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THE
Sabbath Question.

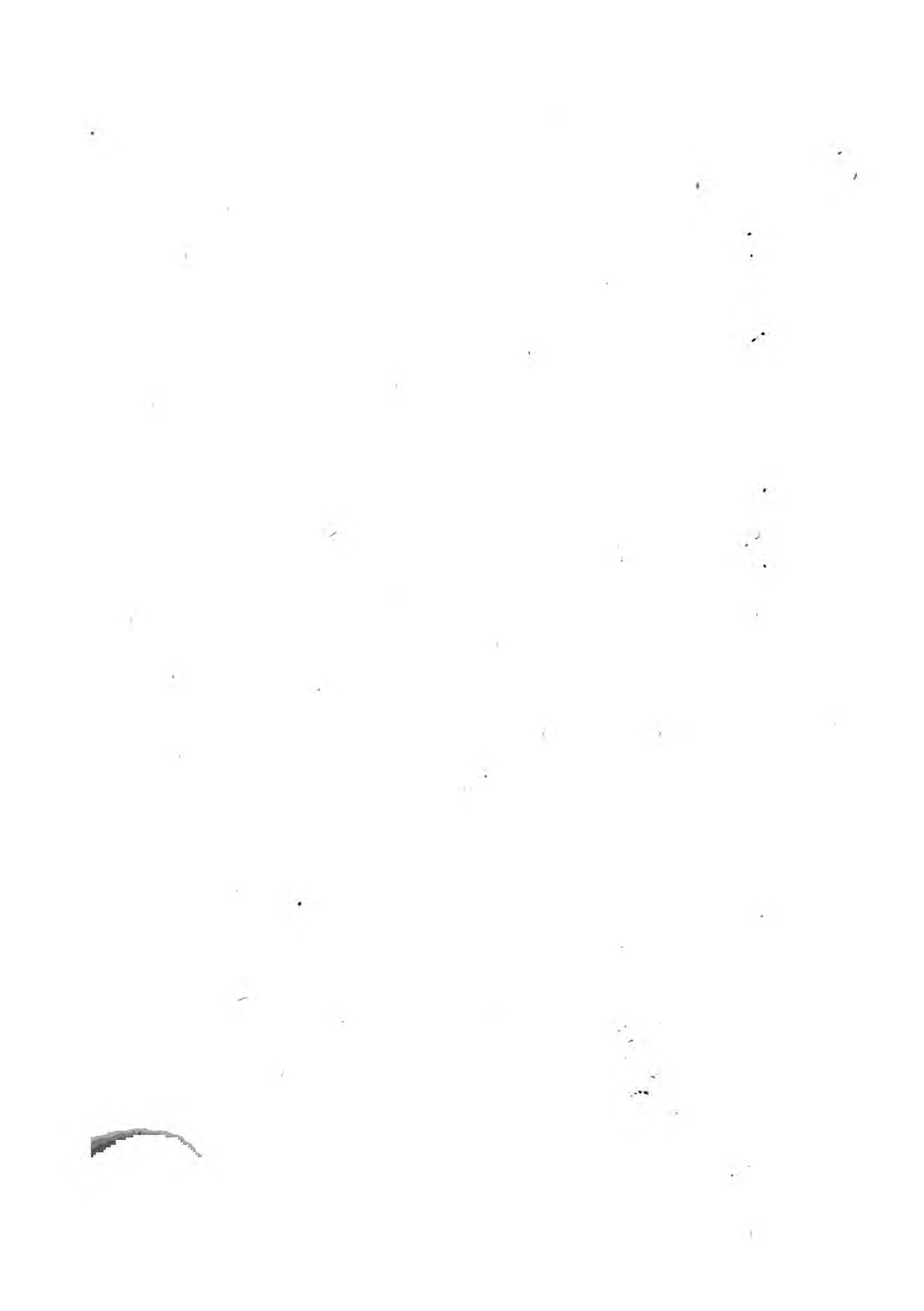




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THE
SABBATH QUESTION,

HISTORICAL, SCRIPTURAL, AND PRACTICAL.

BY

THE REV. JAMES MACGREGOR,

FREE HIGH CHURCH, PAISLEY,

AUTHOR OF "TEXT-BOOK FOR YOUTH—CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE," THE
ARTICLES "HEGEL" AND "JACOBI" IN THE "ENCYCLOPÆDIA
BRITANNICA," ETC.

"Ye are travelling home to God
On the way the fathers trod."

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DEDICATION.

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TO THE OFFICE-BEARERS, MEMBERS, AND ADHERENTS

OF

THE FREE HIGH CHURCH, PAISLEY,

THIS

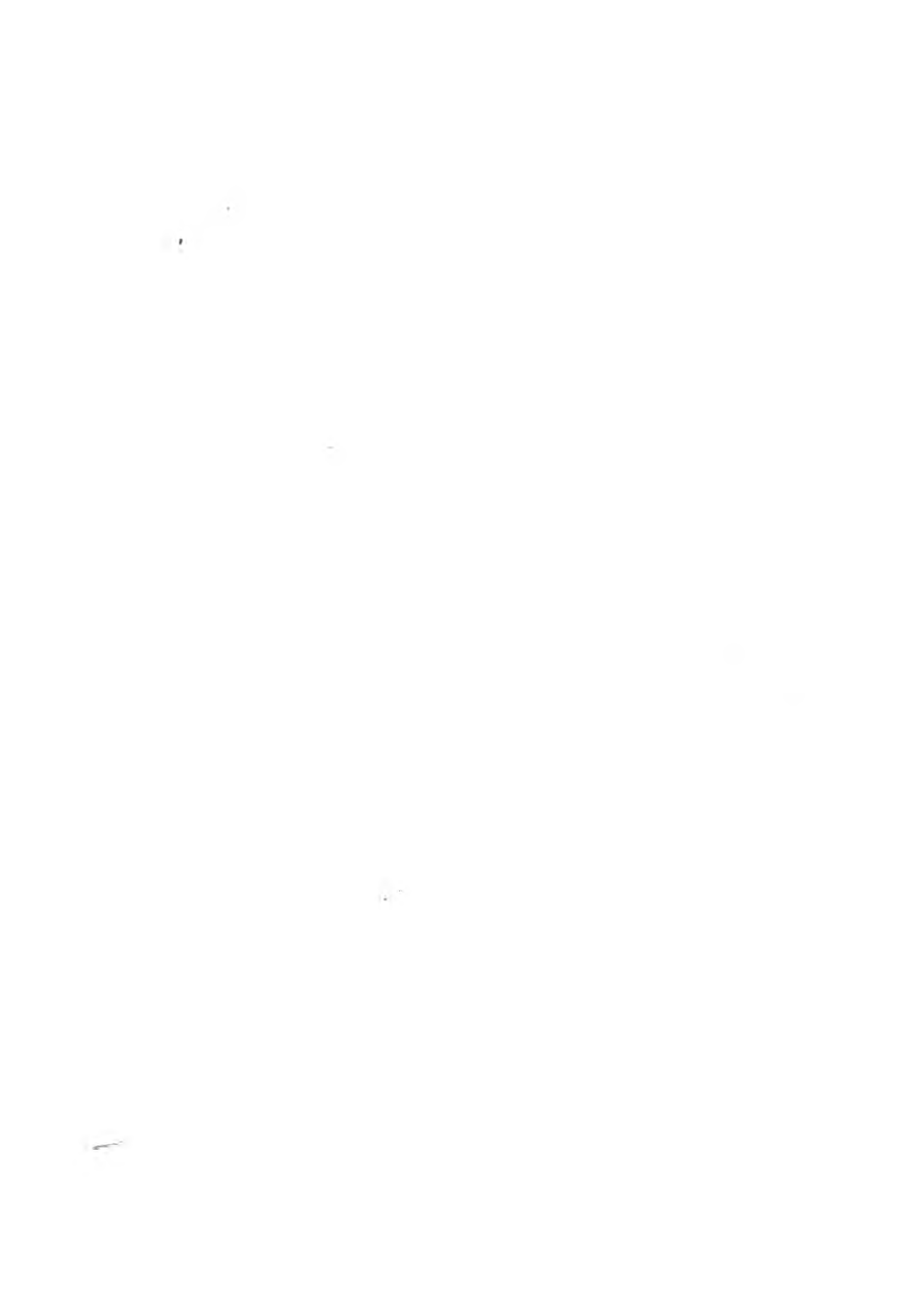
MEMORIAL AND FRUIT OF PASTORAL LABOURS AMONG THEM

IS

DEDICATED

WITH

AFFECTIONATE REGARDS.



P R E F A C E.

THOUGH the publication of this work has been unexpectedly delayed, it was ready for the press at Christmas. But it must not be supposed that, because ready so early, it was prepared in haste. The first Book is but an expansion of what had been published years ago in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*. The fourth Chapter of Book II. and the third Chapter of Book III. are reprinted, almost *verbatim*, from the *Family Treasury*. Other Chapters I had beside me in manuscript. And there is no part of the book available for pastoral instruction that had not, in the class-room or from the pulpit, been addressed to the congregation in which I am minister long before Dr Macleod's demonstration had given a new vividness of interest to the subject.

The only thing really new is the application of the old truths to the new circumstances, of an assault by Drs Tulloch and Macleod. In dealing with these—*par nobile fratrum*—I have endeavoured to shun every appearance of meddling with anything but their ministerial character as represented by their published works. Thus far to deal with their character I have felt necessary for the cause of the truth they have assailed. In so far as I have felt justified in dealing with these learned divines at all, I have felt bound to act on our clan motto, “E’en do, and spare nocht;” and there may thus be vivacities of expression requiring to be accounted for by the agitating circumstances in which this work was prepared for publication, as well as by the fact that the first Book is really a reprint of letters to the *Daily Review*.

J. M’G.

January, 1866.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

THE NEW MOVEMENT AND ITS LEADERS.

INTELLIGENT Christians are in general at one with the member of Glasgow Presbytery who represented Dr Macleod's demonstration as one symptom of the advancing presence and power of a new theological movement in his Church. The movement extends to other Churches, to all the Churches in Britain. In its negative aspect, it is a sceptical movement, a Sadduceean propagandism, with reference to our Christian religion in whole or in part. Under its positive aspect, it is in the first instance an awakening on the part of the Church to a feeling of the necessity of reconsidering the fundamentals of her creed.

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This feeling is experienced in some measure by every generation of Christians, and particularly in the persons of Christian teachers, who in most cases undergo a process of training deliberately intended to make them examine every theological question to the bottom for themselves. Some such "Cartesian doubt," or speculative suspense of judgment, appears to be indispensable to the true education of a man. But the case is very different when a new inquiry is necessitated by the emergence of actual denial or disbelief of the truth. And this necessity has been felt in our generation among the Churches of Britain more deeply than in any previous age of their history ; it has been felt over Christendom more deeply than in any previous age since the rise of the Christian Church on earth.

Some thirty years ago, by more than one controversy about comparatively minor matters of Christian doctrine and law, the Head of the Church was trying the spirits of her teachers and members. Even in our day, "He that is faithful in little" will be found "faithful also in much :"

as of faithfulness so of faithlessness: our fidelity to God-given truth and law in minor matters of detail is one important test of our loyalty to Christ with reference to the catholic fundamentals. But to us of the present generation it seems all but incredible, that almost within our recollection the Erastian controversy and the Puseyite controversy should have been justly regarded as *the* then controversies of the national Churches of Britain: in our new circumstances we can hardly realise that recent state of things, in which the strain of battle was felt to be so far from the citadel of our faith and life in God.

Even the first Reformers were under no constraint of felt necessity to contend for the catholic fundamentals of doctrine and law. They found it necessary only to clear away the antichristian superstructure which had slowly grown up on the Christian foundation, and was definitively adopted by the Popish Church when the semi-pagan mediæval poetry of religion was condensed and stereotyped into prosaic dogma by the Council of Trent. And they felt they had it in their power

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to appeal to a catholic Christian doctrine, and to a biblical revelation of God; and that no professing Christian, even the most bigoted papist, would or could gainsay the relevancy of the appeal.

To find a parallel to our present condition, we must look back to the dawn of Primitive Church history, and see the grey fathers pleading with the Pagans in behalf of the great fundamentals of religion, a living personal God and Judge of all, a personal responsibility of man, and a personal immortality of offered weal or possible woe for man. The "new movement," under its negative aspect is not merely a movement of disloyalty in Church government, nor even merely a movement of heresy in doctrine, but a movement really Pagan,—the emergence in the church of a Pagan philosophy under the disguise of Christian terminology. This we clearly see in its continental developments. Strauss's *Leben Jesu* is an attempt to construe the life of Jesus in harmony with the Hegelian pantheism,—to deduce the history of redemption by Christ, as Hegel has attempted to

deduce all history and science, by mere force of logic from the pregnant principle of *Seyn=Nichts*, or Being equal to Nothing. Renan's *Vie de Jesus* is dominated by the same pantheistic pre-supposition, that a miracle is impossible, that there is no preternatural—neither a personal God, nor a true and enduring personality of man; and consequently, that the son of Mary is an impure, and lying, and suicidal French hero of romance. And that pantheism which some years ago was “the public secret of Germany,”—humbly imitated by France—has now become the “public secret” of Christian Britain.

The cold and hard socinianism of the old “moderates” is now out of fashion even among “moderates” themselves. The cynical scepticism of Colenso and the “Essays and Reviews” is repudiated in good faith by men who are still more profoundly sceptical or unbelieving. As Justin Martyr wore the philosopher's gown after he had become a Christian teacher, not a few of the would-be leaders of our time teach a Pagan philosophy under the name of Christian doctrine,

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conceal the Pagan dogmatist or sceptic under the minister's gown and bands; so that in listening to them we feel as if listening to Philo Judæus, or to some neo-platonic gentile risen from his grave.

And even this philosophy, which is the real creed of the school, is not the "orthodox" philosophy accepted by sound and cultivated minds. Though once enshrined among the beauties and sublimities of Plato, it is an untrue, ungodly, and inhuman philosophy: it is a philosophy distinctively barbarous. Of pantheism the proper abode is the chaotic mind of a child or a savage. It is historically associated with the childhood of the race: either the first childhood of the savage "heroic" age, or the second childhood of intellectual barbarism, of senile decrepitude, illustrated by the Alexandrian neo-platonists. The same philosophy is found in a form by no means crude among the cannibals of the South Seas, and in a highly sublimated form among the roving nomads of Tartary. And it is the great scandal of our time and land, that so-called

teachers, professing to lead the van of our modern Christian civilisation, have made the incarnate God and Saviour to be but the "Llama" of Christians, and have abandoned the glorious truth of the gospel of God's redeeming love in favour of a false and degrading philosophy of barbarism—a philosophy which, in the least favoured lands, is now rotting away among the effete abominations of heathenism.

This scandal of an unbelieving world in the Church has necessitated an intellectual awakening of the believing Church in the world. True Christians were never more abundant and abundantly blessed than now in "works of faith and labours of love and patience of hope," for the extension of Christ's kingdom on earth. They never were more conscientiously diligent in the study and application of Christian principles for the purpose of the Church's inward edification. But "all thoughtful men" among them have long been feeling that although *there*, in "the field," their blessed work of sowing and reaping must ever go on, yet *not there*, but at the very heart or

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citadel of our faith and life is the strain of battle. The leaders (at least) of Christian thought have long felt constrained to re-examine to the bottom every vital question, regarding not only the records, and credentials, and doctrines of our religion, but even those grand elementary metaphysical facts, of "God, and freedom, and immortality," which must be presupposed in order to any living religion, and must be laid down as the only sure foundation of morality itself.

This new awakening in the Church is highly auspicious. Left to herself, even when she has attained to a scriptural creed, she is ever in danger of going to sleep on her creed, of degenerating from principles of faith into mere habits of believing. What one generation has earnestly contended for, and clearly apprehended, and dearly loved, for its seen and felt beauty and glory of truth divine, another may come to accept with a blind and passive acquiescence in the wisdom of its predecessor—an acquiescence the same in its spirit, of faith in man, with the acquiescence of a thorough-going Papist in the

dogmas of his Church. Now a past age can no more do our thinking for us than it can do our eating and drinking for us. We can live by the believing of our fathers no more than we can live by the mastication and digestion of our fathers. If, then, the Church should lapse into the mere habit of believing traditionally, though the thing she (in a sense) believes should be the truth of God, yet her faith degenerates from a spiritual into a merely mechanical action, and her life decays along with that faith which is the life of a Christian life. And further, the formal faith, the traditional believing, *because* merely formal and traditional, is "ready to pass away." This is the secret of what has been rightly described as "the incurable scepticism" of the Church of Rome. Her dogmatism is on the ground of mere human authority; but this is a foundation which really cannot sustain the fabric of a steadfast faith. Her faith, therefore, ever feels its own instability, her dogmatism has always a quaking suspicion, an "incurable scepticism" at its heart. And so it must be with the true Church of God, if she once lean on mere human authority, if her faith be-

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come merely traditional, or a thing of mechanical habit.*

To save her from this danger, the Lord in His providence from time to time makes provision for awakening her from mere "dogmatic slumber." For this end, He who brings good out of evil permits the devil to produce such scandals as I have spoken of, not only the unbelief of a world around the Church, but the rise of heresies and infidelities in her bosom. The effect of such scandals is perhaps in the first instance to alarm the unstable believer; but always to awaken the slumbering Church, and compel her to examine anew the nature and evidence of the doctrine assailed; and so, in the last instance, to establish her faith more profoundly and *vitally* than before she had slept. This has been the visible and sensible effect of the recent infidel movements in the English Church. They have no doubt occasioned the ruin of many souls—souls for whose blood

* There may be a *habit* of believing which is not mechanical, but vital and rational, and every true act of faith tends to the formation or corroboration of such a habit. Some appear to imagine that the proper antidote to mechanical habit, or traditionary faith, is a *habitual scepticism or doubt*.

the movers must answer to God. But they have at the same time been the occasion of awakening the Church to inquiry—inquiry which already has sensibly resulted in a revived clearness and fulness of faith both in the theopneust documents of our religion and in its catholic doctrines. Such, within a few weeks, has already been the sensible result of Dr Macleod's assault on the catholic doctrine of the Decalogue and Fourth Commandment. Mr Holyoake, and the *Saturday Review*, and Principal Tulloch, have heartily commended the assault. Mr Facing-both-ways,* the son of By-ends, always true only to his own false nature, has been rowing down-stream with Dr Macleod, though finding it prudent to look steadily up-stream with the general Christian public. But the voice of that public has taken every one by surprise; none, I dare say, more than Dr Macleod. Not only the true Scottish Church, but the whole Scottish nation, on being rudely awakened, has found itself vehemently Sabbatarian. Even those who make no profession

* This is not an individual, but a species, of which I have observed several individuals on this occasion.

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of personal Christianity have received a vivid impression of the vast importance of the Sabbath "made for man." And the faithful, on re-examination, not only have been established in their faith, but have experienced at least an intellectual revival of appreciation of its value, and of confidence in its immoveable strength.

Nor need the gain be confined to renewed vitality and strength of faith in the truth already possessed. It ought also to include a veritable addition to the matter of our knowledge of God-given truth. The Church, no doubt, in past ages of her history, has been providentially led to survey the whole domain of theological science, so carefully and long that, we may presume, all the leading questions of biblical evidence and doctrine have in substance been exhausted, and all the leading principles of biblical revelation definitively ascertained. The map of the domain is thus completed, with the river and mountain systems delineated, the outline and leading features exhibited, so that he who neglects the labours of our predecessors wilfully forfeits an incalculable

advantage from the outset, even though he should purpose to institute a new survey for himself. But the more minute ramifications of the system have yet to be explored, and many a pleasant spot has yet to be subdued and peopled: there are multitudes of details yet remaining undiscovered to reward the patience of the searcher; and, *e.g.*, in connexion with the relation between philosophy and theology, nature and grace, the old creation and the new, the *horizon* admits of unlimited expansion, even though the map of the domain within that horizon should remain unaltered in every feature. Such real accessions to our knowledge of Bible truth have been occasioned by the system of Galileo, and the new science of Geology, and the "oppositions of science" regarding the unity of mankind in species and origin. And a vast augmentation of our knowledge of the text and canon of scripture, and the principles of criticism and interpretation, has resulted from those objections to the canon and text and contents of scripture which English infidels in gown and bands have recently stolen from German infidels in gown and bands, and which they

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had stolen from the earlier and manlier generation of the English deists of the eighteenth century. When we have within our reach a measure of information and discipline for which Erasmus and Beza would have sighed in vain, let us remember that "out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness:" this bread and honey have come from the dead lion of rationalism, thrice reviving, and as often slain again.

While, then, deploring the scandals which have occasioned the awakening, we look with joyful confidence to the awakening itself. We are confident in Christ, who ever prophesies by His word revealing the truth, and by His Spirit enabling men to perceive the truth. "Truth, like a torch, the more it's shook it shines;" and when earnestly sought for the truth is found by all the true-hearted. The Church needs only to be shaken wide awake in order to hear Him who speaks the truth and is the truth. And for every such awakening her morning song of battle remains forever, *magna est veritas et prevalebit.* But

while thus confidently joyful, let us be wisely heedful, remembering the warning: "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; for many false prophets are gone out into the world." In times of such awakening, false prophets will abound, with their cry, "Lo here, lo there." Nor will their falsehood be always unmistakably obvious; for though inwardly "ravening wolves," it is their very nature to wear "sheep's clothing." Thus they may often succeed in leading many astray, particularly the foolish and young, who have not known sorrow nor felt sin, and the vain and proud who cannot love God. For, says One who knew the human heart, "If I had sought mine own glory, ye would have believed me." The truth, which exalts God and abases man, is not always popular, though it be always victorious in the end, even upon the cross; and the vainglorious egotist will often be popular, because he will seek the applause of his hearers by pandering to their vanity and pride, and instinctively seeks for himself a doctrine which crowns the lust that should be crucified. Thus the Pagan pantheism of which I have spoken, though

fundamentally most debasing, is most fascinating to the carnal mind, because it is a formal deification of man; and the sceptical "knowingness" of the more ignoble species of the same genus of prophets is most intoxicating to the ignobler species of worldling, because it gives a coarser and more attainable gratification to vainglorious egotism. Now we must remember that there are many worldlings in the purest Church, and much of worldliness in the purest Christian. We ought therefore at all times, and peculiarly in seasons of intellectual awakening, to be on our guard against those prophets who sing the Siren song of praise to self, and administer the Circean cup which pleases our vanity and pride while turning those who drink it into swine, and, vampires as they are, glut their own carnal affections while they lull poor dying souls to an eternal sleep of death.

There are special reasons why we should now be trying such "spirits" as Drs Tulloch and Macleod. The apprehension of Dr Macleod's copresbyter appears, by signs not a few, to be well-founded. Disloyalty in government is now being

followed by disloyalty in worship and doctrine. The existence of a "broad school" in the Scottish establishment may be regarded as a notorious fact. And of this new school Dr Macleod is probably a predestined practical leader, while Principal Tulloch appears to be certainly a self-elected speculative leader. Hence the Glasgow speech of the one and the St Andrew's pamphlet of the other, whatever may be their quality as contributions to theological science, are important as "feathers which show how the wind blows," as being characteristic samples of what may be expected from the new movement in the Scottish establishment, if not even informal *manifestoes* of the new school. These two productions are therefore deeply interesting to us, as enabling us to apply the rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them," to the trial of "the spirits" of that school.

What manner of spirit Dr Macleod is of, may be divined from his assault on the catholic doctrine of the Decalogue and the Fourth Commandment—an assault exposed in the body of this

work. And how we ought to think of Principal Tulloch's claim to be a prophet in the new movement, may appear from an *epilogue*, in which I will comment on his recent pamphlet. Meantime, I think we ought to ascribe it to "a gracious Providence" that the first battle in the new campaign has fallen to be fought on a ground so manifestly important, and so popularly interesting and intelligible, as that of the Sabbath law in connection with the Decalogue.





BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

DR MACLEOD'S POSITION.

IT is the purpose of this first book to trace the Sabbath question back through the Christian centuries to the apostolic age. This historical review will remove certain prejudices against the truth, and at the same time serve as a discipline for the contemplation of the question on its merits. And, beginning with the instant in which I write, I will endeavour to define the position assumed by the Rev. Dr Macleod of Glasgow.

At a meeting of his Presbytery in November

last, the reverend Doctor delivered a speech, in which he was understood to deny and assail the doctrine of the perpetual obligation of the Decalogue in general, and of the Fourth Commandment in particular. But he afterwards complained of having been misunderstood ; and in order to explain his real meaning, delivered a second speech in the Presbytery and a sermon in the Barony Church. After reading his two speeches and sermon as reported in the newspapers, I wrote to the *Daily Review* to the following effect :—

His avowed purpose from the first was to get rid of the Fourth Commandment, even as authoritatively prescribing the form of Lord's-day observance. For this purpose, he laboured to show that the Fourth Commandment is not obligatory on Christians. And in order to show this more effectually, he affirmed, and laboured to prove that the Decalogue as a whole is dead with Christ and buried in His grave. This is the sum and substance of his original speech, the only thing he possibly could say, the only thing he

actually did say, to his purpose. This in substance he has repeated again and again when he speaks to the purpose, in his explanatory speech in the Presbytery and sermon in the Barony Church. And what he vaguely says about a liberty that is *lawless*, a spirit which rejects *the Word* of God, a love which *supersedes* the Commandments,—this Antinomian cant, so strikingly contrasted with the teaching of Christ (*e.g.*, John XIV. 21–26),—when uttered by Dr Macleod in support of his position, only furnishes additional evidence of the fact that his position really is what it has been understood to be, that he really does deny and assail the doctrine of the perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment in particular and of the Decalogue in general. The same Antinomian cant is ably exposed, with reference, I believe, to Plymouthism, by one of the most spiritual-minded teachers of our time, Dr Bonar of Kelso, in his recent work on “God’s Way of Holiness,” under the heading, “The Saint and the Law,” where the reader will see the difference between true spirituality and *falsetto* spiritualism. But with reference to the question of Dr Macleod’s

position, any theologian will see that no one could have employed the cant in his circumstances who seriously believed the doctrine that the Fourth Commandment is of perpetual and universal obligation, and that the whole Decalogue binds all men in all ages and lands.

But Dr Macleod had intimated meanwhile that he meant to prepare his speech for publication himself, so as to supersede the report of the gentlemen of the press. And it was thought by some that this publication would seriously affect our first impression of the true nature of his position. I was not one of those who thought thus. I was persuaded that the publication could do nothing to modify that impression, that the theological position was determined by the practical position of antagonism to the pastoral, and that the Doctor had only two alternatives,—either to retract his speech, or to accept the position which his co-presbyters, and the newspaper reporters, and the general public had assigned to him from the first. And that persuasion is abundantly justified by the publica-

tion now before me,—the Doctor's speech, as revised and remodelled for publication by himself.*

The speech thus prepared is somewhat different from the speech as reported in the newspapers. Some vivacities of expression, incidental to extemporaneous utterance in agitating circumstances are—quite fairly and properly—softened down, so that, *e.g.*, the speech is not now so vividly *gastronomical* as at first. Here and there, at critical points, I notice the infusion, as if by another hand, of a new element, of verbal subtlety and real confusion, as if the author now wished to say something *as like as possible* to what is commonly believed among us regarding the Ten Commandments and the Sabbath Law; though even this new infusion does not, in my opinion, go further than the Doctor has a right to go in preparing “the substance” of his speech for publication,—it only aims at putting that sub-

* “The Lord's-day,” being the “Substance of a Speech,” &c., by Norman Macleod, D.D. 1865.

stance in the best possible form, making the most of the ground originally assumed. But with all the care bestowed on the preparation of it, this publication does not in the least affect the correctness of the first impression regarding his position : in every particular of any real consequence, the position as now definitively assumed is the position as generally understood from the first.

1. The Doctor's practical purpose is still to get rid of the Fourth Commandment, even as authoritatively prescribing the form of Lord's-day observance : he even labours to show that the Commandment *cannot* be applied to the regulation of that form.

2. For this purpose, he still denies the doctrine of the perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment. The denial is iterated and re-iterated in every conceivable form. Thus, he denies the doctrine wholesale, (*e.g.*, on pp. 8, 9, 18, 20.) Again, in detail, he denies—(1), the applicability of the distinction between moral

and ceremonial, essential and circumstantial (p. 11); (2), the sanction of moral law in the commandment to our Lord's-day observance (p. 9); and (3), even the authority of the commandment as prescribing the form of duly observing that day (p. 13). And again, as if to make his position clear beyond all possibility of mistake, he assails in detail the leading arguments by which our doctrine is established (pp. 24–29); he states and defends as his own that Dominical theory which is in itself a denial of our doctrine (pp. 30–36); and his last word on the subject (p. 6) is an acknowledgement of “manifold obligations” to Dr Hesse, the leading representative of the Dominical theory in Britain, and to Mr Cox, who has long been well known as a keen Scottish Anti-sabbatarian. And

3. He still denies, and labours to disprove, the doctrine of the perpetual obligation of the Decalogue. It is here peculiarly that we mark the new infusion of verbal subtlety and real or logical confusion. The author appears

to think that he makes a point by saying that the Decalogue does not bind us *merely because given by Moses*. This, no doubt, is true, and has been confessed as true—not only by Baxter, but—by the advocates of our doctrine for many hundreds of years. The Decalogue does not bind us merely because given by Moses from God, but because it is given to us *as a code of moral laws*, which in their very nature as moral bind all men in all ages and lands. But this, though true, is nothing to the purpose, even of defining the Doctor's theological position. For though he confess this truth, he may deny *the only* truth in question,—the truth, viz., that the Decalogue *is* a code of moral laws, of permanent and universal obligation by their nature. Again, he says *something like* what is commonly believed among us when he utters this truism (p. 20), “Decalogue or no Decalogue, every commandment in it, *in so far as** it is moral, must be of perpetual obligation as the law of duty to God and man.”

* The *italics* are mine.

This utterance is a sample of what I have described as verbal subtlety and real confusion, fitted at least, if not intended to mislead the public, and against which the public must be put on its guard:—it is in its substance a mere truism, amounting only to this, that “every commandment in so far as it is moral—is moral.” The Doctor does not say *how* far the Ten Commandments are moral. He does not in the sentence I have quoted say that any one of them is moral at all. And in the paragraph in which the sentence occurs, he expressly affirms that one of them is *not* moral:—“Surely on this ground we may affirm, without doubt or offence, that the law of the Fourth Commandment, from its very nature, is not moral;” and consistently adds, in the sentence immediately after it, “I therefore do not believe in the continued obligation of the Fourth Commandment.” Although, therefore, he manages to say *something like* what we all believe, the likeness is merely in form: what he utters in reality is an irrelevant truism instead of the Christian truth. And that the Decalogue is really a code of moral laws, so that every one

of its commandments must always bind all men by nature, the reverend Doctor does not affirm, but, again in every possible form, denies and labours to disprove.

Thus in general (pp. 18, 19), he describes the Decalogue as being *merely* the foundation of God's covenant with Israel; and compares it to a marriage contract, whose terms bind the husband because they are in the contract, but might have bound him by nature though they had not been in the contract. Now it is true that the Decalogue was the foundation of Jehovah's covenant with His Church of old, and thus formed a contract of marriage between Him and her:—"Thy maker is thine husband." But the question is, Was it *merely* this? Is it not a code of moral laws, every one of which is permanently and universally obligatory. And to this question the Doctor in substance answers, No. Thus, (p. 21), in answer to his own question, "Must I go, then, to the Decalogue for a rule of life?" he gives us a good deal of declamatory *quasi*

argumentation, as if we had meant that the Decalogue is the *only* scripture source of information regarding man's duty; but goes on in substance to say that it is not and cannot be a rule of life to Christians, but is superseded by something higher and better; from which it will follow, of course, that it is not and cannot be a moral law, of permanent and universal obligation. And this general view of his position is abundantly established by the following details:—

(1.) He denies the perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment; *i.e.*, affirms that the Decalogue is *not* a code of moral laws, every one of which is of perpetual obligation. (2.) He labours to refute the arguments ordinarily adduced in support of our doctrine of the morality of the Decalogue (19-24). And (3.) In his own defence, he employs that Antinomian cant (*supra.* p. 21) which would never have been employed in self-defence by any one who seriously believes our doctrine.*

* It must be admitted that Dr Macleod is sometimes inconsistent with his own position. For example, in admitting, on the

The theological question thus revived is by no means unimportant in Christian practice. For example, with reference to Lord's-day observance. In the body of this work (B. III. Cap. I.) I show that in strict logic the same *form* of observance which is prescribed by the Fourth Commandment is prescribed by the Doctor's Dominical theory. But at the same time I show (B. II. Cap. III., and B. III. Cap. IV.) that even with reference to the form of observance the *practical effect* of our doctrine on the minds of men will be very different from that of the poor theory which labours to supplant it; so that he who says, "Why contend for your doctrine if the proper form be observed on any ground?" is like our Hibernian compatriot who said, "Why waste powder and shot on that eagle,—it would be

authority of some French infidels, that one day in seven is required by man's constitution for rest, he, like Baxter, virtually admits that the Sabbath law of the Fourth Commandment is moral in its substance. On the other hand, in drawing consolation from Paul's reasoning about "days," in Rom. xiv., he virtually subverts his own Dominical theory; for he has no right to derive any consolation from that passage, except on the supposition that *no resting day is divinely obligatory*.

killed *by the fall.*" But further, though the form should be the same, the substance is different. The Christian who keeps the Lord's-day in obedience to the Fourth Commandment thereby owns and adores the God who spoke on Sinai as the true God and only Saviour: he who keeps the day *only* on the ground of apostolic institution does *not* pay this formal and express homage to that God of Israel who uttered "The Ten Words" of old.

Again, as to the remaining nine commandments, I am not aware that any one has said that the Decalogue is the *only* revelation of moral law. If any one have so spoken, he has virtually denied our doctrine, and really contradicted himself; for a moral law, from its very nature, is revealed in the natural constitution of things. Again, I am not aware that any one has said that Dr Macleod thinks it lawful to rob, or murder, or steal, or lie; though this I regard as the logical consequence of his Antinomian cant. What our doctrine says is that the Decalogue reveals preternaturally a code of

laws which are moral or natural. And, in denying this doctrine, and setting the Decalogue aside as a thing of the past, Dr Macleod has, in my opinion, lent his influence to a view which seriously endangers the morality of the country. For, though the Decalogue be not the moral law but only a revelation of that law, and though it be not the only revelation of it but merely a preternatural revelation of it; yet this preternatural revelation furnishes an important *security* for the knowledge and observance of the natural law among the peoples. In the body of this work (B. II. Cap. II.), I show that it is *the only effectual* security; that although the law is revealed by nature in the constitution of things, it has been actually known and observed by the nations only where declared with the new sanction of preternatural revelation by God in His word.

Of the need of a preternatural revelation of moral law, we have a most impressive illustration in the esoteric doctrine of that pantheistic system to which I have referred in the

preface. As will be seen in the *Epilogue*, Principal Tulloch appears to regard such "ideas" as that of "law" and "justice" as merely the detailed results of a certain "religious philosophy" of the recent Evangelical Church, which deserves the attention of "all thoughtful men" only as a (probably morbid) *phenomenon* of modern Church History. The pantheistic school, whose utterances Dr Tulloch faintly echoes, and of whose esoteric doctrine Dr Macleod is possibly ignorant, regards the "ideas" of "justice" and "law" as not merely morbid but really nonsensical or meaningless. To the initiated in this school, *moral* law, as distinguished from merely physical, has no existence; sin is a mere unfortunate eccentricity; and redemption from sin, its dominion and guilt, as commonly understood among Christians, is not merely unreal but inconceivable. Thus, as described by perhaps the finest theological genius of our time, the school is "a *lawless* crew." And for *their* salvation, at least, it is vitally important that, what they cannot see in their own nature God should show them preter-

naturally,—the reality of a *moral* law, with its correlative “ideas” of guilt and depravity by nature, and justification and sanctification by grace. It is but fair to add, that this school, profoundly Antinomian in speculation, is, so far as I know, superficially irreproachable in practice.

On the Doctor's position as ascertained from his original speech, I made certain strictures in the *Daily Review*, which I will now reprint—with one exception. I stated as a fact, that he had said he would not obey the Presbytery, if they should bid him read their pastoral letter, or, as he put it, should bid him be a mere electric machine, to communicate a doctrine he did not believe. This statement I made inadvertently, having had my attention mainly directed to the theological aspect of his speech, and not dreaming that any Christian minister could ever become even the passive instrument of teaching his people what he believes to be untrue. But since that time, one member of the Glasgow Presbytery has read the address, and then told

his congregation that he dissents from its principles ; — a form of obedience which is a real disobedience, aggravated by insult. Dr Macleod has publicly intimated that it is only an accident that has kept him from reading to his congregation “that beautiful pastoral address,” which is avowedly based on a principle he has publicly denied and assailed as untrue. And on reading again the reports of his speech, as given by the newspapers and by himself, I see that my pre-supposition of what a Christian man cannot do was a mistake ; that Dr Macleod did *not* say he would refuse to read the pastoral. Now, therefore, I retract my statement, and, with this deduction, and some corrections and amplifications, reproduce my first letter to the *Daily Review*.

In stating that he had nothing new to say on the question of the Sabbath law, Dr Macleod said one thing obviously true. The cry of “liberality,” on the ground of willingness to give away what is not ours, we all have heard till we sicken at the sound. Others before him

have often denied the continued obligation of the Fourth Commandment, and affirmed that all the Ten Commandments are buried in the grave of Christ. His statements regarding the necessity of a "Lord's-day," and its apostolic authority, are familiar commonplaces. And the arguments or *quasi* arguments with which he assails the Decalogue in general and the Sabbath law in particular, are not only old and familiar, but "stale and flat" as well as "unprofitable;" so that *one* reader of his speech has not yet ceased to wonder that a learned D.D. should have made an appearance so poor on an occasion so grave. But there is something really fresh and original, a startling novelty, in *the position* assumed by him in making the assault.

I do not wonder at his calling attention so pointedly to his own *person* on this occasion. His very long speech had very little of intrinsic weight, such as inheres in a really able and masterly theological argument: it was rather in its nature a sort of rambling "testimony,"

a somewhat incoherent outpouring of personal feelings, convictions, recollections, accusations, and suspicions; so that its practical effect must mainly depend on the view men take of the personal character and position of the speaker. Besides, we cannot forget, what Dr Macleod was too modest to mention, that he is a leading minister of the Established Church, and the responsible editor of *Good Words*; so that our view of his person on this occasion will influence our opinion of the character of that Church which in some measure he represents, and of the trustworthiness of that very popular periodical whose religious character must be mainly determined by him. And, as we shall see, our view of his position will affect our judgment on questions still more important and far-reaching. I therefore feel warranted in criticising that personal position to which public attention has been called by his speech. I do not meddle with the question of personal Christianity, the question whether what the reverend Doctor has said in one sense may not be true in another:

“He has not brought *me* out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” The question to which I will speak is that of his personal fitness to be a religious guide, invested with the authority of his Church, and maintained at the expense of the nation.

At his ordination, the reverend Doctor solemnly declared before God and man that he “sincerely owned and believed the whole doctrine contained in the (Westminster) Confession of Faith; . . . that he would firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and to the utmost of his power assert, maintain, and defend the same, and that he disowned all . . . doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever contrary to and inconsistent with the foresaid Confession of Faith.” At the same time, he promised before God and man “to submit himself willingly and humbly, in the spirit of meekness, unto the admonitions of the brethren of his Presbytery, and all other Presbyteries and superior judicatories of his Church, where God in His providence should cast his lot.” On the ground of this or-

dination vow, he was invested with the ministry of the Established Church, and received a certain *status* and emoluments from the State. Thus by his own voluntary oath, and by his obligation as minister of the Church and paid servant of the State, he is trebly bound to believe and practice and inculcate the whole doctrine and law of his Church as defined by the Westminster Confession of Faith. And now, in denying and assailing the doctrine of the continued obligation of the Sabbath law and the Decalogue, he denies and assails what he is trebly bound to defend.

The Westminster Confession (Cap. XIX.) declares the morality and permanent obligation of the whole Ten Commandments of the Decalogue, as clearly as it declares the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, or the Incarnation of God's Word, or the Atonement by His death. The doctrine which the reverend Doctor now denies and assails is an integral part of the Christian religion as defined by that Confession he has sworn to, a part as real as the doctrine of the

Trinity, or of the Incarnation, or of the Atonement. It is the received doctrine of the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, and of that whole Church, the most powerful Protestant denomination in the world,—the great Presbyterian Church which adheres to the Westminster Standards. It is, besides, the doctrine of that wider *Puritan* party, in the British Isles, in Anglo-Saxon America, and in our colonial empire, which, though not Presbyterian in government, has always been Sabbatarian in doctrine and discipline. It is, indeed, as I purpose to show, really the doctrine of all the Reformation Churches of Evangelical Christendom, yea, of the Christian world as a whole; so that the systematic divines, in stating the question regarding the Decalogue and Sabbath law, can name no opponents of the doctrine but the Antinomian *Anabaptists* and the really infidel *Socinians*. In speaking of the doctrine with so much contempt, the reverend Doctor must surely have forgotten what is due to the Christian world, and presumed on the existence in his hearers of a very “plentiful lack” of knowledge of Church history.

This doctrine the reverend Doctor does not believe. He finds himself, *therefore*, constrained in conscience publicly to deny and assail it, though it be the doctrine and law of his Church. This, of course, is no new thing. A minister may any day find himself at variance with the doctrine of his Church, and on this ground seek to be relieved of her ministry, because he can no longer discharge its duties. But the peculiarity in Dr Macleod's position is this, that while denying and assailing the Church's doctrine *he retains her ministry*; he retains an office after he has avowedly become unable to discharge its duties; he continues to accept wages after he has avowedly become unable to do the work for which he is paid. And while occupying a position so painful to contemplate, he appears to claim credit for a peculiar measure of ingenuous honesty, almost for a babe-like simplicity and integrity of purpose! Of the *moral* aspect of his position, I need not say a word. But as to its bearing on the question of his trustworthiness as a religious guide, a leader in his church, the editor of *Good*

Words, I feel warranted in quoting the warning words of that great Apostle whom the reverend Doctor quotes on the topic of "liberality:"—"Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly: and by *good words* and *fair speeches* deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. xvi. 17, 18.) They will be simple indeed who shall trust or follow henceforward one who not only has caused a division contrary to the doctrine of Evangelical Christendom, but in so doing has assailed and vilified what he is sworn and bound and paid to defend. But there are three other aspects of his position which must not be overlooked.

The Doctor's position has a *political* aspect of some importance. He is one of the chaplains to the Queen for Scotland; and this assault on one important article of the religion of the country, by one whom the Queen delights to honour, does not tend to establish her throne in the

affections of her people.* Again, the Decalogue is inscribed on our statute-book, — is part of the law of Scotland; and therefore, in so far as he assails its obligation, Dr Macleod may justly be regarded as revolutionary, or at least seditious, stirring up Christians to despise the law of the land. And once more, in thus leading them to despise the Commandments of God, he does *not* predispose them to honour and obey the civil law of man.

Its *denominational* aspect, as affecting the duty and destiny of his own Church, is not without interest to us all. One of her sworn “ministers” or servants publicly denies and assails a doctrine which, by his ordination vow, he was bound to teach, obey, and enforce. Gillespie, the venerable father of the Relief Secession, was deposed from his ministry because he would take no personal part in the intrusion of a minister on a reluctant congregation.

* It has been publicly commented on as an ominous fact, that four of the Queen's Chaplains for Scotland have now made public assaults on the religion established by law in Scotland.

The Evangelical Scottish Church was driven out of the Establishment in 1843 because she would not perpetrate the violence of intrusion, and at the same time surrender that spiritual independence which is essential to her completed being as a kingdom of Christ. The Church now established professes to represent that Church which visited with severest censures those ministers who would not obey her when she bade them do what they regarded as a sin, and what she did not pretend to regard as prescribed by God's law. Will she now allow a minister who openly denies and assails her doctrine and law to retain her ministry, to go about invested with *her* authority to teach and to rule? Will she suffer to go unpunished an offence against ministerial position and vows, the same in its nature which made the world stand aghast in the cases of Strauss and Colenso? Will she leave the flocks which trust her a prey to "false prophets," "wolves in sheep's clothing," yea, and furnish the "clothing," the gown and bands by which the false teachers are disguised? If she do, then alas for the flock! and alas for the shepherds!

But, again, the Doctor's position has a *national* aspect. It directly bears on our duty and interest as citizens. For, as I have said, he is a paid servant of the State. He receives the State pay on condition of serving as minister of the Established Church. And that ministry consists in obeying the courts of the Church as Presbyterian, and in teaching and enforcing her doctrine and law as declared in the Westminster Confession of Faith. Thus, to obey his Presbytery and to teach the Christian religion as defined by the Confession, is the condition on which Dr Macleod holds his emoluments and *status* from the nation. And therefore it is a fair question, which any citizen of the nation has a right to press on the civil courts, has the reverend Doctor, in publicly repudiating an integral part of the State religion, not abandoned the trust which the nation commits to him, and forfeited the temporalities he holds from the State? Further still, the question of public duty bears not only on the case of this one minister, but on the case of the whole Established Church. That Church holds her

establishment and endowments from the nation on condition that she shall be a Presbyterian Church, and shall through all her ministrations teach the Christian religion as defined by the "aforesaid" Confession. But suppose that she allows one of her ministers to teach a doctrine the opposite of what she has bound him by oath to teach; *i.e.*, that she ceases to be Presbyterian and becomes Congregational. Or suppose that, thus, through one or more of her ministers, *she* publicly denies and assails an important article of the Christian religion as defined by the Confession. Then it will be a fair question, which any citizen may have right, and all may be bound to press upon the national Government—Has not this Church, which has ceased to be Presbyterian in government, and become (so far) Anti-Sabbatarian in doctrine, *eo ipso* forfeited her endowments and establishment, by violating the condition on which she holds them? And this question is far from being merely speculative: it is intensely practical. Many of the best Christians and most energetic citizens among us are hostile to all Establishments on

principle. A very powerful body of Christians, who admit the abstract lawfulness of Establishments, yet regard the existing Scottish Establishment as grossly corrupt, so that they cannot in conscience accept its benefits. And all true-hearted Scottish Christians, though they should be members of the Established Church, would far rather see her Establishment swept away than see it become a stronghold of doctrines the reverse of Christian. Thus it may become the duty of all Christian citizens to seek the destruction of the Establishment, even for the salvation of the Established *Church*, and much more for the sake of that whole community for whose spiritual good the Establishment is intended. In the event I have supposed, even those who have hitherto felt free to confine themselves to their own direct work as Evangelists, may feel constrained in conscience to turn aside to a warfare they have hitherto shunned, and join in a national rising for the subversion of the Establishment.

Once more, this defection of a leading minis-

ter of a Scottish Presbyterian Church gives a new aspect to the whole Sabbath controversy.* It has now ceased to be a controversy between believers and unbelievers,—it has once more become a controversy between the mass of Christians on the one hand, and one or more professing Christian ministers on the other. And therefore all Christians are now providentially called to a new study of the Sabbath question, under all its aspects, historical, Scriptural, and practical.

* Hence the fulness with which I have discussed a production so insignificant theologically as Dr Macleod's Glasgow speech. Theologically insignificant, it is historically important as constituting henceforward a landmark in the history of the Sabbath question in the Evangelical Churches of Britain; and, as I have shown in the preface, it is important as one sample of what may be expected from the new school in the Scottish Church,



CHAPTER II.

THE DEVELOPED CALVINISTIC CHURCH.

DR MACLEOD'S position, morally analogous to that of Colenso and Strauss, is logically identical with that of Dr Hessey: the Glasgow speech is an echo of the Bampton Lecture—an echo which, rolling and “rumbling” round the Scottish hills, has become vague, confused, and inarticulate as compared with the original English voice. And, in view of the fact that under the name of Dr Macleod the real assailant is Dr Hessey, when dealing here with the Glasgow speech I will make free and full use of what I have elsewhere published* in a review of the Bampton Lecture.

