the Lord, honorable," to rejoice in Him, and ride upon the high places of the earth.

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