Dr Macleod has sought shelter behind the great

* “British and Foreign Evangelical Review,” January 1863. See Appendix C.

name of Baxter, as if this had been the shield of some Telamonian Ajax, from behind which any Teucer may safely launch his arrows against the defenders of our Troy. The extract he has quoted is really consistent with our doctrine, against which he quotes it. There are other passages in Baxter, *e.g.*, one quoted by me in a letter to the *Daily Review*, and another quoted by Dr Cairns in a lecture delivered at Berwick, which appear to declare expressly in favour of our doctrine. And it is certain that Dr Macleod does not know to this hour whether the name of Baxter ought really to be produced on the side of his Dominical theory or not. But the selection of that name was singularly ill-judged and inauspicious.

A member of the Glasgow Presbytery expressed his apprehension that the Doctor's speech was but one symptom of a growing disposition in his Church to depart from the old paths in matters more vitally important than even the Sabbath law. And in all Church history it would be difficult to find a name more ominous of evil in this

respect than the name of Richard Baxter. He, more than any other man, by the influence of his doctrinal speculations, occasioned that "new movement" among the English Nonconformists in the eighteenth century, which began with a cry against Confessions such as Dr Tulloch has uttered at St Andrews, and which, before the century closed, had resulted in the reduction of one of the noblest Presbyterian Churches in Christendom to the quality and dimensions of a few Socinian chapels. His personal piety, and wonderful power and success as an Evangelist, have made Baxter's name deservedly dear, and venerable, and great. But the appeal to him *as a theological authority*, at the inauguration of a new theological movement, can only serve to elicit from the heart of intelligent Christians the prayer, *Deus avertat omen*.

But the Doctor has appealed to *human authority*. In appealing to Baxter as an authority, while ignoring the authority of his Church's creed, he has followed the example of other foes of the Sabbath law. While rejecting the doctrine of God's Word, and contemptuously setting aside the

creeds and confessions of whole Churches, they have often grasped at stray utterances of individual teachers, such as Luther and Calvin, and clung to them with an abject servility of devotion amounting to a species of Sadducean popery. We, on the other hand, prefer to have the question settled on the ground of Scripture alone; for we believe that the Scripture evidence is abundantly sufficient for a settlement; and we know that "the Bible, the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants," that "the Bible, the Bible *at least*, is the religion of all who deserve the name of Christian." In condescending from the high ground of Scripture to the low ground of Church history and human authority, we are making a concession to the weakness of our adversaries, stooping to their level, in order, if possible, to raise them to ours. And in proceeding to speak of the historical aspects of the question, I must make some remarks, by way of introductory *caveat*, on the nature and value of the historical argument.

Authority in the highest sense, as binding men to believe what He says merely by His saying it,

can exist only in The One who is infallible and omniscient. Now we profess to have received our doctrine of the perpetual and universal obligation of the Fourth Commandment from God in His Word. But our adversaries do not pretend to have received any contradiction of our doctrine from that Word: no one has ever said or imagined that the Bible anywhere says that the Fourth Commandment is abrogated. And therefore, as against us, no amount of mere human authority can anything avail, unless it be such as to show that our doctrine *cannot* have been revealed in Scripture. The only historical question that seriously affects our position is this: "Do not the facts of history furnish an *a posteriori* demonstration of the *impossibility* of a Biblical revelation of your doctrine?" And to state this question is to show that on grounds of history or human authority our position can never be seriously endangered. For none of our adversaries deserving to be listened to will venture to answer the question in the affirmative. But while no historical argument can have any real force of reason against us, I purpose to show that

rightly understood, history, or human authority, speaks clearly and strongly in our favour.

There is a subordinate sense in which authority may pertain to the utterance of mere men. Suppose that, by some judgment such as we read of in "The Eclipse of Faith," the Bible had been lost, how could we hope to ascertain the doctrine of the lost Bible regarding the Sabbath or Lord's-day? By consulting the memory of those who had been Bible readers, or the writings of divines who profess to have deduced their doctrines from Scripture, or those creeds and confessions of Churches which profess to be founded on that infallible Word. These would be authorities in the secondary sense in which a traveller from an unknown country is an authority: their evidence would justify us in believing, or bind us to believe, that the doctrine they profess to have received from God's Word really is the doctrine which He has revealed in the lost Bible. So in the present actual case, when the doctrine of the Bible is disputed if not doubtful, the evidence of Bible readers, and divines, and Churches may help to

dissipate the doubt, to end the dispute, to turn the wavering balance of the judgment, by constituting a *presumption* on the side which it favours. For as the Bible is intelligible, and God's children know their Father's voice, it is to be presumed that what Christian Bible readers, divines, and Churches believe as being revealed in His Word is what He really has revealed in His Word. If, then, it had been true, as it is not true, that the Bible evidence is obscure or inconclusive, we might conceivably obtain from Church history a presumptive evidence sufficient to turn the wavering balance. And this presumption, whatever may be its value, is in favour of our doctrine.

The value of this authority of human testimony varies according to the character of the witness. The authority of a newspaper editor, who may know little of the Bible, and care less, is inferior to that of a Christian minister who has devoted his life to the study and exposition of Bible truth. The authority of a minister like Dr Macleod, who denies and assails what he has

sworn to teach, and who cannot speak so as to be understood (by himself), is inferior to that of a minister like Mr Charteris, who is faithful to his ordination vow, and speaks not only beautifully and nobly, but clearly and coherently. The authority of a divine like Baxter, who is characteristically speculative and rash, often running into heresies, is inferior to that of a divine like Owen, who is characteristically cautious as well as profound, and seeks only to know "the mind of God on the Scriptures." The authority of any one divine like Luther or Calvin, who may speak inadvertently on an occasion, is inferior to that of an Evangelical Church in her creed or confession, *i.e.*, of a whole Christian people, solemnly recording what it regards as the substance of divine truth, for the instruction of its members and the discipline of its "ministers" or servants through generations to come. And the authority of a Church which has had no occasion to study the question profoundly or thoroughly is inferior to that of a Church which has been compelled to investigate it, under all its aspects, in the whole combined light of the Word of God, by a genera-

tion of controversy. These obvious truths, which may almost be regarded as truisms, need only to be stated in order to show that the historical argument is all in favour of our doctrine of the Sabbath or Lord's-day. And I will conclude this chapter by one illustration of the argument.

The highest human authority that has ever pronounced on the Sabbath question is that of the Reformed Churches of Britain and the Continent in the first half of the seventeenth century. For these Churches had not yet, on the one hand, become dead and hard in their orthodoxy like the Lutherans, nor, on the other hand, experienced the deadly chill of that "moderate" movement which extended all over Christendom in the eighteenth century, and which was signalised by a general break-up of Christian belief, the result as well as the cause of decay of Christian life and love. They were in the fulness of intelligent sympathy with the living Word of God. The study of that word was not only the habit but the passion of their members. Their divines were engaged in giving the last finishing touches to

their symbols, in order that these might perfectly and definitively express the faith which at the Reformation God had given to His saints. And with reference to the Sabbath question, they were more favourably placed than the first Reformers. The first generation of Reformation divines had everything to begin—the very art of Biblical study to learn; and for the most part they were led, by their controversy with Rome, to look at our question only incidentally and cursorily, under some of its secondary aspects. But their successors in the second and third generations not only had the benefit of a previous generation of controversy as a discipline for theological study in general, but were compelled to study the Sabbath question in particular under all its aspects, by a controversy regarding it which had arisen between the orthodox Church on the one hand, and the fanatical Anabaptists and sceptical Socinians on the other. The beneficent influence of this controversy, which had begun to be felt before the first generation of Reformers passed away, was fully experienced by the second and third. And while all Protestant Churches were thus made

awake and alive to the question of the Decalogue in general, the "Reformed" branches of the Reformation Church were free from the blinding influence of the festival-system with reference to the Fourth Commandment in particular.

Further, both in Holland and in England the mind of the Church had been led by providential circumstances, not merely to the general question—about which there was no difference in the catholic Church—of the perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment, but to the special question, whether "one day in seven" is not what is prescribed by that commandment in its substance, and whether the Lord's-day is not the "Christian Sabbath." And thus, in that first half of the seventeenth century, at least in the Reformed Protestant Church, every educated theologian had fully in his view, with perfect comprehension of its bearings, the question—1, in general, whether the Decalogue is a code of moral laws binding all men in all ages and lands; and, 2, in particular, whether the Fourth Commandment is a moral law of permanent and universal obligation.

This highest authority I will take at its culminating point, in the Synod of Dordt and the Westminster Assembly,—the two noblest Synods, in point of fulness and clearness of God-given light that have met on earth since the Council of Jerusalem. The Synod of Dordt had as its *nucleus* the divines of Holland, who—though no one of them equalled Francis Turretine—had by this time as a class borne away the palm from Geneva, and become the theological leaders of the Calvinistic branch of the Reformation Church. With them were associated representatives of the Reformed Churches of Britain, Germany, and France; so that the Synod was virtually a general council of Calvinistic Christendom. And though the articles on the Sabbath were occasioned by some dispute in Zeeland, and not drawn up till the foreign delegates had left, these articles, as will appear in next chapter, and as may well be presumed, were simply the matured utterance of the real mind of all the Churches represented in the Synod. These articles (as agreed upon at the sitting of 17th May 1618) admit—what no one of us denies—that the Fourth Commandment is partly ceremonial, in so far as it

speaks of the *seventh* as the day of religious rest, and prescribes* a rigidity in the form of observance which is distinctively Jewish. But they also declare that the law is *moral, of permanent and universal obligation*, in so far as it prescribes a day to be kept holy as a day of religious rest, and forbids all such worldly recreations and employments as are incompatible with the due observance of that rest; and that, while the day thus prescribed by God's unchangeable law of nature was the "Sabbath," or Saturday, under the Old Testament, it is the "Lord's-day," or Sunday, under the New. Dr Macleod cannot so much as understand how the Fourth Commandment, which speaks of the seventh day, can, without dishonesty, be made to bear on our observance of the first day of the week. The mere fact that it has been declared to bear on it by this great Synod suggests and answers the question, whether his inability to understand arises from the absence of intelli-

* Here, I believe, the Synod was mistaken in point of fact: it is doubtful whether the Jewish Sabbath was really more rigid than the Christian (See B. II. Cap. I.); and it is certain that the Fourth Commandment does not prescribe any rigidity distinctively Jewish.

bility in the matter or from the lack of intelligence in the speaker.

From this noble Synod we pass to what, perhaps, is a nobler. Of the Westminster Assembly we have recently heard from another learned doctor, who like Dr Macleod has solemnly sworn that he believes the whole doctrine of its Confession; and who like Dr Macleod holds his office and living on condition of maintaining and defending that doctrine with all his might. Principal Tulloch, who is entrusted by his Church with the education of her future ministers, inculcates on his students the duty of studying the Westminster Confession in the light of its history, and particularly of its *psychological* history, as ascertainable from the character and feelings of the men who framed it. But, not to speak of a perceptible *animus* against that Confession (See *Epilogue*), one of his remarks has led me to think that the duty he inculcates has not been very successfully discharged by the learned Principal himself. He states that the Confession, in an unusual degree, is marked (perhaps disfigured) by

the local and temporary peculiarities of its authors. And this—independently of the *moral* aspect of his inaugural lecture—strikes me as a symptom of incapacity for psychological and historical criticism.

For, from a study of the comparative anatomy of creeds and confessions not a few, I had formed an impression of the Westminster Confession precisely the reverse of his. And further meditation, occasioned by reading the report of his lecture, has only deepened that impression. There is *one* point, indeed, on which, on account of the *Erastian* controversy in England and Scotland, the Westminster divines are peculiarly and unmistakeably emphatic—viz., the spiritual independence of the Church under the headship of Christ; and this point may well occasion irritation, and disturb the lofty composure even of a learned Principal, if *he*, unhappily, should be a friend of that Erastianism of which the Confession he has sworn to is so uncompromising a foe. Again, the Confession is decidedly and unmistakeably *Calvinistic*; so that

it must needs be felt as a very disagreeable book, presenting very offensive peculiarities to one who may happen to hate the Calvinistic system which he is bound, and paid, and sworn to maintain and defend. In fine, the Confession teaches a *definite dogmatic system*, as declared in the Word of God, and therefore must present offensive peculiarities to those who will have a Christianity which is "a life" and *not* "a doctrine;" who, while solemnly bound to teach a definite doctrine and law, are disposed to believe and teach everything in general and nothing in particular.

But to one who has not this very slipshod view of Christian truth and duty, who seriously believes in the substance of Free Presbyterianism in government and Calvinistic Evangelism in doctrine, I do not see how the Confession can present any offensive peculiarity. From the circumstance that the Westminster divines had no serious doctrinal difference among themselves, it might be expected that their Confession would not protrude any doctrinal peculiarity into offensive prominence. From the circumstance

that they stood at the culminating point of an epoch of serious research into Scripture, it might further be expected that their Confession would be unusually free from the exaggerations of crude immature thought. And in fact I believe that ninety-nine in every hundred of those who are seriously Presbyterian and Calvinistic, and who have studied the Calvinistic creeds and confessions comparatively, will regard our own Confession as the most complete and symmetrical, the freest from exaggeration or disproportion of parts—in a word, the most *catholic* of all the Calvinistic symbols. And I am certain that there is nothing in the general aspect of the Confession that ought to derogate from the Assembly's authority with reference to the question of the Sabbath.

With reference to this question, the Westminster divines had the benefit of all the light derivable from the earlier controversies on the Continent, from the relevant articles of the Synod of Dort, and from the luminous commentary on those articles by such first-rate divines as Walaeus. And to sharpen their faculties,

they had enjoyed the discipline of a controversy in Britain. The Reformed Church of England had confessed the perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment, in that prayer of her liturgy to which all her congregations respond every Lord's-day to this hour, "Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law"—a prayer on which Dr Hessey comments in the manner of those Arminian doctors of his Church who expound her Calvinistic articles. But even at that time there were some who could "interpret" the liturgy as it is "interpreted" now. King James's "Book of Sports" came out under the "highest" ecclesiastical auspices. And long before the Westminster Assembly sat, the Puritan section of the English Church had found it necessary to fight the same battle which we are now fighting for the due observance of the weekly day of religious rest. That Assembly, therefore, by the influence of causes at home and abroad, had been made fully alive and awake to the nature of the Sabbath question under all its aspects, speculative and practical. And its decision on this question is thus invested with all

the authority of what many have regarded as the noblest Assembly that ever met in Christendom, and what every one will confess to have been certainly the noblest Assembly that ever met in Britain.

This decision was uttered, not as a mere opinion, in the shape of a resolution, but as a deliberate judgment on a matter vitally affecting the permanent welfare of the Church. First, in that Confession which declares the terms of office in the Church, and to which Drs Macleod and Tulloch have solemnly sworn, as containing nothing but what they believe and will teach, it is declared (Cap. XIX.) in general, that all the Ten Commandments deserve the name of moral law, because they are of permanent and universal obligation. And, second, in the Catechisms—which Dr Macleod as a minister is bound to accept as the basis of his instructions to the Church's young members, and for the teaching of which Dr Tulloch is bound to prepare his theological students—it is declared, not only in general that "*the moral law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Command-*

ments ;” but also in special that the Fourth Commandment is part of that moral law, and morally binds all men, in all ages and lands, whether on the Old Testament seventh day, or on the New Testament first day, to observe “one whole day in seven as a religious rest.”

The two Assemblies of Dordt and Westminster are the *principal* witnesses on the stage of Church history. Their testimony is more important than that of all other human witnesses together. And though the primitive Church, and the Lutheran Church, and Luther and Calvin, and an indefinite number of the “Reformed” Protestant Churches, had deliberately and unmistakeably pronounced for Dr Macleod, the greater weight of human authority would still be against him.





CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST REFORMERS AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THEIR TIME.

THE *leading* fact of Reformation Church history in the present connection is this : *The first Reformers and their Popish antagonists agreed in believing and confessing our doctrine*—1, in general, that the Decalogue is a code of moral laws, binding all men in all ages and lands ; and, 2, in particular, that the Fourth Commandment is a moral law, of permanent and universal obligation. Thus the whole Catholic Church, both Papist and Protestant, at the Reformation, affirmed in general and in particular what Dr Macleod has denied.

The doctrine is confessed by the Council of Trent as clearly as by the Westminster As-

sembly; as clearly in the current Popish systems of Bailly and Dens as in the Westminster confession and catechisms. And though the Council of Tr ent fulminated an anathema against Antinomianism, manifestly meant to hit the Reformers, the Reformers, on this point, did not depart from the catholic faith, but were really of one mind with the antichristian faction which ignorantly (?) condemned them. In proof of this statement, I need only appeal to the Reformation confessions in general,* and to the systems of Reformation divines, in their discussion of the topic, "the Law of God." Dr Macleod has borrowed from Mr Cox a quotation from Luther, on which I make the following notes :—1st, Does Dr Macleod accept this quotation as expressing *his* opinion? Then the reverend doctor is *really* an Antinomian. 2d, Does he insinuate that Luther, on *this* point, is a trustworthy representative of the Reformation Church doctrine? Then he is untrue to the notorious fact, that Luther, carried away by the fury of his polemic against legalism, has made utterances about the law even as a rule of

* See Appendix B.

life which no Protestant Christian can accept. 3d, Does Dr Macleod mean to insinuate that the quotation expresses *Luther's own* deliberate convictions on the subject? Then he is untrue to the fact, which is honestly stated and proved by Mr Cox, that the Antinomianism of the Anabaptists brought Luther to his senses, and that he accepted and earnestly inculcated the catholic doctrine of the Decalogue.*

And in subordination to that leading fact, Reformation Church history reveals the following details :—

1. Papists and Protestants agreed in maintaining the distinction of moral and ceremonial, essential and circumstantial, in the Fourth Commandment. What precisely is moral and what ceremonial, they were not agreed. But they fully agreed in affirming and applying the distinction which Dr Macleod has rejected with scorn.

2. Papists and Protestants agreed in maintaining that our Lord's-day observance has in the

* See Appendix A. and B.

Fourth Commandment a foundation and sanction of moral law. They differed on the question, by what authority the selection of the Sunday for the Lord's-day has been determined. But they agreed in affirming that, no matter how the day has been chosen, its observance is "rooted and grounded" in that natural law; so that in this detail they agreed in affirming what Dr Macleod has denied.

3. Papists and Protestants agreed in affirming that the Fourth Commandment prescribes the *form* of the Lord's-day observance, by authoritatively presenting the true *ideal* of a consecrated day, as being negatively a day of cessation from common work, in order to be positively a day of religious rest. They differed on the jury question, What species or amount of common work is incompatible with a *bona-fide* day of religious rest? But they agreed in affirming the revealed doctrine that, by authoritatively prescribing the true *ideal* of a consecrated day, the Fourth Commandment prescribes the form of Lord's-day observance; so that in this detail they agreed in affirming what Dr Macleod has denied.

Thus, wholesale and retail, the reverend Doctor has denied the faith of the Catholic Church, whether Popish or Protestant, at the time of the Reformation ; and thus far, in denying the faith, he has cut himself off from the communion of the modern Christian world.

I now proceed to deal with certain utterances of the first Reformers which have often been quoted against the defenders of the Sabbath among us. They have been quoted so often, that the unwary may imagine that they constitute the *leading* aspect of Reformation Church history in relation to the Sabbath law. I have therefore set in the front what really constitutes the leading aspect, viz., the fact that our doctrine of the perpetual obligation of that law and of the whole Decalogue was the undisputed creed of Christendom at the time of the Reformation. This leading fact will account for the circumstance that the Reformers were not always very careful to push forward the doctrine into prominence, or to guard against misconception of such of their utterances as might at first sight

appear to militate against it; for what no one questioned, Papist or Protestant, there was no need very carefully and anxiously to guard. It will also show that no one of these utterances, though it really should be inconsistent with the doctrine, can furnish so much as a faint presumption of Reformation Church authority against it: it can only show at the utmost that the Reformers were not always, in their occasional utterances on secondary subjects, perfectly consistent with the doctrine which represented their settled convictions on the leading subject. And it shows, above all, that even in order to understand these utterances we must always keep the leading fact in our view, and look at all the secondary *phenomena* in its light.

As we look at these utterances in the light of their historical connection, we find that *no one of them really contradicts the catholic doctrine* of the Decalogue in general, and of the Fourth Commandment in particular. In order to prove this point, I will “summarily comprehend” the questionable utterances in a few propositions under two heads?—

The *first* class are irrelevant, having nothing to do with any question that seriously concerns us now, regarding the Sabbath or Lord's-day. 1. For example, "That the Decalogue does not bind us merely *because given by Moses.*" In this respect it differs from *positive* laws, ceremonial or judicial, which have no authority but in the express will of the legislator, by being *moral* or *natural* law, which rests on the nature or constitution of man, and therefore would have been obligatory by nature, though it had not been revealed preternaturally. A preternatural revelation of it may be exceedingly precious, as authoritatively showing us *what* is natural or moral law, and binding us in our subjection to this law to obey *a person*, the living Jehovah, the God of Israel, as our King. But, so far from its binding us *merely* because He has revealed it, He has revealed it as moral law because it binds all men by its own nature.

This is very different from Dr Macleod's statement, that the "Decalogue *qua* Decalogue" is abolished. What he really means is, that the

Decalogue as such does not bind us at all ; that it is *not* a code of moral laws positively revealed, so that every one of its commandments is perpetually and universally binding. This plainly appears from his denial of the perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment. The Reformers, on the contrary, believed and confessed that the Decalogue *is* a code of such laws, every one of which binds us by nature ; and that thus, in effect, God said on Sinai, “*This* is the natural law of your constitution, authoritatively declared to be such by Me, the Creator and Restorer of that constitution.”

2. “That no day is holy ; and that the true rest of a Christian extends through a Christian’s life.” What is the meaning of this proposition ? Does it mean that no day should be consecrated or set apart for religious rest ? Then it annihilates Dr Macleod ; for he contends for “a Lord’s-day.” It annihilates the Reformers themselves ; for they all observed the Lord’s-day, and some of them a whole system of Church festivals besides. What they really meant will be understood from

their historical position of antagonism to the *Popish* notion of "holiness" in days. In the estimation of Romanists a consecrated day was "holy," as the consecrated bread and wine were "holy," in the sense of having some *virtue in itself*, without the spiritual action of faith and love, *ex opere operato* to convey saving benefit through the mere "corporal and carnal" enjoyment of it. To counteract this notion, subversive of the great Reformation doctrine of justification by faith, the Reformers said of consecrated days, as we have learned to say of the sacraments, that they are "made effectual to salvation, not by any virtue in them, but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith" enjoy them. And as the Reformers said of the days, so do we (*e.g.*, the Free Church Assembly, in a pastoral letter read a short time ago to her congregations), that the day is *nothing in itself*, but only an atmosphere through which the Sun of righteousness may shine, in *His* healing power, on our souls; that no day is "holy," as no bread nor wine is "holy," in the sense of having power in

itself to confer saving benefit through the mere bodily enjoyment of it ; and that the true (spiritual) rest, of faith and love, which a Christian realises most fully on the Lord's-day, pervades every day of a truly "Christian year."

3. "That the Sabbath is abolished as typical, as ceremonial, as Judaically austere and gloomy." This class of statements—(See B. II., Cap. I.)—represent a confused if not erroneous impression of the true nature of the Jewish Sabbath. Judging from the doctrine and practice of Jesus, we may safely conclude that a true spiritual Jew like Him was as free and glad on the day of rest as a Christian in our day. It is incorrect to speak of the Sabbath as ceremonial merely because the ceremonial Jewish worship was observed with peculiar fullness on that day ; for the ceremonies pertained, *not to the day of rest, but to the Old Testament dispensation* superinduced on the original constitution of man and the Church.* And I know no

* The *seventh* day may be regarded as a really ceremonial as well as positive element in the Old Testament rest ; for, coming *after* the six working days, it showed that the true rest had yet to be

good reason for believing that the Jewish Sabbath was, properly speaking, a type at all. But suppose it had been, and now therefore is abolished *as a type*, it may still remain *as a Sabbath*, or day of rest; just as, though the old Jewish government is abolished as a type, government or magistracy remains as an institution of nature. Again, though the Sabbath had been under one aspect ceremonial, it may still remain as moral or natural. And once more, though the *Jewish Sabbath* should have been gloomy, austere, carnal, yet the original Sabbath, "made for man," may now have been restored to us by Him who has come to restore all things, in the form of a *Christian Sabbath*, bright and free and glad-some, as becomes the full dispensation of the Spirit.

These three propositions, therefore, though under some aspects liable to misconstruction, do

procured by redeeming work in the future; while our *first* day, going *before* our days of work, shows that the great redeeming work is "finished," and the true rest achieved by that work in the past.

not bear against any position of any importance in relation to the Sabbath or Lord's-day.

The *second* class of utterances do bear on what has been called the Puritan theory of the Lord's-day, as being one in substance with the Old Testament Sabbath, though different in form; and on the Westminster doctrine "of one day in seven," and not merely *some* days in the year, as being prescribed by the substance of the Sabbath law. But *they do not at all conflict with the catholic doctrine* of the perpetual obligation of the Decalogue and Fourth Commandment—the only thing between us and Dr Macleod.

1. "That the selection of the Sunday to be the Lord's-day has been determined, not by the sovereign will of Christ, but by the Christian wisdom of His Church." This, again, annihilates Dr Macleod; for it expressly contradicts the one only statement of fact on which his poor "Dominical" theory is founded. It also militates against the Puritan theory of the substantial oneness of the Old Testament Sabbath and New Testament Lord's-day, by contradicting *one* of

the Scriptural witnesses in behalf of that doctrine. But it does not so much as touch the catholic doctrine of the Fourth Commandment, even upon the Westminster view of that commandment, as in its substance or moral part prescribing "one whole day in seven." For whether the Saturday, or Sunday, or Monday be observed as the Lord's-day, there *is* "one day in seven" observed as a religious rest; the Fourth Commandment is therefore obeyed in its substance, as understood by the Westminster divines. In their estimation the commandment does not determine *which* day of the seven shall be kept, but leaves that to be determined by positive institution of competent authority. *What* is a competent authority on this point may be a question. Romanists may answer "The Church," as consisting of lordly Prelates;* Lutherans, Anglicans, and not a few early Calvinists, have answered, "The Church," as consisting of the body of members and ministers; while the Westminster divines believe that the only competent authority is the "Lord of the

* At the beginning of the Reformation, they so believed; but in the Catechism of Trent the *infallible* Church slides into an appeal to apostolic institutions.

Sabbath." If, then, it were seriously proposed to keep the Saturday or Monday instead of the Sunday as the Lord's-day, the Westminster divines would resist the proposal on the ground of the *Second* Commandment, because the Lord, through his apostles, has chosen the Sunday for His day. But they would not and could not oppose it on the ground of the *Fourth* Commandment; for this commandment, in their estimation, while prescribing *some* "one day in seven," does not determine which. This first proposition, though (in our estimation) mischievous and untrue, does not so much as touch the catholic doctrine of the commandment, even in the "high" view of the Westminster divines.

2. "That the Fourth Commandment in its substance does not prescribe one day in seven, but only *some* days in the year." This, again, militates against the Westminster view of the divine institution of the week, by contradicting one *part* of the evidence of *one* of its Scriptural witnesses. And thus it comes short of what we regard as the completed Scriptural fulness

of the catholic doctrine of the Sabbath law. But it does not contradict, but so far affirms, the catholic doctrine even of the Fourth Commandment, and does not so much as appear to contradict the catholic doctrine of the Decalogue. It only, if true, would show that the question (not *which day* of the seven, but), *what days* in the year shall be consecrated to God, falls to be determined by positive institution of competent authority. But it shows, at the same time, that the Fourth Commandment binds us with the force of moral law—1, in commanding us to observe *some* stated days; and, 2, in prescribing the *form* of observing *whatever* is really a consecrated day, by presenting the divine ideal of a consecrated day, as being negatively a day of cessation from secular work, in order to be positively a day of religious rest.

This incomplete view of the substance of the Sabbath law has proved by its fruits the evil of incompleteness. It was accepted by Romanists, Lutherans, and Anglicans, because it left them a standing ground even in the Fourth Command-

ment for their man-made system of Church festivals,—a system which has always been the leading stronghold of Antichrist in the Church, and which, wherever it has prevailed, has practically brought down the Lord's-day far beneath the ideal of a *bona-fide* day of religious rest. And once they had accepted it as a justification of their false position, their false position kept them ever after from rising to the true and complete Scripture doctrine. And thus, while the "Reformed" Churches, having abandoned the man-made festivals, have grown up to the fulness of Scriptural knowledge and privilege with reference to the God-given festival of the Sabbath, the Lutherans and Anglicans, pressed down by the festival system, have never grown an inch from their infancy, but, in their view of the Sabbath law, still remain as stunted and inadequate at this hour as at the first Reformation,—no unimpressive illustration of the vital importance of a pure scriptural worship, were it only in order that we may know and believe, not only "the truth," but "the *whole* truth, and *nothing but* the truth," as God has revealed it regarding His ordinances.

But even on this low and inadequate view of the commandment, *the proposition does not contradict the catholic doctrine*, as between the Westminster Standards on the one hand and Drs Macleod and Hessey on the other. For between these doctors and us, it is perfectly agreed that there shall be "one day in seven," viz., the Sunday, observed as a religious rest. The *only question* between us and them is, whether the observance of this day (no matter how it came to be chosen) has any foundation and sanction in the law of nature as preternaturally revealed in the Decalogue? And to this question, even on the lowest view of the substance of the commandment, it is answered by the catholic doctrine that our Lord's-day observance has the sanction of moral law—1, inasmuch as we are morally bound to observe *some* stated days; and, 2, inasmuch as we are morally bound to observe them in the *form* of days of religious rest.

I thus have shown that the questionable utterances of the first Reformers do not contradict their catholic doctrine of the Decalogue and

Sabbath law. And I have indicated in passing what will *account* for these utterances, in so far as they conflict with the Westminster theory of "one day in seven," or come short of the fulness of Scriptural truth on the subject. The first Reformers did not carefully study the subject of the Sabbath or Lord's-day as a whole: their controversy with Rome, the great work of their lives, while necessitating a full and careful study of the "doctrine of grace," led them to look at the Sabbath question only incidentally and cursorily, under some of its secondary aspects. And at the same time that controversy, specially in connection with the festival system, led them into a position in which it was morally impossible that they should not take a distorted and one-sided view of the subject of the Sabbath or Lord's-day. Of the effect of their friendship for that system, in the case of the Lutheran and Anglican Churches, I have already spoken. And I now speak only of the effect of their *hostility* to that system, as the incarnation of the notion of "holiness" in days. The system as possessed by that notion was one of the strongest bulwarks

of the whole Antichristian Babylon. But of the system, the Lord's-day was represented as a case in point, a standing illustration, a practical demonstration. Hence the objectionable expressions of some even of the "Reformed" regarding the Lord's-day. Some of these expressions, which at first sight appear to be directed against the Lord's-day, really represent only the passion of the Reformers' polemic against that Popish notion of "holiness" in days, which had sought shelter behind an institution which the Reformers venerated and loved. Others of them, really untrue and unwarrantable, and as such soon renounced by the "Reformed," are easily and naturally accounted for thus,—that of the blows which were levelled at Antichrist, some, by inadvertency, lighted on a Christian institution, which Antichrist had leavened with his "leaven of the Pharisees." And no one of the expressions really contradicts the catholic doctrine of the Decalogue in general, and the Fourth Commandment in particular.

Further, the Reformers, while coming short

of the Westminster theory, really gave important though unconscious testimony to its truth. For *they affirmed the leading facts on which that theory is founded, namely,—1st, in the primeval revelation of God the Father, the institution of the Sabbath in Eden; 2d, in the economy of God the Son, the revelation of the Sabbath law on Sinai as a law of nature, with a “reason annexed,” which obviously points to “one day in seven” as being of the substance of the law; and, 3d, in the dispensation of God the Holy Ghost, the continued observance of that week, determined by a day of religious rest, which has been observed by God’s Church ever since she first began to be on earth. These three Bible facts, with accessory facts which need not be specified, can be accounted for only by the Westminster theory, and therefore are three heavenly witnesses to the truth of that theory which accounts for them all. Hence, the theory of “one day in seven” was accepted even by some of the first Reformers, e.g., Beza; in the second Reformation, it was generally adopted by the “Reformed” Churches, as we find in*

Francis Turretine, the greatest of systematic divines; and in the third generation, as I have shown in Chapter II., it was inscribed on those creeds which are the definitive expression of completely developed Reformation theology. We may therefore reasonably affirm that the Reformers, in logical consistency, ought to have explicitly embraced the theory, and that all but certainly they would have so embraced it if they had calmly and fully considered the question, and if their minds had been free from those disturbing influences of which I have spoken. And though they did not so embrace it, they rendered it important service, partly by affirming the leading Bible facts on which it is founded, and mainly by affirming the catholic doctrine which Dr Macleod has denied and we affirm. Thus, even on the lowest ground of the low ground of modern Church history, the reverend Doctor is utterly annihilated. Though all human authority had been in favour of his doctrine, that could have been nothing as compared with the authority of God's Word against it. But I have shown in last Chapter that his

doctrine has been condemned by the highest human authority that has ever pronounced on the question ; so that, although all other human authorities had pronounced in its favour, we would have still remained victors on this field. And now I have shown that his doctrine has been condemned alike by Papists and by Protestants, by the modern Christian world as a whole.





CHAPTER IV.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

FIND it more and more difficult to keep up the appearance of regarding Dr Macleod as a theologian deserving to be seriously reasoned against; and in speaking of the primitive Church fathers will deal with such really respectable antagonists as Dr Hessey and Mr Cox.*

With reference to the evidence of ante-Nicene Church history, we must distinguish between *historical* testimony and *doctrinal*. It is the opinion alike of Dominicals and of us Sabbatarians that in point of fact the Jewish Sabbath (observed on the Saturday) has been abolished, and the Lord's-day (ob-

* On Dr Hessey's and Mr Cox's Works—See Appendix C.

served on the Sunday) has come in its place. This opinion, we all believe, has a Scriptural basis in the series of New Testament statements regarding the first day of the week. And as it concerns a matter of historical fact, it admits of corroboration from post-Apostolic Church history, especially from the earlier or sub-Apostolic Church fathers. Thus, in the estimation of Pædobaptists among us, the opinion that infant baptism has been practised from the time of the Apostles—this opinion, while resting on a series of Scriptural facts, is strongly corroborated by post-Apostolic testimony of the Church, as represented, *e.g.*, by Tertullian,* a century after the death of

* Neander, in his abstract of Tertullian's tract on Baptism, represents him as saying precisely the reverse of this. On thinking of the question, *why* Neander so mistook a plain fact of Church history, I arrived at the conclusion that he must have been blinded by his theory of a "Christian consciousness," or power in the Church to *originate* doctrines from her own inward experience, as contrasted with her obligation to *receive* the doctrine which God has declared in His Word. And while I was thus speculating on Neander's mistake, a friend came in and began to tell me of a living German minister, who, though a Pædobaptist himself, is strongly against an Apostolic institution of infant baptism, *because* this supposed institution would (so far) knock on the head his theory of doctrinal development.

John the divine, and by Augustine, two centuries later, both giving us to know, in a connection * which evinces their truthfulness, that the practice had notoriously prevailed ever since the New Testament Church began to be. And such corroboration in kind, and much more abundant in amount, is furnished by the early Church fathers to the opinion that the Jewish Sabbath was abolished by Christ's death, and that the Christian Lord's-day has been observed by the Church ever since the day of Christ's resurrection.

In the "age of the councils," it is notorious that the Church had come to regard the Lord's-day as "the Christian Sabbath;" and we are now concerned only with the testimony of the ante-Nicene fathers. From Constantine the Great, the chain of witnesses stretches back to Ignatius and Clemens Romanus, contemporaries of the Apostles. Their testimony is

* Tertullian, when recommending that baptism should be *delayed* till near death: Augustine, in reasoning with the Pelagians on original sin, appeals to the immemorial practice of infant baptism as a thing which no man could deny.

in breadth co-extensive with the then existing Christendom and civilisation. Clement of Rome, Dionysius of Corinth, Pliny in Bithynia (Saul among the Prophets!), Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr of Syria, Clement and Origen and Peter of Alexandria, and Tertullian and Cyprian of Carthage—these “lights shining in a dark place” shine all around the horizon of the Roman world: there is not a region, hardly an important Church, that does not, in the scanty remains of the primitive Christian literature, furnish some testimony, direct or circumstantial, to the fact that the Jewish Sabbath has been antiquated by the Saviour’s death, and the Lord’s-day has been observed from the beginning of New Testament Church history. And that testimony, in connection with the series of Scripture statements already referred to, conclusively establishes the historical fact of the transposition of the resting day to the week’s beginning from its end; and, though not so obviously, yet not less conclusively, the fact that this transposition has been effected by Christ through His inspired Apostles.

This conclusion is not shaken by the recent work of Mr Cox on the literature of the Sabbath question. That work* contains a very large amount of valuable information. But the author appears to be much better able to hoard information than to employ it to good purpose: his memory is very much better than his logic. For example, his reproduction of the opinions of the Reformers is really chaotic, because he does not present their detailed utterances in the light of what I have shown to be the leading fact of Reformation Church history in this connection. And in what he says of the primitive Church he betrays the same incapacity to appreciate the nature and force of the argument from history. He strives to show that one testimony is spurious, and another misunderstood, and a third inconclusive—that no one of them is demonstratively conclusive by itself; apparently under the impression that this process will suffice for the subversion of our conclusion from Primitive Church history. But in fact, though no one of the testimonies had been

* See Appendix C.

conclusive by itself, the whole might be conclusively clear as the sunlight. The word "day" is not seen in the letter D, nor in the letter A, nor in the letter Y; but it is in the whole combination of letters, D A Y. So of the series of facts in post-Apostolic Church history in connection with the series of Scripture statements regarding the first day of the week. Though many objections made by Mr Cox were sustained in detail, yet the argument from those facts and statements as a whole would remain in force of historical demonstration. And the facts as represented by Mr Cox himself, in connection with the statements remembered by every Bible reader, cannot be accounted for except on the supposition of Dominicals and Sabbatarians, that the Lord's-day has been observed since the time of the Apostles, and was instituted by the Apostles of the Lord.

But we Sabbatarians are by no means so hysterically anxious about this testimony of the Primitive Church as the Dominicals. For, while the fact which it corroborates is the *only*

thing their theory has to stand upon, our doctrine rests, not on the one isolated fact of Apostolic institution of the Lord's-day, but on a series of Scripture facts extending from the book of Revelation back to the first chapter of Genesis; so that, as I have shown in last Chapter, many of those who have denied that Apostolic institution nevertheless felt warranted in claiming for their Lord's-day observance the sanction of moral law as declared in the Fourth Commandment. But though we have not nearly so much need of it, we join the Dominicals in welcoming the testimony of the early Church to the historical fact which was patent to her observation; a testimony which aids, *e.g.*, in the demolition of the "Sabbatarians," so called at the Reformation time, who contend for the Saturday as the day of weekly rest.

But Dominicals appeal to the primitive fathers as authorities on a question, not merely of historical fact, patent to their observation, but really of theological doctrine addressed to their judgment — the question, *viz.*, of the

internal relation of the New Testament Lord's-day to the Old Testament Sabbath, and of the Fourth Commandment to both ; the question whether, as Mr Gilfillan puts it, the two institutions, with a specific difference, have not a generic unity ? Or whether, as it may be put, though differing in form they are not one in substance, presenting two aspects of one unchanging law of nature. This is far from being the real question between us and the Dominicals : rather, it is the question between some of the first Reformers and their successors, *e.g.*, between Calvin and the Westminster divines. And on *this* question, of theological doctrine, the opinion of the early fathers is of exceedingly small importance.

Their opinion, of course, has no absolute authority, so as to rule our faith ; for they, like the Reformers, were not inspired of God for this end. And on the scale of that comparative authority which attaches to clear and full comprehension of the Christian system, the early fathers are not only immeasurably be-

neath the Reformers, but really lower than any other class of Christian teachers represented in Christian literature. Even when endowed with real and great theological genius, as in the case of Tertullian and Origen, their genius was so wildly undisciplined that their doctrinal speculations, though richly suggestive, have no authority whatever. Their controversies with the Jews, the Pagans, and the semi-Pagan Gnostics, led them to the close study only of the outline of the Christian system and its evidences as compared with unchristian systems on the whole. The deliberate study of Christian doctrine as now understood by us, the endeavour to comprehend the facts of our religion in their inward principles and reciprocal relations as a system—this did not, properly speaking, begin till it had been thrust upon the Church by the rise of the Arian and Pelagian heresies within her own borders, in that “age of the councils,” the age of really scientific theologians like Athanasius and Augustine, which, as I have said, was signalised by the definitive statement and acceptance of our

theory of a "Christian Sabbath." The early fathers are important as witnesses to historical facts within reach of their observation, and also as evincing by their *silence* the absence in their time, at least in its developed form, of that anti-christian system which buds in Bishop Wordsworth and blossoms in Pius Ninth. But to make *them*, in their infancy of Christian thought, authorities in a question of doctrine against the Catholic Church, would be to bind the Christian world in the swaddling-clothes of perpetual babyhood.

But further, the early fathers do not pronounce in favour of the merely Dominical theory. To one who has looked at their statements only as they are arranged by the skill of Dr Hesse, this may appear a bold assertion. But he who can be judicial, and will look at the statements in their historical connection, the *setting* of Primitive Church history, shall see that the assertion is strictly true. The statements do not contradict our Sabatarian doctrine: they merely at the ut-

most do not affirm it; so that Dr Hessey's logic is no better than that of the Irishman who thought to rebut the testimony of ten witnesses who *had* seen him perpetrate a crime by producing twenty witnesses who had *not*.

The early Christian fathers had frequent occasion to speak of the "Sabbath" as antiquated by Christ's death. But by this "Sabbath," Dr Hessey well knows, was meant the *Jewish* Sabbath, observed on the Saturday. This Jewish "Sabbath" continued to be observed along with the Christian Lord's-day, as circumcision continued to be observed along with baptism, by Jewish Christians, for some considerable time after its abolition by the death of Christ. When the observance was not represented as necessary to salvation, or as required by Christ's law, it was tolerated as a useful preparation for observing the Lord's-day. But when it was so represented, the Primitive Church fathers spoke of the "Sabbath" in a tone of disparagement and censure which reminds us of Paul's remarks about "Sabbaths" and "days."

And again, "the Sabbath," *as opposed* to the Lord's-day, was one standing subject of the Church's then great controversy with the unconverted Jews. Although, therefore, that early Church had believed and confessed our Sabbatarian doctrine, we could easily account for her expressions in disparagement of "the Sabbath," by the circumstance that the *Jewish Sabbath* is what was then understood by this name. We could understand why her teachers should studiously avoid the application of the name to the Lord's-day, because this application of the name might lead simple-minded believers to embrace the thing which was generally understood by the name, viz., the Jewish Sabbath as opposed to the Lord's-day.

But the early Church was not explicitly or even consciously Sabbatarian. From Origen and others, Mr Gilfillan has produced some statements which appear to indicate, on the part of some of her teachers, a recognition of the substantial oneness of the Old Testament Sabbath with the New Testament Lord's-day,

—statements which Dr Hessey leaves wholly unaccounted for. With such statements on record, I think it very strange that he should venture to speak as he does speak of the testimony of the Primitive Church. But, on the other hand, I believe that the statements do not necessarily imply that even those who made them were consciously and deliberately Sabbatarian: they may be fairly construed to mean merely that the Lord's-day has *in some way* come in place of the Jewish Sabbath, and has *some* foundation in the nature of things. And certainly, the Primitive Church as a whole was far from being consciously and explicitly Sabbatarian.

What she *might* have thought if she had conclusively thought on the question between Sabbatarians and Dominicals, may be divined from a sentence uttered by Tertullian, when he has occasion to glance for an instant in the direction of that question. He is reasoning against the heretic Marcion, who maintains that the Old Testament Creator is not the

New Testament Redeemer; an opinion which seems to underlie the position of Dr Macleod,* and of others who plead for what they call "Christianity *versus* Judaism," and what I call "Christianity *versus* the Gospel of Christ." On behalf of his general doctrine, Marcion has appealed to the particular case of the Sabbath, affirming that Christ came, *inter alia*, to destroy the Sabbath. Tertullian answers that Christ came not to destroy the Sabbath law, but to fulfil it; and that "it became Him who has hallowed the Sabbath as Creator to hallow it still more by His beneficent work as Redeemer." Here, through The Master's "coal-bright" obscurity, we see, in germ, the Sabatarian theory: the one true (though undisciplined) theologian of the Primitive Latin Church points in the same direction with Origen, the one true (though undisciplined) theologian of the Primitive Greek Church. But here Tertullian is before his age — anticipates, for the instant, Athanasius and Augustine.

* See B. II. Cap. I.

Neither he nor the Church of his time was explicitly Sabbatarian. She did not avowedly rest her Lord's-day observance on the Fourth Commandment. She did not expressly declare that the Lord's-day is the "Christian Sabbath." And if she had been abruptly asked the (doctrinal) question, whether the two institutions, superficially antagonistic, like circumcision and baptism, are not, like circumcision and baptism, fundamentally one, she might, perhaps, have answered in the negative. For she had no disciplined theological power to deal conclusively with such a question, and the settlement of the question was left for a later generation which had the power. As to the early Church, the question was never fully and fairly before her mind. Though we had the lost treatise "On the Lord's-day" by Melito of Sardis, it is all but certain that even in that we would find no discussion of the question between the Sabbatarian and Dominical theories. For from the whole course of her history and teaching it is plain that the early Church had gone no further in her thinking on this subject than to recog-

nise the historical fact, that the Jewish Sabbath has been abolished, and the Christian Lord's-day has come in its place. She had formed *no* theory of the Lord's-day, Sabbatarian or Dominical. And it would have been strange if she had. The time for theorising, even on leading facts of Christianity, had not yet come. And *any* theory of a matter so comparatively small as the weekly day of rest would have been an unmistakable anachronism. Although, therefore, the authority of the early fathers on questions of theological doctrine had been as great as it is really small, that authority would have been altogether unavailing on *either* side of the question now before us.

But the Primitive Church testimony, though inconclusive in itself, is important in connection both with what had gone before it and with what has come after it. As to what had gone before it—the Bible revelation—we have shown that the post-Apostolic Church testimony corroborates one of the Bible facts on which our Sabbatarian theory reposes, *the only* Bible fact

which the Dominical theory pretends to be built on—the fact of Apostolic institution of the Lord's-day. And with reference to what has come after, in subsequent Church history, we now shall find that the Primitive Church testimony is one link of a chain, one ray of a *pencil* of light, for the demonstration of our theory of a "Christian Sabbath," so far as any such thing can be demonstrated on the ground of Church history or human authority.

St Vincent's maxim, "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,*" may suffice for those great leading facts of our religion which no one can be a Christian without believing and confessing. But with reference to such secondary matters as that of the Sabbath or Lord's-day, a much less stringent rule must be accepted. Instead of excluding from the witness-box every one who has not expressly and formally pronounced on the question, we may safely regard as relevant evidence, though it should be unconscious, every utterance in word or life regarding the Lord's-day; look on the whole

system of such relevant utterances as a system of facts to be accounted for; and conclude that whatever hypothesis *accounts for* the facts is evidenced as true by the facts for which it accounts. This rule is but a generalisation of the remark I have made about the logic of Mr Cox. And in application of this rule—"The true theory is that which *accounts for* all the facts"—we claim the Primitive Church as an unconscious witness in behalf of our theory of a "Christian Sabbath." For her testimony constitutes one part of a system of historical facts which are accounted for by that theory alone, and which, therefore, constitute a system of circumstantial evidence in behalf of that theory.

On the supposition that our theory is true, it is easy to account for the fact that the Primitive Church did not explicitly recognise and confess it. In the Church's explicit recognition and confession of revealed truth there has been a process of gradual development, analogous to the gradual development in God's revelation of the truth by His Word. Thus, with

reference to the substance of our religion—

1. Corresponding to the Old Testament Scriptures, the Primitive Church is occupied mainly with apprehending and proclaiming the great fact of a real revelation of God, and a real redemption by the grace of that God, the Father the Son and the Holy Ghost.
2. Corresponding to the Gospel History, the Church, down to her completed Reformation, is engaged in a long agony of contending, finally victorious, against a dominant and domineering pharisaic apostacy, and for the great fact of salvation by faith in the righteousness of Christ. And,
3. Corresponding to the Apostolic labours of planting and training by demonstration of the Spirit, the Reformation Church of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is engaged in carefully collating the facts which the glorious Reformation has fully restored to light, grouping them round their centre in the crucified Christ, and adjusting them, or the doctrines regarding them, into a complete, coherent, theological system, the only such system—complete, coherent, theological—that our world has ever seen.

That there has been such a development with reference to our religion as a whole, not in origination of doctrines by the Church, but in recognition of doctrine in the Bible, is a plain matter of historical fact. And that there has been such a development with reference to the Sabbath or Lord's-day, may be reasonably presumed, and can be historically proved. 1. As I have shown in this Chapter, the Primitive Church, carrying us back to Pentecost, bears witness that the Lord's-day has been observed from the beginning of the new dispensation of the Spirit, without expressly declaring what is the reason or *rationale* of this observance. 2. As I have shown in last Chapter, at the time of the Reformation the Catholic Church, both Popish and Protestant, carrying us back to Sinai, recognises as the reason of our Lord's-day observance the moral law as declared in the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue. And, 3. As I have shown in Chapter II., the "Reformed" Protestant Church, the only Church really free from the blinding influence of man-made Church festivals, has carried us back to

Eden and the first estate, by affirming that the Fourth Commandment, in its substance as moral law, prescribes not merely *some* days of religious rest, but "one day in seven;" so that the Lord's-day of the New Testament is one in substance with the Sabbath of the Old, and the Lord's-day is the "Christian Sabbath." Up to this point, therefore, there is a manifest continuous development. From this point, since the time of the Westminster Assembly, there has manifestly been no further development: in recent Church history there has been nothing that so much as appears to be a further development in doctrinal apprehension of the true nature and reciprocal relations of the Sabbath and Lord's-day.

From this historical induction the natural inference is, that the conclusion in which the "Reformed" Protestant Churches have rested is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as God has revealed it, regarding the weekly day of rest. In consistency with this conclusion, we can account for the indefiniteness

of Romanists, Lutherans, and Anglicans, on the ground that their false position in relation to Church festivals has made it morally impossible for them to see the truth in its Scriptural fullness, which condemns their system. The questionable utterances of the first Reformers are accounted for by the fact that they had not fully and carefully studied the whole question, and that their mind was clouded by their peculiar connection, both friendly and hostile, with Popish Rome. And the silence of the Primitive Church is accounted for by the fact, both that she too did not consider our question, and that she too was disturbed and biassed by a controversy regarding the day of rest—her controversy with the Jews. But *the* great fact, both of Primitive Church history and of modern Church history—the fact for which our theory accounts, and for which no other theory can account—that great fact in the present controversy is this, that while neither the early fathers nor the early Reformers as a class were explicitly and consciously Sabbatarian, yet they did not expressly deny our doctrine : there were

circumstances in each case which account for their non-recognition of it, and as soon as these circumstances were altered, the ancient Church through Athanasius and Angustine,* and the modern Church through the Synod of Dordt and the Westminster Assembly, declared the doctrine towards which everything before had been silently pointing. Thus the whole facts of Church history in this connection constitute a system for which our doctrine accounts. And therefore we claim the whole system of historical facts as a system of circumstantial evidence in favour of our doctrine, which accounts for them.

This is very much more than we need. As I have said in the second Chapter, the only historical question that seriously concerns us is this—“Are the *phenomena* of Church history consistent with the *possibility* of a Biblical revelation of our doctrine?” And to this question we can much more than answer,

* In corroboration of the view I have given of Primitive Church testimony, see Appendix D.

“Yes.” We can say with truth, not only that the facts of Church history are consistent with the supposition that our doctrine is true and divine, but that they *demand* that supposition as the only thing which can really and fully account for them. And thus, in favour of our doctrine, there is established the strongest presumption that Church history can furnish. The “ecclesiastical” theory of the Lord’s-day is merely a modern (Popish) innovation. The Dominical theory has never been the creed of any Christian Church. Our Sabbatarian theory, so far as there has been any Church doctrine of the Lord’s-day, is the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Even where it has not been formally confessed in her creeds it has been attested by the unconscious evidence of the whole course of her history:—in short, it is the only thing that will *account for* the course of Church life and Church thought in relation to the subject now in debate.

I have dwelt on this ground of presumptive evidence of Church history and human author-

ity, because this has been chosen as the favourite ground of our adversaries. And I have shown that even on their own chosen ground they have not so much as "a leg to stand upon." Consciously weak on the high and clear ground of Bible evidence, they naturally seek shelter on the lower ground, comparatively obscure, the jungle of Church history. It is, therefore, a good service, for practical purposes, to have driven them from this covert. And having thus far cleared the way for a judicial consideration of the question on its merits, I leave the covert on the yet lower ground of malignant gossip about Sabbath observance to be dealt with in the third and last Book.





BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRACTICE AND PERCEPTS OF JESUS.

IN this book I purpose to present the same subject from various points of view. This will necessitate a certain amount of repetition. But this will be more than amply made up by the advantage of looking at every aspect of the subject in the whole condensed light of Scripture revelation. And I will introduce the discussion of the question on the ground of God's written Word by commenting on the lessons derivable from the Gospel history of the Word Incarnate.

The intellectual awakening of which I have

spoken in the preface is characterised by a disposition to make every question turn on the teaching or the life of Jesus the Son of Mary. On the part of the sceptical or Sadduceean movers, this disposition is but one aspect of a general disposition to accept the smallest possible amount of positive Bible truth; for no one can make any pretension to the name of Christian who does not profess some sort of respect for the Jesus of Gospel history. But on the part of Christians or believers, the disposition is a wholesome one. It is true that, from the first verse of Genesis to the last of Revelation, every word of God prepares the believer for the due apprehension of all that follows; and that no one is duly prepared for apprehending any part of Scripture who has not been educated, in faith and love, by all that has gone before. Yet in a very obvious respect the Gospel story of Jesus the Christ is the centre and foundation of all theological study. For the Son of Mary is the key-stone of the system of Bible evidence: everything rests on His purity and truthfulness as a man: no one who acknowledges His per-

sonal purity and truthfulness can consistently stop short of receiving the Bible as a true revelation of God. And Jesus the Christ is the life-giving Sun of the Bible system of doctrine: without Him, that doctrine is a system without a sun, a body without a soul: He *is* "The Truth." We therefore welcome as an auspicious symptom the prevalent disposition of Christians to give peculiar prominence to the living person of Jesus.

Against our doctrine, with reference to the question of the Sabbath, to the wider question of the commandments of God in general, and to the yet wider question of the written Word of God, an appeal has been made to Jesus by morbid pietists on the one hand and by cold-blooded Sadducees on the other. They claim Him as their authority for rejecting the Sabbath law, and disclaiming allegiance to detailed commandments in general, and disdainfully disregarding the letter or form of the express mind of God as communicated in the Bible. They maintain that His person and life consti-

tute an all-sufficient revelation of truth and law, so that the Incarnate Word really supersedes the written Word of God. And it will be profitable here to consider the real bearing of the Saviour's personal history and teaching on the varied aspects of the question now before us.

1. As to the *Written Word* of God. Here our adversaries make some confused reference to the distinction between the letter of the word and its spirit. But this distinction is nothing to their purpose. In any written word, the spirit or meaning is inseparable from the letter or form: on the one hand, the letter without the spirit is mere printer's ink; and on the other hand, it is only in the letter that the spirit has "a local habitation or a name." *Where*, if not in the letter of the written word, do our *false* spiritualists find that spirit of God's mind which is revealed in Scripture? Is it in some "innermost divine consciousness of their own," independent of that written word which is His mind expressed? If it be, then let them give up the name of Christian; for Christianity,

under one leading aspect, consists in believing "the *Word* of Christ" as prophet of the Church. But they have appealed to Jesus; and to Jesus we shall go with them.

They choose to reject the written word in favour of some "spirit" which they represent as peculiarly Christ-like and Christian. But, as I have said in B. I. Cap. I., this spirit of theirs is plainly antichristian: their Antinomian cant about a spirit which rejects the word is directly opposed to the teaching of Christ,—*e.g.* in John XIV. 21–26, where He represents it as one great work of His Spirit of truth to lead men to receive and cherish the Word which expresses the truth. And this part of His teaching is amply illustrated by His example.

After His baptism, or public consecration as the Christ of God, the first words which we find Him uttering are, "It is written . . . It is written . . . It is written again." The enemy, after exhausting the lower forms of temptation, when driven to his last shift, has:

looked for the least ignoble temptation that can be presented to a rational spirit, and quotes one of the noblest texts of one of the noblest chapters in the Bible. (Ps. xci.) Thus one of the two greatest spirits that ever met in mortal conflict reluctantly confesses the supreme importance of the "written" Word of God. But the Spirit of Jesus has made the same confession from the first. From the beginning of His wilderness temptation to its end, so far from drawing upon that "innermost divine consciousness" which *with Him* was an independent reality,—He rests with a babe-like simplicity on that "It is written, it is written, it is written again," which is to this hour the stay of believers—and the scorn of Sadducees. Such is the example He sets us in that temptation which is His probation as the Christ, the trial of His qualification for the mediatorial office and work.

And such is the example He continues to set us throughout the temptation or trial of His life to its close,—until, on the cross, He breathes

out His life in a sentence of Old Testament Scripture. The whole course of His ministry was in keeping with its beginning and its end. The human life of God's incarnate Son is the most impressive illustration on record of the first sentence of that ministry: "It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every *Word* of God." Though under one aspect His ministry accomplished a revolution, by subverting the dominant Pharisaism and Sadduceeism, yet in its leading aspect it was a re-formation,—a re-utterance of the old Word of God, in a form adapted to the circumstances of Teacher and taught in "the fulness of time." No one who has not made a special study of the subject can be aware to how large an extent the instructions of Jesus are a reproduction of the very words of Old Testament Scripture. There is no leading principle uttered by Him that had not in substance been uttered by His Spirit of old. There is hardly an illustration, even among the detailed parables, that had not been previously given, at least in germ, in that Scripture which was then in the

hands of the Church. Throughout His ministry, He avowedly rested on the Old Testament Scripture as His warrant and witness in all things. And even when there was no obvious occasion for a reference to that Scripture, its words came unbidden to His lips, as if the old Hebrew Bible had indeed been to Him as the breath of life. If, then, we will follow His example, we too shall act on His maxim, "Man shall live only by the *Word* of God."

But Jesus, if we will believe Him, is not only a model man but also a teacher from God. And if we will in good faith appeal to Him, we must not only look to the practice of Jesus the man but listen to the precepts or doctrinal instructions of Jesus the prophet. But if we will receive His instructions,—*e.g.*, as delivered in John xiv. 26, and xv. 26, 27,—we shall accept at least the New Testament written word as a divine external rule of our faith and practice. And if we will obey His precepts,—*e.g.*, as recorded in John v. 39–47,—we shall receive the Old Testament Scriptures as being no less divine and

authoritative. It is strange that our modern Sadducees should have appealed to Jesus as an incarnate reason why we should repudiate Moses; for Jesus Himself has said, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" This question, no doubt, was primarily addressed to Jews under the Old Testament, with whom belief or disbelief in Moses was practically equivalent to belief or disbelief in the God who had spoken through Moses. But it has an obvious application to us. Jesus has set upon Moses the seal of His authority; so that no one can reject the Jewish lawgiver without virtually rejecting the Saviour who has sealed Him. Jesus has set His seal on "the (Old Testament) Scriptures" as a whole; so that it is logically impossible to rest upon Him as the chief corner-stone without consenting to be built on the foundation of the prophets as well as of the Apostles. In short, if we will really receive this Jesus as a teacher from God we shall accept the whole written word as a revelation of God for our guidance to this hour.

Once more, if we will believe Him, Jesus is

not only a prophet of God but God's eternal Son, one in substance with the Father, His equal in power and glory, so that He can say with truth, "I and the Father are one (*thing*)."

And if we thus regard Him, we shall receive "all Scripture" as being not only sealed with His authority, but "given by inspiration" of His Spirit. For "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," and the Apostles avowedly have delivered to us only what they have received from the Lord; so that he who rejects any part of the written word, Old Testament or New, really rejects the Saviour Son of God speaking for our healing and guidance in His Word.

2. As to *the commandments* of God in general, which are now represented as *superseded* by love, or by a *lawless* liberty which does *not* find its glorious realisation in keeping the commandments. It will be seen that this objection really tells against commandments *as such*, *i.e.*, against *all* detailed precepts, positively revealed, whether moral in their nature or not. But, in the first instance at

least, it is meant to tell against the Ten Commandments of the Decalogue. And it is with special reference to these that we now look to the practice and precepts of our Master.

(1.) Let us look at the *example* of Jesus the man. He was "made under the law." *He perfectly obeyed the Ten Commandments.* So that if we will follow His example we shall go and do likewise. So even of believers, who do not regard His obedience merely as exemplary, but know that it was vicarious. They know that His obedience though not merely an example is really an example. They, therefore, though consciously freed by His vicarious obedience unto death from slavish fear of death and from the burden of Old Testament ceremonial, yet feel bound by His example to obey the written commandments of God, specially those which are not ceremonial or positive but natural or moral. But the lesson comes home with peculiar force to those Sadducees who believe that His obedience is *merely* exemplary and not vicarious, that it is *nothing but* an example :

they, in logical consistency, should feel bound to obey, not only those moral commandments which we recognise as binding all men, but also that whole ceremonial system, "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," from which *we* believe that His vicarious obedience has set us free.

(2.) Let us listen to the *teaching* of Jesus the prophet. What that teaching is, I show in the following chapter. He employs "the commandments" of the Decalogue as the instrument of testing the character of man in his relation to God. He declares with special reference to the Decalogue, that He has not come to destroy the law but to fulfil; and that whoever will break—literally, "loosen," or "deny the *binding* force of"—the least of the commandments, and teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. And so far from saying that love supersedes the law, he declares that the law is only the detailed application of the "two great commandments," Love God, Love thy neighbour,—

that "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." These two great commandments, therefore, if we will believe Him, are the soul of the Old Testament system, the life-giving spirit which keeps the body from corruption and dissolution; and which only in that body has a sensible being and power. Hence, all who seriously receive Him as a teacher from God, "if they love Him, will keep His commandments:" if they love God and their neighbour, they will obey those Ten Words which are the incarnation and detailed application of the "royal law of love."

This lesson for all men comes home with peculiar force to those who lay peculiar emphasis on the commonplace truth, that the Decalogue lay at the foundation of the Old Testament Church-constitution, or of God's covenant with His Church of old. That Church-constitution had on the face of it a veil of evanescent ceremonial, which has passed away with the evanescent circumstances of the Old Testament Church. But in its substance, as dis-

tinguished from evanescent circumstances, that Old Testament constitution remains for the Church of all ages and lands; so that, if the Decalogue lay at the foundation of that constitution, it may be presumed that it is of perpetual obligation at least on Christians. Again, the covenant of God with His people cannot have been merely ceremonial, superficial, formal,—*i.e.*, Pharisaical. It must have included some moral element; it must have bound them to do what man is bound to do as man. And that moral element—where is it to be sought for, if not in the code which lay at the foundation of the covenant? They, therefore, who lay peculiar emphasis on the common-place truth, that the Decalogue lay at the foundation of the Church's constitution and of God's covenant with her, are under superadded obligation to believe what we believe on the authority of Christ, that the Ten Commandments are of universal and perpetual obligation, and that the obligation is peculiarly incumbent on Christians.

(3.) Let us remember that this prophet is

“*God* manifested in the flesh,”—*the same* God who gave the law to Israel on Sinai. This fact is surely forgotten by our adversaries when they venture to speak of the Old Testament law with contempt, or plainly show that they despise the Old Testament even when they profess to revere it. In B. I. Cap. IV. I have mentioned the heretic Marcion, who maintained that the Old Testament Creator is not the same God as the Redeemer of the New, but rather a malignant demon from whom the New Testament Redeemer has delivered us. There is nothing new under the sun. Those who express a contemptuous hatred of the Old Testament as opposed to the New, in whole or in part, really speak against Jesus as the Son of God, blaspheme Him who as “Angel of the Covenant” was revealed to the ancient Israel, and now has been manifested to the modern Israel in the flesh. They unconsciously ventilate the vile old heresy of Marcion in a new (?) form. For the only ground on which their appeals to Jesus *against* the Old Testament can rest is the principle of Marcion, that the Old Testament Creator is

not the New Testament Redeemer — or the Manichæan principle, that there are really two Gods, the one evil and malignant (revealed in the Old Testament), and the other good and benignant (revealed in the New).

We, on the other hand, who really believe that the one true God is revealed in “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever,” of course believe that the commandments, which yesterday were in a sense the foundation of His covenant with Israel, are to-day in the same sense, as a rule of life, the foundation of His covenant with the same Israel under the New Testament, and shall to-morrow be His instrument in judging the whole world, and determining the destiny of all men through the eternal day — or night.

3. As to the *Fourth Commandment* in particular. This our adversaries regard as *the* illustrative sample, in relation to which our Saviour’s sayings and doings justify them

in assailing not only the Sabbath law but the whole Decalogue, and even the written Word of God as such. And on this account, and also because it immediately concerns us at present, I will speak fully of the example and precepts of Jesus in reference to this one of God's Ten Words.

(1.) *He perfectly obeyed the Sabbath law.* Our modern Sadducees loudly praise Him as a Sabbath desecrator. The ancient Pharisees no less loudly condemned Him as a Sabbath desecrator. But here Pilate and Herod combine in crucifying The Truth. If we will believe Him, He was no desecrator of the Sabbath, but perfectly obeyed the Sabbath law. This is the ground on which He *invariably* stood in self-defence, on all the occasions on which He was accused of perpetrating or sanctioning a violation of the law. He did not plead that He had a right to break it, but He maintained that he had perfectly obeyed it. If, then, we will be ruled by His example, we shall not violate the law which He perfectly obeyed.

The law thus perfectly obeyed by Him was the Sabbath law, not merely as given for mankind in the Fourth Commandment, but as given to the Jews, with ceremonial circumstances, and a penal sanction of death, peculiar to them under the Mosaic discipline. Here, then, we mark the culmination of a lesson which we have been learning from the outset of this chapter. Our adversaries profess to have *outgrown* the Old Testament, to have a spirit *too large* for the letter of God's word, a love which cannot find room for its fulness in the commandments of His law. They have thus not been ashamed to echo, in sense if not in sound, what infidels have dared to say of God's Old Testament revelation, that it is but a suit of "Hebrew old clothes," immeasurably too small for the great men of our enlightened generation. Considering the character of those who speak thus, as compared with Moses, and David, and Isaiah, their airs of superiority are simply ludicrous. But the foolish pretension assumes an aspect of profound impiety, when we remember that

the word thus despised occupied the whole mind, and the commandments thus rejected gave scope to the whole heart's love of God's incarnate Son. And the mingled impiety and folly become most glaringly obvious when we consider the contrasted aspects of Him and of the despisers towards this one commandment of the Sabbath. The contrast begins to appear in the fact, that He perfectly obeyed the Sabbath law. *This* part of the suit of "Hebrew old clothes," immeasurably too small for our Sadducean Christians, has been worn by Jesus the Son of God. But the contrast will appear more fully as we proceed.

(2.) He declared the *purpose* of the law to be "mercy and not sacrifice." Hence *the exception* in cases of "necessity and mercy." On account of our professing to recognise this exception to the rule, we Sabbatarians are scoffed at by Dr Macleod. But this is not the only case in which that Christian minister has inadvertently "stumbled at" the foundation in Christ.

In recognising that exception, we do but follow the example of the Son of God. And the exception as declared by the incarnate Word or *Reason* of God (*Logos = ratio vel oratio*), commends itself to the reason of man. The purpose of the Sixth Commandment is to guard the sacredness of human life. But for this purpose, which is the spirit or meaning of the law, it may be necessary to depart from the letter of the law, "Thou shall not kill:" *e.g.*, in the death-punishment of murderers, what society seeks is not the destruction of life but really the preservation of life, by solemn judicial vindication of its sacredness. And in thus departing from the letter of the law in order to obey its spirit, society does not reject the written Word of God, but accepts the letter of that word as the instrument of expressing the spirit of it, and obeys the word itself by doing *what God really means* men to do: *i.e.*, by effectually providing for the protection of human life. So of the Fourth Commandment. *What God really means* in this commandment is to give rest to man's body and soul. Therefore, He means that we should

do everything we innocently can for the realisation of that rest; for example, that all should make due needful provision for bodily ease and comfort, and that ministers should be doing *their* great work for the healing and comforting of souls. And thus in all cases of real "necessity and mercy," in working for the realisation of the God-given rest of body and soul we are not breaking the law but really obeying it, that is, doing what God really means us to do.

Hence, too, *the law itself*. Our adversaries appear to imagine that "mercy" is shown *only* in the exceptional cases; that the law itself is *unmerciful*, imposing a painful burden; and that the cases of "necessity and mercy" are simply cases in which the harshness of the law becomes intolerable, that is, *extreme* cases of the ordinary inhuman spirit of the law. It is not from the gospel history of Jesus that they have learned to think thus, but from their own unconscious Manichæism. He has taught us that the whole Old Testament system is pervaded by the "mercy" of God to man. He sets

forth the Decalogue in general as a notable instance of that love of God, because it gives man so many calls and inducements to the blessedness of loving God and his neighbour. And what He gives us to understand with reference to the Ten Commandments in general He shows to be conspicuously true of the Sabbath law in particular.

It is a significant illustration of the unchristian position of our adversaries that this law, which they have selected as *the* illustrative sample of the harshness and inhumanity of the Old Testament religion as opposed to the religion of Jesus, is the one only commandment selected by Jesus Himself as an illustrative sample of that "mercy and not sacrifice" which He declares to be the spirit of the Old Testament religion as a whole. (Matth. XII. 7.)

In selecting this law for that purpose, he does not, of course, deny, but virtually affirms the mercifulness of that religion of which it is an illustrative sample. This virtual affirmation

extends to those minute ceremonial regulations, and even to those severe penal sanctions, of the theocratic system, which have been abrogated by His death. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." Under the Old Testament the Church was a child. What a child needs, in order to be trained for a healthful maturity, is a daily and hourly subjection to positive precepts, all imbued with parental tenderness as well as invested with parental authority, and all combining to form a *habit of subjection* to lawful authority,—a habit which shall remain after the precepts which instrumentally formed it have long been forgotten. And even the severe penal sanctions were fitted to train the Church to feel the great *value* of the ordinances which were guarded at such a cost. Such is the training which every generation of children receives in well-conditioned Christian families. This training God gave to His Church in her Old Testament childhood by the ceremonial regulations and penal sanctions which are abrogated now. And we, who enjoy the fruits of that training, in a disciplined habit of subjection to

God's law, may well confess, as we look back to the Old Testament discipline, that its presiding spirit was always "mercy and not sacrifice."

But in selecting the Sabbath-law as *the* illustrative sample of that merciful spirit, the Saviour tells us, in effect, that *this* law is so *manifestly and signally* merciful as to be of itself a vindication of the mercifulness of the whole Old Testament system to which it pertained as a part. And that it actually is so can be easily seen by any one who will read the Fourth Commandment in a really judicial spirit. A gentleman who does not make what we regard as a visible profession of Christianity recently told me, that he thought himself "broad" enough, but not nearly so "broad" as Dr Macleod, and that as to the Fourth Commandment, he needed no proof of its divinity: in his estimation, the commandment itself has internal evidence of being of God; for the careful provision it makes for the comfort of slaves and even of beasts would never have been spontaneously made by any nation of selfish men.

Such is the impression naturally produced by the commandment on a clear and unsophisticated mind: nothing but the artificial sophistry of the schools could ever have blinded a learned D.D. to its manifest spirit of mercy.

The Sabbath which the Saviour thus characterised as a *signal* illustration of the mercifulness of His religion as revealed of old, was the *Jewish* Sabbath; for it was in its Jewish form alone that the Sabbath existed in His day. From this we may learn what was the true character of that Jewish Sabbath of whose harshness and austerity and gloomy asceticism so much has been ignorantly said. The impression of the first Reformers and of our modern Sadducees regarding the Sabbath of the Old Testament Church, appears to have been derived from the *pharisaical* custom of Sabbath observance. The pharisaical notion of the Sabbath was really antagonistic to that of spiritual-minded Jews under the Old Testament. Of the true spirit of Old Testament Jewish Sabbath-keeping, we have a fine illustration in the

92d Psalm, one of those which are headed, "A psalm for the Sabbath-day."* The whole song is replete with festive gladness, without any allusion to "first-rate dinners." And in one of its details it is curiously contrasted with the recent proposal to *run trains* in the morning and evening of the Lord's-day: the spiritual-minded Jew resolves to *sing psalms* in the morning and evening. A gentleman who drew my attention to this contrast, at the same time reminded me of the fact that on the first Christian Sabbath the risen Redeemer appeared *in the morning* to the women at the sepulchre, and *in the evening* to the assembled disciples: does any one expect Him to appear to morning or evening Sabbath railway travellers? The reader of that psalm will probably believe that the Old Testament saint was very much more truly and highly spiritual than those who now object to the Old

* One pulpit orator in the recent movement has given as an illustration of the gloominess of the Jewish Sabbath the *fact* (!) that there is no psalm expressing gladness or thankfulness on account of this "day which the Lord has made;" and thus has illustrated in his own person the ignorant prejudice which is at the root of much of our modern anti-sabbatarianism.

Testament Sabbath on the ground of its being incompatible with *their* "spirituality"—as I have no doubt it is. Again, we have a description of the true spirit of Jewish Sabbath-keeping in Is. LVIII., 13, 14. There we see that what our Sadducees represent as a degrading bondage the true Old Testament Israel called "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable," enabling them to "delight themselves in the Lord," and to "feed on the heritage of Jacob their father," *i.e.*, on God's redeeming love. And the conclusion thus suggested by the nature of the Sabbath law, and by the spirit in which it was received by the true Old Testament Church, is abundantly established by the example and words of our Lord: *that* cannot have been a degrading bondage of the letter which He felt and confessed as a signal illustration of the merciful spirit of that religion which in the Old Testament He had revealed.*

* The subject of "The Jewish Sabbath" is admirably treated by the Rev. D. K. Drummond, of St Thomas' Chapel, Edinburgh, in a pamphlet published by John Maclaren, Edinburgh, 1862. From him I take the following notes:—1. The prohibition to

(3.) He declared that "the Sabbath was made *for man.*" In this respect (as I will show in Cap. IV.) the law of the Sabbath, like the law of the family, is contrasted with the eight imperial laws of the Decalogue. These, no doubt, were made for man in the sense of being fitted and intended to serve as a boon to bless his life, and much more as a law to rule his life. But the two provincial laws of the Sabbath and the family are distinguished from the imperial by the circumstance of having been made for man *alone*, and of having been made for him mainly in order to

kindle a fire on the Sabbath was delivered in connection with the building of the Tabernacle; and was presumably meant merely with reference to that occasion, to guard the chosen people, in the ardour of their enthusiasm, from going on with the work on the day of rest; and for this purpose kindling the fire of their furnaces, for the molten work of the sanctuary. 2. Under the general name of "Sabbath" or "rest" were included several species of holy days in addition to the weekly day of rest; some of these, like our sacramental fast days, *were* superficially gloomy and ascetic, intended for the salutary discipline of "afflicting men's souls;" the pharisaic asceticism spread this gloom over *all* God's Sabbaths, even at the cost of presumptuously adding to His word; and hence the mistake of the Reformers regarding the Jewish Sabbath, and the mistake of our recent adversaries, who ought to know that a *Judaical* or pharisaical Sabbath is antichristian, while the true Jewish Sabbath is Christian in its substance though antiquated in its form.

be a boon to bless his life. God might have made man, like the other rational creatures, so as to be naturally incapable of receiving the Sabbath and the family; or, having made him as He has made him, He might not have given him these two institutions, which his actual constitution as man requires for the fulness of his completed well-being. And therefore, in first making man such as to be naturally susceptible of the law, and then building the law on the basis of the human constitution, the Creator has bestowed on mankind a signal gift of that tender mercy which extends over all His works. They, therefore, who break the Sabbath law are guilty of treading under foot, in swinish grossness of ingratitude and ignorance, a precious jewel, which should be all the more dearly prized by man because it is given to man alone. But further,

The Saviour teaches that the Sabbath was made, not merely for Jew, the man in exceptional circumstances, but "for *man*," the man *as such*, *i.e.*, for all men in all ages and lands.

From this it follows that, both as a law to rule man's life and as a boon to bless it,* God has made the Sabbath for all nations and ages. There must therefore be a Sabbath in the New Testament Church. But *where* is this Sabbath in the New Testament Church? It is, and can be, only in the Lord's-day; for this is the only festival which either we or our adversaries recognise as being divinely instituted for the Church of the new dispensation. So that it is not merely from ancestral tradition, nor merely from our own theological speculation, but really from the lips of Christ, that we have received the truth that the New Testament Lord's-day is the "Christian Sabbath." Further still,

* In Dr Macleod's pamphlet it is reasoned that, *though* there should have been a Sabbath in Paradise, it will not follow that there is a Sabbath for man fallen and depraved; *because* what was fitted for the unfallen man may not be fitted for the fallen. This reasoning at first sight strikes us as very odd; for we have been accustomed to think that if the unfallen man required the rest, *much more* it is required by the fallen and depraved man. But the oddity disappears when we recollect the "first-rate dinner" reason why the Old Testament Church was able to obey the Fourth Commandment. *Supposing* that the Sabbath is a painful burden, requiring a "first-rate dinner" to enable us to sustain it, then of course the first man unfallen was able to endure an amount of holy resting which will be intolerable to his sinful posterity.

What He has declared to be made for man is a *Sabbath*. By a Sabbath, His hearers must have understood Him to mean a day set apart for religious rest; for this is the only sort of resting-day made known by that name in the Old Testament. And that this is what He actually meant appears from the fact that in His own defence he reasoned from the analogy of the temple and the shew-bread. From this reasoning it appears, if we will believe Him, that, so far as His argument is concerned, the "Sabbath" made for man is of the same nature as the temple and the shew-bread. Now what, so far as His argument is concerned, is the nature of the temple and the shew-bread? The temple as distinguished from all other houses, and the shew-bread as distinguished from all other bread, are "holy," in the sense of being set apart for the worship of God. If, then, the Sabbath be really of the same nature as theirs, this day made for man is distinguished from all other days by being a "holy" day, set apart for the worship of God. And if the Lord's-day be the Christian Sabbath, it is

thus "one whole day in seven," set apart from the ordinary purposes of human life, and consecrated, with all due regard to emergent claims of "necessity and mercy," to religious rest. So that, not merely from ancestral tradition, nor merely from theological speculation of our own, but really from the lips of Christ, we Sabbatarians have received our doctrine of the form of Lord's-day observance.

(4.) He declared that He, as "the Son of Man, is lord also of the Sabbath." He is lord of the Sabbath and of the family in some such sense as He is "greater than the temple." The Sabbath and the family, though natural institutions, existing in Eden before man fell, had been to a large extent lost to man, as their blessings had been forfeited by his fall. And though the law of the twin institutions was revealed anew on Sinai, yet the institutions themselves, in their fulness of blessing, have been actually restored to man only by Christ's redeeming work of grace.*

* The restoration was effected under the Old Testament, before the redeeming work was done; as a workman in our day often re-

He has restored this among other things which constituted man's natural heritage of blessing forfeited by sin. And therefore He claims a "propriety in" or lordship over both the Sabbath and the family, not only on the ground of His nature as the eternal Son of God, but also and specially on the ground of His grace as the mediatorial Son of Man. His claim as to the family He asserts and seals in the baptism of infants, constituting every Christian family a "Church in the house," baptizing the natural institution into His new kingdom of grace. And as to the Sabbath He asserts and seals the same claim by transposing the resting-day to the week's beginning from its end, and giving to this Christian Sabbath the name of "the Lord's-day."

Here we see the truth that He, and He alone, has *competent authority* to effect that transposition. No human authority, of prince, or priest, or people,—no mere creature,—has power of right to alter even the form of a God-given law **ceives some part of his wages beforehand, to support his family, on the faith of his engagement to do the work.**

or institution. But the Son of Man, in the case now before us, has that power of right. What the Sabbath law requires in its substance is the consecration of one day in seven. Which day in seven shall be consecrated, is merely a question of form. And this question of form, not determined by the substance of the Sabbath law, falls to be determined by the positive institution of Him who is the "Lord of the Sabbath." When, therefore, we find reason to believe that the resting-day has been transposed by Him to the beginning of the week, we have no difficulty in believing this evidenced fact, but rather see in the evidenced transposition an incidental proof of the deity of Him by whom the change has been effected. And thus, farther,

Here we see a special reason why we should recognise the Lord's-day as the Christian *Sabbath*. In order to give Jesus all due glory as the Lord, we must recognise Him as one who has restored "*all things*." Thus in our family worship we must acknowledge the Son of Mary as the God-given and divine Head of the

Christian household, restored by His grace. And thus in our Lord's-day observance we must own Him and adore Him as "Lord of the Sabbath also," *i. e.*, we must openly confess that He who on Sinai revealed the Sabbath as an institution of nature has restored it on Calvary by His grace as Redeemer. The Dominical theory of the Lord's-day, therefore, detracts from the glory due to Jesus as the Lord. The practical looseness of Lord's-day observance countenanced by the advocates of that theory deserves the righteous wrath of Jesus, not only as Creator but also as Redeemer. And they who profane the day on the ground that "the Sabbath was made for man," are as perverted in their understanding as in their heart. The proper inference from the humane destination of the Sabbath is, that "the Son of Man is lord of it;" that this "pearl of days" is His by a blood-bought right; and that, therefore, the man who by profaning the day treads the jewel under foot, at the same time violates the majesty of that divine Son of Man who has redeemed the Sabbath for man with His blood.



CHAPTER II.

MORALITY OF THE DECALOGUE IN GENERAL.

WE have seen that the Christian world as a whole regards the Decalogue as a code of moral laws, of permanent and universal obligation.* On this account the Ten Commandments, showing us what to do, occupy a place in Christian education alongside of the Lord's Prayer, which shows us what we should ask of God. That code, in the estimation of Christians, *because* a code of moral laws, has lain at the foundation of God's

* Sound divines often explain, that they insist on calling it moral or natural only in the sense of its being universally and permanently obligatory. It is obviously only in this sense that the authors of our Confession would emphasise the morality of the Decalogue. It is in this sense that it is theologically and practically most important. A highly metaphysical mind may conceive as possible a merely *positive* law of permanent and universal obligation: some good Christians have held that *all* laws are merely positive, in the sense of being merely the express will of God.

covenant with His church under both dispensations; and has thus become the instrument of connecting, not only the New Testament with the Old Testament, but the new creation with the old creation, by showing that our Redeemer is the true God and King of the whole moral universe, and that in our redemption He does not forget His holiness, nor cease to be a righteous moral governor, but really "magnifies the law and makes it honourable" when pardoning and blessing the guilty law-breaker. Let us endeavour to ascertain from God's word whether His Catholic Church has been mistaken in this matter, or whether she has not been a faithful minister delivering to her children what she has received from the Lord.

A moral law is distinct in its nature from a positive law, whether ceremonial or judicial. A positive law is founded on some peculiar circumstances not existing in the nature or constitution of the creature: it binds only those who are in these peculiar circumstances; and them it binds only because it is the express will of the lawgiver. Such, *e. g.*, were among the

Jews the ceremonial law of the passover, and the judicial law of the death punishment of Sabbath desecrators. A moral law, on the other hand, is otherwise called natural, because it is based on the nature or constitution of man in his unchangeable relations to God and his neighbour: it binds all men in all ages and lands; and so far from its binding them merely because God has declared it, it has been declared by Him because it is obligatory in its own nature. Such, *e.g.*, are the laws, "Love God—love thy neighbour." These would have bound us by their very nature, though God had not revealed them in His word. Though there had been no Bible, yet, from the very nature of things, every man in every age and land would have been bound to love God and his neighbour. And the question to which I now proceed to speak is this:—Is the Decalogue, or code of "Ten Words," a code of moral laws, and not merely of positive laws, ceremonial or judicial? Our doctrine of the Decalogue is, that it *is* a code of moral laws; and this doctrine I now proceed to prove.

For this demonstration I will prepare the way by disposing of certain preliminary objections which have recently been revived by Dr Macleod and others, and are well known to students of Church history as the old familiar commonplaces of Antinomians. In disposing of the objections, we shall be prepared for the recognition and appreciation of the truth.

1. The objection sometimes assumes the abstract form of an appeal to the general character of the New Dispensation, as being distinctively a dispensation of the Spirit, of liberty, of love. From this it is concluded that particular commandments, laws, or words, are alien to the nature of the dispensation. This vague Antinomian cant is denounced by Dr Bonar, in the work already referred to (B. I. Cap. I.), as a symptom of real impurity of mind assuming the form of *falsetto* spiritualism, or at best a symptom of ignorance at once of God's law and of the gospel of Christ. But for the present purpose it is enough to say, that this Antinomian cant is directly opposed to the teaching of Christ,

e. g., in John XIV. 21–26. So far from recognising a law which supersedes the commandments, or a liberty without law, or a spirit which rejects the word of God, He declares that one great work of His Spirit is to lead men to “keep His words;” that the true liberty of Christians is subject to a “law of liberty;” and that the true Christian love is a love which evinces its presence by “keeping the commandments of God.”

2. The objection sometimes assumes the more definite form of the very words of Scripture, *e. g.*, that Christians are “not under law but under grace.” But we know that the devil can quote Scripture for his own purposes, and that men can wrest the word of God to their own destruction. We must, therefore, not be deluded with the sound of the words, but search into the sense of them: for “the *meaning* of the Bible is the Bible.” What, then, is the meaning of the Scripture statements to the effect that Christians are not under law? We know that Christians are not under the law

as a covenant of works; that we are not commanded to obey the Decalogue in order thereby to achieve a righteousness of our own; that we are not bound to toil at the Ten Commandments like slaves in the vain hope of achieving our salvation as the reward of our obedience. All this we joyfully confess. But the real and only question between us and our opponents is this, are not Christians under the law *as a rule of life*—as prescribing the duties which the children of God owe to their Father in heaven and to their brethren on earth? And in answer to this question I need only refer to the teaching of Christ, to which I have appealed in the preceding paragraph. A child does not differ from a slave by being free from obligation to obey the father; but rather by being in a condition to do freely and gladly in love what a slave does painfully and reluctantly for hire. He who does not feel bound to obey the commandments of the Father is not a true son, but a slave let loose, perhaps less miserable, but not less vile, than the slave in chains, cowering and shuddering under the lash.

3. The objection is sometimes based on the Preface to the Ten Commandments:—"God has not brought *me* out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage." To this objection we answer, 1st. God *has* taken all Christians out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage; He has really thus redeemed them *alone*: they alone are His true Israel: "*We* are the circumcision, who serve God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh." 2d. Though He had not taken us out of that land and house, yet He *is* "The Lord our God." All Christians believe that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the one true God of heaven and earth. And, therefore, in the words of that Preface, there is abundant reason why all Christians should feel bound to do what He commands. But, 3d. Though He had not been the Lord our God, or had not revealed the Ten Commandments, though there had been no Bible, yet we would have been bound to keep the commandments by their very nature, if they be really *moral* laws, and not merely positive.

I know, indeed, that some have said that

though the Decalogue should be a code of moral laws, yet it may in some sense be abrogated, so as to be no longer obligatory on Christians. But this is not the only case in which nonsense has been talked in behalf of heresy. If the Decalogue really be a code of moral laws, then God on Sinai declared in effect, "This is *My* view of the duty of man as man, in all nations and ages." And having said this He never can unsay it, unless He have said what was untrue, or unless He have changed His mind, or unless He have changed the moral constitution of the world as declared by Him on Sinai. The declaration of a moral law is like the placing of a star in the firmament: once placed there, it is never displaced, but shines in the firmament "for ever and ever." God may have given us new light as to the import of the law, so as to enlarge and complete our conceptions of its heart-searching height, and depth, and length, and breadth. But to talk of the *abrogation* of a really moral law, is to perpetrate an absurdity as gross as though one had talked of the abrogation of

the law of gravitation, or of the multiplication table.

We are now in a condition to look with unclouded mind on the Scripture evidence in behalf of our doctrine of the morality of the Decalogue. That evidence is furnished, partly by the *circumstances* in which the law was revealed and preserved, and mainly by the *substance* of the law itself.

1. The *circumstances* of the revelation and preservation of the Decalogue. (1.) Of the *revelation* of it. It is not merely that Israel had been delivered from Egypt with a strong hand, and miraculously led through the Red Sea and the wilderness to Mount Sinai. The utterance of the Ten Words was attended with circumstances so peculiar as to set them "high on a hill apart" from all the merely positive laws, whether ceremonial or judicial, which the chosen people received on that mountain from their God. First, to prepare them for receiving the Decalogue, Jehovah appeared to them in His glory as The King, causing the mountain

to tremble with hoarse thunders and glare with fierce lightnings, as if in anticipation of the great day of judgment; so that the terror-struck people implored their mediator to speak to God on their behalf, lest they should die. Second, the Ten Words were not merely delivered to them by Moses as he had received them from the Lord, but spoken in their hearing by the awful voice of God Himself. Third, after being thus delivered, they were not committed to perishable paper or parchment by the hand of man, but graven by God's own finger on both sides of two imperishable tables of stone,—on both sides of the tables, as if to show that nothing could be added to the words of this law; and on imperishable tables, as if silently to show that not a jot or a tittle of it was ever to be allowed to pass away. And Fourth, the law thus revealed was solemnly declared by God to be the foundation of His covenant with Israel: the tables, to be distinctively the tables of His “testimony.”

2. Not less impressively significant are the

circumstances attending the *preservation* of the Decalogue. They all remind us of that cry in the 40th Psalm, "Thy law is within my heart." Literally, this law was in the heart's heart of the Old Dispensation: while the Pentateuch was kept on the outside of the ark, the two stony tables were kept in the inside of the ark of the covenant, in that Holy of Holies which was the heart of the Old Testament tabernacle and temple. And really, the law has been always within the heart of God's living temples, the only living temples he has had on the earth since the fall. First, in the heart of the Old Testament Church: not only the law was laid by God at the foundation of her constitution and covenant with Him; but, as we find in the book of Psalms—the utterance of her heart's experience—that law was ever before her mind's eye, whether broken or kept, whether hated or loved, as if in the very place of Jehovah the Lawgiver. Second, in the heart of the New Testament Church, which is a temple of the Holy Ghost. In Romans XIII. 8–10, we find this divine Spirit writing on her heart the

words, "He that loveth another hath fulfilled *the law*," and again, "Love is the fulfilling of *the law*." And if we ask *what law*? We find in the next verse that it is the law of *the Decalogue*, e.g., its second table, "Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, viz., Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Again, in James II. 10-12 we find the same Spirit speaking of "*the whole law*," "*the law of liberty*." And if we ask *what law*? again He answers, The law of *the Decalogue*,—producing two of its commandments to illustrate the point he is proving—"For he that said, do not commit adultery, said also, do not kill." By writing this law on the record of His word, the Spirit has provided for writing it on the heart of His Church in the new dispensation of the Spirit: so we have seen, the whole catholic Church, whether Protestant or Popish, excepting a few fanatical Anabaptists and Sadducean Socinians, has believed and con-

fessed our doctrine of the Decalogue ; and thus the law is “ within the heart ” of the whole Christian world. Third, and last, and greatest of all, it is “ within the heart ” of Christ, the true living temple, in whom sinful men meet their Saviour God. It is really He (Heb. x. 5-9) who by anticipation uttered that cry in the 40th Psalm. And when He had come in the flesh He visibly fulfilled the anticipation. Thus in His conversation with the rich young nobleman (Matt. xix. 17-19) He says, “ If thou wilt enter into life, keep *the commandments*.” The young man asks Him *what* commandments ; and He answers in effect, The commandments *of the Decalogue*,—producing those commandments of it which are best fitted to serve the practical purpose in His view : “ Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother, (and what “ briefly comprehends ” them all), Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Again, in His sermon on the mount, when giving an outline of the character of His new kingdom as

contrasted with the Pharisaic and Sadducean apostasy, He speaks of "commandments" in tones which well might make the ears of some pretended Christian ministers in our land and time to tingle—(Matt. v. 17–19): "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." And if we ask, *What* commandments are these, receiving this new sanction, more tremendous than the thunders and lightnings of Sinai? again we find that they are at least the commandments of *the Decalogue*; on three of which (Vers. 21, 27, 33), as illustrative samples, He proceeds to comment (21–37), so as to bring out the fulness of their spiritual import.

These circumstances attending both the reve-

lation and the preservation of the Decalogue are so many converging rays of circumstantial evidence all pointing to the conclusion, that it is a code of laws distinct in its nature from all merely positive laws, ceremonial or judicial,—that, in other words, it is a code of laws distinctively moral. And the conclusion thus made at least highly probable is demonstrated by what we now proceed to consider, viz. :—

2. The *substance* of the laws themselves. As we look on these Ten Commandments, certain secondary facts present themselves to our view. Thus (1.) we observe in them what may be called a tincture of Judaism, like the tincture received by a river from the soil through which it flows: they all are written in Hebrew; and one of them (the Fourth) has a circumstance (the *seventh* day) confessedly ceremonial, though not distinctively *Jewish*; and another, (the Fifth), an allusion (to “*the land*”—of Canaan) to the local and evanescent circumstances of the Jews. (2.) While eight of them are *imperial* laws, applying to the whole moral universe of

creatures, the remaining two,—the law of the Sabbath and the law of the family—are merely *provincial*, applying only to man in time on earth. (3.) The eight imperial laws are *negative* in their form, saying, “Thou shalt *not* ;” and so, too, is one of the two provincial laws in its leading clause, *forbidding* to work on the day of rest. This negative form impressively reminds us of the office of the Decalogue as “The Testimony” of God: it is His testimony, not only to His own holiness and,“sovereign right to rule us, but also and specially to *our* unholiness as fallen, our rebelliousness of heart, requiring to be sternly repressed by the prohibitory “not,” as by the fire-edge of a flaming sword. But the negative form does not disqualify the code for its office of showing us our positive duties: in telling us what we ought not to do, the Law-giver indicates what we ought. As declared in the Second Commandment, the principle of all true obedience is “love.” And if there be this love in the heart as a principle or fountain, the prohibitory precepts will guide us to our duty like the banks of a stream, which lead it

to flow where it should by preventing it from wandering whither it should not. And (4.) even in their substance, some of the laws are *limited* in their application by that "royal law" of love which is the principle of them all: *e.g.*, in the punishment of murderers and in righteous wars, the letter of the Sixth Commandment is violated in order to obey its spirit; and the letter of the Fourth gives place to its spirit in cases of "necessity or mercy."

But these obvious facts are merely secondary and subordinate. The great leading fact which shines on us from the whole face of the Decalogue is this, that all its commandments are moral or natural, intrinsically obligatory on all men in all nations and ages. Thus,

First, as to the eight *imperial* laws, this is obviously and unmistakeably true. It is not obviously wrong in a Christian man not to keep the passover once a year. It is not obviously wrong in a Christian nation not to stone a Sabbath-breaker to death. It is obviously

wrong in any rational creature to worship a false God, or to worship the true God impurely, or to take His awful name in vain ; it is obviously wrong in any rational creature to murder, or corrupt, or rob, or lie, or covet. In this respect those laws are different even from the commands, "believe, repent, and be saved." These commands, though binding all *sinner*s of mankind who hear them, are in their nature positive, do not bind men *as men*, much less as rational creatures : they did not bind Adam before he fell, they do not bind the angels which have kept their first estate. But the commands, to worship the true God, and worship Him purely, and reverence His name ; the commands, lovingly to cherish our neighbour's life, purity, property, reputation, and to respect them as his even in our hearts ; these commandments, from their very nature, manifestly bind not only all men, but all the angels of God. So

Second, Of the two *provincial* laws. Their morality, of course, is not so obvious in itself. And therefore God has, so to speak, taken

special pains to show us their morality in His word. Thus, after having revealed them in Eden in the first estate, He placed them *in the heart* of the Decalogue,—as if to set the imperial constitution of the whole moral universe in guard on either side of these two provincial laws of earth. And again, He has added to each of them a special clause, which of itself would suffice to evince its morality. The promise of temporal prosperity attached to the Fifth shows that this commandment is natural, by showing that it is indispensable to the temporal well-being of individuals and communities. And the “reason annexed” to the Fourth, a reason founded in the constitutional history of our world’s origination and preservation, shows that the law applies, not merely to Jews under the Old Testament, but to every citizen of our world through all ages of its history.

The demonstration of our doctrine, both by the circumstances of the revelation and preservation of the Decalogue and by the substance of its commandments, is thus complete.

And the remarks which follow are all based on the supposition that our doctrine is true and divine.

1. *Christians are bound to obey the law declared in the Ten Commandments.* This proposition is by no means inconsistent with the reality of that liberty with which Christ has made His people free. Liberty does not consist in the absence of law. God himself, absolutely free, is most perfect in His regard to law. In the preface to the Ten Commandments, He declares that he has brought His people "*out of the house of bondage;*" and yet in the commandments themselves, He goes on to *bind* His people to obey. It is evident, therefore, that binding of itself does not constitute bondage; that *some* sort of binding is indispensable to the realised freedom of rational creatures. And it is thus that we understand "*the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*" In connection with the general idea of liberty, there are two species of glory. The one is *Satanic*—the glory offered by the devil to Jesus in the wilderness when

he had shown Him "all the kingdoms of this world, and *the glory* of them." This Satanic glory consists in a liberty in man independent of the law of God; a liberty to do what *we* will, no matter what *He* wills; in short, a liberty such as the "murderer" proposed to our first parents when he said, "*Ye shall be as gods.*" *This* is the liberty and glory sought by Antinomians, ancient and recent. They, therefore, reject the Decalogue as constituting, in their estimation, a degrading bondage; because it does not give them the "glorious liberty"—of devils. But another species of glory was chosen by the First-born: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." In His estimation, the true glory of God's children is inseparably bound up with the due glory of their Father. As it is the due glory of God to reign as a sovereign,—sovereign even in His Fatherhood, so it is the true glory of His children to serve,—subject even in their sonship.

And this glory of theirs is a truly "glorious liberty." The liberty of a creature *not* to serve

God is the mere license of a slave let loose. The liberty of a son is not a disruption of the bond of obligation to obey the father, but a liberty like that of the angels, who are *bound* with the golden chain of love,—an inward freedom of heart, in purity and love, to do what the father commands. The filial love is a fountain, longing to rush forth in a stream of obedience. And the law of God creates so many channels in which that love may flow forth freely and gladly in a song of praise; the Ten Commandments are, so to speak, the ten fingers of God, creating the channels, pointing out the courses in which may flow that love which is “the fulfilling of the law.”

2. *Christians* are under *peculiar* obligation to obey this law. The “reason annexed” to the Fourth Commandment in Deut. v. 15, is not the “reason annexed” in Exodus xx. 11. It is a reason which applies *peculiarly* to Christians: “And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand,

and by a stretched out arm ; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day." This reason, of course, does not *supersede* the reason declared in Exodus xx. 11. But it *supplements* it. And this supplementary reason shows these two things:—(1.) The reasonableness of the transposition of the resting-day to the week's beginning from its end. One great reason why we should keep one day in seven as a religious rest is the fact of redemption, or new creation. To exhibit this fact is one leading purpose of our Sabbath-observance. And now that the redemption is achieved, this fact is most clearly exhibited by the observance of the *first* day of the week as the day of weekly rest in God, Creator and Redeemer. (2.) This "reason annexed" reminds us of the fact, that it is Christians—ransomed men—that alone are likely to keep the natural law of the Sabbath. In point of fact, they alone have kept it. The Gentile nations have shown in their institutions some glimmering reminiscence of a God-given law, commanding the observance of one day in seven as a religious rest. But they have not

actually observed it. The day of weekly rest has been really observed only by Christians—Old Testament Christians or New Testament Christians. For they alone have seen and felt the superadded obligation to show forth the glory of God as Creator, arising from the fact that the God who is the Creator of all is the Redeemer of His “peculiar people.”

But this superadded “reason annexed” to the Fourth Commandment is but a special application of the preface to all the Ten Commandments. And in that preface we see two reasons why Christians should be peculiarly faithful in obeying the whole moral law. (1.) In acknowledgment of *Jehovah*, the God of Israel, as the one true God, the fountain of all true law in the universe. I have repeatedly stated that a moral law as such is binding in itself, though there had been no preternatural revelation of it. In obeying this law, we only do what we are bound to do by nature. But in obeying it *as given in the Bible*, we obey *a person*, the living *Jehovah*, the God of Israel, as our king, as the rightful

king of the universe. And we ought therefore to keep the Ten Commandments, were it only in order to give due glory to Him as the true God. (2.) As a thank-offering to Him, not only as Creator, but also and especially as *Redeemer*. I have always admired the division of theology in the Heidelberg Catechism. Theologians have often been perplexed with the question, what place they should give in their systems to the Decalogue,—a perplexity which does not, perhaps, redound to the credit of their systems. But the Heidelberg Catechism very nobly resolves the vexed question thus:—It arranges the whole system of revealed truth under three heads,—our *Ruin*, our *Redemption*, and our *Gratitude*. And under the third head, of our *Gratitude*, it places the Ten Commandments of the Decalogue. This is not the whole truth; for (as is indicated by the “reason annexed” to the Fourth Commandment in Ex. xx. 11), we are bound to keep the laws of the Decalogue even by nature. But it is a very important part of the truth; for (as we learn from the “reason annexed” to that commandment in Deut. v. 15,

and from the preface to all the commandments in Exodus xx. 2), we are laid under special superadded obligation to obey the natural law by the fact that God is not only our God and Creator, but also our Redeemer. He, therefore, who shall decry the commandments on the ground of his being eminently Christian, "knows not what manner of spirit he is of." The only effect of our being Christians, in reference to the Ten Commandments as a rule of life, is to lay us under a new and superadded obligation to keep them, in order to show forth the praise of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light—who has brought us out of the true spiritual Egypt, and made us in spirit the true "Israel of God."

3. We should be *thankful* for this *preternatural revelation of natural law*, or positive declaration of the law which is moral. A rule of life, like the banks of a river, keeps the love in the life from forming a mere swamp, by constraining it to flow as a beneficent stream. And

there may be a natural law which comes into practical effect as a rule *only* by being revealed supernaturally. For instance, the doctrine of the unity of mankind, and the consequent moral obligation to "honour all men" as brethren at least by nature,—this doctrine and obligation shall no doubt be one day fully and finally established on grounds of natural science. But it has not been so established in the past: it is not so established at this hour. The mass of scientific men, representing scientific "orthodoxy," have learned to believe that all men are one in origin and species, in kin and in kind. But even now there are some men of science "heretical" on this point; and in past ages the mass of men did not believe in the unity of mankind unless they had been taught this truth regarding man's nature by God's preternatural revelation. They disbelieved it. The nations accepted, as a mere matter of course, the horrible doctrine of natural enmity between nations, *e.g.*, as "Greek and barbarian," and of natural antipathy between classes, *e.g.*, as "bond and free." And their teachers, the "philoso-

phers," sought a theoretical justification for that horrible doctrine and its consequences in the false principle of an original diversity of nations or classes, in origin if not in species, in kin at least if not in kind. The truth that "God hath made of *one blood* all the families of the earth," that they are but so many branches of the one great family of Adam, has been efficiently declared only by the positive revelation of the natural history of man by God's Word. The principle of the unity of mankind has been known and honoured by the peoples only where the Sun of righteousness has shone on our dark world. The history of this principle, therefore, illustrates the value of a preternatural revelation of what, because involved in the natural constitution of things, may (conceivably) be discovered by nature.

But the value of such a positive revelation of natural law is sufficiently evinced by the history of the moral law itself, which is "summarily comprehended" in the Ten Commandments.

Thus, first, with reference to the *provincial* laws of the Sabbath and the family, peculiar to man on earth in time. These, I have no doubt, are written on man's constitution so plainly that they may conceivably be discovered even by man fallen and depraved. Thus, as to the law of the Sabbath, no nation worth mentioning has ever yet been without religious festivals, or stated days of religious rest. Even Dr Macleod's French infidels were able to tell him, as the result of their experience, that "one day in seven" is the due proportion of man's time for the purpose of rest. And as to the law of the family, it can be easily shown from experience, and from the nature of the case, that monogamy alone is consistent with the prosperity of men, and with the very existence of the family, properly regarded. But though this be true, and ascertainably true by nature, the truth has not been ascertained in fact by the nations which have not had it revealed to them preternaturally. The family, properly speaking, has never existed, except where God has revealed its true constitution, and created it anew, by His grace in the Gospel

—partly in the Old Testament,* and completely in the New. The true law of the family has been known and observed among the heathens only by the few *masculine* races, such as the Greeks and Romans, and, above all, the noble “savages” of Germany. And as to the Sabbath law, though there are all over heathenism some traces of a glimmering recollection of it, it is only where the “Lord of the Sabbath” has come, in His Lordly power of sovereign grace, to renew men’s hearts and lives, that the law is not, to all practical purposes, as dead as any palæozoic fossil. Yet these two laws not only

* Under the Old Testament, though the true law of the family had been revealed “from the beginning” in Eden, God did not fully enforce it on His own people, even in the Mosaic dispensation. It is true that He provided for the sure though slow extinction of polygamy, so that before Christ came, the Jews had become distinguished among the Shemitic (feminine) races as monogamic. But He suffered at the outset a manifest looseness, on account of “the hardness of their hearts.” This reminds us of what He does every day in sending us the sun-light. He does not send it all at once in noon-day brightness, which would blind us; but He *educates* our eyes for the brightness of noon-day, by a morning twilight slowly *shading into* “the perfect day.” It is thus that He proceeded in restoring to men’s knowledge and in their practice the moral or natural law of the family. If any one say that this method, of *gradual* preparation and revelation, is unworthy of God, I answer, that it must be worthy of Him, for it is His.

are written on the natural constitution of things, but were delivered to men in a primeval revelation, of which there are surviving traces in the religion of every nation under heaven. From the history of these two laws, therefore, we may understand how important it is to have a supernatural revelation even of laws which are natural or moral. Though the hands of the watch should accurately point out the hour, yet we need a *light* on the watch, of the sun or of a candle, in order to see what is plainly written on its face.

Second, as to the eight *imperial* laws. These, being based on the abstract constitution of man as rational, or on the moral constitution of the universe as a whole, are of course much more demonstratively evident, and much less likely to slip out of men's recollection and practice than the merely provincial laws of which I have spoken. It may therefore be imagined that these, of course, must be known by nature in every nation,—that no nation can possibly need to have them revealed preternaturally. And

yet there is no one of them with reference to which history does not show the indispensable need of such a revelation. In all men there does remain indefeasibly a conscience which speaks of *some* law written on their hearts. And the Pagan philosophers have occasionally lighted on some general principle which *might* have led men to the knowledge of good rules of life in relation to their neighbour: *e.g.*, the Stoical maxim, "Regard yourself as one monad in a system of monads," though immeasurably inferior to "the royal law of love," is at least as good as the Kantian rule, "Act from a maxim fit to be law in a system of universal legislation." But in point of fact, the nations left to themselves did not actually know and honour those plain moral laws which we—thanks to God in the Bible, *educating* our conscience by His word—have learned to regard as palpably self-evident. Thus,

The whole of the first table has been a dead letter among Pagans in general. And there is no precept of the second table which has not

been ignored or forgotten by some, at least, of the nations which know not God in Christ. Thus as to the Fifth, setting forth the ideal of the family, as consisting of father, mother, and their children, polygamy has been the general custom of the Pagans who could afford it. As to the Sixth, murder is part of the *worship* of the Thugs. As to the Seventh, fornication and adultery have been practised in the temples of the most *civilised* Pagan nations. As to the Eighth, the sober and masculine Spartans looked upon successful theft as a virtue. As to the Ninth, not to speak of Pagans, or of professed Jesuits among Christians, are there not "high-flying" Protestant ministers pretending to a morality higher than that of God's law of the Decalogue, who go about assailing the doctrines they are bound, and sworn, and paid to defend, and even "glorying in their shame" as an evidence of "progress," "liberality," "enlightenment," etc., etc., etc.? And the Tenth would probably have been regarded by the most moral of Pagans as a piece of spiritual quixotism.

From this bird's-eye view of human history,

national and ecclesiastical, it abundantly appears that we need a preternatural revelation in order even that plain laws of natural morality may be known and observed among the peoples.* And we need that the revelation once made should be made for ever,—should not be withdrawn: that the “Decalogue *qua* Decalogue” should not be abrogated. When the stars appear in the firmament, they are reflected in the bosom

* It will be understood that I am far from concurring with those who, on behalf of a “Christian Ethics,” deny the validity of Natural Ethics as a science. It is true, as I have shown, that even the natural Ethics has gained an incalculable advantage in Christian lands by the preternatural revelation of natural law: the sun of that revelation has shown us clearly what without it we could only have dimly felt, even on the face of our lower world:—the new creation, in restoring man to his normal moral condition, restores the proper object of his science to the view and analysis of the philosopher. And even in declaring *what* is moral law in His word, God has given us what Moral Science may wisely employ as a conjectural hypothesis, to guide her in her search for moral law as ascertainable from His works. But still it remains true, that to discover the moral law only from the works of God, *i. e.*, the constitution and experience of man, is the proper office of the science of natural Ethics. And this office, so far from deserving to be discountenanced by Christians, is really of great importance to the Christian system, as furnishing not only an important part of the materials of natural theology, but also an important *a posteriori* evidence of the divinity of that word which from the beginning positively declared as moral law what is now scientifically ascertained to be moral law.

of quiet rivers and lakes and seas on earth. But when they disappear from that firmament above, they vanish from the mirrors in which they were reflected here below. So even of the moral laws of God. We have seen that two of them, after having once been revealed from heaven in Eden, soon disappeared from the mirrors which reflected them, the hearts and lives of men. And now, in connection with the foolish talk about abrogation of the "*Decalogue qua Decalogue*," we witness a disappearance of its commandments from men's hearts and lives:—the ninth commandment, as I have said, is being scandalously violated by Christian ministers, who deny and assail what they are bound by oath to teach; the eighth commandment is disregarded by the same class of men, who receive the state pay for doing what they are striving to undo; and as to the Fourth Commandment, they have already got so far as formally to deny that it is a moral or natural law at all. "If such things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" If professing Christian ministers have begun to "loosen these command-

ments, and to teach men so," what is to be expected as the result of their teaching, by precept and example, in the case of men in the mass?*

It must be remembered that the "Decalogue *quâ* Decalogue" is the *only* thing in Scripture that professes or even appears to be a complete statement of the moral law. The New Testament does not pretend to give us a new revelation of moral law. Its general principle, of love to God and our neighbour, is not new, but is declared by Moses as clearly as by Jesus. And though it had been new, it is not a code of moral laws, but only a principle, like the Stoical and Kantian maxims I have quoted, to indicate the proper spirit of obedience to all particular precepts, and serve as a test of their morality, and regulate their practical application. The Saviour and His Apostles habitually refer to "the law," "the commandments," as something already well known to the

* A gentleman of whom I have already spoken said on this point :— Dr. Macleod and a few others may go on observing the Lord's-day ; but if their theory supplant the Sabbatarian doctrine, the observance of the Lord's-day by the mass of men will come to an end in one generation.

Church ; while we know that it was *only* in the Decalogue that the moral law was then revealed to her from heaven. And, as I have said, they show by characteristic samples that what *they* meant by "the law," and "the commandments," was the moral law as thus preternaturally revealed through Moses of old. If, then, a positive revelation of moral law be the only effectual security for the actual knowledge and observance of it among the peoples, it is evident that the "Decalogue *quâ* Decalogue," the *only* such revelation extant, is, and always shall be, of vital practical importance to the Church and the world. Let us, therefore, be thankful that the Decalogue has not been abrogated by the Lord or His Apostles, but has received new sanctions and fresh illustrations from both.

Thus far I have illustrated the value of the revelation merely as securing that we shall know the moral law. But the revelation accomplishes much more than this. As I have said, it enables us to know the moral law *as God's*, to see it in its ultimate seat in His bosom, and so to see *Him* in

His glory as the ultimate fountain of law, whether physical or moral. And this is an effect of vast practical importance. It is not enough that we merely know what, for the matter of it, is right, and do it because it is right in itself. It is the moral life of a rational creature, not merely to do what for the matter of it is right, but to do it in the spirit of reverential love to *a person*, the living, personal God, as rightful King. It is the life of a man thus not merely to do what in the matter of it is right, but to do it out of love to God as a father. It is the life of a Christian, not merely to do what is right in the matter of it, but to do it in adoring love to God as doubly our Father and King because our Redeemer by His grace. And for this end,—the realisation of our life in its outgoing exercise—as we need in general to “see all things in God,” so we need in special to see that moral law, which is the rule of all human life, in the mind of Jehovah, the God of Israel, as its ultimate fountain and perpetual vindicator ;—not that He has *made* the law at any time, but that it eternally *is* in His bosom, and that He has therefore *declared* it once for all and for ever.

This view of God as the fountain of moral law is always vitally important, and never has been more so than in Britain at this hour. The Pagan pantheism of which I have spoken, denying the personality of God, denies, of course, the reality of His *moral* attributes—"holiness, justice, and truth." And thus even in Scotland, Principal Tulloch has begun to perceive that such ideas as "law" and "justice," in their recent Calvinistic development, are merely the detailed results of a "religious philosophy." Now, to take away the *holiness* of God is simply to take away from all pure rational creatures the life of the life which they have in Him. One stain upon His holiness would break myriads of the purest hearts on earth, would break every creature's heart in heaven; for a God who is not holy is merely a *thing* or a *demon* on Heaven's throne. Hence we ought to rejoice in that plain revelation from heaven of a moral law, eternally seated in His bosom, which shows us that such "ideas" as "justice" and "law" are—like the "ideas" of Plato—realities supremely and eternally existing, that they are supremely and eternally true, in the

very essence of the character of our God ; that He is a moral Governor of the universe, *because* He is essentially and unchangeably "holy, just, and true" in His nature. And as we "give thanks to God at the remembrance of His holiness," without which his love would be a stone instead of bread to our souls, let us be thankful for the two imperishable "Tables of the Testimony"—testimony to His holiness as well as to our sinfulness.

Hardly less important is the Decalogue as a testimony to our unholiness. "By the law is the knowledge of *sin*." The vague Antinomian cant on which I have commented is little likely to lay sinners low in the dust, convinced of their guilt and depravity, and thus ready for the grace which He gives to the lowly, who hunger and thirst for His righteousness in Christ. The pantheism of which that cant is the unconscious echo formally destroys the very idea of *moral* law, and its correlate ideas of sin, and guilt, and depravity, and righteousness, and justification, and sanctification to life—in short, virtually declares that the saving doctrines of the Gospel are not only untrue,

but meaningless or absurd. And this pantheism is destroyed by the thunderbolts of Sinai, as well as by the sacrifice on Calvary. On these two mountains we see the personality and holiness of God, and the correlate personality and responsibility of man, clear as the noon-day, in heaven's own light of righteous wrath and redeeming love. But no man can see what God shows on Calvary, of true redeeming love, who has not first looked up, trembling and adoring, to the revelation of His holiness on Sinai. And thus the "Ten Words" are always needed, not only for the regulation of the life of God's children, but also as a schoolmaster to lead those who now are lost to feel that they are lost, depraved and guilty—and bring them as convicted sinners to Christ, and through Christ to their lost life in God.



CHAPTER III.

MORALITY OF THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT IN PARTICULAR.

IN the fourth Chapter I will illustrate the *rationale* of the Sabbath law, and show how it can conceivably be moral or natural. But in this chapter I speak to the previous question. Is it so in point of fact? What reason have you to believe in the perpetual and universal obligation of the law? And to this question we answer,—The system of Bible facts regarding the Sabbath and Lord's-day. These are the evidences of our doctrine, for our doctrine alone accounts for them. And in order to illustrate this position, I will here resume and expand what I have repeatedly said regarding the nature of the argument.

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The doctrine of universal gravitation is evidenced by the facts of the material universe in its mechanical aspect; because this doctrine, and this alone, accounts for the facts:—it is the only real *theory* of them, *i. e.*, it alone enables us to *see* them as a system, to comprehend them in one view, from centre to circumference all round. The doctrine of a Trinity in Unity is evidenced by the system of Bible facts regarding the constitution of the Godhead, because this doctrine, and this alone, accounts for them all. And in like manner we maintain that our doctrine of the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath law is evidenced by the system of relevant Bible facts, because our doctrine, and it alone, accounts for the facts: it is the only real theory of them, enabling us to see them as a system, to comprehend them in one view, from centre to circumference all round.

It may be objected that some of the alleged facts are unreal or irrelevant, that some are not accounted for by our doctrine, and that no one of them is demonstratively conclusive by itself. But this objection is obviously futile. Against the

doctrine of a Trinity in Unity it may be objected that some Bible texts alleged in support of it are not to the purpose, that no one plainly and expressly declares the doctrine, and that there are some Bible texts referring to the constitution of the Godhead for which the doctrine does not account. But this does not destroy, it does not sensibly affect, the strength of the Trinitarian position. For the strength of that position consists in this, that the supposition of a Trinity in Unity, and that alone, accounts for *the system* of relevant Scripture statements as a whole. Against the doctrine of universal gravitation it may be objected, that some of the facts alleged in support of it are unreal or irrelevant, that no one fact in the universe of itself suffices to demonstrate the doctrine, and that there are some facts for which the supposition of gravitation does not account. But this does not sensibly diminish the force of the evidence for gravitation. For the force of that evidence consists in this, that the supposition of gravitation, and that alone, accounts for the system of facts of the mechanical universe as a whole. So of our doctrine of the Sabbath law. Though it

had been true that some of the facts alleged in support of it are unreal or irrelevant, that some relevant facts are not accounted for by it, and that no one Bible fact of itself suffices to demonstrate its truth, yet our doctrine would have been shown to be the Bible doctrine, the God-given theory, of the Sabbath or Lord's-day, by the circumstance that it, and it alone, accounts for the system of relevant Bible facts as a whole. One ray of light, pointing in a given direction, may have little or no evidential value. But a system of such rays, converging on one point, forming a *pencil* of light, will constitute an evidence clear and strong as demonstration.* And the force of the demonstration will not be seriously affected though it should be found that some supposed rays are not light-rays at all, that no one ray is a conclusive demonstration by itself, and that some rays do not point to

* For example, the traditional account of Haco, king of Norway's invasion of Scotland represents the Norwegians as having been terror-struck, on landing at Thurso, by a darkening of the sun, all but a ring round its edge. But it can now be demonstrated by astronomical science, that in the year of Haco's invasion (A.D., 1262), there was an eclipse of the sun, and that the eclipse was *annular* at Thurso. Here *two* converging rays manifestly constitute a demonstration.

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the centre of the pencil. All that is needed for practical demonstration is a pencil of rays, a veritable system converging on one point. And we maintain that the Bible reveals a system of facts in regard to the Sabbath or Lord's-day, which, being accounted for by our doctrine and by our doctrine alone, constitutes a pencil of light, a system of circumstantial evidence of the truth of the doctrine which accounts for them.

Again, the force of the demonstration will not at all be destroyed though there should be found to be difficulties, real and insoluble, against our doctrine, in the shape of apparent counter-evidence of Scripture. There are difficulties which no man can solve against the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity : the difficulty of an apparent contradiction in terms is really insoluble,—no man can ever fully explain *how* the God who is One is also Three. But these difficulties do not in the least affect our ability and obligation to accept the fact which is evidenced by the system of plain Bible texts. There may be difficulties, real and insoluble, against the doctrine of universal gravita-

tion. Soon after that doctrine was first promulgated, the following objection was made:—The doctrine cannot be true; for if it had been true, then a stone let fall from the mast-head of a ship sailing on the sea would light *at the foot* of the mast, whereas it will really light some distance behind the mast. This objection remained unanswered for a hundred years; it was admitted that the difficulty was real and insuperable; but no one on this account was shaken in his conviction of the truth of the doctrine; for the conviction was justified, in spite of the difficulty, by the system of plain facts which evidence the doctrine. And so, though there should be difficulties, real and insuperable, in the shape of apparent counter-evidence of Scripture, against our doctrine of the Sabbath, this will not at all affect our obligation to believe it, if only the doctrine be evidenced by the system of plain Bible facts as a whole.

But it will appear as we proceed to consider the facts, not only that our doctrine accounts for them all, but that there is no real difficulty, no counter-evidence of Scripture against it. The facts to be

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accounted for are all connected with the institution of the *week*,—the distribution of time into periods of seven days, each containing six days for work and one day of rest. And in connection with this hebdomadal distribution of man's time there are three leading facts of Biblical revelation, which no Bible reader can fail to perceive, no matter what may be his opinion regarding the Sabbath or Lord's Day. First, in the Bible account of creation and man's first estate, we find (Gen. II. 3) revealed the fact that God blessed the seventh day, and *the reason* why He thus consecrated the hebdomadal distribution of time,—a reason which applies not merely to Jews, but alike to all men in all ages and lands. Second, *for that reason*, He declared the Sabbath-law on Sinai, and set it in the heart of a code of laws distinctively moral. And third, the New Testament Church, under the authoritative guidance of inspired Apostles, continued to observe the institution of the week, altered in its form by the transposition of the resting-day from its close to its beginning, but unaltered in its substance as consisting of six days for work and one day of

rest. These three leading facts are the principal witnesses for our doctrine, furnishing the primary Bible evidence of its truth. And it is interesting to notice that they are respectively associated with the three Persons of the adorable Trinity: the first, with God the Father, dealing with man as man: the second, with God the Son, "the angel of the covenant," dealing for salvation with man as sinful and fallen: and the third, with God the Holy Ghost, building up in holiness and comfort that Church which Christ has redeemed by His grace.

Again, around these three leading facts there are three clusters of *secondary* facts,—planets round their suns,—which constitute so many groups of secondary witnesses, furnishing accessory evidence of the truth of our doctrine. First, in connection with the narrative in Gen. II. 3,—It appears on the face of the God-given record that the Sabbath-law was revealed to man unfallen in Paradise, and was not unknown to the patriarchs before and after the flood;* and it is certain, not only that

* Having spent some part of my life on a *sheep-farm*, I can perfectly understand how the patriarchal Sabbath-day is in Bible

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the week has been more or less fully known by the Gentile nations, but that the Sabbath was known and observed by the Jews before God declared the law on Sinai. Second, in connection with that Sinaitic legislation,—The Sabbath law (with ceremonial circumstances) was observed by God's Church from Moses to Christ, for fifteen hundred years; during that period He gave indications of a purpose to preserve a Sabbath for His Church in the New Dispensation; and when His Son had come in the flesh, the God-man declared, not only in general that He had not come to destroy the law but to fulfil it, but in special that "the Sabbath was made"—not merely for Jew, but—"for man," and is therefore a part of that indestructible human inheritance of which "the Son of Man is Lord." And third, in connection with the week, and weekly rest of the New Testament Church—a rest observed

history not visibly distinguished from other days. If it were not for the *congregational* public worship, which in the patriarchal system had no place, the Sabbath-day life of a Christian sheep-farmer would not now be visibly distinguishable from his ordinary life. Further, though the patriarchal Sabbath *had* been visibly distinct from the six days, the silence of the historian regarding it is of a piece with his silence regarding the Jewish circumcision for hundreds of years after the settlement in Canaan.

by the whole Christian world from the day of Pentecost to this hour—Neither the Apostles, nor the primitive Christians under them or after them, have left any trace of their having regarded this week as anything new or even surprising, so as to demand a divine institution or at least explanation: they present every appearance of having quietly accepted it as a matter of course, a thing with which the Church was familiar from of old, and which *therefore* demanded no formal institution, nor even so much as a formal explanation, in the New Testament.

These Bible facts, primary and secondary, must be accounted for by anything which plausibly pretends to be a theory of the Sabbath or Lord's-day; and any supposition which really accounts for them all is evidenced by them all as being the Bible doctrine, the God-given theory of the facts. Now our doctrine really does account for them all. It accounts for them as follows :*—First, the Sab-

* I state the doctrine here, not in the looser form in which it is held by the Romish, Lutheran, and Anglican Churches, but in the stricter form in which it is held by the advanced Calvinistic Churches represented by the Synod of Dordt and the Westminster Assembly.

bath is moral or natural in its substance, as requiring the hebdomadal distribution of man's time into periods, each containing six days of working for God and one day of resting in Him; and thus far it has remained in force through all ages of human history. Second, as declared in the Fourth Commandment, the law, moral in its substance, is ceremonial in one circumstance,—the appointment of the *seventh* day as the day of weekly rest. *Which* day shall be the resting day is not determined by the substance of the law: the determination of this question does not arise out of the essence of the hebdomadal institution: the question falls to be determined by the positive institution of God. And it has been so determined: by God's institution, the seventh day was kept holy in all the ages before, and the first day has been and shall be kept holy through all the ages that follow the resurrection of Christ for the justification of His Church. But Third, while thus undergoing modification in its form, the law has been always unchanged in its substance: the week of man as prescribed by God has always contained seven days,—six days of holy working and one day of holy resting.

This manifestly *is* a clear and coherent account of the system of Bible facts. Our doctrine is thus a veritable *theory*, enabling us to *see* the facts as a system, to comprehend them in one view, from centre to circumference all round, in the light of a principle. On the other hand, no other “theory” of the Sabbath or Lord’s-day does account for the plain Bible facts. The Ecclesiastical and Dominical theories do not so much as pretend to account for them all. The Ecclesiastical theory simply rejects them all as irrelevant to the question of our duty. The Dominical theory rejects them all but one,—the fact of Apostolic institution of the Lord’s-day—and the one which it accepts it leaves utterly unaccounted for. Our doctrine, therefore, which really accounts for the system of Bible facts, and which alone accounts for them, has in the whole system of facts a Bible system of circumstantial evidence in demonstration of its truth and divinity.

I have said and shown that this Biblical demonstration would not be seriously affected by the existence of difficulties, real and insoluble, even in the

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shape of apparent counter-evidence of Scripture against the doctrine so demonstrated. But I now proceed to show, under the head of answers to objections, that there is no real insoluble difficulty in this case—no difficulty that does not, on calm and close inspection, vanish away into nothing. The objection against gravitation was solved at last, by some one who happened to make the experiment of dropping a stone from the mast-head of a ship; and who found that it actually lighted, not behind the mast, as the objector had said, but at the foot of the mast, as the doctrine implies. And so it will be found in the case of our doctrine. When closely examined, the objections alleged against it will be found to corroborate the Biblical demonstration of its truth.

The alleged counter-evidence of Scripture is derived from two remarks of the Apostle Paul—one in deprecation of a certain regarding of “days” (Rom. XIV. 5, 6,) and the other in disparagement of “Sabbaths” (Col. II. 16,) in connection with “new moons.” As to these remarks, the question is, How do you account for them *on the suppos-*

ition that your doctrine is true? And to this question I answer :*

1. As to the remark about regarding “days:” the question is, *What* species of regarding? And our answer is, a *Judaical*, superstitious regard:—a superstition consisting, not in the religious observance of a day prescribed by God,—for the Apostles themselves observed a day, the first of the week;—but in the expectation of saving benefit from the mere outward observance, apart from divine institution and blessing;—the same superstition which (See B. I. Cap. III.) the Reformers denounced in the Popish observance of Sabbath and Church festivals.

2. As to the remark about “Sabbaths,” in connection with new moons: the question again is, *What* “Sabbaths?” And our answer is, *Jewish Sab-*

* The solution which I give is only one of several which have been proposed. Though mine should not be satisfactory, some of the others may be. And though no proposed solution should be satisfactory, it would only follow that—what often occurs in our experience—there is a yet unsolved difficulty encumbering a plainly revealed truth.

baths, observed on the seventh day of the week. It is doubtful whether the name of Sabbath is given to the Lord's-day so much as once in all the New Testament Scriptures. It is certain that the Jewish Sabbath is what is ordinarily designated by the name in the New Testament throughout. And (See B. I. Cap. IV.) it is notorious that the Hebrew members of the N. T. Church went on observing the Jewish Sabbath *along with* the Lord's-day, as they went on observing the Jewish circumcision along with the Christian baptism, for a considerable time after the Jewish form of Sabbath and sacrament had been confessedly antiquated by the death of Christ. Their observance of this antiquated form was, as I have said, tolerated as a harmless weakness, and, in the case of the "Sabbath," as a useful preparation for observing the Lord's-day. But the observance of the Jewish form was in some cases regarded and inculcated by Judaisers as being necessary to salvation, or at least as incumbent on Christians by God's law. Partly on this account, that Jewish "Sabbath" was early placed on the black books of the Primitive Church. And on this account the

Apostles found it necessary to throw out such warnings with reference to the "Sabbath,"—*i.e.*, the antiquated Jewish form of the weekly rest—as they more emphatically uttered with reference to circumcision, the antiquated Jewish form of the sacrament of initiation.

These two remarks are the only things which so much appear to be Scripture counter-evidence against our doctrine. We have seen that they are so only in appearance, and that even the appearance vanishes away on close inspection. And therefore we maintain that, while the whole system of Bible facts is a system of Bible evidence in favour of our doctrine, there is, properly speaking, *no counter-evidence* of Scripture against it.

But in the absence of positive evidence of Scripture against us, some have based an argument on *the silence* of one part of Scripture:—"The Apostles do not formally declare your doctrine; and how can their silence regarding it be accounted for on the supposition of its truth?" To the advocates of the Dominical theory of the Lord's-day, we

might answer this question by proposing another : How do *you* account for that which is involved in your doctrine, the very singular circumstance* that an institution (of the Lord's-day), *entirely new*, and vitally affecting all human life, created by the Apostles, and universally received by the Primitive Church, has not in all the New Testament any record of its creation, nor even so much as one indication of its novelty ? The institution of the Lord's-day is thus wholly unaccountable on the Dominical hypothesis, but is easily and naturally accounted for on the Sabbatarian.

But we can give a more generous answer than this *argumentum ad hominem*. The question is, "*If our doctrine be true, why do the apostles not formally and expressly declare it?*" And the answer is : Because, *if our doctrine be true*, it had *no need* of formal and express Apostolic revelation : *it was already well known* : the institution

* This "very singular circumstance" is wholly out of keeping with the other parts of the New Testament Church constitution : that constitution as a whole rests on the Old Testament law, cleared of its typical superstructure ; while on the Dominical hypothesis the Lord's-day rests upon—nothing.

of the week, as prescribed by moral law, was part of the immemorial revelation of God in His truth ; and had thus been made familiar to the Church as the air she breathed, become inwrought into her constitution, by four thousand years of Sabbath observance.

For the sake of illustration, let us look at what most Christians will regard as a parallel case. The practice of infant baptism rests on the doctrine of infant church membership, and implies the substantial oneness of baptism and circumcision. But against circumcision, the antiquated Jewish form of the sacrament of initiation, the Apostle speaks much more strongly than he speaks against "Sabbaths," the antiquated Jewish form of the weekly day of rest. Yet the Apostles take no pains to guard the Church against errors which might easily arise from misconception of such statements against circumcision. They do not explain, that what the statements are directed against is not the substance of the sacrament, but only its antiquated Jewish form. *They do not formally and expressly declare the doctrine of infant church*

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membership, as establishing the right of infants to be baptized. This doctrine they leave *to be inferred*, from the nature and circumstances of the case as revealed in Scripture as a whole : *e.g.*, from an incidental allusion in Col. II. 11, 12, not more conclusively clear than the allusion to the Sabbath in Heb. IV. 9 ; or from the substantial identity of the Church's constitution under both dispensations, Rom. XI. 16-21, as we reason for our doctrine on the ground of the unchangeable constitution of man, for whom "the Sabbath was made;" or from the *reason* of the Old Testament institution, Rom. IV. 11, a reason which equally applies to infants under the New, as we appeal to the "reason annexed to the Fourth Commandment," because this reason equally applies to all men in all ages and lands. And why do they not formally and expressly declare the doctrine of infant Church membership as the basis of the practice of infant baptism? Because *it did not need* any express and formal Apostolic revelation : it was already well known : it had become familiar to the Church as the air she breathed by sixty generations of infant circumcision. Even an

Antipædobaptist will admit that this is a conclusive answer to the objection :—“ *If your doctrine be true, why do the Apostles not formally and expressly declare it ?*” And the same answer amply accounts for the Apostolic silence regarding our doctrine of the Sabbath or Lord’s-day.

It must always be remembered that, historically, Jerusalem on earth is “the mother of us all.” The Jewish Church is the vine on which we Gentiles have been grafted. Of the Apostolic Church membership a very large proportion were Jews by birth and education. They alone brought into the Church *a definite religious character and habit* of thought and feeling and action,—a character and habit which had been formed in them by the Old Testament revelation of God ;—so that Paul served God, no doubt “in Christ,” yet “from his forefathers.” The Gentile converts, on the other hand, with hearts renewed, but character and habits quite unformed, were, so to speak, as the *molten gold*. The Jewish element was the strong *mould* in which the Christian Church was cast, giving its own definite form to the Gentile. And

thus it came to pass that the primitive Church accepted as a matter of course the seemingly unreasonable institution of infant baptism ; because the doctrine of infant Church membership, on which that practice is based, had been inwrought into the Jewish mind, so as to constitute a sort of religious "second nature," by two thousand years of infant circumcision. So of our doctrine of the Sabbath or Lord's-day. The primitive Church fell easily and naturally into the habit of observing the Lord's-day, because the *doctrine* on which that observance is based had been known to the Church from the dawn of revelation in the form of "Sabbath" observance ;—because, in short, the Sabbath law is a law of nature, and therefore the Lord's-day was not a new institution, but an old institution, as old as the nature of man—the old institution under a new form, gradually acquiring, on account of its true nature, the proper name of "*Christian Sabbath.*"

Thus by the system of Bible facts as a whole we are shut in to the conclusion, that the Sabbath law is natural or moral, and as such binds all

men in all ages and lands. The same conclusion is significantly indicated by God's own finger, writing the law of the Sabbath and the law of the family on the two stony tables, in the heart of that imperishable code of which not a jot nor a tittle shall ever pass away. By setting the two in the centre of the written constitution of the moral universe as a whole, God has shown us that they, though merely *provincial*, binding only man in the province of earth and time, are yet moral or natural, binding *all the provincials*, so that all men in all ages and lands are morally bound to obey them. If the Fourth Commandment be merely positive, why has it been set, by God's own hand, in the heart of a code of laws distinctively natural? If the Sabbath law be not for all ages and lands, why has He graven it on yon table of stone?

But the question remains, Is this doctrine of ours of such practical importance that it ought to form part of the Confession of a Church? And to this question we answer, That our doctrine is the only thing that will secure a real *bona fide* observ-

ance of a weekly day of rest. Let us look, for instance, at the doctrine which comes nearest to it, that of a Lord's-day prescribed by the Apostles, but having nothing to do with the Fourth Commandment, not resting on "the law of nature and nations." This Dominical theory, in point of mere logic, leads to the same conclusion, as to the manner of observing the day of rest, which we contend for on the ground of our doctrine: for a Lord's-day is "one whole day in seven" devoted to religious rest. But it is one thing to show that the observance of the day is obligatory in mere logic, and another *to secure the practical discharge* of the obligation. In point of mere logic, the due observance of the Lord's-day *ought*, perhaps, to follow from the merely Ecclesiastical theory of the day, *i. e.* from the supposition that it has been appointed merely by the Christian wisdom of the Church, on the ground that *she* finds the day of rest to be necessary to her completed well-being, temporal and spiritual. But this Ecclesiastical theory, whatever may be its logical consequence, is found in practice an utter failure. It never has secured a real observance of

“one whole day in seven” as a *bona fide* day of religious rest. For it gives the institution *no adequate hold of the conscience of man in the mass*. And the Dominical theory, though not in the same degree, is characterised by the same practical weakness.

A Christian, no doubt, would be bound to observe the institution merely of inspired Apostles, as truly as though the law of that institution had been written by the finger of God, in an imperishable code, many ages before it issued with new sanctions from the Apostolic mint. But though as strongly bound in practice, the mass of men will never feel so strongly bound in practice. Again, we may be as strongly bound in logic, but we do not feel so strongly bound in practice, to obey a mere positive precept, which has no recognised root in the nature of things, as to obey the same precept when we recognise its *rationale*, its root or living foundation, in the whole revealed constitution of the world and the Church.

Take, for example, the case already referred to,

of the baptism of infants. Pædobaptists justify their practice by Apostolic institution. But the New Testament evidence of that institution is by no means overwhelming. The mass of Christian men are not able to appreciate the corroborative testimony furnished by the facts of sub-Apostolic church history. And while their conduct is ruled by what they believe to have been the practice of the Apostles, their judgment and conscience ultimately rest, their belief itself is really rooted in the Biblical *rationale* of that practice, that which lies at the root alike of infant baptism and of infant circumcision—the Scripture doctrine of infant Church membership.

So with reference to the Lord's-day. The Dominical theory represents it as a merely positive institution of the Apostles, having no vital connection with anything that went before ;—leaves it to be regarded as a really *arbitrary* institution, standing in no vital connection with the constitution of man, either as citizen of the world or as member of the Church. And this, in the experience of the mass of men, must greatly detract from the force

of the evidence for the institution itself. I believe that the evidence of New Testament Church history, corroborated by the evidence of post-Apostolic Church history and doctrine, is logically conclusive for the observance of the Lord's-day as a day of religious rest. But at the same time I believe that this evidence is by no means so *practically indisputable and impressive* as to rule the lives of men in the mass. The Lord's-day without the Fourth Commandment would be what infant baptism would have been without a preceding infant circumcision. Some men might doubt whether, after all, the Apostles and their Church did rest on the first day in a sense in which they did not rest on the second or the third. Others might reason, even on the supposition that they did, that since they have given no express precept to us, their practice does not bind us to rest as they rested. And both classes might affirm, with really great force of reason, that it is antecedently improbable, *ex facie* incredible, a thing *quite unprecedented in the constitution of the New Testament Church* (a constitution which rests on the Old Testament), that there

should be for us a binding law which has no reason in the nature of things, no root in the Old Testament, no living foundation even in the New Testament system, not even so much as an express and formal Apostolic institution,—but which rests only on a practice by no means indisputable, either in point of fact, or in point of relevancy to the question of our duty as Christians.

The force of these considerations is silently confessed by the advocates of the Dominical theory themselves, when they speak of the Apostles as having perhaps been guided, in instituting the Lord's-day, by the analogy of the Sabbath law. In so speaking, they really, though perhaps unconsciously, rest on the ground of the God-given Sabbath law as a law of universal and perpetual obligation. And in truth, a rational soul can find no other possible rest. The Dominical theory is weak and ineffectual in practice, were it only on this account, that it is weak and poor in speculation. It is a lame and beggarly theory. It does not so much as appear to account for the system of Bible facts regarding the Sabbath. It

does not even account for—it leaves wholly unaccountable—the one isolated fact on which it professes to stand, the fact of the universal acceptance of the Lord's-day on the part of the Apostolic and post-Apostolic Primitive Church. In fact, it really accounts for nothing. It gives no *rationale* of anything. It merely affirms one isolated fact, and calls the affirmation a theory! And therefore it is not entitled to the name of a theory. A theory is that which enables us to *see* many facts as one system, to comprehend them in one view, from centre to circumference all round. A bare, bald, isolated, lifeless assertion of one fact is not a theory. It is not a thing on which rational souls can ever repose in stable faith. And an unstable or wavering faith can never sustain the mass of men in a consistent and thorough-going practice.

The *practical weakness* of the Dominical theory is illustrated by the work which is its leading advocate in our day, the Bampton Lecture of Dr Hessey. His personal observance of the Lord's-day may be all that can be desired by the

most zealous Sabbatarian : this (see B. III. cap. I.) would be the logical result of his doctrine. But that this is not its *practical* outcome is shown by his discussion of the form and spirit of Lord's-day observance. He does not contend for the Pagan-Popish half-day, or for a three-quarters' day, or for anything less than a "whole day" of religious rest ; but he dislikes and misrepresents *the only real alternative*, the *bona fide* "whole day" of religious rest. He earnestly protests against the continental Sunday—the secular holiday with a sprinkling of religion (like holy water on a robber) ;—but he dislikes and misrepresents *the only real alternative*, the whole day of religious rest, subject to all due regard to the claims of real "necessity and mercy." Objecting alternately to each of the only two possible ideals of Lord's-day observance, he has no *tertium quid*, no new idea of his own. I believe that what he really has at heart is the Puritan ideal, which he condemns without knowing it. But his remarks on the subject of practical observance of the Lord's-day are pervaded by a sort of Sadduceean leaven, a vague and indefinite *arrière pensée*, always reserving

something for a modern "liberty of the spirit,"— a liberty which does *not* mean a freedom of love and light to know and to do the will of God, or relief from the soul-enslaving guilt and dominion of sin. And this distressing vagueness he appears to regard as justified and necessitated in some unaccountable way by the theory, "that the first day of the week is *only* the day of "the Lord!" If such practical looseness of conception regarding the observance of the Lord's-day be the result of the theory in the mind of a learned logician and divine, what must the result be in the mind and life of men in the mass? God grant that the experiment may never be made in our land! For Dr Hessey's Bampton lecture does not show more clearly than the Glasgow speech of Dr Macleod, that the practical *drift* of the Dominical theory, as opposed to the Sabbatarian doctrine, is to lead to a loose and indefinite practice of Lord's-day observance.

On the other hand, our Sabbatarian doctrine is practically strong and impressive, were it only on this account, that it is speculatively clear and com-

plete. So far from excluding any one of the Bible facts regarding the Sabbath, it demands them all. It not only accepts whatever is true in the poor Dominical theory, but accounts for *all* that needs to be accounted for. And this, as we have seen, is conclusive evidence of its truth. But this, too, is one source of its practical power. It sways the practical conscience and will by giving satisfaction to the speculative reason. It moves the man to action by enabling his mind to rest. Recognising the fact of Apostolic institution of the Lord's-day as frankly and fully as the poor Dominical theory, it presents that institution to our view as organically connected with the whole historical revelation of God in His word. And in thus showing the foundation, deep and wide, in the whole system of revealed truth regarding the nature of man in his relation to God, it secures to the Lord's-day a place of corresponding depth and breadth in our affectionate veneration.

The practical impressiveness of our doctrine is one reason why it was so joyfully received by such earnest practical men as the Puritans, and has

been one cause of its deep and abiding influence for good in Puritanic Churches and nations. And we rest in the conclusion that our doctrine is the doctrine of Scripture on the subject, not only because it is the only thing which accounts for the Bible facts regarding the Sabbath or Lord's-day, but also because it is the only doctrine that can result in practical Lord's-day observance,—the only doctrine which, when tried on a large scale, has *not* been found wanting in practical power to secure that observance which Dominicals as well as Sabbatarians regard as prescribed by the law of God, and as vitally important to the true well-being of man. The *advantages* of the Sabbath thus constitute a subsidiary experimental evidence of the morality of the Sabbath law. And of these advantages I will speak in the following Book (B. III. Cap. II.). But in the mean time I rest satisfied with having produced the express and direct Scripture evidence.



CHAPTER IV.

RATIONALE OF THE SABBATH LAW AS MORAL.

WHAT the Sabbath law is a law of nature, that the Fourth Commandment is a moral law, we conclude from the place of that law in the Decalogue, at the heart of a code of laws distinctively moral, and from a conjunct view of all the Bible statements regarding the Sabbath and Lord's-day, as well as from the experimental evidence of the advantages of a weekly day of rest. But the question remains, *how* is this law a law of nature? how *can* the law be, properly speaking, moral as distinguished from merely positive, whether ceremonial or judicial? This question we might have been unable to answer. We might have been unable to point out the pre-

cise aspect or part of the natural constitution on which the law is based and yet be bound to believe that, *somehow*, it is moral, because we are so informed by the word of God. But the Bible not only declares the fact of the morality of the Sabbath, but also reveals its reason. And on that revealed reason or *rationale* I will now make some remarks.

The indisposition or incapacity to recognise the morality of this institution on the part of men who are willing to receive it as divine, originates mainly in a confusion of thought regarding what constitutes a moral law, or what proves its morality. The simple truth is, that a law is moral or natural if it be based on *the nature* of man. Some have imagined that it cannot be natural or moral unless, as soon as proposed, it commend itself to the conscience of all men. But (as we have seen) this imagination is a mistake. The laws of the first table of the Decalogue (though they are all moral) do not commend themselves to the conscience of Pagans in general. The conscience of an ancient Spartan, who deemed it a virtue to be

a successful thief, would give no response to the law of the Eighth Commandment; nor will the Sixth Commandment find acceptance with the conscience of the modern Thug, who deems murder an acceptable worship of his goddess. Men are often so untrue to their nature as to be incapable of recognising what is based on that nature. And if a law be really founded on the nature of man in his relation to God or his neighbour, then, though all men should fail to recognise it, yet it is truly a moral or natural law, binding all men to obey it.

Again, the law is natural or moral though it should not be founded on the nature of *rational creatures* in general, if only it have a foundation in the nature of *man*. Some have imagined that it cannot be natural or moral unless it be founded on the abstract nature of man as rational, the constitution he has in common with all rational creatures in the universe. But this imagination, again, is a mistake. Eight of the Ten Commandments *are* founded on that abstract rational nature, the constitution alike of men and of good and evil angels. They therefore bind all rational creatures

alike : they are the *imperial* law of the rational universe in all its provinces : all rational creatures are bound as firmly as man by those laws of the first table which bind man to have Jehovah for his God, to worship Him according to His nature and will, and to reverence His holy name ; and also by those laws of the second table which bind man to love, and cherish, and defend as his own, his neighbour's life, purity, property, good name. But these imperial laws do not constitute the whole of what is truly moral or natural law.

Of what has been called "the law of nature and nations," a very large part has no binding force to any creature but man ; for it is founded, not on his abstract nature as rational, but on his concrete constitution, individual, domestic, social, as man, an incarnate spirit, *the provincial* of earth and time. These laws are not imperial, binding all rational creatures through infinity and eternity, but merely provincial, binding none but man, and binding man only in time on earth. Such, for example, is the first commandment of the second table,—“Honour thy father and thy

mother." This law does not apply to angels good or bad ; for it has no basis in their nature : they "neither marry nor are given in marriage," they have no created parent to honour and obey. Nor can it apply to man after he has gone to his fellow-immortals in the eternal and invisible world ; for the marriage bond, the relation of created parent, is peculiar to earth and time : it has no place in eternity : there all living creatures are either for ever and utterly orphaned, or have their only father in God. Thus the law of the family, though truly natural or moral, is yet provincial merely, and not imperial. And so of the last commandment of the first table,—“Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.” The law of the Sabbath may be truly natural or moral though it should not be imperial, founded on the abstract nature of man as rational, but only provincial, founded on the concrete nature of man as man, the provincial of time and earth.

A provincial law thus founded on man's nature is specifically distinct from a merely *positive* law—even of God. A positive law is

not necessarily arbitrary or groundless. All the laws of God, whether positive or natural, are based by perfect wisdom on the circumstances of His creatures to whom they are applied. But of the circumstances on which His laws are based, some are local and evanescent in their nature. Such, for example, were the peculiar circumstances of His Church under the Old Testament, limited as she was to one land and race, and waiting for the promised Messiah. Correspondingly, the laws which were based on those peculiar circumstances—for example, the typical ceremonial of tabernacle and temple—are only of local and temporary obligation; they pass away with the circumstances on which they are based; they bind only some men in some ages and lands. But others, as we have seen, even of the provincial laws, are based on circumstances of man's earthly condition which are inseparable from him in that condition, which are permanent and universal as his earthly duration. And these, from their very nature, are of an obligation correspondingly universal and unchangeable, binding all men in

all ages and lands. Such is the law of marriage and the family. Excepting the clause about "the land" (of Canaan), the Fifth Commandment is based, not on any exceptional circumstances of the Jew in Palestine before the coming of Christ, but on the unchangeable nature of man on earth in time; and therefore binds not merely the Jew, the man in exceptional circumstances, but the man in all circumstances in all lands and ages. And such, we maintain, is the law of the Sabbath.

It is thus we understand the statement,—
"The Sabbath was made *for man*." It is made for man in the sense of being adapted to his constitution or nature, both as a boon to bless his life and as a law to rule his life. It is thus made for man *alone* of all the rational creatures,—that is, the law is provincial and not imperial. And it is thus made, not merely *for Jews*, but *for man*, for *all men alike*,—that is, it is not merely positive but moral or natural:—just as not merely the Jew, the man in exceptional circumstances,

but every man in every age and land, is morally bound to "honour his father and his mother;" so (we hold) not merely the Jew, the man in exceptional circumstances, but every man in every age and land, is morally bound to "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy."

How and where the law does really repose on man's unchangeable nature, as distinguished from men's accidental circumstances, may be learned from the "reason annexed" to the Fourth Commandment. This Commandment is the only one of the Ten which is shown by the divine Lawgiver, in the very terms of the law, to be founded in the natural constitution of things. As was observed in Cap. II. of this Book, the "reason annexed" to this commandment in Deuteronomy shows that the law is also founded in the supernatural constitution of the church. But in illustrating the morality of the law, I will, of course, refer mainly to the (*fundamental*) "reason" as given in Exodus.

1. Man lives *in time*. In eternity there is no

time, no distribution into years and months and weeks, no alternations of evening and morning; but one eternal day—or one eternal night. Correspondingly, in eternity there is no *periodic* repose. Through all its infinite duration, the wicked find no peace nor rest, while the ransomed of the Lord run and never weary, walk and never faint. With time itself shall pass away all the “dividers” of time—the sun, and moon, and stars, that grand horology of nature by which the hours of man are now so magnificently told off. But man is now the denizen of time. So far as we know, he is its *only* rational denizen, the only immortal who has a life that ebbs and flows with the tides of mortality; whose constitution demands periodic repose,—repose not only returning every night, but also intervening in some days of his working life. And there is therefore a peculiar fitness to his nature, a grandeur of appropriateness in the law which ordains, that in all ages and lands every son of man shall consecrate to God in a holy resting a stated portion of his time. Our world

then takes its predestined part in the "singing of the morning stars," when man, its rational subject-lord, standing as dead nature's living priest, gives articulate utterance of reason to the psalm of time in honour of the Eternal Creator. And at the same time the Creator, in claiming as a tribute what it blesses us to give Him, nobly illustrates the spirit of His law,—a spirit ever crying, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

This consecration of a part of our time is not a denial or evasion of the truth, that the whole of our time belongs to our Maker and Preserver. It is really a solemn recognition of that truth. In setting apart as "holy" to the Lord a fixed proportion of our worldly wealth, we do not deny, but solemnly acknowledge, that He is Lord of all, both of what we retain and of what we give away; that we are but His stewards, administering the whole in obedience to Him as paramount Lord and Proprietor. And so, in offering to Him the one day in a "holy" rest, we do not withdraw from Him the six

days of work for our own mere pleasure ; but we make solemn recognition of His sovereignty over all our time,—of the six days which He gives us for holy working, no less than of the one day He reserves for our holy resting: through that holy resting in God on the one day we seek His presence and power to dwell with us, and sustain us, and bless us all through the six days of our holy working for Him. The custom of all nations in observing religious festivals, or stated days of religious rest, is an unconscious testimony of religious humanity to the morality of the Sabbath law thus far, that it demands the consecration of a *stated portion of our time* for the solemn recognition and worship of God as the Lord of our life. Thus far, therefore, the doctrine of the morality of the Sabbath law is not only (as we have shown, B. I.) the doctrine of the Catholic Church, but (if I may so speak) the doctrine of Catholic humanity. But, the “reason annexed” to the Fourth Commandment leads to the high Calvinistic form of that doctrine,—to the conclusion, that “one day in

seven" is of the substance of the moral law.

Why should the adoring acknowledgment be made on "one day *in seven*?" Why should the week, the period of returning recognition, consist of seven days? Because, not only in general, man lives in time, but also, in especial—

2. Man lives *on earth*. From the inspired record of creation we conclude that it was the general plan of our world's constitution that it should be a *microcosm*, or miniature image of the universe. This plan was completed in the creation of man, the subject-lord of earth, the image of God. He and his little earth are an image of God and His great universe. Thus the *nature* of man—in spirituality, freedom, and immortality—is an image of God's nature. Man's *sovereignty* over the creatures of earth is an image of Jehovah's universal dominion. And in further prosecution of this plan through all possible details, man was made the image of his Maker in *the distribution of his time*. His week

of seven days, six of holy working and one of holy resting, images the Creator's work and rest of creation: "*for* in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." Of the *duration* of those days of God, this "reason annexed" does not speak.* We know that his resting day is not a mere human day of twenty-four hours but a divine day, a period of vast and indefinite duration; that His rest from the old creation extends through the whole course of time, and His rest from the new creation extends through all eternity. Suppose that, by parity of reasoning, His working days were on the same scale, not mere human days of twenty-four hours each, but divine days, creative epochs, periods of vast and indefinite duration.

* Nor do the Westminster divines. Before subscribing the Confession, I made particular inquiry on this point, on which my mind was not made up; and ascertained that (1.) the Westminster divines were *aware* of the question of the duration of the Creator's day; and that (2.) they have not pronounced any opinion on that question, but simply inscribed on their standards the words of Scripture, leaving the precise import of the words to be ascertained from any further light that God in His providence may reflect on this point.

This will not in the least diminish the binding force of the "reason annexed."

The reason or *rationale* of the commandment is, that the life of man, being portioned out into weeks, should be an image, perpetually recurring, of the week of God. And for this end, it matters not whether the picture be full length or miniature, whether the image be of the same magnitude with the original or only on a scale indefinitely small:—all that is needed is a due proportion of parts. Thus man's nature and dominion are faithful images, though only miniature images, of the Creator's nature and dominion. The *general* plan is, therefore, that the image should be on a scale indefinitely small, that the picture should be a miniature. And if, as may by parity of reason be supposed, the same scale be observed in the distribution of time, and man's week be only a miniature image of God's, in the same *proportion* with his nature and dominion, this will not hinder the image from being true: a miniature may be as faithful a likeness as a full length; and the

grand week of God is perpetually imaged in the life of every man who truly keeps the Sabbath law. In every such life there is a perpetual recurrence of the week of seven days—six days of work, productive toil, the image of God's work in creation; and one day of rest, contemplative, conservative, restorative repose, the image of God's providence, including the grand episode of redemption.

Here again we observe in the law a peculiar appropriateness. This we may see written on the physical constitution of the man himself, which, in the words of a distinguished physiologist, is "an eight-day clock," requiring to be wound up every week of seven days, were it only for mere animal life and health.* But still more clearly we see it "writ large" in the con-

* Yet it is well that the commandment seeks its reason rather in the constitution of man's universe than in the constitution of man himself; for the truth, that God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh, is much more plain and impressive than the truth, that man's constitution requires, for its completed well-being, that he should work six days and rest on the seventh; and therefore the theological reason is better fitted to secure a due observance of the law than the physiological reason.

stitutional history of man's world. He is the only rational denizen *of earth*, kindred of its dust, as well as of immortal spirits. It is of the creation of *his* world that the commandment speaks.* It is the origination of *his* world that the institution of the seven-day week commemorates through rolling ages. The law is thus in its nature manifestly not imperial but provincial: it is fitted or adapted, not to the rational creation as a whole, but only to this province of earth.

But here, too, we observe the universal and permanent obligation of the law, in reference to man on earth in time. *Its reason applies to all men alike.* For that reason is found, not in any exceptional circumstances—for example, of the Jews—but in the universal and permanent circumstances of men here below. Not only the Jew, but the man in all ages and lands, is bound by nature to make solemn acknowledgment of God as the Lord of his time. Not only to the

* It speaks of "heaven;" but, as we may presume from Gen. I. and II, of "heaven" only in its aspect towards earth and man.

Jew, but to the man in every age and land, the truth comes home as part of the life history of *his* world's creation and preservation, that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is; and rested the seventh day." And therefore, not only to the Jew, but to the man in every age and land, God's work of creation and rest of providence perpetually preach as a law of nature, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy,"—that is, Be the image of God in the distribution of your time.

I have marked the distinction between the fact, that the Sabbath law is a law of nature, and the *rationale* or explanation of the fact. Some of my readers, who receive the fact, may not accept what I have given as a *rationale*. Others may be in doubt both as to the *rationale* and as to the fact itself. But I have a right to say, *Suppose*, for the sake of argument, that the *rationale* I have expounded is real, that the Sabbath law is, as I have explained, a moral law or law of nature, though not imperial but provincial.

And on this supposition I base the following practical inferences:—

1. *The transposition of the day of rest* from the end of the week to its beginning is consistent with the nature of the Sabbath law. If the law had been imperial, founded on the constitution of the rational universe as a whole, then it would have been impossible to alter a jot or a tittle of the law without subverting the moral constitution of the universe. But since, in fact, it is merely provincial, founded on circumstances peculiar to man on earth in time, it may be altered or abolished (for example, by the obliteration of man and his world from the universe of creatures), while the universal imperial constitution remains unimpaired and unchanged.* And

* In the second Augsburg Confession, the German Reformers refer to an argument (now abandoned) advanced by the Romanists in behalf of their claim to absolute prelatical or Popish authority, —the argument derived from the (imagined) transposition of the resting-day by prelatie or Popish authority. The Reformers rebut this argument by saying, that the transposition was effected by the Church in the evangelical sense,—the body of believers. But they admit that the Romish pretension to a power of altering any part of the Decalogue is something to blasphemous presumption; though they do not arrive at the truth, that any modification even

if there be any modification of the circumstances on which the law is founded, then a corresponding modification of the form or letter of the law, while permitted by the constitution of the universe, will be demanded by the spirit of the law itself; for, as we have seen, one great end of the law is to bring into view the actual circumstances of man as a denizen of earth and time.

Now there has been a vitally important modification in the circumstances of all men. God's providential rest has been characterised by the great work of His redeeming grace to man depraved and lost. And this grand fact, of a new creation in Christ, vitally affects the condition of all men, not only of those who are chosen and called and justified and sanctified, but of all men in all ages and lands. To Christ they owe the season of grace vouchsafed to our world, and the universal Gospel call to believe and be saved,—the free invitation to all sinners of mankind to enter by faith into that “new heaven and new

of the form of a God-given law can be really accomplished only by the authority of God Himself.

earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." All men therefore owe allegiance of adoring gratitude to Christ, not only on the ground of his nature as God the Creator, but also on the ground of His grace as God the Redeemer. In order to bring into view this new fact of redemption, a corresponding change is required in the form of the Sabbath law. And that change, the transposition of the resting-day to the week's beginning from its end,* while demanded by the change in the circumstances of man, is permitted, as we have seen, by the general constitution of the universe, because this law is not imperial but provincial.

2. From the same point of view we see the value of a *positive revelation* of this law of nature. From the nature of a merely provincial law, it is antecedently probable that

* The first day (Sunday) is observed as the Christian Sabbath, because that is the day on which Christ rose from the dead, and inaugurated the new resurrection life of His Church. If He had risen on the Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, this would have been the Christian Sabbath. For the Christian Sabbath is the day which visibly shows that the Christian's labour "is finished," and his eternal rest achieved.

the obligation to obey it shall not be universally felt and confessed by wicked men—and even that the law itself shall be forgotten or ignored by the nations which know not God. This, we have seen, may happen even to imperial laws, founded on the abstract nature of man as rational. And of course it is much more likely to happen in the case of merely provincial laws, whose foundations are much less deep and broad. So, in fact, it has happened to monogamy, the natural law of the family. This law has been to a large extent ignored or trampled under foot by the Pagan nations. For the knowledge and due application of this law of nature we are largely indebted to the revelation of God's grace in Him who has come to "restore all things,"—not only to bring a new creation into being, but to pour a flood of new light upon the old, and a flood of new life into its natural institutions. But though the family institution be thus *restored* by Christ, no one imagines that it is not an institution of nature: we all admit that it was "at the beginning" what He by His grace has made it to be again; that He has simply restored

and adorned what He had created at the first, and we had corrupted and lost by our sin.

So of the twin institution of the Sabbath. It has been restored by Christ, as part of that original heritage which man had lost by sin; and therefore He claims it as part of His mediatorial possession,—just as, in the baptism of infants, He claims a lordship of grace over our families. It has been almost though not quite forgotten or ignored by the nations which knew not God; and He has reclaimed it and redeemed it with His blood. But from this it does not follow that the Sabbath is not, like the family, an institution of nature. It follows only that we had lost a precious pearl in the darkness of our sin, and that for the recovery of that “pearl of days” we had need of the saving grace of God revealed in Christ.

3. *Our obligation to obey the Sabbath law* is not diminished, but is really augmented, by the circumstance of its being provincial and not imperial. A heathen who has several

wives, or a heathen who breaks the Fourth Commandment, may be a man less bad than the heathen who lies, or robs, or murders; for it is a stronger indication of depravity to violate an imperial law, which, from the nature of the case, cannot be easily ignored or forgotten, than to break a merely provincial law, which, from the nature of the case, can be easily forgotten or ignored. But in both cases alike he violates a law of nature. And while the heathen sins *without* the light, in ignorance, he who breaks the law of the family or Sabbath in a Christian land is guilty of sinning *against* the light of the clear and full revelation of God in Christ, and the circumstance that the Sabbath is peculiar to man on earth in time, really binds us to regard it and keep it "pure and entire" with a peculiar degree of affectionate veneration.

A railway proprietor reasons that it is lawful to run trains on the Sabbath, *because* "the Sabbath was made for man." This reasoning would have been conclusive if the Sabbath had been made for man to *run trains on*.

But if the Sabbath has been made for man "to keep it holy" as a day of religious rest, then the reasoning really amounts to this, that because the Sabbath was made for man "to keep," therefore its divinely appointed keeper may lawfully break it! The same reasoning, if valid, will justify polygamy, adultery, disobedience to parents, cruelty to children; for the family, in the same sense as the Sabbath, was made for man,—that is, was made for *him alone*. But the circumstance of its being made for him alone, to bless and rule his life, surely gives him no right to corrupt the institution and violate its law. The Glasgow water-works were made for Glasgow, for Glasgow alone. Does this give the Glaswegian a right to break the law of the works, to poison the water, to refuse to pay the water rate? Surely not. Though provincial in its application, the law is imperial in its origin; it is invested with the authority of Queen, Lords, and Commons; and he who will break it violates the majesty of the nation which has made it. The provincial is bound to obey it, not the less but the more, because it is

made for his province alone. No foolish babe was ever yet so foolish as to throw its clothes into the fire because, before the babe was born, they were made for the babe, the babe alone. But this worse than babyish folly is perpetrated by the bearded men who reason for Sabbath desecration on the ground that "the Sabbath was made for man."





BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

THE PURITAN SABBATH.

THE application of this name to the Sabbath of Puritanic communities in our time frequently involves a popular fallacy, the fallacy of supposing that those who accept the Puritan ideal are responsible for all the details of Puritan legislation, ecclesiastical or civil. But among English-speaking Christians, there is no doubt, the early Puritans, English and Scottish, have left inefaceably the traces of their doctrine and practice to this day. Their doctrine and practice, in substance, we regard as most nearly resembling the God-

given scriptural ideal. And therefore, with due limitations, such as will be suggested in the following discussion, we have no objection to have the Sabbath we contend for on the ground of God's Word described and discussed as the Puritan Sabbath.

The Puritan Sabbath is simply *one whole day in seven consecrated to religious rest, on the ground of moral law as declared in the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue*. This is the practical outcome of our doctrine of the Sabbath and Lord's-day. And *this* is the real object of most of the recent assaults against our doctrine: these assaults have been mainly occasioned by that practical outcome. The popular objections to our doctrine to a large extent assume the form of an *argumentum ad invidiam*, working on popular ignorance in order to stir up the popular hatred against the "Christian Sabbath" of the Puritans. These objections, though merely popular, (I might almost say, vulgar,) have impressed themselves so deeply on the mind even of Dr Hessey, that he represents it as one great advantage of his Dominical theory, that this theory pro-

vides a way of escape from the practical consequences of our Sabbatarian doctrine. But in considering these objections, we shall not only be delivered from the ignorant popular prejudice which enslaves him, but led to form precise and definite conceptions of the true nature of that Christian Sabbath which is prescribed by God's Word.

It must be observed at the outset that Dr Hessey's impression as to the result of his theory is a mistaken one. His theory will not deliver him from any logical consequence of our doctrine as to the form of Lord's-day observance: no such consequence can be deduced from the Sabbatarian doctrine that will not follow, by parity of reasoning, from the Dominical theory. This fact, sufficiently obvious in itself, I will abundantly illustrate in the course of this chapter. But it is a fact of much greater importance that the objections themselves are futile, and owe their appearance of force only to misapprehension and misrepresentation, such as (see B. II., Cap. I.) have clouded men's view of the Jewish Sabbath. The objections have reference either to the *form* of Puritan Sabbath observance,

or to the *spirit* of it :—the *form*, as prescribed by the rule, “one whole day in seven ;” or the *spirit*, as determined by the doctrine of the Sabbath law as moral, declared in the Fourth Commandment.

As to the *form*, it is objected—1. That the Puritan observes a “*whole day*” of religious rest, in the public and private exercises of God’s worship, and will give no part of the day to “worldly employments or recreations.” By this, of course, the Puritans never meant that every instant of the four-and-twenty hours is to be occupied with praying, or psalm-singing, or reading or hearing the Word. It is astonishing that they should have been understood to mean anything so preposterous by a learned divine like Dr Hesse, who has studied human nature and Church history, and has written a book brim-full of Latin and Greek. If I announce a resolution to devote a “*whole day*” to study, no one will understand me to mean that for not one instant in the four-and-twenty hours shall I be without book or pen in hand. Every one will understand me to mean merely that I purpose to take, not a holiday, nor a half-holiday, but a *bonâ fide* whole day’s

work,—that study is to be *the business* of the day throughout. And what the Puritans really meant by the “whole day” may be understood from their circumstances as well as from the nature of the case.

They had full in their view, not only the no-day of the Antinomians, but also the half-day of those whose religious rest was restricted to the “canonical hours” of public worship. This half-day religion had been characteristic of the pagan festivals, and of the Sabbath of that Judaism, that carcass without the life, which lingered on the earth after the Christian Church had risen as the true “Israel of God.” At an early period, it had begun to infect the Christian religion: thus we find Origen, in the third century, inveighing against some professing Christians of his time who gave the hours spent out of church to mere carnal resting and enjoyment, instead of devoting the whole day, publicly and privately, to true religious rest. The practice spread with the baptized paganism of the Popish saints’ days and other Church festivals. It lingered in the half-reformed Church of England. It confronted

the Puritans in a severely practical form as advocated by that semi-Popish party which has left us such monuments of its piety and zeal as King James's "Book of Sports." And it was in opposition to this pagan-Popish half-day that the Puritans contended for their "whole day" of religious rest. In so contending, what they really meant was, that religious rest, with appropriate religious exercises, should not be restricted to the "canonical hours" of public worship, but should continue to be enjoyed in the family and the closet,—should, in short, be *the business of the day* throughout.

To this *bonâ fide* whole day they were bound by their Sabbatarian doctrine; for that doctrine speaks not of a half-day, but of a whole day,—a veritable *day*, and not a mere *fragment* of a day. But to the same whole day the Dominical is just as truly bound by his theory; for his theory speaks not of a half-day but of a whole day, not of any fragment of a day but of a veritable day—"the Lord's-day." It binds the man who believes it to religious resting as the business of the day throughout,—unless, as its advocates appear to imagine, a

day become a half-day, or something less than a whole day, by being "the Lord's."

2. It has been objected that the Puritan church-discipline and state-legislation have been characterised by a stringency and particularism out of keeping with the new dispensation of the spirit, and savouring of the old dispensation of the letter. On the *Antinomian* or fanatical aspect of this objection, I have commented in B. II., Cap. I. But here I will call attention to the distinction between the scriptural *ideal* of the Puritan Sabbath, and the Puritan attempts to realise it. Their attempts to realise it we know to have been human,—it is only the ideal that we own as divine; for that alone is involved in our Sabbatarian doctrine.

Now this Puritan ideal expressly excludes the characteristic of the Edenic and Old Testament Sabbath,—the observance of the *seventh* day as the day of rest. It excludes those sacrifices and other typical ceremonies which characterised the Sabbath of the Jews. And it does not include the severe penal sanctions of the judicial law of Moses; for

these have no place in the Fourth Commandment. The Puritan ideal—so far as the form is concerned—is simply “one whole day in the seven” consecrated to religious rest. This ideal the Puritans were bound by their doctrine to strive to realise. So are we by ours. So, we have seen, is Dr Hessey by his theory. So, even, are the advocates of the merely Ecclesiastical theory by theirs.* Every one who, on whatever ground, believes that we are bound to observe a weekly day of religious rest, is bound in consistency to seek and find a practical solution of the question,—How the Church by her discipline may best enforce upon her members the duty, and how the State by its legislation may best secure to its citizens the privilege, of ceasing from common work for “one whole day in the seven,” in

* Since this was written, I have seen an illustration of its truth in an article on “Sunday” in the first number of the *Contemporary Review*, by Mr Plumptre. As opposed to Dr Hessey, the author maintains the merely Ecclesiastical theory of the ground of Lord’s-day observance. But the ideal he contends for, so far as the form is concerned, is very much the same in substance as ours; though on the jury question, how this ideal may be best realised, he differs considerably from most Sabbatarians.

order to make religious rest the business of the day throughout? This problem, which the Puritan fathers felt bound to solve for their time according to their light, we all are bound to solve for our time according to ours. God grant that we all may set ourselves as manfully as they did to the practical realisation of our common ideal!

That they perfectly succeeded in realising it, even for their time, I will not affirm of fallible men. But if we will form a fair estimate of their success, we must recal to mind the circumstances in which, and for which, they grappled with the problem. They were themselves endowed with a singular measure of the spirit of life, and light, and liberty; so that a time-serving Erasmus could cry from his heart,—*Sit anima mea cum Puritanis Anglicanis.* But they had a great work to do, and that a species of “law work,” in the purification of that Church and nation which Popery had reduced, and semi-Popery was bringing back, to the condition of an Augean stable. And in their circumstances, a disciplinary code which might be utterly out of place in our better times, may have been perfectly fitted for their

glorious purpose, to rear up a regenerate society from the *debris* of an ungodly nation and a corrupted Church: that which now, thanks to them, appears to us as a needless, and therefore offensive stringency and particularism, may have been the very *Eureka*, the true remedial measure, for healing the disorders of their time. This much I feel bound to say in justice to the abused memory of the Puritans, through whose discipline we have been educated beyond the need of that particularism and stringency.

But to defend every Sabbath regulation of every Puritan Church and State is what I will by no means undertake to do, and what I have no call to undertake. Our Sabbatarian doctrine commits us to the defence, not of the details of Puritan legislation and discipline, but only of the Puritan ideal of "one whole day in seven," as the end to be aimed at in the legislation of states and the discipline of churches. And this ideal, as I have said, is really prescribed by *every* theory of the Lord's-day, as truly by the Dominical, and even by the Ecclesiastical, as by the Sabbatarian.

But here our adversaries are alternately maudlin and fierce in imploring and demanding that we shall take into merciful consideration the condition of society, the circumstances of individuals, the capabilities of poor human nature. The nature which is most intolerant of a *bonâ fide* day of religious rest has very little claim on the favourable consideration of those who truly love either God or man. But all the truth that is contained in such appeals is involved in the bosom of our Sabbatarian doctrine, and is inscribed on the face of our Puritan standards. Our doctrine not only permits but demands a due regard to every circumstance that ought to modify the rigid application of the Puritan ideal. It bids us accept a law which has been authoritatively construed by the Divine Lawgiver not only to permit but to demand, in obedience to its spirit, a departure from the letter of observance in every real case of necessity or mercy. Accordingly, the exception in cases of "necessity and mercy" has been inculcated on us by the Puritan standards from our infancy. So far, therefore, the Dominical and Sabbatarian are at one; save that the exception, in cases of necessity and mercy, which the

Dominical strives to establish by reasonings of his own, the Sabbatarian finds established to his hand by the word of Christ.

The Sabbatarian, no doubt, may differ from the Dominical on the question, *What* is a real case of "necessity or mercy?" But so may a Sabbatarian from a Sabbatarian. So may a Dominical from a Dominical. I am greatly mistaken if some serious Christians, misled by specious reasonings into embracing the Dominical theory, do not regard some of Dr Hessey's suggestions as being a virtual abandonment of the Lord's-day in its integrity as a *bonâ fide day* of religious rest. But however they may differ in the detailed results of the application of the rule, the rule itself, as prescribed alike by the Sabbatarian doctrine and the Dominical theory, is this,—“Regard as your ideal the observance of one whole day in seven as a religious rest, a day of which religious rest shall be the recognised business; and make exemption in cases, and only in cases, of real necessity and mercy.”

So far of the objection to the *form* of the

Puritan Sabbath. And now, in the second place, let us consider the objections to its *spirit*. They may be summed up in the following two:—

1. That the Puritan Sabbath observance is Judaical or Popish, in the sense of being *Pharisaical*. Here we must attend to the meaning of words. What is really meant by the word “Pharisaical?” By some of our adversaries the word is employed as if it meant “anything but sceptical,” as if he must needs be a Pharisee who seriously believes, and acts on the belief, that there is a God and Saviour who has spoken for our guidance in the Bible. In *this* sense we admit, of course, that our Sabbath observance is Pharisaical; for it is avowedly in obedience to the voice of God as uttered in the Scriptures. But a Pharisee in the scriptural sense is one who, (1.) religiously observes what God has not prescribed in His Word, and who (2.) expects saving benefit from the mere outward observance of religious ordinances, without faith or love. And the Puritans have been distinguished among Christians by their zeal in contending for these two propositions—1. That religious

observance of what God has not prescribed is a sin—the sin of “will-worship;” and 2. that to expect saving benefit from mere outward observance even of what God has prescribed, is mere superstition. Their *general* doctrine, therefore, has no tendency to produce Pharisaism in their Sabbath observance. Nor is there anything tending to Pharisaism in their *special* doctrine of the Sabbath or Lord’s-day. That doctrine, as I have abundantly shown, is that the observance is prescribed by the law of nature, as declared in the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue. But does a law of nature, as such, demand a mere *outward* obedience, not springing from the heart? Does the Fourth Commandment prescribe a *Pharisaical* observance of the Day of Rest? Surely not. To say that it does, is to blaspheme.

There may be Pharisaical Sabbatarians, as there may be Pharisaical Dominicals. If the man be a Pharisee, his Lord’s-day observance will, of course, be Pharisaical, whatever may be the formal ground or reason of his observance. But to say that our Sabbatarian doctrine, as such, leads to

Pharisaism in Sabbath observance, is to utter a stupid untruth at the best, if not a malignant lie at the worst. In fact, the only doctrine on this subject *really* Pharisaical is that of our adversaries. The Ecclesiastical theory, which bases our Lord's-day observance on the mere will of the Church, is, in the opinion of Puritans, Pharisaical on the face of it, because it rests an important part of Christian duty on vain human tradition, and thus far makes of none effect the Word of God as the *only* rule of religious faith and practice. And the Dominical theory is tinged with Pharisaism in so far as it *leans* towards the will of man, instead of resting on the sole sovereign will of God. But the Sabbatarian doctrine, in making our Lord's-day observance to rest only on God's immemorial revelation of moral law, is most manifestly free from every taint and suspicion of that Pharisaism which has been ignorantly alleged as the characteristic of the Puritan Sabbath.

2. The main objection to the spirit of the Puritan Sabbath is, that it is harsh and austere—a spirit of gloomy and sullen asceticism. From the terms in

which this objection is sometimes couched, it would appear that some regard the Puritan Sabbath-keeping as involving some horrible mystery, some fearful "communion of demons," pregnant with demoralisation and woe, like the pagan worship of the devil. I regret to find Dr Hesse misled into representing the spirit of gloom as being the natural and proper spirit of the Puritan Sabbath. The representation is singularly at variance with the broad facts on the face of the life of Puritanic communities, such as in Old Scotland and New England; communities which have been distinguished above all others by a superabundance of racy humour and fun, that can have resulted only from a peculiar fulness of inward life and gladness of heart.*

* In a certain company it was jestingly alleged as one reason why we should maintain our Puritan institutions in their integrity, that they have given birth to a vast number of stories which it is a pleasure to hear. The company agreed that these stories about ministers, precentors, beadles, &c., are for the most part very *innocently* funny, having no tendency to degrade the Church in popular estimation, but tending rather to gain for her men's affection, in addition to due respect; and that in this respect they are strikingly contrasted with the low gossiping stories of Dr Macleod.

The question here, again, is, What is the natural and proper result of the Sabbatarian *doctrine*? In answer to this question, it is fair, to a limited extent, to consult the experience of those by whom the doctrine has been wrought out in practice. But the experience consulted must not be that of hypocrites, who, in this and all other things, are joyless slaves; but of true Christians, the living children of God, who alone can receive and relish the things of His Spirit. And their experience must be learned, not only from the malignant gossip of worldlings—perhaps in gown and bands—who know not what they say nor whereof they affirm, but mainly from those who have at once full means of information and the moral and spiritual gift of appreciation. Such is Dr Chalmers, a truth-speaking man who well knew what he spoke of, and from whom Dr Hesse has quoted a noble testimony, appending a foolish comment of his own. Such are those true Christians in many lands and ages whose testimonies have been collected by Mr Gilfillan from the life-history of the Church. Such are the millions of Sabbath-keeping families in Britain and America, who bear a silent but most impressive testimony by the prevalent

spirit of their happy homes during the week. And of the Christian experience thus attested it is the uniform tenor, that to evangelical Christians their Puritan Sabbath is the crowning joy of their earthly life, the "pearl of their days," diffusing "righteousness and peace and joy" through the week to its end, and forming in itself the truest foretaste of heaven on earth.

But the natural and proper spirit of the Puritan Sabbath-keeping may be most satisfactorily learned from a direct contemplation of the Puritan Sabbath law; *i.e.*, from the moral law of the Fourth Commandment, prescribing "one whole day in seven" to be observed as a religious rest. This law does not, on the face of it, prescribe a spirit of gloom. Dr Hessey admits that even when it was veiled behind the Mosaic ceremonial, its observance was not a mere fast, to "afflict men's souls," but a true religious festival and rest. A voice more authoritative than his (*see* B. II., Cap. I.) has declared that even under the Old Testament its spirit was coincident with the spirit of the whole religion of grace, as contrasted with Pharisaism,— "I will have mercy

and not sacrifice ;” and that, even with all the painful particularism and severe penal sanctions of the Mosaic institute, it always accomplished the *humane* purpose for which it had been originally instituted,— “The Sabbath was made for man.” And now every trace of that particularism and severity has disappeared. The good which the day conferred on the Jew still remains to the Puritan. And what the Jew enjoyed in the dim and tremulous light of the stars, the Puritan enjoys in the gladsome light of the risen and glorified “Sun of Righteousness.”

The good enjoyed in common under the two dispensations is a holy rest in communion with God the Creator and Redeemer—a refreshing repose on the bosom of the Father as revealed in the Son. The Sabbath prescribed by the Sabbatarian doctrine is a day spent *at home with God* in Christ. From such a day the carnal mind will shrink with loathing and terror, because “the carnal mind is enmity against God.” The Puritan Sabbath must therefore always be regarded as constituting a gloomy bondage of fear by those whose ideal rest is either an

“ecclesiastical” festival, or a secular holiday devoted to mere carnal resting and enjoyment,—in indolent torpor, or in mere intellectual or æsthetical self-cultivation, or in feverish pleasure-seeking,—swelling the tide, of unresting idleness and vagabond blackguardism, which every Sabbath morning rushes forth from our cities and towns, to disturb the sacred repose and pollute the morals of the land. But it is strange that any Christian should regard a day *at home with God* in Christ as a day of gloom. It is the creed of all professing Christians, and the experience of all real Christians, that the children of the bride-chamber cannot mourn while the Bridegroom is with them. The enjoyment of blissful communion with Christ, in the glorious fulness of His resurrection-life, is the Christian’s true festival,—the realised ideal of his rest. And the practical effect of that enjoyment on the character is thus described by a high authority:—“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty: Now we all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Such is the spirit of the Puritan Sabbath: such is the ideal which the Puritan longs and strives to realise. This ideal is prescribed to him by his theory. But the same ideal is prescribed to the Dominicals by theirs. According to their theory, the first day of the week is a divinely instituted "Lord's-day,"—a day to be consecrated to the Lord, with special reference to the blissful glory of His resurrection-life. Consequently, he who will duly observe it must be "*in the spirit* on the Lord's-day." Now, what is it to be "in the spirit?" It is to be in spiritual communion with Christ, recognition of His glory, enjoyment of His presence as the eternal God and risen Redeemer; *i.e.*, to be in precisely the same frame of mind as is prescribed by the Puritan theory. And in order to be in this frame of mind, the Dominical has precisely the same need as the Puritan to observe the form of "one whole day" of cessation from common work in order to religious rest.

I thus have shown, as to the popular objections to our Sabbatarian theory—first, what is most important, that they are in themselves invalid; and, second, what is of least importance, that they all

apply with equal force to the Dominical theory. This I do not say in disparagement of the theory, but so far in its praise. But having proved what I say, I now repeat it; because it has been urged on behalf of the theory that it will relieve us of some alleged evil consequences of our Sabbatarian doctrine; while, in point of fact, no practical inference can be logically deduced from our doctrine that will not flow, by parity of reasoning, from the Dominical theory. If the Dominical get any "enlargement" in respect of Lord's-day observance, it will not be from his theory, but from his lack of logical appreciation of its practical consequences.

It may therefore be imagined that if Christians be thus agreed in believing what ought to lead them both alike to observe the day, their doctrinal difference must be practically of no importance. But this imagination will be found in practice to be a serious mistake. Dr Hesse will tell us that his theory delivers man from certain (alleged) evils of the Puritan Sabbath; and it certainly eliminates from the substance of Lord's-day observance a very important element in the estimation of Puritans, viz.,

the recognition and confession of the morality of God's law of the Sabbath, and the solemn acknowledgment of Him who gave the Ten Commandments on Sinai as the ultimate source of moral law. Dr Macleod does not affect to conceal the truth, that his advocacy of the Dominical theory *versus* the Sabbatarian is in the interest of a form of Lord's-day observance more free and easy than the Fourth Commandment will permit. And—what reason might have divined from the nature of the case—history tells us with all the authority of the recorded experience of mankind, that on a large scale the theory and the observance, the doctrine and the practice, distinguishable in thought, are inseparable in fact; that men's practice varies with their doctrine as "high" or "low": either the high doctrine will gradually elevate and assimilate their practice to itself; or the low practice will result in the adoption of a doctrine such as may serve for its theoretical justification.

The high Puritan doctrine, the legitimate consequence of the leading position assumed by the Reformers, has resulted in the Sabbath of Puritanic

communities: the low Ecclesiastical theory, higher than the illegitimate consequence of the stray utterances of the Reformers, has resulted in the continental Sunday :—with what results in relation to *the religion* for which the Reformers lived and died, let history declare. For our part, we rest in the conclusion—1st, That the Catholic doctrine of the Fourth Commandment is the only reliable foundation of a due observance of the Lord's-day ; and 2d, that the legitimate result of the Catholic doctrine is the Puritan Sabbath.





CHAPTER II.

ADVANTAGES OF THE SABBATH.

THE Sabbath was made for man, in the sense of being not only a law to rule his life, but also a boon to bless it. And this may be regarded as an experimental proof of the truth, that the Sabbath law is a law of nature. Of what has been called "the law of nature and nations," a very large portion is held to be sufficiently evidenced by its being seen and felt to be indispensable to the completed wellbeing of individuals and communities. This is the only species of evidence demanded by the Kantian rule—"Act from a maxim fit to be law in a system of universal legislation," and, indeed, by every really good ex-

ternal criterion of virtue. And if, on the one hand, in having shown from Scripture that the Sabbath law is moral, I have shown that it *must* be beneficent; on the other hand, in evincing its advantageousness, I shall be giving an *a posteriori* demonstration of its morality.

1st, Its *temporal* advantages: it is good for body and mind. It is good even for the body; it promotes material health and wealth. This is too frequently made the only test of the value of institutions, or at least the main one. There has crept in upon us a low habit of looking at everything from a merely economical point of view,—of making money the only standard of value—of estimating all things, human and divine, according to their bearing on mere material wellbeing. And against this habit of mammon-worship I protest, in behalf of both God and man.

Money, no doubt, represents *one* species of real value. God has set man on earth for this, among other purposes, that he may be a wealth-producer, by his skilful toil developing those resources which

the earth, left to herself, keeps hid in her bosom ; and by his thus being the image of God as creator, becoming the image of God's providence, providing not only for himself but for the creatures committed to his sovereign care. And therefore political economy, the science which teaches, how most effectually to provide for increase and perpetuation of a nation's wealth, has a legitimate place in human thought, and influence on human life. But there are some who fain would set this science in the place of morality and religion, and the "Wealth of Nations" in place of the Bible, as if mammon had been God, and Adam Smith his prophet. They look upon wealth, not merely as *one* subordinate end, but as *the chief* end of men and of nations. They thus subvert the constitution of things, making man, whom God has made the lord of nature, to be her slave. And this impiety is suicidal folly. For the nation which wills to find its life in wealth at the expense of men, shall surely lose even the low life it seeks :—

" Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

But in defence of the Sabbath, we are willing to

meet the gross utilitarian on his own low ground. Look, if you will, at the man who is God's image as a mere wealth-producing machine. Yet this machine is not of iron, but of flesh and blood, and needs periodic repose; not only the sweet repose of the night, but also periodically returning *days* of rest. And the period of recurring days of rest demanded by man's nature is physiologically ascertained to be the week of seven days. This was found in the experience even of Dr Macleod's French infidel friends. Man's constitution is an eight-day clock, which runs down in seven days, and requires to be wound up by resting on "one day in seven." If he go on without this weekly rest, he lives on the *capital* of his life, and necessarily shortens its duration, and makes it preternaturally wretched while it lasts. This would have been true though man had been the mere animal which our adversaries, without knowing it, are striving to make him. It is proved by statistics, that a horse which runs seven days in the week will run a smaller number of miles in the year, and live a smaller number of years, than if he had run only six days in the week.

This consideration bears with peculiar force on the case of that labouring class of the community, for whose interest the Sabbath institution is most obviously intended. It is painful to find the case of working-men discussed as if they had been mere animals—as if the only question about them had been, how to get out of them the largest possible amount of work ; for this is the real meaning of the question, how to get for them the largest possible amount of wages. And it is delightful to find the working-men themselves repudiate this statement of the question with disgust and indignation, and maintaining that *they* think of their intellectual, moral, and spiritual interests, involved in the Sabbath question, at least as highly as the idlers who may never feel the merely physical need of rest. But (see this point in next chapter) the economical interest of working-men, so far from demanding the destruction, really demands the preservation of their intellectual, moral, and spiritual interest in the weekly day of rest : so far from enriching them, the system of working 365 days in the year instead of 313, would really impoverish them. When the Ten Hours' Factory Bill was first proposed, the cry was

raised, "It will ruin the country, and reduce the working-class to abject poverty, by diminishing the number of weekly days of work." But it has been found that the ten hours' labour produces as much work as the twelve hours had produced, and that the worker's wages are therefore not diminished. Three young men of my acquaintance were working as masons by the piece. They were young and strong and ambitious, eager to make money in order to get into business for themselves as contractors. And they found that their best plan for making money, *i. e.*, for producing work, was to work only five days in the week, and only eight hours in the day. Their experience of bodily toil coincided with Sir Walter Scott's experience of mental toil. And the experience of both coincides with the science of the late lamented Professor Miller, who, in his Exeter Hall lecture on "Labour Lightened, not Lost," states that the due proportion of hours is this, "eight hours of hard, hard work; eight hours of hard, hard sleep;" and eight hours devoted to meals, social intercourse, innocent recreation, and private study, not excluding religious meditation and prayer.

Thus, "the mair greed, the less speed." By increasing the number of days or hours of labour, you do not necessarily increase the quantity and quality of work produced, *i. e.*, of what determines the workman's wages ; but by *unduly* increasing the former, you really and necessarily diminish the latter. Hence our working-men, were it only for the sake of their wages, have a vital interest in forbidding the days of work to be more than six in the seven ; because *this* is the proportion physiologically ascertained, (not to speak of God's revelation of our natural constitution,) to be that which is demanded by the constitution of man, not only intellectual, moral, and spiritual, but even mechanical or animal.

So of the more immediate results. But what would be the final result to the mass of men, if they were to be given over from new year's day to new year's day, all their life long, to that Egyptian bondage, unbroken continuity of toil, never relieved nor brightened by a sweet refreshing "blink" of rest ? This and that iron body, this and that adamantine firmness of mind, might for a time sustain the leaden weight, the dread monotonous pressure of "work, work, work." But the mass of men, within

one or two generations, would sink into a race of slaves, dwarfed or deformed in body, darkened and imbecile in mind, not far above the level of the brutes. The experiment, indeed, has never yet been tried:—Except, perhaps, by the Spaniards in their West Indian conquests, with destructive results. Nor is it likely that the experiment, if tried in our land, shall be carried out to a conclusion. A ceaseless millhouse round of unintermitted toil is more than human flesh and blood will ever long endure. Let the experiment be tried among us, and instead of a poor maiden's "song of the shirt," a nation's mad *Marseillaise* will be heard, proclaiming to the tyrants, inhuman as well as ungodly in their greed, that their time has come; that the foundations of the social pyramid are loosened and upheaving, and that the fabric shall speedily sink, a crumbling ruin to the ground.

Not less pernicious in their nature would be the results of degrading the holy day into a secular holiday. The most perceptible result of this desecration among ourselves, even in regard to wealth, is that a few speculators in steamers and railways,

are possibly enriched by sending their servants to tempt the people to break God's law, while they themselves, perhaps, are devoutly worshipping Him at church. But, *per contra*, as to its effects,—*First*, Those servants are systematically defrauded by men's greed of the rest which God has made for man ; their mind and body are brought into a state of torpor, listlessness, imbecility ; and consequently, ever and anon, what we call a "tremendous accident" is God's visible judgment on the pleasure-seekers and treasure-seekers who, for the gratification of their lusts, rob the creature of his rest, and the Creator of His honour in the holy day. *Second*, The pleasure-seekers themselves are not really refreshed. For a secular holiday is not a true day of rest. Though they should abstain from other stimulants, the occasion is ordinarily an artificial stimulant in itself, exciting both mind and body into a fever, and sending the man back to his work on Monday morning sunk in that lassitude which follows over-excitement, jaded in body and dull in mind, as well as dead in soul. And, *Third*, *They who will and can partake in such dissipation, misnamed recreation, are not the many, but the few.*

Though the husband and grown sons and daughters should go forth, by steamer or rail, to desecrate the day which God has sanctified, the mother and children, the grandfather and grandmother must ordinarily remain at home. And even of those who can go, the mass of men *will* not be drawn out of their houses, unless it be to the public-house, by anything short of a felt religious obligation to "go up to the house of God." Unless they be drawn out of themselves by some such obligation or law, they will either keep drudging at their common work, or sit idly at home in torpid inaction which does not really refresh even the body, and which is as pernicious to the mind as the over-excitement of the pleasure-seekers who break up their families in order to rove abroad.

The result is seen in the Sabbath-breaking nations of the Continent. Our adversaries tell us that these are exceedingly cheerful and gay. They are, indeed, next to the American blacks, the gayest of mankind,—“the dancing and fiddling nations of the world.” But in a grown-up man excessive gaiety is far from being a symptom of real solid

happiness : more frequently it is the recoil from inward unresting misery. Much less is it the symptom of true blessedness, moral and spiritual elevation. It is "the loud laugh which speaks the vacant mind." It is one of the surest symptoms of intellectual, moral, and spiritual degradation. Natural and winsome in a child, it is unnatural and therefore disgusting in a man, showing him to be but a grown-up baby, or slave, or barbarian. The Sabbath-breaking nations really are nations of children, utterly unfit for the solemn and arduous duties of freemen, the grand and earnest life of true men. Untrained to close and earnest thought, to habitual dealing with spiritual and eternal realities, they are admirably qualified for a holiday existence of frothy, animal, social enjoyment. But their frivolous spirits, unaccustomed to rule themselves, are formed only to be ruled. In no one of those Sabbath-breaking nations have the mass of the people long continued to be free ; for in no Sabbath-breaking nation can they be fit for the duties of freemen. The hope of Italy, and of the American blacks, is Jesus Christ in the pure word and institutions of His gospel. Nations are not made free by the stroke of man's

pen in Acts of Parliament, but by creation of God. "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

The free nations of Christendom are those which in some measure "remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy." And here I might dilate upon the *domestic* blessings of due Sabbath-observance, in bringing the members of the family periodically together as fellow-pilgrims towards the eternal world; its *social* benefits, in gathering rich and poor as brethren to the one Father of all, through the elder Brother on high; as well as its *political* advantages, in leading the nations habitually to bend before the throne, and meditate adoring on the law of that "blessed and only Potentate" by whom "kings reign and princes decree justice." But all these are but secondary aspects of the *personal* benefits, of true elevation, which the Sabbath, duly observed, bestows upon *the man*. First of all, by making the rest a matter of religion, the Sabbath law sets the guard of divine authority around its integrity, to protect it sacredly from all needless intrusion of everyday toil and moil. In calling the man within this sanctuary to communion with God the Re-

deemer, it relieves him for the time of the care and burden of the week. Its appropriate exercises keep his mind and body in gentle and equable activity, equally removed from feverish excitement on the one hand, and from indolent torpor on the other. It trains him to earnest thought on the loftiest themes. Revealing the love of God, it warms him into responding love to God and his neighbour. Filling him with the filial fear of God, it arms him against the slavish fear of man. In short, it raises him into a higher atmosphere, refreshes and strengthens his soul by the view of eternal realities, fills the whole man with the life-giving light of heaven, and, after showing him the glory of his Lord, sends him down into the week a renovated man, changed into the image of that glory he has seen, his heart warm and strong, his face brightly shining, like the Hebrew prophet,

“ When down the mount he trod,
All glowing from the presence of his God.”

Such men are blessed in themselves. They are a blessing in their families, to the third and fourth generation. They are a blessing to the whole community to which they are given by the Lord. As

we see in the case of the English Puritans and Scottish Covenanters, they are the nation's true wealth, its strength and glory, the invincible asserters and defenders of its spiritual and political freedom.* The nation or church to which a race of such men is given can never be enslaved. And one chosen instrument of God in training up such heroic races for His glory in the nation's good is a well-spent Sabbath, of holy rest in true communion of spirit with Him. But here I anticipate what falls to be said under the second head, viz., of—

2d. The *spiritual* advantages of the Sabbath. It is one of the doctrines of Mohammed, that women have no souls. This Mohammedan delusion appears to be more than shared by the advocates of Sabbath desecration. They appear to imagine that

* See a noble lecture (republished in "Odds and Ends,") by Mr Froude the historian, on "the Influence of the Reformation on Scottish Character,"—a lecture very different from some of the lectures delivered to the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh. Mr Froude maintains that John Knox has been, under God, the real maker of the Scottish people; and that this people, intensely Puritanic, has been a peculiarly happy people.

neither men nor women have souls. For when they have told us how their secular holiday will refresh the body and cultivate the mind, then they stop short, as if the demonstration had been complete. We have shown that their demonstration is inconclusive, even so far as they pretend to go ; that the best refreshment, even for body and mind, is not the desecration but the sanctification of the Sabbath. But suppose that the purpose of bodily refreshment and mental cultivation could be accomplished by a secular holiday as well as by a day of holy resting, this will by no means land us in the conclusion—a secular holiday, if it really be the fact that men and women have souls. If there be in every man an immortal spirit, then it is not the mere culture of body or mind, or of both, but, above all, the culture of the soul, that is the education of the man. A rest which cultivates merely the body or mind, or both, but leaves the soul a waste, is not the rest which God has made for man. To cultivate the body without the mind, is merely to train the man into a powerful beast ; to cultivate the mind without the soul is merely to give him the education of a devil.

Now our Sabbath-desecrators do not, for the most part, so much as pretend that their secular holiday shall cultivate the soul. When, therefore, they speak of that holiday as an educator of the man, they give us cause to suspect that, like their predecessors the Sadducees of old, they believe in "no angel, nor spirit, nor resurrection;" that they are the slaves of the worse than Mohammedan delusion of believing that the *soul* is not a part of the man, that neither men nor women have souls.

On the other hand, the Bible law of the Sabbath proceeds upon the Bible doctrine of man, that he *has* a soul, an immortal spirit; that, properly speaking, it is the soul that constitutes the man. And "the Sabbath was made for man," above all, because it is good for the soul. If it really be good for the soul, it must be good for the mind and body: the showers which refresh the mountain-top will percolate with their blessing through the mountain to the plain. But even though it should in some measure be evil for body and mind, yet it ought to be tolerated, accepted, cherished as a blessing, if it be good for that soul which *is* the man.

Now the soul, no less than the body and mind, of man on earth, in time, needs periodic repose. Adam unfallen was God's true son. The Father's presence and love were ever with him, his realised bliss and glory, a "heaven surrounding" that infancy of our race. His daily work was a daily worship of God; his ordinary life was a perpetual psalm in His praise. "He walked with God." So the good son among men, when he goes forth to toil, is accompanied in spirit by the father and family at home; he toils throughout the day with continuous reference to the will of his father, and the weal of his brethren; every stroke of his work is an outgoing act of domestic life and love. But this does not suffice for the immanent act, the continued indwelling of that precious life and love in its fulness in his heart. For the sustentation of that life in the fulness of unflagging vigour, there must be periods of undisturbed communion of love. And for this end, after the toil of the day the workman must have rest, the labourer find repose, returning at eve to the bosom of the family, replenishing the lamp of life in the contemplation and enjoyment of home, rekindling the languishing flame of love at the home fire-side.

So, for preserving the spiritual life of His son in full elastic vigour, the Creator provided in Eden the rest of the Adamic Sabbath. The soul of man, even when "upright" or unfallen, would have been weakened and relaxed by being always kept on the strain of outgoing activity. An angel may be able to give his whole soul at once to perpetual outgoing endeavour and to refreshing contemplation; but in mortal man, the two operations, active and contemplative, must in some measure alternate—Martha and Mary must *relieve* one another. The two lives cannot be fully lived at once. Adam, even unfallen, could not wholly give his soul at once to unintermitting operation on the creatures, and to uninterrupted meditation on the Creator. And therefore, in mercy to man, in merciful consideration of his nature as incarnate, in addition to the good portion, of Martha-like serving for the glory of his Maker, God gave him a "better portion," of Mary-like contemplation of His glory, in the blessed day of holy rest, of undisturbed communion with the Father, filling him anew with the life-giving fulness of God's love. Thus even to man in his first estate, God said in effect, "If thou

turn away thy foot on the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words;—then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.” And much more may He so speak now, when man is fallen and depraved.

We now need to be fed “with the heritage of Jacob,” to find our lost life in God, not only as the Creator, but as the Redeemer. And for this saving purpose, the people of God have always felt and confessed their need of periodic repose, in order to undisturbed communion with the Saviour. In their experience, the Sabbath-law is as the cloth which the apostle saw in his vision let down from heaven: it lifts up their souls, which cleave to the dust, quickens and refreshes them by meditation on God’s Word, bathes them anew in heaven’s own life-giving light, baptizes them anew with the heavenly dew of the Spirit. And here is one grand reason why the repose of the Sabbath should be sacredly

respected and guarded by all men. If there be any truth in the Bible, God the Redeemer has a peculiar people on the earth. If there be anything sacred, their feelings should be respected, their felt interest carefully protected. For it is *for their sakes* that the earth is redeemed, and the judgment is suspended, and the world stands. No man, therefore, nor nation, can wantonly assail them in their blood-bought inheritance of privilege, can do less than love, and cherish, and defend them, without being guilty of criminal violence or criminal disregard to God the Redeemer in the person of His saints:—"Saul, Saul, *why persecutest thou ME?*" Now their most vital interests are endangered, their most precious privileges are wantonly assailed, when any assault is made on their holy rest, the monument of their Redeemer's glory, the instrument of their peculiar blessing in communion with Him.

But further, the mass of lost men still require to be converted to God. Their natural disposition as fallen and depraved is to keep God, eternity, heaven and hell, all that supremely concerns their well-being, out of mind and view. Now, will a secular

holiday tend to bring the "things of our peace" to the view of sin-laden souls, and lead them to delight in the Lord, "the heritage of Jacob," to rest in Him and feast on Him as Creator and Redeemer? How many *conversions* may be expected in a century of Sabbath excursions by rail or river, of Sabbath exhibitions of music or painting? Will not these dissipations tend rather, with all their seductive might, to increase the downward tendency of the sinful soul, which gravitates earthward of itself? In our own land the tendency is counteracted, the downward course is interrupted and reversed, in a measure at least, by the solemn stillness of a holy Christian Sabbath. The very sound of its bells, the aspect of worshippers going "up to the house of God," the voice of their united prayers and psalms, the sweet repose which throws its mantle over a weary world,—all impressively speak to the most careless and abandoned profligate; silently remind him that he has a soul, that there is a God in whom He lives and moves, a heaven above him, a hell beneath his feet; warn him to "fly from hell, and rise to heaven;" show the weary wanderer the glorious face of Christ, and cause him to hear the

tender voice of His love, "Come unto me, O thou that labourest and art heavy laden, and I will give thee rest." Of the persecutors of a past age it was a satanic device, by the din of drum and trumpet to drown the faithful voices of the martyrs on the scaffold. It is surely by the same instigation that our modern Sadducees intrude upon the Sabbath stillness with the roar of their worldly dissipations, misnamed recreations; and that our modern Pharisees, by filling it with the mummeries of superstition, degrade it into an ecclesiastical festival, or religious "vanity fair." For both alike tend to drown the merciful voice of Christ, the "faithful and true witness," to seduce the weary wanderer away from the soul's true rest in Him, and to drag him down, unwitting and unthinking, to the endless unrest of hell.

And this is another grand reason why evangelical Christians, so regardless of mere form, so averse to formalism, have yet so strenuously insisted on the outward observance of the Sabbath, pure and entire, as a holy day of religious rest. They are not Pharisees: they do not imagine that any spiritual benefit can flow from *mere* outward observance, or

that the religious observance of what God has not ordained is anything but a sin. But on the other hand, they are not Sadducees. They believe that there is a God, who has blessed the Sabbath-day, and commanded all men to seek the Sabbath blessing by keeping the Sabbath holy. They believe that in duly observing the Christian Sabbath in memory of Christ's resurrection, we give Him the glory not only as the Creator but as the victorious Redeemer, who has procured for us the glorious rest of heaven by the painful toil which He "finished" on the cross. *And* they believe that a sacred Sabbath rest is an indispensable spiritual blessing,—indispensable for the origination and sustentation of spiritual life in its fulness in the soul.

This belief is founded on what "the Lord hath spoken" in His Word, generally, of the spiritual constitution and wants of man, and specially, of the provision which has been made for those wants in the Sabbath. But the belief is corroborated by the providence of God in the experience of individuals, families, and communities. Experience teaches that the question of Sabbath observance is but a concrete

form of the question of vital Christianity among us. This is really the hinge of the world's debate on the subject. Among friends and foes alike there is an all but universal, though not always articulate, conviction, that if the Sabbath go down the Christian religion will in great measure go down along with it,—that the religion of Christ can continue to flourish among the peoples only in connexion with that Sabbath which He has made and redeemed for man. The two provincial laws, of the family and the Sabbath, appear to have this honour given to them of God, that they are the peculiar instruments of blessing to the provincials who observe them: the family is the living foundation of all domestic, social, political well-being;* the Sabbath, duly observed, is the grand instrument of spiritual well-being to the world. Of those who assail the holy day, it is distinctly understood by not a few, that in assailing the Sabbath they are really assailing the religion of

* A curious illustration of the Fifth Commandment with its promise is found in the Chinese nation. That singular people is characterised, 1st, By the "long life and prosperity" it has enjoyed in "the land which the Lord our God" has given it; and, 2d, By a reverential regard of children to parents, sometimes amounting to immorality, and sometimes to absurdity.

Christ, seeking to prepare the way for its destruction by destroying one of its chief bulwarks. Hence Mr Holyoake's hearty commendation of Dr Macleod. But others have no such end in view, and would shrink from the contemplation of it. And these I would now affectionately and earnestly address. Take heed what you are doing in assailing this institution. Whatever may be the *end* you propose, the inevitable *effect* of your assault, so far as it succeeds, is to make the sun of the gospel go down in our land. So far as you succeed in relaxing men's feeling of obligation to keep the holy day, you bereave them of the blessing of prosperity to God's kingdom of life and light in the soul, and bring on them the curse of prosperity to the kingdom of darkness and death. Therefore, beware of the leaven of the Sadducees; not only because your Sadducean assault is pernicious to all the best interests of man, but because it is thus shown to be a war against God.

For while, on the one hand, the Bible testimony as produced in the Second Book, showing that the Sabbath-law is moral or natural, of permanent

and universal obligation, leads us to anticipate that men shall be blessed in proportion as they keep it, and cursed in proportion as they break it; on the other hand, the testimony of reason and experience, as exhibited in this chapter, showing that true Sabbath-observance is really conducive to man's physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, and indispensable to the *fulness* of his well-being—this testimony furnishes an *a posteriori* proof of the fact, that the Sabbath-law is a law of nature, founded on the unchangeable constitution of man on earth in time. Thus the two members of the demonstration, like the two sides of a roof, meeting in the Fourth Commandment as its ridge, support one another, and superabundantly show that the Sabbath is made for man, in all ages and lands, because fitted, 1, As a law to rule his life; and, 2, As a boon to bless it.





CHAPTER III.

THE SABBATH-RAILWAY QUESTION.

IT is a frequent effect of controversy at the outset to raise a cloud of confusion round the subject in dispute. The controversy now raging regarding the Sabbath in Scotland has done much to fill the air with the smoke, and dust, and din of battles. And it is the purpose of this chapter to do something towards clearing the confusion away by a practical discussion of the particular case which has been the immediate occasion of the controversy.

We must first understand the precise nature of the case. It is a case of *ordinary, systematic, open, and flagrant secular traffic* on the Lord's-

day. There may be Sabbath desecration which is not traffic ; for example, in the case of needless "Sabbath walking," or Sabbath riding in one's carriage. There may be Sabbath traffic which is not ordinary or systematic, but only incidental and extraordinary ; for example, when a cab or a train is hired for an emergency of real or alleged necessity or mercy. And there may be ordinary systematic Sabbath traffic which is not open and flagrant, but is carried on privately, removed from the public view. But the Sabbath-railway business is not only *traffic*, money-making business, buying and selling, just as if a shopkeeper had kept open shop ; nor only *ordinary systematic* traffic, the same in kind as the traffic on any other day in the week ; but a traffic which, from its very nature, is always and necessarily open and flagrant, in full view of the nation and Church. And the question is, Ought this traffic to be encouraged or tolerated ? Ought it not rather to be discountenanced and suppressed ?

This question has been regarded and treated very much as a question of human *interests*, tempo-

ral and spiritual. For the traffic has originated in a regard to certain temporal interests, such as the pecuniary interest of railway proprietors and of merchants, whom the Sabbath traffic may enable to make more money than they could make without it; and what may be called the sentimental interest of would-be Sabbath travellers, for instance, in the case of that man,—of whom every one has heard and whom no one has ever seen,—whose dearest friend is always dying on the Lord's-day, precisely at the other end of the Sabbath-breaking line. The question, we shall see, is not merely one of interests, however high. But it is really one of interests; and as such we are willing to regard it. And regarding the question in this light, as a question of interests, I will state and illustrate some plain practical principles, which ought to preside in all our discussions and resolutions, and which will amply suffice to set the question at rest:—

1. The interest of *the few* is subordinate to that of *the many*. The interest of the few, the manufacturing class, may have demanded that their servants should work twelve hours in the day; but

the Parliament passed the Ten Hours' Factory Bill, *because* this was demanded by the interest of the many, the factory workers. Again, the old stage-coach proprietors had a deep pecuniary interest in forbidding the introduction of the railway system, which carried destruction to their business in its bosom ; this and that shy and proud territorial grandee had a sentimental interest in forbidding the formation of a line which ran straight through his grounds, rudely disturbing the stately repose which he loved more dearly by far than any amount of mere money compensation ; but the Parliament ordained the introduction of the system, the formation of the line, *because* it was demanded by the interest of the many, the convenience and profit of the nation as a whole. Thus our principle is a recognised commonplace of the legislation of the country, and lies at the foundation of the railway system itself. Let us apply it to the case now in hand.

The traffic, which may be demanded by the interest of a few Sabbath-breaking companies, and merchants, and travellers, is forbidden by the interests of

the many. First, the interest of *the railway servants*, in being allowed to rest for one day in the seven. It has been said that they are not *compelled* to work on the Lord's-day, because, if they do not choose to work on that day, they are free to leave the service. But in fact, Sabbath-breaking companies bring to bear on their servant the only compulsion they can, the pressure of "the financial screw," their power to oust him from employment, and deprive him and his family of bread. At the very least, they *tempt* him, strongly and systematically, to work when he ought to be resting. And as he has an interest in resting on the Lord's-day, so he has an interest in *not being tempted* to work. And the interest of this one class of workmen involves,—

Second, the interest of *the whole working class*. They have an interest in being allowed to enjoy the weekly rest—an interest never deeper than now, in our toilworn generation. And what is it that has hitherto protected this interest of theirs? It is the rule or law that no ordinary secular business demanding ordinary work shall be done on the first

day of the week. This rule or law has hitherto served to protect the workman's rest, as a guardian circle, powerful though silent and unseen, like the angel host which circled the camp of Israel of old. But the circle is necessarily broken by the Sabbath-railway traffic. Though this, and that, and that other man should refuse to work on the Lord's-day, yet others will be found, some *must* be working wherever this traffic exists:—it *necessitates* a certain amount of ordinary work on the day of rest. And the circle broken at one point is broken for all; broken once, its guardian power is gone for ever. If the rule or law be systematically broken in the one case of Sabbath-railway traffic, it will have no remaining force to protect the workman's rest in any other case. If railway proprietors be allowed to keep their servants at work on the Sabbath, there will be nothing to hinder the proprietors of shops and factories and farms from keeping their servants at work on the day of rest,—when once, as in the case of Sabbath-breaking railway companies, man's selfish greed has overcome the surviving power of principle or shame.

Thus the railway servants now stand in the sacred *Thermopylæ* of the freedom of all working men to rest on that day. It has been said that the railway servants form but a small proportion of the whole working class;—as the actual confessors and martyrs, in the fiercest persecution, have been but a small proportion of the whole membership of the Church. But no one has ever pleaded the comparative fewness of its victims as an apology for murderous persecution. And in the case now before us, the traffic which destroys the rest of one class of workmen, at the same time endangers the rest of the whole.

“But if they should lose their weekly rest, will they not have compensation in the shape of higher wages?” The pecuniary gain to the working class is really illusory. *So long as Sabbath labour is the rare exception*, he who works all the seven days will of course have higher wages than he who works only six. But the question is, What will be the effect upon wages of Sabbath labour *as the rule*? And this is a very simple question in political economy. The rate of wages, the price of labour, is always determined in the long run by the *value* of labour, or

the quantity and quality of work produced. But, as we have seen, (*supra*, chap. ii.) from year's end to year's end, he who labours only six days in the week will produce more work and better than if he had laboured all the seven. Consequently, the *system* of Sabbath labour, so far from augmenting the workman's wages, will inevitably diminish them: Esau, having sold his birthright, will find himself cheated of the price—will have a *smaller* mess of pottage than before. But this pecuniary loss is the smallest even of the temporal evil consequences of the system. The grand temporal evil is its effect on the workman's body and mind. For maintaining the mind and body in the fulness of healthful vigour, the weekly rest is a necessary of life. Unbroken continuity of toil, from year's end to year's end, will inevitably injure the workman's health, and shorten his life, and embitter it while it lasts, and, what is worst of all, will degrade and brutalise his character: the system of Sabbath labour will inevitably sink the working-class into a race of feeble, and short-lived, and joyless and spiritless slaves. And the interest of the working class involves—

Third and last, the interest of *the whole community*. The masters have an interest, second only to that of their servants, in being allowed to enjoy the weekly rest. Already they are finding the six days of work all but too much for them, overstraining their faculties, rendering self-cultivation impossible, reducing employers as well as employed into the condition of machines, or of parts of one huge commercial machine. Now if the servants be working on the Lord's-day, the master must needs be superintending: if they do not rest from their labours, he cannot rest from his. If one master, with his workmen, be allowed to work, others will be *driven* to work in their own defence against unprincipled competition.* Again, the master's pecuniary interest, and that of the nation, here coincides with the workman's: that which diminishes the workman's wages, the lowering of the value of work, will in the same degree lower the master's profits, and the

* A most important class of operatives in Liverpool can never make sure of enjoying the rest of any one Lord's-day. One of their employers has stated that he would gladly act on the rule that no work shall be done on that day; but that, so long as others will not act on it, he cannot, without being driven out of the market. *Ex uno disce omnes.*

nation's economical interest in both ; so that the system of Sabbath labour is for the nation an enormous economical blunder. But the true "wealth of nations" is not mere money, but men. The ultimate secondary source of national prosperity and greatness is the *character* of the people. And the nation will surely be enfeebled and degraded by a system which degrades and enfeebles its working class—that class which is the living foundation of the whole social fabric.

When public interests so great and far-reaching forbid the traffic, it is surely worse than trifling to plead in its defence the paltry pecuniary interest of a few Sabbath-breaking proprietors and merchants, who may profit at present by stealing a march on Sabbath-keeping rivals in trade. As to the sentimental interest, of which so much has been said and sung, it deserves no sympathy whatever. The natural affection which impels a man to fly to the sickbed or deathbed of a friend is amiable and estimable in its own due place. But when allowed to intrude into a place not its own it degenerates into unmanly weakness. And it sinks into gross and

disgusting selfishness when paraded as a reason for the traffic which deprives hundreds or thousands of hardworking men of their sorely-needed rest, all the year round, all their life long; which endangers the rest of the whole of our toil-worn community; which saps and undermines the prosperity and greatness of the nation. Our friend in his extremity is far more likely to be helped by our going on his behalf to the Throne of Grace, than by our rushing into his mere bodily presence at the expense of great public interests ruined or endangered. And surely it is better by far that this and that individual, once in a lifetime, should bear the cross of compulsory separation from a friend in extremity, than that the interest of the whole community should be sacrificed to the selfish interests of a few.

2. *Temporal* interests are subordinate to *spiritual*. Some plead for the traffic on the ground of temporal interest *alone*. They labour to show that it will make us "healthy, wealthy, and wise" for time; and when they have shown this to their own satisfaction, then they stop, with a triumphant Q. E. D.; as if this had been all that

needs to be shown, as if the temporal interest had been the only thing that deserves to be seriously considered in the case. And for this method of reasoning, on the ground of temporal interest *alone*, they sometimes claim credit for a monopoly of practical good sense. Now this method will approve itself to secularists, materialists, atheists, who believe that the temporal interest *is all*, who believe that there *is* no spiritual interest, that man has no soul within him, nor God above him, nor eternity before him. But *if there be* a spiritual interest, if man *have* a soul, a God, an immortality, their boasted reasoning is as follows:—There is a mine which contains some copper, much silver and gold, and one “jewel of great price.” The question is, What is the best method of working the mine? And our adversaries answer, that theirs is the best method, *merely* because (in their estimation) it will produce most copper; *although* it should produce little silver and gold, and should keep us for ever out of reach and sight of the priceless jewel!

We, on the other hand, reason thus:—Our method is best, first, because it really produces most copper;

and, second, because, although it did not produce most copper, yet it produces most silver and gold, and alone sets us within reach of that jewel which is immeasurably more precious than all other things. On the ground of temporal interest we are prepared to show that the system of Sabbath-labour, so far from tending to strengthen, enrich, civilise the community, really tends to enfeeble, impoverish, degrade, and enslave. But we further maintain that, though it had been shown that man's temporal interest would be promoted by the system, the demonstration would be little or nothing to the purpose. For we are not secularists, materialists, atheists. We do not believe that the temporal interest is all, that mammon is God, that man's chief end is to make money and enjoy the pleasures of this visible world and life. We believe that there is a spiritual interest; that man has an immortality, a God, a soul; and that the spiritual interest is to the temporal as infinite to finite. The soul is infinitely more precious than the body; God is infinitely more great than the world; eternity is infinitely more momentous than time. The body with its interests is merely in order to the soul's being and well-being;

the creatures are but means of leading us to know, and love, and obey the Creator; the grand purpose of time is preparation for eternity. What, then, though the traffic should tend to profit the body, if it tend to ruin the soul; though it should gain for us much of our perishable wealth in the creatures, if it cost us but a little of the soul's true wealth, its imperishable riches in God; though it should promote in the highest degree our health, and wealth, and prosperity in time, if it tend in the lowest degree to keep us from eternal rest and blessedness in heaven, and drag us down to eternal unresting misery in hell? All that can be advanced on the ground of temporal interest is surely as nothing, less than the fine dust of the balance, when weighed against that interest which is spiritual and eternal. And yet some who would take it very ill to be called secularists, materialists, atheists, *will* reason this question on the ground of temporal interest alone! and even take credit to themselves for a monopoly of good sense for reasoning in a manner so senseless and absurd!!

How the spiritual interest of men will be affected

by the system of Sabbath-labour, it is not difficult to foresee. *Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice.* What God has "made for man" is a "Sabbath,"—that is, a holy day of religious rest; for this is the only meaning of "Sabbath" in the Bible. And this is what man needs even for the body, and much more for the soul. One man in a million may be so very peculiarly constituted as not to need it; as to be able while working or playing in the body yet to be resting "in the spirit on the Lord's-day;" as to be able to maintain a spiritual communion with God amid the bustle of worldly employments, or the roar of worldly recreations. If there be such a man, —*rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno,*— I have never known him. But the question is not, What is good for one man in a million? but, What is good for the million of men, the commonplace mass of ordinary people like you and me, and all our friends and acquaintances and neighbours? And to this question it is answered by experience, that, as a general rule, where there is no Christian Sabbath there is little or no Christian life; where there is no holy day of religious rest there is little or nothing of religious life of any sort. Hence even the pagan

religions have their festivals, or holy days, for the maintenance of religious feeling by commemoration and worship of their gods. Hence the Christian Church has often been tempted unwarrantably to institute festivals of her own, in addition to the God-given festival of the Sabbath. And hence the best Christians among us are the foremost in seeking to preserve this holy rest in its sacredness, "pure and entire."

They feel that *their* highest interest is involved in the preservation of its sacredness. They have no fear that it shall make them too religious, "righteous overmuch." They feel that, with all their Sabbath-keeping, the six days of working are all but too many for them; that they are ever in danger of being too little mindful of the soul, and God, and eternity; and that, for their spiritual interest, they need a holy rest on one day in the seven. Now for their full enjoyment of this holy rest, there must be in the world around them an outward quiet, a Sabbathic stillness all over the land they live in, inviting and enabling the soul to "be still, and know that the Lord is God." And this interest of theirs is neces-

sarily violated by the Sabbath railway traffic. The friends of Sabbath railways may say, "You ought to let us spend the day as we will, for we allow you to spend the day as you will." Though this latter statement had been true, it would not have been conclusive, except upon the Cainite principle, that man is not his brother's keeper. But in the case now before us, it is not true. While a Christian congregation is assembled for worship, a showman and "cheap John" set up a "vanity fair" at the door of the church, with unseemly sights and sounds, distracting the minds of the worshippers, rendering undisturbed communion with God a practical impossibility. If *these* Sabbath-breakers say, "We allow you to spend the day as you will," they add insult to injury—utter, in fact, an impudent lie. But the Sabbath railway traffic is simply "vanity fair" on a large scale, of mingled trafficking and pleasuring, extending over the land as far as the traffic extends. In every spot that is visited by the traffic, the Sabbatic stillness is destroyed, and the dearest interest of Sabbath-loving Christians is so far necessarily violated. And with this interest of theirs is bound up the dearest interest even of—

Unbelievers, whether in the Church or beyond her pale. The holy rest, the outward Sabbath stillness, broken only by the sound of those bells which speak of heaven, and of that preached word which proclaims a "heaven on earth" in the redeeming love of God to the lost ;—this is *the* grand means of their conversion to God. The foes of the Sabbath sometimes speak as if Sabbath trains, and omnibuses, and steamers, had some mysterious *sacramental* efficacy, such as is ascribed by Papists to their mass ; as if Sabbath desecration, *ex opere operato*, secured salvation ; as if the Sabbath traffic had a mechanical power for the conversion of sinners and edification of believers. But this is merely a tub thrown out to amuse the whales. I suppose that no one has ever heard of any one case of conversion, of any spiritual good, as the result of working or playing in Sabbath trains, or omnibuses, or steamers. No one seriously expects such spiritual fruits from the worldly pursuit. Every one knows and feels in his heart that the natural and inevitable result of the traffic is to withdraw all who take part in it from the care of their own souls, to "divert" them *from* the cultivation of those interests which are

spiritual and eternal. It certainly and seriously endangers the souls of Sabbath-working railway servants and Sabbath-pleasuring railway travellers. And it *tempts* the whole community to take part in a traffic, of business or pleasure, which endangers the soul. But further, this traffic deprives, not only the few who are willing to work or to travel on the railway, but the whole community, of the holy day, in so far as it consists in an outward stillness or Sabbatic calm. So far as it extends it destroys that stillness, and thus far keeps men from thinking of their souls, and God, and eternity. And therefore the spiritual interest *of all* demands its suppression.

I have shown that the traffic, while ruining the temporal rest of railway servants, endangers the temporal rest of the whole community. With reference to the spiritual rest of all, the maxim still more obviously applies,—*Obsta principiis*. The class whose rest is utterly destroyed is comparatively small: thus far, the breach in the guardian circle is small. But here a small breach is as “the letting in of waters.” An idle boy makes a very

small breach in one of the dykes of Holland ; but the water flowing through makes that breach larger, and larger, and larger still ; and at last there is a wide way through which the sea rushes in with resistless power to overwhelm the whole land in which that beginning of evils was permitted. So the permission of one recognised Sabbath-breaking class will naturally tend to make in the long run a Sabbath-breaking nation. But this is not the whole truth. As a *spiritual* rest, the Sabbath is *already* broken for all when employed for the purposes of Sabbath-working or Sabbath-pleasuring by some, however few ; for all over the land, so far as it extends, the traffic necessarily destroys the Sabbatic stillness, the outward quiet which our souls need.

Let us, then, look at the question of interests as it must present itself to all who seriously believe that there is a spiritual interest. From this point of view we see the temporal interest of a few weighed in the balance, not only against the temporal interest of the many, but against the spiritual and eternal interest of all. And when the traffic is looked at in this just light, of time and eternity,

it is found utterly wanting. But the question is not one of mere human interest, however high. For,

3. All human *interests* are subordinate to *rights*, divine and indefeasible. On this highest ground of right we are assailed by the friends of the traffic, when they querulously ask us, "Have we not a right to do what we will with our own?" To this question we answer, first, The Sabbath is *not* your own, but God's or Christ's, "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," "the Lord's day," "the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath." Properly speaking, man has nothing of his own; God is the only absolute proprietor; we are only trustees, holding even the working days of the week from Him, and bound to do what *He* will with them. But even in the subordinate sense in which the working days are ours, as being given us for the ordinary secular purposes of life, the day of rest is not ours, but His—sovereignly set apart for the manifestation of His glory, as Creator and Redeemer. So that the statement, "We have a right to do what we will with our own," though it had been true, is utterly

irrelevant. But, second, man has *not* a right to do *what he will* with his own : he has a right only to do *what is right* ; he can have no right to do *what is wrong*,—for example, to violate the rights of others. If I have a sword of my own, I have no right, though I should have the will, with my own sword to take away my neighbour's life. And the Sabbath-railway traffic is a violation of the sacred rights, not only of men, but also of God.

First, the right *of God*, who has prescribed the rest. We are prepared to prove, from God's own Word, that He has prescribed one day in seven, to be set apart from the purposes of worldly employments and recreations, and devoted to the purpose of religious rest. This is virtually admitted by our opponents themselves in harping on that statement of our Lord, "The Sabbath was made for man." The purpose for which they quote the statement is to show that men may lawfully break the Sabbath, *because* the Sabbath was made for man "*to keep it holy.*" But however absurd their purpose may be, in quoting the statement as authoritative they unconsciously bear witness to the truth, that by

Divine institution there is a "Sabbath," that is, a holy day of religious rest. And on the ground of this truth we say, that the traffic is a violation of the right of God. (1.) His crown-right to rule all creatures. If He really have commanded all men to keep the Sabbath holy, every one who needlessly works on the day of rest is guilty of plain sin against His law; and ordinary Sabbath traffic is a continual violation of His sovereignty over us. (2.) His right of property in the Sabbath. If He have sovereignly reserved this day to Himself, then the man who needlessly works on the day of rest is guilty of invading God's sovereign right of "propriety in" it; and ordinary Sabbath traffic is habitual *robbery* of God, the Creator and Redeemer. It is true that for this sin the sinner has to answer to God, and not to man,—at least not to the civil magistrate. But the fact of its being a sin against God's right demolishes the plea,—“We have a right to do what we will with our own.” And further, this right of God, who has prescribed the day, constitutes,

Second, a right *of all men*, a right divine and indefeasible, to enjoy the day according to its nature.

If God has made the Sabbath for man, then man has a right to enjoy the holy rest : if all men, in all ages and lands, be bound by God's law to keep it holy, then all men, in all ages and lands, have a divine and indefeasible right to keep it holy. And the Sabbath railway traffic is not only injurious to the temporal and spiritual interests of men, but a violation of their God-given right, because it puts it out of their power to enjoy that rest which God has made for man.

(1.) The right even of *Sabbath-breakers*. The railway proprietors may say, " We are the servants of the people, and will run Sabbath-trains if the people desire it." Now suppose that, for temporal profit or pleasure, railway servants should be willing to work, and other men to travel, on the Lord's-day. Then the people would be a poor blind Esau, selling an inestimable birthright for a mess of pottage. Esau sins, and shall suffer for his sin ; and so shall his posterity, for many generations, finding no place for repentance, though they should seek it with tears :—" Blessed is the people which keeps God's Sabbath ;" and alas for the guilty people which aban-

dons its God-given right in the holy rest! But Jacob, too, sins, and deserves to suffer: in tempting his brother he is guilty of mean villany, such as has given its peculiar emphasis of bitter significancy to the popular description of "*a Jew.*" And though individuals, classes, the whole community should be willing to sell their birthright in the Sabbath, the railway company which tempts them with the poor bribe of temporal profit or pleasure is guilty of "*jew-ing*" them out of the rest which God has made theirs by a right divine and indefeasible as His right to rule the world. That company is "the servant of the people" as the devil is our servant,—giving us facilities for sinning against God and ruining ourselves. But though some should be willing to sell their birthright, and railway companies had had a right to buy it from them, there would still fall to be considered,

(2.) The right of *Sabbath-keepers.* *Their* right is not forfeited by the sin of their Sabbath-breaking neighbours. To *them*, as well as to their neighbours, God has given the Sabbath. And in giving to them the day of holy rest He has given them a right, divine and indefeasible, to such outward cir-

cumstances as are indispensable for the due observance and enjoyment of it. This right of theirs every man is bound to respect, and every nation is bound to protect ; for God has given us the land on this express condition, that during one day in seven it shall be still as a temple, for all who choose to rest in life-giving communion with the temple's Lord. Thus the Christian congregation has a right to have the "vanity fair" at its door put down by the strong arm of the law ; not merely as a nuisance, offensive to the feelings, and injurious to the interests of good subjects of the Queen ; but as a *robbery*, a violation of the God-given right, of all who will to "keep His Sabbaths, and reverence His sanctuaries." And on the same ground, of *our* right of property in the holy rest, we have a right to demand the suppression of that traffic which destroys it.

"Would you make men religious by Act of Parliament?" No : men can be made religious only by the Spirit of God. But an Act of Parliament can suppress an irreligious traffic, which is not only a manifest impiety in itself, but so far as it extends an outrage on the religious feelings, and violation

of the religious rights, of those who believe and strive to practise the religion of the Bible. An Act of Parliament can put down that nuisance which is an open robbery of man as well as of God. Parliament can make a *Six Days' Railway Act* for Scotland, just as easily as a *Ten Hours' Factory Act* for Britain; and, as we have seen, there are far stronger reasons for the former than there were for the latter.

But whatever may be the magistrate's duty in this matter, it is surely the duty and interest of Christian citizens to strive, in every competent way, for the protection of that Holy Day which we have received from God through our Christian forefathers; and which has been guaranteed to us not only by the Bible, the common law of Christendom, but by that Fourth Commandment which is part of the statute-law of Scotland. God sets the "mark" of His approbation on those who "sigh and cry on account of the abominations that are done in the city;" and has laid those who take no part in His wars, though they should be waged with fire and sword, under a solemn curse, because they come

not "to the help of The Lord, the help of The Lord against the mighty." And thus we are doubly bound, not merely not to encourage the traffic, but in every lawful way to strive to put it down, at once as a nuisance endangering the temporal and spiritual interests of men, and as a flagrant violation of sacred rights.

What we should contend for is *the utter suppression* of the traffic. Some who are not unfriendly to the Sabbath are willing to entertain the idea of a morning and evening Sabbath passenger train. And this, no doubt, would in many cases be a real convenience, even for some purposes of Sabbath observance. But, first, this would be an abandonment of *the principle* on which we contend for Sabbath observance; for "one *whole* day" in seven is what is prescribed by God's law; and the morning and evening trains would render the Lord's-day *not* "a whole day" of religious rest. And, second, this violation of the principle during part of the day will endanger the whole, being a breach at one point of the guardian circle, a "letting in of waters," an insertion of the small end of the wedge, exposing

the whole institution to unceasing and always increasing danger. We are taught by experience, and may understand from the nature of the case, that the only sure ground of Sabbath defence is the rigid and literal application of the rule or law, that, from one end of the twenty-four hours to the other, the day of rest shall not be invaded by any ordinary secular traffic, but that every man who has the will shall have the power to devote "one *whole* day in seven" to religious resting. Due allowance must be made for *real* "necessity and mercy." But if we will be wise for ourselves and our country in this and following generations, we shall make no allowance whatever for alleged public "convenience," when put forward as a reason for ordinary systematic, open, and flagrant secular traffic on the Holy Day of rest. For the same "convenience" which demands a morning and evening train will be ultimately found to demand an entire surrender of the day to secular pursuits of profit and pleasure.

"But this punctilious stopping of work precisely at one hour, and resuming precisely at another, is surely stiff and pedantic. Would it not be more

gracefully free to allow the working days and resting day to *shade* into one another?" The workman who begins precisely at six in the morning, and stops precisely at six in the evening, finds it his interest to be punctilious and peremptory in insisting on *lines* of separation between work and rest rather than *shades*. And our aesthetical friends, who will have shades rather than lines of separation between the Sabbath and the working week, usually show that if their taste is to be gratified it must be *at the expense of the Sabbath*,—by taking so much from its beginning and its end. If they were merely and sincerely sacrificing to the Graces, they would sacrifice what is their own. But if they have a single eye to aesthetics, our fathers will teach them a better way of attaining shades of separation than by nibbling at the extremities, and so endangering the heart of the Holy Day of rest; namely, by taking the needful time *from the working days*,—a Saturday afternoon and a Monday forenoon for a holiday, on which men may leisurely ascend to and descend from the mountain summit of God's ordinance, and by which the working week shall be made gracefully

to shade into the resting day, and the resting day back into the working week. That wise institution of our Christian forefathers points out the direction in which we should now be moving. Let us aid in the Saturday half-holiday movement, and, if that be not enough, let us begin a movement for a Monday forenoon holiday. The hours of toil are at present too many; and by taking a holiday on the Saturday afternoon and Monday forenoon, we shall be really providing for the temporal interest of the people, as well as for that spiritual interest which is superior to the temporal, and for that *right*, divine and indefeasible, which is supreme. But let us sacrifice our taste, and our mere convenience, to any conceivable extent, rather than sacrifice or endanger in the least degree that Holy Rest which God has made for man. And if only we be "in the spirit on the Lord's-day," so as to enter into full enjoyment of its conservative and restorative repose for mind and body, we shall feel no inward temptation to "kill the time" by mutilation of the day; but "calling the Sabbath a delight, holy of the Lord, honourable," we shall feel that any mutilation of its integrity

would be dearly bought by the largest temporal gain, and that the complete preservation of its sacredness is cheaply purchased by the largest possible sacrifice of taste, or greed, or lust of pleasure, or any other secular interest whatever.





CHAPTER IV.

THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS.

IT is not my purpose here to give anything like a Christian Directory for Sabbath sanctification at all times. What I have in view is to give some practical hints regarding some special aspects of Christian duty in connexion with the controversy now fairly begun. And these hints I will arrange on an ascending scale, beginning with what I reckon the least important, and concluding with what I reckon the most important.

1. There are certain *public duties* in connexion with the Sabbath, to which we all are providentially called by the recent course of events in our land.

These duties are partly political, partly ecclesiastical, and partly mixed.

(1.) *Political duties.*—There is among some Christians a disposition to forget that they are citizens, and as such invested with certain powers, for the due use of which they are responsible to God. This disposition sometimes disguises itself under the name of peculiar spirituality, as if spirituality meant inhumanity or ghostliness, as if humanity had been carnality. But it is rebuked by the Spirit of God in the words, "If any man provide not for his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." The saving work of that Spirit is not to unman the man, but to restore the man whom sin has unmanned, in all his aspects, personal, domestic, social, and political,—to make him a true "man of God, . . . thoroughly furnished for every good work." And the current history of the Sabbath-question is well fitted to awaken all Christians from the indolent torpor of that real carnality which has assumed the aspect and usurped the name of spirituality. For it has shown us that, were it only for the interest of their

divine religion, Christians must now be up and doing their part as citizens of the nation.

The first political duty in this case is to ascertain the state of the civil law, or get it adjusted to the wants of our time. The Bible is the common law of every Christian country. The Ten Commandments, declared by the Confession of Faith to be a code of moral laws, are part of the statute-law of Scotland. Of course the application of this divine law by the civil magistrate is limited by the principles of the Bible and the Confession regarding God's sole lordship over the conscience, and—excepting the case of the erastianised Establishment—Christ's sole headship over the Church. But this limitation has nothing to do with ordinary systematic secular traffic; for no one pleads conscience on behalf of that traffic, or pretends that to abstain from it would be a sin against God; no one imagines that in forbidding such traffic the magistrate would be invading the independence of the Church. But in such cases as that of Sabbath-railways, it is doubtful whether the statute-law of the Sabbath has not fallen into disuse. And it would be a good

service to God and man to ascertain by some judicial process, whether the law of the land as it stands does not put it in the power of those who love the Lord's-day to suppress the traffic, as not only a robbery of God and man, but a statutory offence against the Queen.

But the judges may possibly hold that so many years of Sabbath-railway traffic have exempted this species of secular business from the control of the statute Sabbath-law. And if it should be so, the question will remain, whether we ought not to agitate for a law that shall effectually suppress this nuisance; either wholesale, a Six Days' Railway Act for Scotland; or in detail, a clause prohibiting Sabbath-traffic in the charter of every railway company.

This political aspect of the question ought to influence Christians in their choice of representatives, and dealings with their actual representatives in Parliament. There is no other national interest now at stake nearly so great as our interest in the Sabbath. And it is right and proper for every

Christian citizen to see to it that those who represent him in the legislation of the country shall be "sound" on the great question of the weekly day of rest. Again, with reference, for example, to the Forbes Mackenzie Act, citizens should strengthen the hands of their magistrates, and see to it that they are faithful and uncompromising in the administration of the existing law for the protection of the Lord's-day. And whether for the maintenance of existing laws or for the obtaining of new laws for Sabbath protection, Christians are bound to avail themselves fully of their constitutional right of public meeting and petitioning the legislature, so that the makers and administrators of our laws may have no room to doubt what is the opinion and feeling and wish of the serious Christian people of the land.

It is no real breach of logic to bring in under this head of political duties the duty of dealing by petition and remonstrance with railway proprietors. For if they really have by law the power of extending a Sabbath-railway traffic over the country, they constitute a veritable "fourth estate," and

wield a very formidable influence for good or evil to the nation as a whole. Whether they have this power *de jure* or not, they certainly exercise it *de facto* at present ; and though the Parliament should never interfere to *forbid* their traffic, it certainly will never interfere to *compel* the traffic, if the railway proprietors should wish to refrain from it. In Christian prudence, therefore, we ought not to neglect them, but should endeavour, in every lawful way, to influence them in favour of that institution which is their interest no less than ours. Of course, in the event of our being met on their part by a cynical ungodliness such as gave itself utterance not long ago, we are not only absolved from the obligation to approach them, but forbidden to approach them with any Christian memorial, by the law, "Cast not your pearls before swine." But we have no right to suppose that that was a fair sample of the mind of railway directors. Many of them are earnest Christians, and will heartily sympathise with any really Christian movement, though it should be at the (apparent*) expense of their tem-

* One of the ablest statisticians in Britain, Duncan M'Laren, Esq., M.P. for Edinburgh, recently declared at a public meet-

poral interest. Others, who make no pretension to earnest Christianity, will be powerfully influenced by the feeling of their Christian friends, neighbours, countrymen, whom they sincerely respect, or, at least, whom they will not wantonly wound. And those English shareholders, who now have so large a portion of our Scottish railway property in their hands, if only they learn that the mind and heart of Scotland is against the Sabbath-traffic, will be moved, by the proverbial generosity and fairness of Englishmen, not to push the advantage they have, at the expense of lacerating the feelings, or even of offending the prejudices, of the country in which their money is laid out at interest. We ought, therefore, to keep all Sabbath-trafficking railway companies fully informed regarding our conviction, that their traffic is in itself a sin, and to us a nuisance,—aye and until they have brought their business into harmony with the religious feeling of the country in which it is carried on. And in addition to this class of public duties,

ing, that he could prove from the books of any Sabbath-trafficking railway company that the Sabbath traffic really diminishes the profits of the company.

(2.) There are *ecclesiastical duties*, to which Christians will do well to give heed. As I and most of my readers are Presbyterian, I will here employ the Presbyterian dialect of our Christian tongue, leaving it to those whom it may concern to translate my remarks into the Congregational or Prelatical dialect. And my remarks under this head may be all summed up in this one,—that Christians are now providentially called to be peculiarly faithful and firm in the administration of the discipline of the Church; *i.e.*, in seeing to it that their ministers preach, and their members practise, the catholic doctrine of the Sabbath or Lord's-day.

Under this head, I will say of the Established Church only that Dr Macleod's heretical demonstration is a calamity,—a calamity which may any day befall any other denomination of Christians holding by the Confession whose doctrine he has denied and assailed. And of her true members and office-bearers I will speak as fellow-members with me in the visible kingdom of Christ in our land. If that calamity had befallen the Church of which I am a minister, I for one would not stop short of

bringing the heretic either to retractation or to deposition. And I would feel that I had a claim on the sympathy and support of all honest Christians in the Church. For a minister is not a licensed sceptic, with a commission to experiment on the credulity of his hearers; but a public officer, who has freely and deliberately undertaken to teach certain doctrines. If he do not believe these doctrines, no one asks him to undertake the office of teaching them. If he cease to believe them, and yet continue to cling to the office, he is simply a dishonest man. And if his Church allow him to retain her ministry while he denies her doctrine, she is a dishonest Church, and, at the same time, is consciously guilty of sending a wolf in sheep's clothing to "feed the flock of God, which He has purchased with His blood." Therefore I say that it is our public duty as Christians to see to it that our ministers teach the true doctrine of the Sabbath; or that, if they do not teach it, and much more if they teach a false doctrine, they cease to be ministers of ours. For if, while retaining our ministry, they teach a false doctrine, we, in the just estimation of God, are responsible for the consequences of their teaching.

At the same time, we ought to be peculiarly conscientious in seeing to it, that our members of churches do not scandalously offend against the Christian law of the Sabbath or Lord's-day. When the ministers are loose in their doctrine, the members will be correspondingly loose in their practice: "it shall be like priest, like people." And this loose disposition may be regarded by some as a reason for corresponding looseness of church-discipline. As well might they reason that where a fortress is strongly assailed, there it should be feebly defended. In reality, the prevalent looseness of doctrine and practice in relation to the Sabbath is a reason why we should be peculiarly firm and uncompromising in our discipline in relation to that institution of God. But we must distinguish between firmness and obstinacy, Christian law and ecclesiastical domination.

The Sabbath-law is distinguished from the other nine commandments by expressly recognising the exceptional case of "necessity or mercy." There is hardly a limit to the extent to which a Christian might *conceivably* be working on the Lord's-day

in the body while really resting in the spirit. We ministers do our hardest work on the Lord's-day; and yet, if we be Christians, we really and fully enjoy the spiritual rest. And in the case of a slave in the primitive Church, under a pagan master, the outward rest of the Lord's-day may often have been a thing utterly unattainable from the cradle to the grave, while yet, as often as the first day of the week came round, the man may have thrown himself, with all his heart and soul, upon the bosom of the Redeemer as the soul's true rest and feast. In this respect the Fourth Commandment, as authoritatively expounded by our Lord, is obviously contrasted with the seventh or the ninth: there may be unlimited lawful occasions for working on the day of rest; but no occasion can justify adultery or false swearing. And this we must always keep in view in dealing with cases of alleged Sabbath-desecration. We must remember that God has prescribed the exception in cases of "necessity and mercy;" that what is not necessary or merciful in one case may be in another; that there is no limit to the *conceivable* extent to which a sincere Christian, *e.g.*, if he be a slave, may go on working on the day of

rest ; and that, therefore, the question whether this or that piece of Sabbath work is a breach of the Sabbath-law is always a *jury* question of fact, and is not necessarily determined by the letter of the law.

Here, therefore, it may be imagined, is a back-door of unlimited licence of Lord's-day *non-observance*. And here, certainly, for personal guidance, there is a very wide field of Christian casuistry. But for the practical purposes of church-discipline, the guidance of God's Word is amply sufficient. In our very complicated state of society, I do not know that we can safely or wisely be more precise and definite in our Sabbath legislation than the Westminster standards, which, declaring as the ordinary rule, that the "whole day" shall be devoted to religious rest, go on to state that the rule does not apply in cases of "necessity and mercy." But this exception will amply suffice for our guidance in all really doubtful cases. When we remember that no one among us is a slave, that every grown man is his own master, we see that the number of doubtful cases must be really very

small. And the question, Is this or that case a case of real "necessity or mercy?" may be very safely left to any jury of honest Christian men.

Such a jury we have in our kirk-sessions, and, on appeal from them, in our presbyteries, synods, and assemblies. Particularly, I value the judgment of a session, composed of Christian men, the *elite* of the congregation, who to an amount of Christian gifts and graces greater than is possessed by ordinary members of the Church, add a practical acquaintance with men and things not usually enjoyed by the minister. From personal experience in town and country, I have learned to regard the judgment of a really Christian kirk-session on any such practical case as that of alleged Sabbath desecration, as being the best guide that, humanly speaking, we can hope to have in detailed matters of truth and duty. And in every Christian Church, with a real effective discipline, some such elements as we have in our sessions will be found effectively working in some form or other.

It is therefore the ordinary duty of Christians,

in reference to the Sabbath, to support the disciplinary judgments of the Church they belong to. There may be cases of real injustice perpetrated by a Church court—*Humanum est errare*—in which it may be the Christian's duty to dissent from the judgment, and reclaim against it to Christ. But with reference to Sabbath observance in our day, Church courts are much more likely to be unduly loose than to be unduly stringent; Sabbath desecrators can easily get up a clamour for them, and against their judges, from the ungodly world; and, therefore, in all ordinary cases, what Christians have to do is to support the discipline of their Church against the ignorant clamour of a world "which lieth in the wicked one." So far of the strictly ecclesiastical public duties. And now,

(3.) Of the *mixed* duties, partly political and partly ecclesiastical. I am sorry to be here again under the necessity of disclaiming hostility to the Church established in Scotland. As practically Erastian, I am earnestly hostile to her. But as generally Christian, I no less earnestly desire her prosperity. And with reference to the Sabbath question, the

aspect she presents to me is not the Erastian, but the Christian. To make her calamity, the emergence of an unchristian doctrine of the Lord's-day within her borders, an instrument of carrying on our denominational quarrel against her, would, in my estimation, be ungenerous and unchristian. And from the sample we have had of her in the Glasgow Presbytery, we have no right to predict that she shall not be faithful to her position and law ; rather, we are bound to expect that she shall be found faithful. Yet there are plain practical relations of all Scottish Christians to that Church which lay them under constraint of duty, for their own guidance, to watch her procedure in this calamitous case. I do not mean merely the general relation of all Christians to every branch of the Catholic Church, —a relation which binds them to do what they can to strengthen the hands of every such Church in the administration of Scriptural discipline, and to protest against every defection from the discipline required by Christ's law. I refer to the relation of Scottish Christians to the Established Church, as a Church enjoying the benefits, and charged with the responsibilities of the national establishment.

That establishment is a national institution. Every citizen of the nation is taxed for its maintenance. Every citizen of the nation has a right, and is bound, to see to it that the institution is not being perverted from the purposes for which the nation maintains it. Of this right and obligation we cannot denude ourselves. And, therefore, whatever affects the Christian doctrine and discipline of the Established Church necessarily comes home to our business and bosom. For example, as I have said (in B. I., Cap. I,) if Dr Macleod have denied and assailed the doctrine of our religion as defined by statute-law of the Establishment, it becomes a question whether Christian Scottish citizens should not take legal steps to oust him from those temporalities which he enjoys on a condition he has violated. And again, if the Established Church fail to bring him, and Dr Tulloch, and others of the same sort, to retractation or deposition, it becomes a question, whether true Scottish Christians should not take steps to oust *her* from the establishment whose constitution she has failed to enforce. I do not say at present what should be the answer to

these questions : the answer will mainly depend on the conduct of the Established Church towards such of her ministers as Principal Tulloch, who has covertly assailed her Confession as a whole, and Dr Macleod, who has openly denied and assailed the doctrine of her Confession regarding the Decalogue. But I do say that this mixed ecclesiastico-political question is so imminently pressing, that it is the duty of all Scottish Christians to be seriously pondering it, and preparing themselves for taking action in relation to it.

But if we will be duly prepared for these public duties, political, ecclesiastical, and mixed, we must attend to

2. *Private duties.*—(1.) The first of these duties has reference to the due outward observance of the day. As to the inward spirit of observance, it is unnecessary here to dwell upon the commonplace, that outward form without inward power is an abomination to the Lord ; for that commonplace has really nothing to do with the controversy in which

we are now involved. I here speak only of those aspects of the duty of Lord's-day observance which that controversy brings out into prominent relief.

For example, our Sabbatarianism is (falsely) represented as being essentially gloomy and ascetic. The Bible Sabbatarianism (see B. I. Cap. I.) is essentially bright and festive. So is the Sabbatarianism of true Christians among us: it is a very common remark of theirs, that the Sabbath is the happiest day in their week. And in our present circumstances, it is their duty to *show* that it is so. I don't mean that it is necessary to have "first-rate dinners" to enable them to sustain the pressure of God's law; though I see no reason why an excellent dinner on that day should not form one symbol of its character as festive. I mean that Christians in their Sabbath-day life should show on the face of their observance the glad festivity which fills their heart.

This remark does not need to be made with reference to their attendance on public worship; for even in their very attire they show that public

worship is to them a festival; they do not wear sackcloth and ashes, but their gayest and best. But it may require to be made with reference to the Sabbath in the family. In Christian families, servants and children are sometimes made to wear an aspect of gloom, or at least of something not joyous. And for this there is no reason in the nature of the Christian Sabbath. To children, there is nothing more fascinating than the Bible stories which Christian parents are most likely to make the theme of conversation on the holy day:—in a family well-known to me, the children have recently spontaneously betaken themselves to acted representations of Bible stories, unconsciously reproducing the “miracle-plays” of the middle ages. The “psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,” which Christian parents among us are most likely to add to the theologico-historical instruction, are things which our children will relish at least as much as their parents. Any amount of bodily exercise, demanded by the principle of “necessity and mercy,” can easily be conceded, so as really to add to the due impression of the spiritual exercises of a Christian Sabbath. In the nature of the thing, there is no reason why,

to servants and children, the domestic Sabbath should not be felt and remembered as a veritable festival. And to give our family Sabbath-keeping this festive aspect, we are peculiarly bound in our time, by the circumstance that the Christian Sabbath is sedulously misrepresented as an institution essentially gloomy and ascetic.

But while seeking to be duly festive in the spirit of our Lord's-day observance, the circumstances of our time demand that we should be peculiarly careful and conscientious in attending to its form. Here the principle applies which Paul has stated in Rom. xiv., with reference to things in themselves indifferent, and which Dr Macleod has ventured to misapply to a thing which even he admits to be of Divine obligation—the observance of the Lord's-day as a day of religious rest. The principle is, that what is lawful in the abstract may be sinful in this or that particular case; because, though lawful in the abstract, it may tend in this or that case to ruin the soul of a weak brother who does not clearly see its abstract lawfulness. And this principle tells with the force of a thunderbolt on the decision of

certain casuistical questions regarding Lord's-day observance.

For example, with reference to "Sabbath-walking." On the solitary hills, a shepherd may keep the Sabbath holy in walking among his flock, as well as though he had been sitting in his closet. The head of a large family, with only one sitting-room in which the children are crowded, and the mother is cooking their supper, may be better able to commune with God when quietly rambling in the fields than when sitting in that crowded and noisy room at home. And, if he were to have regard only to *his own* spiritual interest, he might lawfully roam abroad. But "no man liveth to himself." The Christian has regard, not only to his own personal comfort and well-being, but also to the well-being of that whole community of which God has made him a responsible member. And what, in the abstract, might be most conducive to his personal comfort and well-being, he may feel constrained to sacrifice for the spiritual, or even temporal good of the community as a whole. Now, in our large towns, and in many country districts, *the system of*

“Sabbath-walking” manifestly tends to render a due observance of the Lord’s-day a practical impossibility: in so far as that system prevails, the Sabbath is in practice degraded into a mere secular holiday. Hence, in our land and time, it is a fair question of Christian casuistry, whether the Christian man should not deny himself the enjoyment of what would, perhaps, in *his* case be most conducive to real spiritual rest; because his example would serve to strengthen a system which, in the case of the mass of men around him, visibly tends to the utter destruction of that rest. The abstract legality of “Sabbath-walking” may save him from the censures of the Church; but the ascertained practical ungodliness of the system may expose him to the just anger of that God who has said, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” And I do not think that, either in personal feeling, or in the estimation of God and good men, he will suffer serious loss by being scrupulous in this matter to scrupulosity.

So with reference to Sabbath travelling by railway, or omnibus, or steamer. The question of Sab-

bath cabs, or private carriages, is one on which no general judgment can be pronounced: the private coachman may be substantially on the same footing with the family cook; and the cabman, by the forethought and liberality of those who employ him to drive them to church, may be enabled to attend public worship along with them, and thus set in the position of family coachman for the day. For my own part, though I would have no difficulty in hiring a cab for Sabbath-travelling on professional duty, I would be quite willing to accept a "self-denying ordinance" against the use of any *hired* conveyance on the Lord's-day. But here I do not see that the apostolic principle applies very clearly or strongly. But it does most clearly and strongly apply to the case of omnibuses, and steamers, and trains, which carry on an *ordinary systematic* traffic on the Lord's-day. There are many cases, of working-men and others, in which it is really very desirable that they should be able to travel otherwise than on foot on the day of rest. In such cases, Christian men do sometimes make use of the existing means of conveyance, by omnibus, or steamer, or train. And, as a church-ruler, I have never felt free to deal with such cases

by ecclesiastical censure. But in all such cases I would put it to the conscience of Christian men themselves, whether they are not seeking their personal comfort, or even well-being, at the expense or risk of the general good of the community. If the *system* of Sabbath-travelling by railway, or steamer, or omnibus not only destroy the weekly rest of the servants employed, but obviously tend to bereave the community of the blessed Sabbath rest, is it not better that you or I should sacrifice a convenience which is lawful in the abstract, than that we should countenance a system which tends in the concrete to the temporal and spiritual undoing of the community? If this question be seriously considered, I am persuaded that there will be an end to all such travelling on the part of serious Christians.

This aspect of the Sabbath-traffic suggests another. There are certain omnibus and steamboat and railway companies which are notorious Sabbath-traffickers. With reference to these, it is a fair question of Christian casuistry how far we should give them our custom through the week. If in Paisley there were two grocers, otherwise

equally good, of whom the one kept open shop on the Lord's-day, and the other obeyed the Fourth Commandment, I would feel constrained, of course, to give my custom to the Sabbath-keeping grocer. This would be a natural and proper expression of my conviction that all men are morally bound to keep one day in seven holy to the Lord. Apply the same principle to Sabbath-breaking railways, and steamers, and omnibuses. Let every Christian man, in conveying his person or goods on the week-days, give a preference to that company which obeys the moral law of the Fourth Commandment. This has been done, to a considerable extent, in the case of a Sabbath-breaking steamboat company on the Clyde. And if it be done in all parallel cases, I have no doubt that the mammon-worshipping companies will find themselves constrained, by regard to their money-god, to show outward respect to the law of our true God ;—that their pecuniary loss on every one of the six working days will be greater than their unlawful pecuniary gain on the holy day of rest.

But this practical observance of the Lord's-day

is founded on what we now proceed to consider in the last place :—

(2.) The most important duty at present is to know and profess and defend the true *principle* of Lord's-day observance,—the catholic doctrine of the Fourth Commandment, as being a law of nature preternaturally revealed. Those who, with Principal Tulloch, deny the truth of human responsibility for belief, will probably not admit that the recognition of that doctrine, though it should be true, is, properly speaking, a *duty* at all. But an authority whom Christians adore has taught us that we are responsible for belief as for all other rational actions; that belief in the truth which is clearly revealed and sufficiently evidenced is, under one aspect, *the* great duty of man,—“This is the work of God that ye *believe* in Him whom He hath sent;” and that unbelief, in the case of those to whom that truth has come is *the* great sin of the impenitent,—“This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and that men have loved darkness rather than light. . . . He shall convince the world of sin, because they *believe* not on Me.” That

Divine Reason has explained how and why unbelief is a sin, in the words, "They have loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil;" and again, in the words, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life. . . But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." When the truth comes, plainly revealed and clearly evidenced, the only reason why it is not believed is, that the man is perverted in his will, ungodly in his heart, and *therefore* blinded in his understanding. So that, to believe the catholic doctrine of the Sabbath-law is a plain Christian duty: not to believe it is a sin.

And this duty is the most important duty of Christians at present with reference to the Lord's-day. For, first, Christians are the "pillar and ground of the truth;" to hold up the truth, as the candlestick holds up the candle, is one leading office of God's Church on the earth. And the truth, the principle of Lord's-day observance, and not the mere form of observing it, is what is most openly assailed at present. But, second, *this* truth is given, not only as precious in itself, but for the

practical purpose of securing the due observance of the day among the peoples. The truth which God has given for that purpose is, we may presume, perfectly adapted for that practical purpose; and anything less than the God-given truth is, we may presume, *not* perfectly adapted for that practical purpose; so that, we may presume, in order to a due observance of the Lord's-day among the peoples, there must be known and believed "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" which God has given for that end. This may be presumed from the fact of God's omniscient wisdom, as manifested in His perfect adaptation of means to ends. And it may be clearly seen in the nature of the case, and in the experience of the Church, as illustrated in the preceding portions of this work.

Thus, as to the nature of the case, we have seen (B. III. Cap. I.) that the ecclesiastical theory does not result in a real observance of the Lord's-day at all, as an act of *obedience to Christ* as King of the Church; for the observance resulting from that theory is dictated by the mere wisdom of man. We have seen (*ibid.*) that the Dominical theory,

though it result in an observance which is an act of avowed obedience to Christ, yet does not result in a real observance; because it does not result in—what is required by God's Word—an observance which is an express and formal homage to Christ *as God*,—the God who gave the law on Sinai, and is the ultimate fountain of all moral law, including the moral law of the Fourth Commandment. Thus the ecclesiastical theory immediately results in mere pharisaical “will-worship;” and the Dominical theory falls far short, at its best, of producing the due worship of God required by the Scriptures: what they both produce is, at the utmost, in this matter, “the form of godliness without the power.” And while their immediate fruits are thus mere “apples of Sodom,” the surface appearance of Christian life with death at the heart, experience teaches that the sure, though it should be remote, result of anything short of the Catholic doctrine will be the disappearance even of the due outward form of Lord's-day observance among the peoples.

This might have been anticipated from the fact, that, generally speaking, the practical purpose for

which low doctrines of the Lord's-day have been advocated, is to justify a low practice of Lord's-day observance. It might have been expected from what I have shown (in B. II. Cap. II., III.), that in proportion as the moral law disappears to men's apprehension in the firmament of positive revelation, in that proportion it ceases to be known and observed, ceases to be mirrored in their hearts and lives; and that, while the ecclesiastical theory expressly denies the divine institution of the Lord's-day, the Dominical theory presents the fact of that institution so shorn of its scriptural evidences, as to have no adequate hold for practical purposes on the understanding and conscience of the mass of men. But what we might thus have divined is impressively demonstrated by modern Church history.

I have said (B. I. Cap. III.) that while the whole Catholic Church from the Reformation downwards has maintained the doctrine of the morality and perpetual obligation of the Fourth Commandment, yet the doctrine as held by her has assumed two forms, which may be described as respectively high and low. Thus, on the one hand, the Reformed

(Calvinistic and Zuinglian) branch of the Reformation Church, having thrown off the bondage of the system of church festivals, and being thus free to embrace the true doctrine in its fulness, gradually rose to the high form of the doctrine as definitively declared by the Synod of Dordt and the Westminster Assembly (B. I. Cap. II, III). On the other hand, the Romish Church, and the Ritualistic Protestant Churches, having clung to that system of man-made festivals, were not free to accept the high forms of the doctrines—to accept the Fourth Commandment as prescribing *only* “one day in seven.” They have felt constrained to construe the commandment more vaguely and loosely, as prescribing only that *some* stated days shall be consecrated to religious rest, and leaving the question, *what* days, to be determined by the Church.

And this lower form of the doctrine has borne appropriate fruit, in the “Continental Sunday” of Popish and Protestant countries; the Lord’s-day, set theoretically on the same foundation with the man-made festivals, has sunk along with them in practical observance to the level of a secular holi-

day with a sprinkling of religion (like holy water on a robber.) On the other hand, the only communities in modern Christendom in which there has been realised in practice anything approaching to the ideal which is prescribed by every theory of the Lord's-day, are those Puritanic communities in Europe and America which have earnestly embraced the Catholic doctrine in the high form it assumed in the developed Calvinistic Church.

This historical induction impressively illustrates the practical importance of holding the Catholic doctrine in its high Calvinistic form. And at the same time it furnishes an *a posteriori* evidence of the truth and divinity of the doctrine in this form. For it may be presumed that the doctrine which God has revealed shall accomplish the practical purpose for which He has revealed it. But this practical purpose has been accomplished by the high Calvinistic doctrine alone; —*ergo*, it is to be presumed that the high Calvinistic doctrine of the Sabbath-law is true and divine. And thus to the system of circumstantial evidence in favour of this doctrine furnished by God's Word, there falls to be added yet another ray furnished

by God's saving work in the heart and life of His modern Church.

If, then, we would see the Lord's-day duly honoured, and the peoples fully blessed by its observance in our time; and if we would leave to our posterity a heritage of Sabbath observance and consequent prosperity such as our Puritanic forefathers have transmitted to us; let us know, and believe, and profess, and defend that high Calvinistic doctrine of the Sabbath which was embraced and inculcated by them with such broad and far-reaching beneficent results: if we would reap as they have reaped, let us sow what they sowed—the seed of that doctrine which God has revealed in His Word.

And let us remember that one most impressive form of preaching the doctrine is the practice of it. In the experience of the modern Church, we have seen how a low doctrine tends to bear fruit in corresponding low practice. On the other hand, if we would see the high practice gradually resulting in a clear and full apprehension of the corresponding high doctrine, we need only look to the experience

of the ancient Church. That primitive Church, as we have seen, (B. I. Cap. IV.), though she never embraced a low doctrine, yet did not at the outset consciously and explicitly embrace the high doctrine. Till the Age of the Councils she had *no* doctrine or theory, properly so called, of the Lord's-day, — a very precarious condition for a Church to be in; for the high divine doctrine is ordinarily indispensable for counteracting the downward proclivities which inhere in the purest Church. But the primitive Church had one thing which powerfully tended to keep her right in her practice of Lord's-day observance, and to lead her to right views of the relevant doctrine: she had, with not a little fanaticism, a high and fervid spirituality, an ardent love to God, purified and strengthened by the furnace of her persecutions, and by the perhaps more painful discipline of daily and hourly collision with the customs of an ungodly Pagan world around her. She thus was in the *moral condition* for the recognition of God's truth: "Unto the upright the light ariseth in the darkness. . . . If any man will to do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." Accordingly she did in due

time receive the reward of her faithfulness in a conscious and explicit recognition of the true doctrine of that Lord's-day which she had always so warmly loved and fully observed. And in the process by which she arrived at this apprehension—finely delineated by Mr Maurice (see Appendix D)—it is interesting to observe that there was no conscious agony, or effort to throw off an *incubus* of error, such as was found necessary by the Reformation Church: the process was rather one of gradual awakening to the full knowledge of that truth which she had always had in its germ in her heart—when she once fairly reflected on the subject, she *found herself* Sabbatarian.

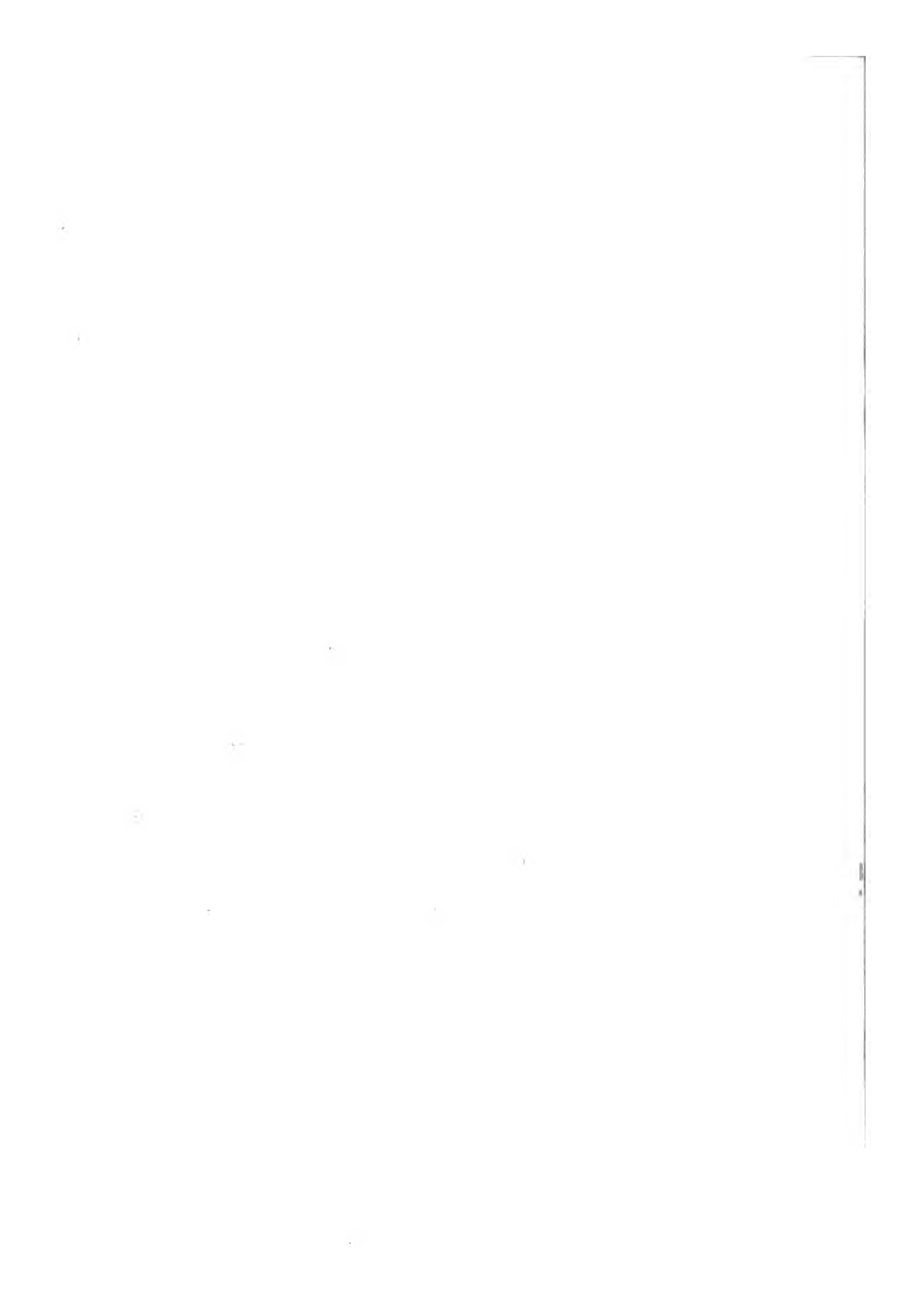
That painless process of ascertaining the truth can never more take place, at least in the experience of educated theologians.* The low or false doctrines of which the primitive Church never dreamed, but which have been advocated in the modern Church,

* In some of the communities recently converted to God in the South Sea Islands, one symptom of high Christian tone of feeling and practice is a very full and glad observance of the Lord's-day, apparently quite spontaneous.

even by professing Christians, have made it henceforward impossible for a theologian to be established in the whole truth without experiencing the agony of doubt, and feeling that Christ has come to "send not peace on earth, but a sword." Still, to those who love the truth, the primitive Church teaches a most important lesson. She shows us that if we would have our children to become unconsciously imbued with the high doctrine,* we must accustom them from infancy to the high practice, teaching them by precept and example to follow in the footsteps of the saints of old, under both Testaments, "Calling the Sabbath a delight, holy of the Lord,

* Principal Tulloch appears to think very meanly of the "traditionary" process of leading children, by catechisms or otherwise, to the knowledge of divine truth. From Abraham downwards this process has been assiduously practised by the people of God. In all civilised nations the same process is employed for leading the young to the knowledge of natural science: they are taught to *believe* the facts and principles of astronomy before they can understand them; and the facts and principles believed constitute a *light* in the mind, enabling it in due time to understand them. Thus, in an important sense, each young generation *inherits* the attainments of its predecessors. And, as I have shown in the *Epilogue*, to object to this process of advancing civilisation is to occupy the position and utter the sentiments of a barbarian.

honourable." The same practice on our own part will set us in the right point of view, the proper frame of mind and heart, both for the recognition of the true doctrine and for the due appreciation of the truth,—that "jewel of great price,"—when found. And a thorough-going practice of the truth, like the practice of the Puritans and the primitive Church, is that which will, next to God's own Word, most impressively commend it to the acceptance of God-fearing individuals, families, and communities which have not yet attained to the God-given truth in its fulness of life-giving light. As we have seen, (B. III. Cap. I.) the most effective answer to the popular objections to the Sabbath prescribed by God's Word is a due observance and enjoyment of that Sabbath by God's people.





EPILOGUE.

PRINCIPAL TULLOCH'S RECENT PAMPHLET.*

“ Nullusne ergo in Ecclesia Christi profectus habebitur intelligentiæ? Habebitur plane et maximus, sed ita tamen ut vere profectus sit ille fidei, non permutatio.”—St Vincent of Lerins.

IN the preface to his recent pamphlet, with reference to Dr Macleod's Glasgow Speech, Principal Tulloch speaks as follows:—

“ With the general drift of that speech I entirely sympathise. The views which it expresses are views which have been always held in the Christian Church: they are the views both of Luther and of Calvin. At the same time, it cannot be doubted that they have not hitherto been the views of the Church of Scotland, and their expression therefore necessarily touches the relation of the Church to certain Puritan dogmas which are rapidly perishing in the minds of all thoughtful men.”

The learned Principal has thus gone out of his

* Theological Controversy, or the Function of Debate in Theology, &c.

way to speak of the Sabbath question—to what effect a very few sentences will suffice to show. I have had occasion (Book I. Cap. II.) to speak of a critical remark of the learned Principal as indicating on his part a lack of capacity for historico-theological criticism. A gross chronological blunder in the first edition of his pamphlet, carefully obliterated in the second, suggests the suspicion that he may be really ignorant of the history on which he dogmatizes. And from the few sentences he has uttered regarding the Sabbath question, it may be divined whether his is a case for application of the proverb, *ex ungue leonem*.

“The general drift” of Dr Macleod’s Glasgow speech is to deny and assail the catholic doctrine of the Sabbath law and the Decalogue. This catholic doctrine is the only “Puritan dogma” with which he comes into collision. His opinion that the Lord’s-day has the sanction of Apostolic authority is the opinion of “the Church of Scotland,” and *was not* the opinion “both of Luther and of Calvin.” And even in holding that “one day in seven” is what is required by the constitution of man, Dr Macleod *differs* from “both Luther and Calvin,” and *agrees* with “the Church of Scotland ;”—though while she believes it on the authority of God’s word, he apparently believes it on the authority of some infidels whom he once met in Paris.

Here, then, there is a twofold question in Church history :—(1.) Is the Westminster doctrine of the per-

petual obligation of the Decalogue in general and the Fourth Commandment in particular a distinctively "Puritan dogma," so that in holding it the Scottish Church is thus far contrasted with the Christian world as a whole? And (2.) Has Dr Macleod's opinion, that the Lord's-day rests *only* on Apostolic institution, "been always held in the Christian Church" by any respectable party? And in answer to this question I have shown (Book I.) (1.) that the Westminster doctrine, from the Reformation downwards, has been the doctrine of the whole Catholic Church, whether Popish or Protestant; and (2) that the Dominical theory has never been held by any Christian Church, nor even by any considerable party in the Church;—so that, in holding it, Drs Macleod, and Tulloch, and Hessey belong to one of the smallest and narrowest sects that ever existed in Christendom.

Principal Tulloch's logic and learning, thus illustrated by himself, have something to do with the question of his qualification for leadership in a time of intellectual awakening. But the "spirit" of a would-be prophet must be mainly "tried" by the indications of his state of mind and heart in relation to the principles of that religion which he professes to expound. And it is by such indications that I proceed to try the spirit of Principal Tulloch.

The materials for the trial furnished by his pamphlet

are neither copious nor luminous. The projectors of a new Theological Review advertise that they "scorn to defend their faith by reticence, or by the artifices too commonly resorted to." So far, every Evangelical Christian must wish them God-speed. For "reticence," *i. e.*, dishonest concealment of real belief or unbelief, has always characterised heretical movements at the outset. For example, in last century, the movement which resulted in Socinianism was characterised at Geneva, in England, and in Anglo-Saxon America, by the gross dishonesty of the moving party, in continuing to wear the garb of a ministry whose duties they had ceased to perform, continuing to profess that they believed a doctrine which they had come to disbelieve. On the other hand, orthodox Christians have never shown any disposition to dissemble their real convictions. They have always shown that they not only believe their avowed creed, but regard the belief of it as their life, and the preaching of it as their glory and joy. We therefore fully sympathise with the *Contemporary Review* in its just scorn of "reticence."

But I fear that Principal Tulloch cannot be accepted as a contributor to that Review, though even in its first number it has gone so far beyond him on the Sabbath question as to have rejected the Dominical theory in favour of the merely Ecclesiastical theory. For Principal Tulloch appears to be not innocent of the "artifice" of "reticence." It is long since Principal

Cunningham—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—publicly challenged him, if he *had* any definite convictions, plainly to state them—to speak out like a man. Even now, Bishop Wordsworth finds it necessary to remind him that snakes lie hid in flowery generalities. And most of the thoughtful readers of his pamphlet will feel disposed to compare him to those ancient warriors who, in order more safely to launch their arrows at their foes, enveloped themselves in a cloud of dust. The learned Principal is abundantly free and full in assailing the faith of others. But it is only once, perhaps inadvertently, that he makes any confession of any faith of his own.

This reticence I regard as a very indifferent qualification for the office of prophecy. In the new dispensation a prophet is bound to use “all plainness of speech:” reticence is alien to the “simplicity of the Gospel.” Yet, from Dr Tulloch’s aspect towards the faith of others, and from his one inadvertent (?) utterance of his own faith, we may learn what manner of spirit He is of. Thus we mark—

1. His aspect towards the *Westminster Confession of Faith*—whose “whole doctrine” he has repeatedly bound himself by solemn oath to teach, and in every lawful way to defend. His whole inaugural address is really, though covertly, an assault on that Confession. And this itself would have been an alarming

symptom of his spiritual condition in the estimation of those who love the Christian religion as defined in that Confession, even though Dr Tulloch had said—what he does not say—that he heartily acquiesces in the substance of the doctrine confessed by the Westminster divines, and dislikes only the form of words in which they confess it.

The ancient Arians loudly protested that they were at one with the Catholic Church in believing the truth of the Saviour's deity; and that they objected only to the word—*homoousios*—by which the Catholics expressed the truth; and would be perfectly satisfied with another word—*homoiousios*—which differs from that word only by one poor little *iota*. The Dutch Arminians at the outset were not less loud in protesting that they were at one with the orthodox in the substance of their belief, and that they objected only to the form of words in the Heidelberg Catechism. And in the English Nonconformist Church at the beginning of last century, the moving party loudly protested that they heartily acquiesced in the substance of what was believed by orthodox Presbyterians, and objected only to the form of words in which it is confessed by the Westminster divines. But in all these cases, it was proved by the result, that the objection to the form of words really originated in a rooted alienation of heart from the substance of the faith which the words expressed.

And the lesson thus taught by the general course of

Church history of heresies applies with peculiar force to any indication of dislike to the Westminster Confession. For, as I have said (Book I. Cap. II.), that Confession is conspicuous among the Reformation symbols by the precision with which—excepting the one article of toleration—it expresses no more and no less than the substance of what it means. There are one or two points in reference to which its utterances may require explanation or modification, and have, in fact, been explained or modified by Churches which honestly hold it as the confession of their faith,—*i.e.*, as showing what the Church believes, and what all her ministers are bound to teach. For example, it states that the civil magistrate has power to call synods of the Church. This will be acknowledged by all Christians who seriously believe that the civil magistrate has power of right to call *every* association in the community, civil or ecclesiastical, before him, in order, *e.g.*, that the association may tell him what it is, and explain that it is not an organised conspiracy against the due rights of magistrates or liberties of subjects. But while confessing this truism, the Scottish Church, in the very act of accepting the Westminster Confession, has explained that she does not recognise in this power of the magistrate anything incompatible with the intrinsic right of every true Church, to assemble synodically of her own motion, when and where she will. Again, the Confession states that the magistrate's duty includes, *inter alia*, the duty of doing whatever he competently can do to maintain

the visible unity of the Church. And that this is his duty will be confessed by all Christians who seriously believe that nations as such are bound to have regard to the will of God as expressed in the Scriptures, and in particular to do whatever they competently can to promote the well-being of the kingdom of Christ on earth. Once more, the Confession makes certain statements which bear on the subject of toleration, and which have been construed as really intolerant. These statements have been regarded and expounded, by such authorities as Dr Cunningham and the elder M'Crie, to mean nothing inconsistent with our modern notions of toleration. But as they are superficially inconsistent with these notions, at least the Free and United Presbyterian Churches have formally declared, by acts of their supreme courts, that in subscribing the Confession no one of their office-bearers is understood to acquiesce in any doctrine really intolerant or persecuting, in anything incompatible with the due right of private judgment.

I labour at this point on account of a very recent demonstration by his grace the Duke of Argyll. At a meeting of the Bible Society in Glasgow, his grace took occasion to advocate a looseness of view of subscription which unpleasantly reminds us of Dr Tulloch, on the ground that the Westminster Confession contains articles no longer believed by the Churches which hold by it. When it is remembered that there were on the same plat-

form with him leading ministers of the Free, United, and Reformed Presbyterian Churches, it will be believed that his grace is far too much of a gentleman and of a Christian to have said what he did say in the full consciousness of its logical consequence. The logical consequence of his statement is, that office-bearers of Churches among us, which really hold by the Westminster standards, solemnly avow that they believe what in fact they do not believe. This logical consequence is utterly unsupported by facts, so far as my knowledge extends. On the two or three dubious points, the leading free Presbyterian denominations among us have taken the honest course, of expressly limiting the extent to which their office-bearers bind themselves by subscribing the *formula* of adherence to the Westminster Confession. With only this reservation, expressly made, our office-bearers solemnly declare that they believe, and will in every lawful way maintain and defend, "*the whole doctrine*" of the aforesaid Confession. And to say that they do *not* believe this "whole doctrine" is—it may be unconsciously—to take a very unwarrantable liberty with the character of Churches, and with the truth.

But his grace of Argyll has corroborated my remark as to the general character of the Confession,—that no one who seriously believes its "whole doctrine" can reasonably object to the form of words in which it expresses that doctrine. For what his grace objected to

on the one point he specified is, not the mere form of words, but the substance of Christian doctrine regarding the magistrate's due right and duty—a doctrine which may well be believed by the most ardent “Voluntary,” and which can hardly be assailed without manifest impropriety by a member of the Queen's government.* The Confession may, conceivably, not be perfectly adapted to the capacity and wants of our time: it may be either too short and simple, or too long and elaborate for the leading purpose of a confession—viz., to show what the Church believes and binds her ministers to teach. And on this ground any one of us may, consistently with a thorough belief in the substance of its doctrine, move for a new form of words. But no one who sincerely believes the substance of its teaching can ever assail the Westminster Confession as it has been assailed, really though covertly, by Principal Tulloch. And that we are not entitled to regard him as seriously believing it, will appear from what follows, viz. :—

2. His aspect towards the *faith confessed* by the Westminster divines. There are three articles of that faith, no one of them unimportant, with reference to which his aspect is unmistakably hostile. (1.) The

* The Duke of Argyll's ignorance of a plain duty and right of the magistrate, a duty and right which are obvious even in the light of nature, illustrates the value of confessions as a *testimony*, showing magistrates their duty as declared in God's Word.

Confession is decidedly *anti-Erastian*; and Principal Tulloch and his grace of Argyll are Erastian, at least in their practice; so that they have a practical interest in the advocacy of loose views of truth and duty in relation to *formulas* of faith. (2.) The Confession affirms the perpetual obligation of the Ten Commandments, not excepting the Fourth; and Principal Tulloch "entirely sympathises with the general drift" of Dr Macleod's Glasgow speech. And (3.) he speaks (p. 29 of his pamphlet, second edition) of a "religious philosophy" which "in the seventeenth century" resulted in "the special development of Calvinistic theology," "known under the name of *Federalism*," and which gave a "prominent development such as they had not hitherto received" to "such ideas, for example, as *law and covenant*, as *forensic justice* and *administrative order*."—(The *italics* are Dr Tulloch's.)

As to the historical place here assigned to that "special development" and these "ideas," it is needless to dispute with the learned Principal:—it was when dogmatising—*more suo*—on this point that he fell into his chronological calamity with reference to Turretine and Witsius. But for our present purpose we inquire, What does he mean by describing recent Calvinistic "prominent development of" the aforesaid "ideas" as a peculiarity resulting from a "*religious philosophy*?" The ideas are confessed by the Westminster divines as *plain Bible doctrines or of facts*, which lie at the foundation

of God's revealed method of dealing with man and the universe. In the estimation of these divines, it is a plain Bible doctrine or fact that God, the Moral Governor of the universe, observes a certain "administrative order," and administers "justice," and is the ultimate fountain of "law" both physical and moral. In their estimation it is a plain Bible doctrine or fact that, while thus related to the universe as a whole, He has, moreover, always dealt with man by special positive compacts designated "covenants:" that with man un-fallen He dealt by a covenant of works, and that with man fallen He deals by a new and everlasting covenant of grace in Christ. What, then, does Dr Tulloch mean by speaking of the above "ideas" in their recent "development," as the detailed results of a "religious philosophy?"

Does he mean that they are *not* plain Bible doctrines or facts? That they are not really a theology, given by revelation of God, but merely a philosophy, the invention of man? That the Westminster divines, to whose Confession he has sworn, did not find them in the Bible, but got them up out of their own inventive minds, as a theory for the justification of their views of Bible fact or doctrine? If he do mean any such thing, he has certainly abandoned the Faith confessed by the Westminster divines regarding the *substance* of the law and the Gospel. And that his statements are inexplicable except on the supposition that he really has

abandoned it, will abundantly appear under the next head.

3. His aspect towards *all Christian creed and Christian doctrine*. Reticence is not the only artifice of controversy. Principal Tulloch, as we have seen, would fain leave on our mind the impression that what he assails in detail is not the Christian religion as believed by the Catholic Church, but merely certain "Puritan dogmas" regarding the Sabbath law and God's law in general, and His grace in the Gospel; whereas what he really assails is not any mere peculiarity of the Westminster doctrine, but the catholic doctrine of our religion as confessed by all the Reformation Churches. And this will now appear more clearly and fully.

Of creeds and confessions he speaks as follows :—

"I have long seen that the day is approaching when the claims of *all creeds and confessions* to hold the place they have hitherto done (*sic !*) in the estimation of Christians will be keenly canvassed." (Pamphlet, p. 24.)

Again (p. 30) :—

"My own profound conviction is that religious thought in Scotland, no less than in England, has already entered on a movement which is destined to *remould dogmatic conviction* more largely than any previous movement in the history of the Church, and that it is well-nigh impossible that the *old relation of our Church to the Westminster Confession can continue.*"

And once more (p. 30) :—

“ In one sense that which has been done once cannot be undone ; and there is no man with a large intelligence of Christian history, or of the difficulties attending the effective working of ecclesiastical organisations, who would simply propose to abandon the Confession of Faith, as some of the clergy of last century did. No Church can ever rid herself of her dogmatic substructures without the peril of dissolution. This I profoundly think. But there may be *various changes in the relations of living belief to these documents of a former period.*” (The *italics* in the above extracts are mine.)

Here, at the outset, there arises a practical question, —What does Dr Tulloch mean by “ changes in the relations of living belief ” to such old “ documents ” as the Confession he has sworn to? Does he mean a change resulting from *disbelief* of the doctrine of the Confession? Does he advocate the retention of the Confession merely as containing articles of peace, *not* as declaring articles of faith seriously believed by all who solemnly subscribe it? Will he have a clerical subscription with the reservation recently proposed by some west-country elders of his church—who will own the Confession as the confession of their faith *in so far* as it is consistent with reason and Scripture—a reservation with which any Church might as well have the Racovian Catechism or Tom Payne’s “ Age of Reason ” for her standard as the Westminster Confession? If Dr Tulloch mean any such thing as this, if this be the sense in which his Church is to retain her “ dogmatic substructures,” then it is time to protest in behalf not only of the Fourth

Commandment, but also the Eighth and the Ninth. For to accept a subscription to any "document" on the understanding that the subscriber does not believe it, is to sanction a deliberate lie ; to accept an establishment and endowment on condition of teaching a doctrine she has ceased to believe, is, on the part of any Church, to be guilty of receiving public money on false and fraudulent pretences. And how far this method of dealing with "dogmatic substructures" is compatible with the character of a Christian Church may be left to the arbitrament of any unsophisticated Christian conscience, or, indeed, of any commonly honest mind.

And yet I do not see what else the reverend Doctor can mean. If he had meant merely that the *form* of expressing Christian truth in the Westminster "documents" is different from the form in which the same truth would now be naturally expressed by us, or that the "remoulding of dogmatic conviction" arises from new attainments in knowledge of the *substance* of that truth ; so that a new form of words is exceedingly desirable, while yet there are practical difficulties so great that a Church in adopting a new form would incur "the peril of dissolution ;"—if he had meant this, then we could have recognised his utterances as consistent with Christian truth and honour. We *could not* have recognised them as consistent either with "a large intelligence of Christian history," or with a Christian intelligence of the nature and duty of a Church. It re-

quires but a very small "intelligence of Christian history" to show us that (as, *e.g.*, in the case of the Second Reformation Church of Scotland) a Church which seriously believes the substance of Christian truth can safely at any time abandon her old "dogmatic substructure" in favour of a new one more perfectly adapted to new circumstances, both of the Church and of the world around her. If altered circumstances really demand a new form of words, then it is the plain duty of a Church to abandon the old form and adopt a new, whatever practical difficulty she may find in effecting the change. And as to an apprehended "peril of dissolution" from such a change, I do not remember any case of a Papist confessing a feeling of dependence on "dogmatic substructure" so abjectly servile as is here confessed by Principal Tulloch:—certainly, all true Protestants, so far from believing with him that the Church is kept from dissolution only by a man-made creed (she has ceased to believe), know and confess that the Church is kept in corporate being by, and only by, the living word and Spirit of God.

The natural inference from his manner of speaking is, that Principal Tulloch regards his Church as not seriously believing the substance of Christian doctrine declared in her Confession; yea, as not seriously believing *any* Christian doctrine capable of being constructed into a *formula*; and that he regards this as a *legitimate* condition of a Christian Church. And we

now shall see that he gives us reason to conclude that he, at least, does not seriously believe the substance of Christian truth as confessed by Evangelical Churches in general.

(1.) It will be observed that the "change" of which he speaks has reference not merely to the Westminster Confession, but to *all* the existing creeds of the Churches, including the surviving creeds of the ancient Church. Thus (p. 27), he speaks of them all as characterised by those peculiarities,—of place and time, and other evanescent circumstances—which in his estimation disqualify the Westminster Confession for serving as a *bona fide* confession of the Church's faith,—*i.e.*, for showing what she really believes and binds her ministers to teach. Again, as we have seen, it is "the claims of *all* creeds and confessions to hold the place they have hitherto held in the estimation of Christians," that are about to be "keenly canvassed." And once more, if we will believe Dr Tulloch's vaticinations, "the propriety of *formulas* of faith" in general is about to become "the great question of this age."

All this is intelligible on the supposition, and only on the supposition, established years ago by Principal Cunningham, that Principal Tulloch has abandoned the creed of the Reformation,—*i.e.*, the faith of the evangelical Christian world. If he have abandoned it, then, of course, the question of all existing creeds and confessions will be a very great one in his estimation :

the propriety of any *formula* which expresses the Protestant doctrine of grace will to him be very doubtful at the best. But to one who sincerely believes the Reformation doctrine, the question of this or that Protestant confession, though practically important, will appear as theologically small. And any such believer will gladly recognise the propriety of his Church's confessing, and binding her ministers to teach, the religion he regards as true and divine.

The learned Principal appears to imagine that we who love the old creeds regard them as authorities, properly speaking, *i.e.*, as binding us to believe what they teach merely by their teaching it. But we have not so learned Christ. The imagination that we have is of the same quality with Dr Tulloch's chronology of Turretine and Witsius. We honour the creeds as venerable monuments of the wisdom and piety of our forefathers. We value them as well fitted for the practical purpose of confessing the faith of the Church. And we apply them as tests of the loyalty of our office-bearers, by depriving of our ministry any one who may assail or deny the doctrine of our Confession,—as the authorities of a college would turn out of their ministry any professor who should set himself to deny the propositions of Euclid or refute the *Principia* of Newton. But in all this we do not for an instant proceed on the supposition that our Confession is a proper theological authority, binding us to believe what it teaches merely

by its teaching it,—as the college authorities do not accept the principles of geometry and astronomy merely because Euclid and Newton have uttered them. We regard and use the Confession as a summary of what we believe to be the Christian doctrine of God's word, the doctrine which the Church, through her ministers, is bound to teach. And we regard a minister, not as an avowed sceptic in gown and bands, with a commission to experiment on the patience or credulity of his hearers, but as a veritable "minister" or servant of the Church, gladly consenting on her behalf to teach the doctrine of her Confession, *because*—as he solemnly declares—he believes it on the authority of God's word. Any one who does not so believe it is no true minister of ours, but a "wolf in sheep's clothing,"—practising "reticence." This is so plainly the true view of our relation to the Confession, that—not to speak of "large intelligence of Christian history"—if any of our catechumens, with a glimmering of Christian intelligence, be asked, *On what authority* does your Church believe the doctrine of her Confession, and teach you to believe it? he will answer at once, On the authority of God as revealed in His word. In fact, judging from Dr Tulloch's slavish dread of abandoning a confession no longer believed, we are very much more free in relation to our Confession than he is.

But while the learned Principal has such a dread of abandoning the "dogmatic substructures" of his

Church, he appears to have a profound aversion to seriously *believing* the dogmas they embody. And thus, under the head of *tradition*, or *traditional* belief, he is very hard upon us poor Protestants, and plainly shows that he is no Protestant at heart. Regarding our confessed relation to the past, "I will a round, unvarnished tale deliver." The course of Christian thought in Church history has been as the course of a river,—the river, in this case, having its fountain in that Rock which was smitten by the rod of Moses, the sword of God's law. The river evermore *resumes the past*, at every point receiving its contents and *momentum* from its whole previous career, from the fountain downwards; and the Christian thought of every age always resumes the past—is in unbroken continuity with the Christian thought of all preceding ages. The river, though receiving occasional augmentations from tributary streams, as it pursues its beneficent course, is always the same river, "one and indivisible;" and the Christian faith of the Church has always been one in its substance, though sometimes corrupted by error or poisoned by heresy, and sometimes disappearing from the world's view like the fabled Arethusa, yet always remaining substantially the same, while gradually swelling towards its completed fulness of breadth and depth, and towards completed deliverance from errors alien to its own true nature. Once more, the river Nile, after receiving its fulness in the African highlands from "the river of God" in the

heavens, flows down with its blessings through low-lying Egypt for hundreds of miles without receiving any considerable augmentation from the sky; and such, in point of fact, has been the history of Christian doctrine for the last three hundred years: since the seventeenth century, the Church has in fact made no important addition to her knowledge of the substance of Bible truth or law; since the Reformation, the substance of Christian doctrine has been definitively ascertained.

The course of Christian thought as thus depicted is what might have been expected from the fact that the Christian Church of all ages has been one in her life,—a life created by one Spirit, and filled and ruled by one word of God. It is what can be demonstrated by the plain facts of Church history. And it is what has been confessed by the Reformation Churches. A “hobble-de-hoy, ’twixt man and boy,” on hearing us appeal to a *catholic tradition*, will of course set us down as Papists. But he who disclaims this appeal is not a true intelligent Protestant. For the Reformation Churches did appeal to a catholic tradition. They did not pretend to have discovered or invented a “new Gospel,” nor admit that they had departed from the genuine old catholic faith. They described their work as being, not a revolution, but a Re-formation. They maintained that the Popish system which they rejected was a baptized Paganism *superinduced* upon the true

old catholic faith of the Church, analogous to the mountains which overlay the hidden Arethusa. And against that antichristian system which had usurped the name of catholic, they appealed to the old and true catholicity, and maintained that theirs was the true old catholic faith,—purified, expanded, and re-formed in the light of God's word and of His Church's manifold experience. The view which I have presented of the history of Christian doctrine is thus the *Protestant* view. And it is directly opposed to Principal Tulloch's.

His view of the progress of Christian thought may be divined from his Inaugural Lecture at St Andrews, and is exhibited with sufficient clearness in his Essay read before the Theological Society of Edinburgh University. It reminds us of the description, "tossed about with every wind of doctrine." As contrasted with our view of the history of Christian thought as being like a river, always resuming the past, his view may be represented by the course of a ship at sea—apparently without rudder or compass or pole-star—moving in no particular direction, but always moving away from the past, and retaining no impress of the past from which it has moved away. And his view may therefore be illustrated thus:—The doctrine of universal gravitation is held by "all thoughtful minds" to be definitively ascertained as true. On the basis of this scientific "dogma," generation after generation of astronomers have been adding province after province to the domain

of the known stellar universe. *Their* position is thus identical with that of us poor Protestants, who believe in a catholic tradition of Christian doctrine. But a pretentious *ignoramus*, wishing to be a prophet of hobble-de-hoyism, comes forward like the quack in the French comedy, and says, "We have changed all that. In the name of 'progress' I demand that we totally break with the past, and on no account believe what our fathers have ascertained to be true. Let us throw Euclid and Newton to the owls and the bats, scorning all 'traditional' faith; let us retire into the 'innermost divine consciousness,' and, in its mysterious recesses construct a new and unheard-of system of mathematics and astronomy for ourselves. For to believe what our fathers have ascertained to be true is incompatible with true progress, liberty, liberality, enlightenment," etc., etc., etc., *ad infinitum* of "great swelling words."

In the domain of science, this piece of charlatanism would of course be greeted with the contemptuous ridicule which greeted Hobbes's refutation of the axioms of geometry. Yet it is for a piece of charlatanism the same in kind as this that a learned Principal has abandoned the Reformation creed, and that not a few hobble-de-hoys are disposed to receive him as a prophet! I do not here dwell on the fact, that in contending for a real *disruption* from the past Principal Tulloch is intensely sectarian or uncatholic. The hobble-de-hoys who are disposed to believe in him will be more influ-

enced by the fact, that his proposal is inhuman and irrational in the sense of being barbarous. The progress he contends for is really a backward progress, in the direction of intellectual barbarism. And it is a progress as suicidal to the Christian society as if an individual were suddenly to obliterate from his mind all the stored information, and disciplined habits of thought and feeling and action, which he has acquired through the previous training of his childhood and youth and manhood.

It is thus abundantly clear that the learned Principal has abandoned the creed of the Reformation Church —*i.e.*, the creed of the Catholic Church as re-formed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But even in this deep, of intellectual barbarism, he has found a lower deep. For

(2.) He has not only abandoned all existing creeds. This he might conceivably have done in the interest of a *real* progress. In my opinion, no real addition remains to be made to the substance of Christian doctrine. But this opinion may be mistaken. And though there should be no real addition to the substance of our knowledge of God-given truth, yet circumstances may demand a recasting of the form of words in which that God-given truth is confessed. A true Church of Christ may thus at any time be bound to abandon all existing creeds or confessions, in favour of a new creed or confession more perfectly adapted than any of the old ones

to the capacity and wants of the Church and the world. And a very vain man, sincerely Protestant or Evangelical, may conceivably invite or command us to forget all the teachings of the past in order to learn of *him*, and to give up our old creed in favour of a new creed proposed by him,—on the ground that “*he* is the man, and wisdom shall perish with him.”

If any such new creed be proposed for our acceptance, I venture to predict that, when theologically analysed, it will be found to be either the old Socinian creed or the old Evangelical creed, perhaps disguised;—or some such *amalgam* of Evangelism and Socinianism as we already have in the (so-called) Popish and Arminian “systems,”—which are really *no* systems. But Principal Tulloch,—not scorning “reticence”—does not propose any new creed of his own. Excepting one inadvertent (?) utterance, he gives no sign of having any definite theological convictions of his own. He only, by way of *prolegomenon* to the epoch of “all thoughtful minds,” gives us to know that all existing creeds must be abandoned as proved and found wanting,—as being incapable of serving the practical purpose of a Church’s *bona fide* confession of faith, to show what she really believes, and what her ministers are bound, and paid, and sworn to teach. What he vaguely intimates in his Inaugural Address is that no *possible* creed can ever serve that practical purpose, that it is now a question whether *any formula* is proper or

legitimate. And that this is his real opinion he makes unmistakeably plain in the Essay he has published along with his Address.

He is almost as hard on our "dogmatism" as on our Protestant "traditionalism." Now we must not be frightened with a word: a "dogma" is merely a doctrine or truth taught,—*e.g.*, by a Church in her confession—as being definitively ascertained. To justify dogmatism, all that we need is the supposition that there is or there can be some definitively ascertained truth,—such, *e.g.*, as the truth of Euclid's propositions or Newton's doctrine. If there be any such definitively ascertainable truth in the Bible,—with reference to the substance of religion,—every Church has a right and is bound to ascertain it definitively, to make up her mind that this is what God has revealed in His word, and to make it through her ministers a part of her instructions to her members and adherents. The head of a family is bound to ascertain this ascertainable Bible truth for the instruction of his children. By parity of reasoning, every true "mother" Church is bound to ascertain it for the instruction of her members and adherents. And as a parent is bound to see to it that his family tutor is "sound" in his grammar and mathematics, so a Christian Church is bound to have a creed, and apply it as a test of ministerial qualification—*if* there be such a thing as definitively ascertainable Bible truth.

But the learned Principal proceeds on the supposi-

tion that there neither is nor can be any definitively ascertainable theological truth. This sceptical supposition pervades the concluding part of his Essay (Pamphlet, pp. 13-24). Thus, he maintains the infidel theory of irresponsibility for belief. He even holds that universal agreement in opinion among men is physically impossible, that disagreement is necessitated by the very structure of man's rational constitution. And hence he bitterly assails our Christian forefathers because they proceeded on the supposition that man is responsible for his belief as well as for his other actions or habits as rational. In this connection, he speaks of the old "Moderates" as having been equally "dogmatic" with their "Evangelical" adversaries. But in so doing he reminds us of the Dutchman who, because he had imprisoned a malefactor in one of two towers, felt constrained to shut up an innocent man in the other. His love of symmetry has carried the learned Principal into a neglect of his "large intelligence of Christian history," and into an injustice to the poor old Moderates. It is, indeed, a cruel injustice to them that, while *we* glory in being the successors of the Evangelicals, the true successors of the Moderates should studiously ignore their parentage, and point-for-point resemblance of the children to the parents. The Moderates as a class were zealous only for one dogma,—viz., the dogma that Christian ministers have no right to blame the Church though she should be guilty of sin, and even that they are bound at her bidding to do what they know to be sinful,—a

dogma which bore fruit in the First and Relief Secessions. But violent intrusion of unacceptable ministers they did not affirm dogmatically as a thing required by God in His word. And as to the substance of saving truth, Dr Tulloch himself has told us that they would willingly have abandoned the Westminster Confession: in fact, they were kept from giving it up only by their finding that, if they did give it up, they would need to give up their emoluments along with it—a necessity which few Moderates, ancient or modern, have been able to brave. And the reader of Witherspoon's "Ecclesiastical Characteristics" and "Corporation of Servants" will recollect that the old Moderates were as "liberal," "enlightened," "progressive," and *genteel* (*i.e.*, superfinely vulgar),—that, in short, they were as thorough unbelieving ecclesiastical "snobs"—as any of their successors in our favoured generation. But still, even in the injustice he does to them by classifying them as dogmatists along with their Evangelical opponents, we see an evidence of Dr Tulloch's anxiety to be known as *distinctively* a theological sceptic.

Again, the learned Principal is eloquent in the praise of Leighton, on the ground that *he* proceeded on the supposition that man is not bound to give practical effect to his Scriptural convictions of truth and duty. His use (or abuse) of Leighton's name reminds us of the precept, "Let not your good be evil spoken of." This true and great saint was in his own day, and has

down to our day continued to be, a power for evil,—a power all the greater because of his generally beautiful Christian character. For through mere pusillanimous softness, like that of Melancthon, Leighton was as undecided in practice as Baxter was daring and rash in speculation. And his indecision, born of his mere pusillanimous softness, has been pleaded ever since his time, and was pleaded in his time, as an apology for latitudinarian looseness of principle and practice, by men who hate the Christian faith in reference to which [see Appendix E] he cordially agreed with his Puritan contemporaries, and who really delight in only the one blemish on his otherwise spotless reputation. But of those who thus appeal to him, I do not remember any other who has come up to the audacity of Dr Tulloch.

The learned Principal has ventured to put into Leighton's mouth a statement which any reader of Appendix E will believe that Leighton himself—true Christian, though weak—would have repudiated with abhorrence;—the statement, viz., that “there is *no absolute divine rule to guide us* in this matter.”—(The *italics* are Dr Tulloch's.) The marked words may have reference only to minor matters of Church order, not vitally concerning the Church's being or well-being; in which case they express only an irrelevant truism. But Dr Tulloch makes no express limitation of his meaning. The scope of his declamation requires that his words should

be understood as applying to the matter of Christian faith in general. And if this, their only relevant meaning, be the real meaning of his words, then his appeal to Leighton is at least an additional evidence of his being a theological sceptic.

And once more, in objecting to creeds, he professes to speak in the interest of *liberty* of theological thought. The liberty he contends for is not the true intellectual freedom, to think what is right and believe what is true. It is rather a sceptical freedom to believe anything or nothing. The "Cartesian doubt," or speculative suspense of the judgment, of which I have spoken in the Introduction as a useful part of the education of youth, Dr Tulloch appears to regard as the one normal condition of a Christian man, and even of a Christian minister. For in his estimation, any external presentation of doctrine, laying all men under obligation to believe it, is, though the doctrine should be revealed as true and divine, a veritable *bondage* of the reason.

Now the objection thus made *against all possible creeds* will really tell against the Bible itself. If the authoritative *ab extra* presentation of facts or doctrines, binding us to believe them, really constitute a degrading bondage, alien to the nature of man as rational, then the Bible cannot be of God. For the Bible on the face of it is an authoritative presentation of facts and doctrines binding us to believe them; and God cannot

have given us a book which thus is subversive of the human nature He has made. Accordingly, the readers of Dr Tulloch's pamphlet may have observed, that in that pamphlet there is not one sentence from which it can be inferred that the author seriously believes in the Bible as an external rule of Christian faith and practice. And the same objection, which thus leads to infidelity, or theological scepticism, will, if consistently applied, lead to universal scepticism.

For, What is the external world as known to us but a concrete system of doctrines or facts authoritatively presented *ab extra*, and binding us, and in fact compelling us to believe them? Thus a friend of mine once wrote to me with reference to an article in a certain *Review* which branded the Bible as making us slaves by *ruling* our faith:—"It is all *bosh*. That apple tree in my garden rules my faith. It will not allow me to regard it as a bashaw with three tails, or as anything but an apple tree. It dominates me and my faith as absolutely as though it had been the father of that rod which blossomed of old." So again, the inner world of our own thoughts, feelings, desires, and volitions, regarded as a subject-object, presents to our reflecting reason another system of facts and doctrines in the concrete, which bind and compel us to accept them. If, then, we will be thorough-going and consistent, with the theological scepticism we must embrace a universal scepticism: if we reject the preternatural

revelation of God in Scripture on the ground of its authoritatively presenting facts and doctrines from without, on the same ground we must reject the natural revelation given us in the two worlds of mind and matter, and, before retiring into the mysterious recesses of the "innermost divine consciousness," say to the whole universe, "My native land, good night." The appeal to this "innermost divine consciousness," (p. 22 of Dr Tulloch's pamphlet), apparently as *super-seding* "the intellect" in theology, is a virtual avowal of the *ir*-rationalism which, in the same mystical jargon, has been professed by some of the rationalistic leaders in the English Church. And in the case of Dr Tulloch, the utterance is perfectly in keeping with his sceptical supposition, that liberty of thought is incompatible with an authoritative *ab extra* presentation of truth.

The liberty for which he thus contends is not the true liberty with which Christ has made His people free, but a spurious liberty, a slavish license, analogous to the license of Antinomianism. True liberty of thought is no more suppressed by authoritative presentation of truth *ab extra*, than true liberty of action is suppressed by an external presentation of law. The revealed law, evoking the slumbering love into activity, and guiding it in action, really gives occasion for the realisation of moral freedom. And so it is the truth presented *ab extra*, and awakening the reason, and giving it matter of intuitive and discursive thought, that inwardly occasions

the realisation of intellectual freedom. In both cases alike, of the will and the reason, the binding of law or truth, so far from constituting a degrading bondage, really constitutes the condition of realised freedom—that freedom which exists supremely in God, who is supremely free, *because* He is supremely bound by His own nature as love and as light. On the other hand, he who does not feel bound to believe the truth which is clearly revealed and sufficiently evidenced is the slave of “passion, prejudice, or sloth.” He who does not receive the sunlight of heaven, and rejoice in its life-giving brightness, is in bondage of darkness—that darkness which is the shadow of death.

The “liberty” which is incompatible with felt obligation to believe the truth is thus, because sceptical, profoundly irrational; the boasted “enlightenment” of the new school leads to a new reign of “chaos and old night;” even as the “progress” of that school is a backward progress, in the direction of intellectual barbarism. We cannot, therefore, accept Dr Tulloch’s argument as a contribution to the defence of true liberty. His argument is really and solely in the interest of his sceptical supposition, that there is and can be no definitively ascertained theological truth; or, as he put it years ago in an earlier work, that all theological systems are incompetent. None of our theological systems pretends to account for all the *phenomena*, to explain all the mysteries, of the Biblical revelation of God. They

profess to be simply an exhibition of plain Bible doctrines and facts, in their internal nature and reciprocal connections, so far as man's mind is capable of comprehending them. In maintaining the competency of a system of theology, we simply affirm that the Bible reveals plain doctrines and facts, which man can definitively ascertain. In denying the competency of theological system, Dr Tulloch virtually affirms the sceptical proposition, that the Bible does *not* reveal plain doctrines or facts capable of being definitively ascertained.

Again, a Church's confession does not necessarily include all that can be and has been ascertained definitively. There may be circumstantials of plain Bible teaching which are not included in the theological system even of a private orthodox divine. And such mere circumstantials—*e.g.*, regarding the length of the days of creation, the restoration of the Jewish nation, the second advent, etc.—are in fact excluded from the Church's creeds and confessions, which include only what the Church regards as necessary to be confessed by her and preached by her ministers. However complete the dogmatic system may be, there will always remain a margin of minor details of doctrine or law regarding which there may be difference of opinion, and Christians can "agree to differ." But unless she to some extent dogmatise, or utter as definitively ascertained some theological principles of truth and duty, and so require of all

her ministers to teach them, the Christian Church has not a visible being under one important aspect of her nature, as "the pillar and ground of the truth." A Church without a creed, written or unwritten, and really and honestly applied to the practical purpose of instructing her members and trying her ministers and enlightening the world, abnegates her function as a Christian teacher, and is a *sceptical* community usurping the name of a Christian Church.

To this condition the Scottish Church will sink if she allow her "dogmatic convictions" to be "remoulded" by the sceptical principles of Principal Tulloch. The remoulding *cannot* be what he predicts,—larger than any previous remoulding "in the history of the Church." In uttering the prediction, he evinces a lack of "large intelligence of Christian history." In Geneva, Britain, and America, the remoulding in last century resulted in Socinianism. In Germany and England and America, in our own day, the remoulding has resulted in pantheistic atheism. It is, therefore, impossible that any impending remoulding of dogmatic conviction should be larger than that with which a very small "intelligence of Christian history" will make us familiarly acquainted. But even his confused misapprehension of the possible results of the new movement show us the direction in which *he* is drifting. His mystical jargon about an "innermost divine consciousness" as superseding "the intellect" will be understood by the initiated to mean a

rejection of the authority of God's word as a *bona fide* rule of faith and practice. His affirmation of the incompetency of theological system, and supposition that there is and can be no definitively ascertained theological truth, are, all but expressly, an avowal of theological scepticism. And the *ground* of his affirmation and supposition,—the ground that authoritative external presentation of truth is subversive of liberty—is a ground that can be maintained, in logical consistency, only by a universal sceptic, who really believes neither in God, nor in the universe, nor in man, as manifested so as to bind us to believe.

But it would be wrong to suppose that the learned Principal, though the principles he announces be sceptical, is consciously, deliberately, and consistently sceptical in his person. Though apparently sceptical so far as scepticism can serve his purpose—to get rid of the galling bondage of Evangelical truth—the learned Principal, so fierce against dogmatism, can, when that purpose demands it, be himself fiercely dogmatic.* This we now shall see as we proceed, in conclusion, to consider his one dogmatic utterance, under the head of—

4. His aspect towards the catholic doctrine of divine Fatherhood. In the concluding paragraph of his inaugural address at St Andrews, Principal Tulloch finds

* The fiercest dogmatists I know are those whose only dogma is, that there should be no dogma.

occasion to refer to Principal Candlish, in studiously insulting terms—which illustrate nothing but the quality of Dr Tulloch's "liberality." And (apparently) in order to give point and *momentum* to the insult, he utters what we now proceed to consider :—

PRINCIPAL TULLOCH'S ONE DOGMA :—

"The central truth of the Gospel is, that God is, and always has been, the Father of all His rational creatures."

Maida seldom barked; but when he did bark, he shook the Eildon Hills. And when, for once, Principal Tulloch abandons his customary "reticence," he dogmatizes to some purpose. His dogma we must accept under peril of excommunication from the fellowship of "all thoughtful minds." But before accepting the dogma, it may be well to consider what it really is not, and what it really is.

(1.) It is *not* merely that God is, and always has been, "the Father of all His rational creatures." If this had been the dogma, its truth would have been very questionable at the least. It is doubtful whether God is, properly speaking, the *father* of any "rational creature" but man. The holy angels appear to be relegated by Scripture to the place of mere servants in God's family, "ministering to the heirs of salvation :—" they are apparently not included in the inner circle of true sons. And this is what we might have inferred

from the Scriptural description of the angelic constitution. That constitution is not domestic. The angels are not married, nor given in marriage. They know not a created parent. The *filial* relation does not exist among themselves. And therefore it may be presumed that the properly *filial* affection does not exist in them towards God. They know, and love, and obey Him as an all-wise, all-good, and all-powerful Creator, Preserver, and Ruler; but do not and cannot know Him as a *father*. So that even in this one of its circumstantial aspects, as ascribing to all rational creatures a proper sonship to God, Principal Tulloch's one dogma is apparently false.

(2.) The dogma is *not* even merely "that God is and always has been the father of all" men. If it had, it would in one sense have been true. The tenor of Scripture teaching warrants the belief that there really is a natural sonship of all men to God, or fatherhood of God to all men. Man is by nature domestic. His natural constitution makes him a son. He is naturally qualified and constitutionally disposed to know and enjoy the tender sovereignty or sovereign tenderness of love in a father. This love we experience, shadowy and evanescent, in the paternal affection of "the fathers of our flesh." Now, there is none good but One, that is, God: whatever good we find in the creatures is but an evanescent shadow of a corresponding good, really existing because infinitely and eternally

existing, in the Creator. And therefore the good which we find shadowy and evanescent in created parents supremely exists, and thus really exists, substantial and eternal, for all who truly know God, in Him whom *Christians* know as “the father of their spirits.” The tender sovereignty, the sovereign tenderness, of distinctively paternal affection, exists supremely and therefore truly in that true God “of whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named.” Hence even the heathens have spoken of God as “the father :” in so far as we long for God as the Good Supreme, we are taught by the constitution of our nature to cry, “Show us *the Father.*”

The human constitution thus furnishes a foundation on which the Creator, if He will, can build up for man the joy of home in heaven and fatherhood in God. When Adam was made, the image of his Maker in state and heart, he really was “*the Son of God*”—probably the first son of God among the creatures. When the morning stars sang together over his creation, they were as the joy bells announcing to the universe the birth, not only of a King to earth, but of a true son to the eternal Father and a true brother to the eternal Son. And in our redemption God can if He will, without altering our natural constitution, by merely restoring it, give us the “fulness of joy” of fatherhood in Him. Yea, even in the reprobate heart of mankind the natural filial constitution remains indestructible—to torment them. That

filial constitution involves them not only in the aggravated guilt of having rejected a *fatherly* love as well as rebelled against a kingly authority, but also in the aggravated anguish of vainly and ceaselessly longing for that *fatherly* love of God which their impurity has rendered them incapable of enjoying. Their natural sonship is thus an additional element of misery in the cup of their undying woe:—the prodigal is all the more miserable because he is a prodigal *son*.

(3.) Principal Tulloch's one dogma *is*, not merely "that God is, and always has been, the Father of all His rational creatures," but that this is "*the central truth of the Gospel.*" And this dogma—that a universal natural fatherhood of God is "the central truth of the Gospel"—contradicts the faith of the whole Catholic Church regarding the grand fact of redemption by grace, contradicts the Gospel of God's redeeming love in its essence. We have seen that the learned Principal is intensely uncatholic or sectarian in his scepticism; and now we see that he is no less intensely sectarian, uncatholic, unchristian, in his dogmatism. For

What has always been the faith of "The Holy Catholic Church" regarding God's fatherhood? What has she always meant by her *Credo*, "I believe in God *the father?*" What does her Prophet mean by bidding her pray to "*our father*" in heaven? Is it merely "that God is, and always has been, Father of *all*

His rational creatures?" Is it that *this* is "the central truth of the Gospel?" Is it that this alleged universal natural fatherhood is, properly speaking, any part of *the Gospel* at all? If it be, then surely the Church is cruelly misled when she cries, in a rapture of adoring gratitude and joy, "Behold, what manner of love the father hath bestowed on *us*, that *we* should be called the sons of God!" *What* manner of love? Is it merely the love of a natural fatherhood which equally extends to "all rational creatures?" Is it a love which equally extends to the men to whom God says, "Ye are of your father, the devil . . . depart from me ye cursed!" Is it a love which equally extends to the reprobate demons in hell? Surely Dr Tulloch's one dogma is a visible demonstration of deep-rooted alienation from the substance of the Christian religion of grace. His "central truth of the Gospel" is subversive of the true Gospel of God's fatherhood in its essence. It puts a mere *natural* fatherhood, which extends to all, in the room of His fatherhood *of grace*, of free *redeeming* love, choosing and saving from among hopelessly lost men a family of Christians to Himself.

Logicians tell us that "the intension of a concept is in the inverse ratio of its extension." And their maxim is illustrated by Dr Tulloch's one dogma. I have spoken in the General Introduction of a Pagan pantheistic philosophy which is supplanting the Gospel

in some of the seats of sacred learning in England. That system is antichristian, in the sense of presenting a huge, grotesque, gigantesque resemblance to Christianity—like the shadow of a man over against him on the wall,—while it really is an elaborate *evasion* of the Gospel, the shadow *instead of* the substance. And, *inter alia*, it speaks of a divine fatherhood which indeed extends to “all rational creatures”—and to irrational creatures, too. The pantheistic fatherhood includes no such thing as *redeeming* love. It does not even include a discriminating, personal, paternal affection such as we experience in the fathers of our flesh. It is not the fatherhood of a person, of the living personal God at all. It is the “fatherhood” merely of some-*thing* called God, diffused through the universe without any act of will, and mechanically diffusing through the universe a vague impersonal tenderness like the tenderness of the dew, or like the tenderness of—*alma mater*—our figurative “mother” the earth. This is the real esoteric doctrine of divine fatherhood proposed by the New School. And *this* is the doctrine which Principal Tulloch, perhaps unconscious of the fact that he echoes it, has echoed at St Andrews, for the edification of the future ministers of a Christian Church!

Whatever may have been the genesis of his one dogma in Principal Tulloch’s mind, it is certain that in fulminating this dogma against Dr Candlish,—“intend-

ing murder, he has committed suicide." The views he has put forth as his, are views the maintenance of which will be regarded by many as a disqualification for the leadership in any Christian movement. For, not to speak of his assaults on the faith of others, this one inadvertent (?) confession of his own faith has shown him to be a teacher of "another Gospel" than that which God has revealed in His word.

But though his avowed sentiments are sentiments foreign to the system of revealed truth, the learned Principal is not necessarily wedded to them. His one dogmatic utterance, though profoundly antichristian in itself, may on his part be a mere *lapsus*, to which any really ignorant man is liable. It may not represent any deliberate settled conviction of his, but be merely a plunging stroke of blind animosity at the person of the illustrious Principal Candlish. His position *may*, therefore, be simply that of one who has no very mature convictions, Christian or antichristian, and who has suddenly found himself acting as captain of the skirmishers, or leader in that preliminary sceptical propagandism which is the usual precursor of dogmatic Socinianism, or deism, or atheism. And, if so, my wish and prayer is, that on such a mission he may not long continue to waste his good natural abilities, and considerable miscellaneous attainments, and hopeful pride of early manhood, and noble opportunities as the head of a national school of the prophets.

But though Principal Tulloch should persevere in such a course, he need not be dreaded as a formidable foe to God's truth. Though he had been a man of unusual speculative power, such power could nothing avail against divine revelation. "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." In order that men may believe in the truth and divinity of Jesus, and acknowledge all His claims, all that is needed is that "these things should be written,"—that the plain story of His sayings and doings should be told. For the truth has in itself an evidence of its being the truth. As the sun is shown to be the sun by shining, *i.e.*, by being the sun, so the truth is shown to be the truth by its being the truth. And we therefore should rejoice in every occasion that leads to a renewed investigation of the nature and evidence of our Christian system. For the natural tendency of serious inquiry is to manifest the truth in greater brightness. Truth is great, and shall prevail! Whatever is true and divine *must*, sooner or later, conquer the world. So said the famous Abbé Lacordaire, "We must listen to the lies of our enemies and wait for truth, which makes its way in its own time, although slowly."

And on the other hand, whatever is untrue needs only to be fully known in order to be known as untrue. In the interest of The Truth, therefore, we well may cry, "Oh! that His enemy had written a book!" So long as the enemy is "reticent," confining himself to

hints, inuendoes, assaults on the faith of others, he may be formidable as an instrument of "deceiving the hearts of the simple." But when he speaks plainly out, and tells *his own* story, informs us what *he* will give us in place of Christ's Gospel, then he collapses, vanishes away into nothing, like a vapour giant in the genial sunshine. Thus Strauss and Renan are formidable so long as they confine themselves to destructive criticism, or objecting to the truth. For God is really a very unaccountable and (to the carnal mind) *objectionable* Being. And as of Him, so of His works, and so of His word. It will always be easy to conjure up objections to them which it may be very difficult to answer. But Strauss and Renan have been so imprudent as to give us theories of their own. They both give us pantheism as their theory of the universe,—a theory which needs only to be stated in order to be condemned by the common sense of mankind. Of the Gospel history of Jesus, Strauss gives us the mythic theory, and Renan the French romantic theory,—theories which need only to be looked at with a judicial eye in order to be seen to be preposterous. And as of the Evangel, so of its documents, or Evangelical narratives. Strauss is really formidable so long as he confines himself to the endeavour to demonstrate that the Gospel histories were not written by contemporaries of Jesus. But when he ventures to say *when* they were composed,—about the middle of the second century—the student of primitive Church history sees at a glance that his position is in-

credible. Renan, therefore, finds it necessary to admit the true date, in the first century. And when this is conceded, the intelligent reader of the Gospel histories sees and feels that the French romantic theory of the life of Jesus is utterly untenable—that if the Gospels were really written by contemporaries of Jesus, then Jesus must be the Christ, the Son of God.

So of Principal Tulloch. With one foot in St Andrews and the other in Edinburgh, bestriding the Frith of Forth like a Colossus,* he may impress “the simple” as a veritable giant,—so long as he confines himself to assailing the faith of others, and uttering “great swelling words” with reference to the Westminster Confession of Faith. But as soon as he utters a dogma of his own, though it is but one short sentence, a little Gospel sunlight shows him to be but a mere vapour giant, vanishing away into nothing in the genial sunshine: he stands unmasked, as the teacher of “another gospel” than that which Apostles and Evangelists and Prophets have delivered to us from the Lord.

The supposition that a professing Christian minister is the teacher of “another Gospel” recalls to mind an aspect of his position which we are too apt to forget. Principal Tulloch, holding that man is not responsible

* “When the Forth and Clyde shall meet,
Scotland shall begin to greet.”

Prophecy of *Thomas the Rhymer*.

Query: Does “true *Thomas*” refer to the simultaneous demonstrations of Drs Tulloch and Macleod? *I think not.*

for his belief, may scorn the thought that the teacher of "another Gospel" is *guilty* before God, and that God's Church may be bound to regard and avoid him as *anathema*. But, though perhaps confused for a time with the din of men blowing their own trumpets, to the tune of "liberty," "liberality," "enlightenment," "progress," etc., etc., no true Christian can despise *Him* by whose inspiration Paul pronounced this *anathema*:—"Though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. i. 8.) We ministers are God's angels, in the sense of being His servants and ambassadors: though poor sinners in our persons, we are angels in our office. And it is a great privilege, of which the Apostle deemed himself unworthy, in preaching the Gospel to be as "ministering spirits, ministering to the heirs of salvation." But alas! for that pretended minister of Christ who shall teach "another Gospel" than Christ's. If he be an angel, he is an angel fallen, a Satan disguised as an angel of light, a tempting demon, with the brand of God's great curse upon him, for the crime of attempting to bereave Him of His glory as Redeemer, by seducing His children away from the one foundation of their life in His redeeming love in Christ.

From this God-given point of view we ought to regard the teachers of "another Gospel" with compassionate awe. Our first duty in relation to them is,

of course, to avoid them, and warn all who will hear us to avoid them, as "wolves in sheep's clothing." But this is not our only duty towards them. Another duty, which we are too apt to forget, is to pray for them, that God may bring back those "wandering stars" to their orbits,—that He may bring them to a better mind,—that He may save them from the sin, and shame, and woe, of ruining themselves and them also that hear them.

How a reverend Principal can continue to undo the work he is paid, and bound, and sworn to do; how his Church can allow her minister to assail her Confession and seduce her future ministers from her faith; or how the nation can allow its Christian institutions to be made the head-quarters of a *propaganda de delendâ fide*; are questions not unlikely soon to arise in a practical form, and which, in the meantime, may well exercise "the minds of all thoughtful men." But for us let it suffice for the present to have tried the spirit of a would-be prophet by the principles of right reason and of the word of God.



APPENDIX.

A.

LUTHER ON THE LAW.

IN Dr Macleod's speech, as published by himself, there is a long discourse in connection with Lord's-day observance, which has nothing whatever to do with the question between him and his co-presbyters—as to the ground of that observance in the Fourth Commandment—and which may be regarded as a quantity of "*good words and fair speeches,*" fitted, if not intended, to "deceive the hearts of the simple." In the Appendix there is an array of irrelevant or inconclusive quotations, which may deceive "the simple" into the impression that Dr Macleod is a learned man, and that his opinion is countenanced by respectable ecclesiastical authority. And on account of the interest attaching to the great name of Luther, and the frequency of appeals to him on behalf of Antinomianism and anti-Sabbatarianism, I here make some notes regarding that illustrious Reformer.

In Note K, p. 57, of Dr Macleod's pamphlet, Luther is reported as speaking very offensively about the Law of God,—in fact, uttering downright Antinomianism. No intelligent and honest theologian will produce any stray utterance of Luther regarding God's Law as a theological authority on the subject. For it is notorious that Luther's stray utterances are peculiarly unreliable as indications of

the real opinion of the Reformation Church ; and that, with reference to the law, his vehemence against pharisaic legalism carried him far beyond the average even of his own characteristic extravagance. And Dr Macleod has not the excuse of mere ignorance of Luther's characteristics. For,

The reverend Doctor's note is obviously borrowed from the same source at which "a gracious Providence" led him—apparently about dinner time—to find his quotation from Baxter,—viz., Cox's "Literature of the Sabbath Question" (vol i. pp. 383–384). But the reverend Doctor does not mention that, in the same note of Mr Cox from which he has obviously borrowed his note, Mr Cox admits that the first Reformers, like the Romanists, believed that "all the Commandments contained in the two tables are to be observed by the Christian people, . . . because they agree with the law of nature ;" *i.e.*, that in the estimation of the first Reformers the Ten Commandments are not merely positive or ceremonial, but natural or moral. Mr Cox (p. 388) gives the following illustrations of Luther's *real* and deliberate convictions :—

"Master Jobst, dining with Luther one day (A.D. 1541), showed him certain propositions he had drawn up, to the effect that the Law ought not to be preached, since it is not the Law that justifies us. Luther grew quite angry at this :—'What,' he exclaimed, 'shall our own people, while we ourselves are yet alive, propound such things as these ? Oh ! how highly we ought to honour Master Philip (Melancthon) who inculcates with such perspicuity and truth the use of the Law. That which Count Mansfeldt prophesied to me in a letter is becoming fulfilled : 'Behind this new doctrine there will be seen another Munzer.' He who destroys the doctrine of the Law, destroys at the same time political and social order. If you eject the Law from the Church, there will no longer be any sin recognised as such in the world ; for the Gospel defines and punishes sin only by reference to the law. If, heretofore, I in my discourse spoke and wrote so harshly against

the Law, it was because the Christian Church was overwhelmed with superstition, under which Christ was altogether hidden and buried; and I am anxious to rescue pious and God-fearing souls from the tyranny of the conscience; but as to the Law itself, I never rejected it.” —(Michelet’s *Life of Luther*, Hazlitt’s transl., p. 315.)

Again, as reported by Mr Cox: “In a letter against the Antinomians, printed in Samuel Rutherford’s *Spiritual Antichrist* (London 1648), Luther says, ‘I wonder exceedingly how it comes to be imputed to me that I should reject the Law or Ten Commandments. . . . Can it be imaginable that there should be any sin where there is no law? Whoever abrogates the Law abrogates sin also. (pp. 71, 72.) And again Luther adds (p. 72) that the Law is ‘engraven in the bottom of the heart,’ so that ‘it is impossible to raze it out;’ ‘and the devil also,’ says he, ‘is not ignorant of this.’”

So far Mr Cox. He, too, imagines that he makes a point against Sabbatarians by showing that the Reformers held that the Decalogue is not obligatory merely because given by Moses, but really because it is founded in the nature of man and of things. But this, as I have said and shown (Book I. Cap. I., and Book II. Cap. II.), is precisely the point of our catholic doctrine of the *morality* of the Sabbath law. Again, Mr Cox makes a foolish distinction between the Decalogue as *didactic*, and the Decalogue as *preceptive*: as if we had imagined that the Decalogue *makes* the law and had not formally confessed, as the essence of our doctrine, that it only *declares* the law of nature. But, with all this logical confusion, Mr Cox is historically honest in representing the *real* and deliberate convictions of Luther. And in this respect he is favourably contrasted with the reverend Doctor Macleod. The words which this minister of Christ has quoted from Luther do not, in their obvious import, represent the Reformer’s settled convictions on the subject. If we will believe the Reformer himself, speaking in the same note from which Dr Macleod has borrowed, his

words in their obvious import represent a doctrine which he really detested and abhorred. And yet, of the solemn retractations, or, rather, repudiations, which the anti-Sabatarian layman Mr Cox has honestly reported, the reverend Dr Macleod does not take any notice! From this even "the simple" may judge how far they ought to trust the reverend Doctor's quotations—or the reverend Doctor.

The following *gastronomical* story I reckon far better than any in Dr Macleod's anthology. It has been transcribed for me by a friend from Sir James Stephens' "Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography," vol. I. p. 306 :—"A cup composed of five hoops or rings of glass of different colours circulated at Luther's table. Eisleben, an Antinomian, was of the party. Luther pledged him in the following words :—'Within the second of these rings (from the top) lie the Ten Commandments; within the next ring, the Creed; then comes the Pater-noster; the Catechism lies at the bottom.' So saying, he drank it off. When Eisleben's turn came, he emptied the cup only down to the beginning of the second ring. 'Ah,' said Luther, 'I knew that he would stick at the Commandments, and therefore would not reach the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, or the Catechism.'"

If any one do not see that Luther's orthodoxy is superabundantly demonstrated by the above quotations, let him read the following article, Appendix B: and from this and that let him judge of the honesty of him who shall produce stray utterances of Luther for the purpose of showing that he was an Antinomian, and of insinuating that the Reformers were Antinomian as a class.

B.

SYMBOLICAL BOOKS OF THE REFORMATION TIME.

I. CATECHISM OF TRENT.

PART III., CAP. I.: *On the Commandments of God contained in the Decalogue.* Under Quest. 2:—"Since it is the sum of the whole law, pastors should be occupied night and day in meditation on it, not only in order to form their own lives by this rule, but also that they may edify in the law of the Lord the people committed to their trust." And under Quest. 3:—"For there is no one that does not feel a law planted by God in his soul, by which he is able to distinguish good from evil, honourable from base, just from unjust; and since the authority and import of this law differs not from that law which is written, who will dare to deny that God is the author of the law both in our hearts and in His word?"

Again, as to the *Fourth Commandment.* Under Quest. 6:—"This commandment agrees with the others, not in respect of rite and ceremonies, but because it has something which pertains to morals and natural law. . . . For it is natural to man, that he give a certain proportion of time to necessary functions, such as bodily rest and sleep and other such things; and as to the body so to the mind, it is not less demanded by nature that a certain portion of time should be given to it, that it may be refreshed by the contemplation of God."

II. LUTHER'S LARGER CATECHISM.

At the outset, the great Reformer prints in full *the Decalogue*, *Apostle's Creed*, and *Lord's Prayer*. And of the three together he says:—"These are the main heads, supremely necessary, which every Christian ought thor-

oughly to learn and to repeat to the letter." He then goes on to suggest that children should be made to repeat them every morning and evening, and even at meal-times ; and that heads of families should not allow any of their servants to be ignorant of them. It is the man who speaks thus, in his Church's solemn formulary, that has been cited as a witness for the abrogation of the Decalogue !

The remarks of the Catechism on *the Fourth Commandment* (which it calls the Third), while showing that the Lutheran Church holds the catholic doctrine of the Sabbath law as moral, at the same time illustrate what I have said of the pernicious tendency of holding a low view of that doctrine, such as shall harmonise with a low practice of Lord's-day observance :—"Wherefore this precept, in so far as it prescribes a mere outward and animal rest"—which the Catechism erroneously represents as having characterised the Sabbath-keeping of the later Old Testament Church—"does not pertain to us Christians. For (under that aspect) it is a (merely) external thing, like all the other Old Testament (judicial and ceremonial) institutions, appointed (merely) for certain special observances, persons, times, and places, and now done away in Christ." On the other hand, the Catechism goes on to show positively, though confusedly and inadequately, how *the commandment does bind Christians* :—

"But in order that hence (from the commandment?) we may draw for the simple some Christian instruction on the question, *What God requires of us in this precept*,—thus understand : That we celebrate religious festivals not on account of the intelligent and learned (for they have no need of holidays) ; but *first*, for the sake of a certain even bodily purpose and need, which nature herself points out and inculcates ; to wit, for the sake of the common mass, of serving men and women, who toil through the whole week,—that even they may have a day, in which resting from their works they may refresh them from labour, and serve to strengthen their weary bodies by repose. And *second*,

for this above all, that on the Sabbath-day, when at other times it is impossible to be disengaged for the purpose, there may be leisure and time taken for attending on divine worship, so that we may assemble for hearing and meditating on God's word, and may praise God with hymns, psalms, canticles, and prayers. This, therefore, is the plain meaning of this precept,—when we are observing festivals—that we devote the festive days to learning God's word, so that the work of preaching be the recognised proper business of such days, and this for the sake of instructing youth and the multitude. And yet let not the festivals be kept so stringently and superstitiously, that for their consecration works shall be prohibited which cannot be avoided or intermitted."

The rule thus laid down as to the *form* of observance is the same in substance with that laid down by the Westminster divines. The German Church then proceeds:—"Wherefore when asked, What means, 'Thou shalt sanctify the Sabbath?' answer thus:—To sanctify the Sabbath is the same thing as to hold the Sabbath holy. What, then, is it 'to hold the Sabbath holy?' Nothing else but be free for holy words, works, and life. This day, forsooth, has *in itself* no need of sanctification, for it was sanctified by its Maker even from the very beginning of creation. But God requires of thee, that *to thee* it be holy. And thus it comes to pass, that so far as you are concerned it is rendered holy or profane, according as you on the day are devoted to holy or to profane works," etc.

Finally, after the detailed exposition, the Catechism speaks of the First Table thus:—"Hitherto we have been learning the first three (four) precepts, which are given us to be obeyed *towards God*." And of the Sabbath law, in this connection, thus:—"Third, that on festival days the word of God be diligently heard and administered," so that our whole life may be conformed to its rule.

The second Augsburg Confession (A.D. 1540) contains in

the germ the same doctrine of the Decalogue and the Sabbath law which the Catechism has expanded.

III. HELVETIC CONFESSION (ZUINGLIAN.) A.D. 1566.*

XII. "We teach that by the Law of God there is expounded to us the will of God, what He wills or forbids us to do, what is good and right, or what is evil and wrong. We therefore confess that the law is good and holy. And this law (we confess), on the one hand, has been written by God's finger on the hearts of men, and is called the law of nature ; but, on the other hand, has been engraved by His finger on the two tables of Moses, and more fully expounded in the books of Moses. We distinguish it for the sake of perspicuity into moral the law, which is comprehended in the Ten Words or Two Tables ; the ceremonial, which ordains regarding ceremonies and the worship of God ; and the judicial, which is occupied with political and economical matters."

"We believe that by this law the whole will of God, and all the precepts necessary for every part of life, are most amply revealed to us. . . . We teach that this law is not given to men in order that they may be justified by observing it : but rather in order that by its judgment we may be led to recognise our own weakness, sin, and condemnation, and despairing of our own powers may be converted in faith to Christ. . . . Yet we do not disdainfully reject the law. For we remember the words of the Lord, saying, Matt. v., *I have not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil.* We know that by the law is given to us rules and tests (*formulas*) of virtues and vices. We know that the written law, if it be expounded by the Gospel, is useful to the Church, and therefore the reading of it ought not to be rooted out of the Church.

* Approved by almost all the Churches of Reformed Christendom in Britain and on the Continent.

For though there was a veil on the face of Moses, yet, the Apostle shows, the veil [not *Moses*] has been taken away and abolished by Christ. We condemn all that ancient and recent heretics have taught against the Law of God."

IV. THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM (CALVINISTIC).

1. In answer to the question, "What is the Law of God?" the believer says, "God spoke these words," and goes on to repeat the Ten Commandments. And 2. In answer to the question, "What does God prescribe in the Fourth Commandment?" he describes the due *form* of a consecrated day of religious rest.

V. DR MACLEOD'S PREDECESSORS.

Frederick Spanheim (*Select. de Religione Controversiarum*, etc., Leyden, 1687), looking back from the close of the seventeenth century over the whole Reformation movement, sees no opponent of the catholic doctrine of the Decalogue but the fanatical Anabaptists (pp. 110–112) and the sceptical Socinians (176–183), who, from opposite points, arrive at the same conclusion with Dr Macleod,—that the Decalogue does not bind Christians as a rule of life; that the Gospel has *superseded* the Ten Commandments; that Jesus has given us a new and higher law *instead of* the law which God gave through Moses to the Jews for mankind of old.

C.

HESSEY, GILFILLAN, AND COX.

HAVING frequently referred to Dr Hessey and Mr Gilfillan, I think it due to both to reprint here what I said of their respective works in the *Evangelical Review* :—

1. *Sunday, its Origin, History, and present Obligation, considered in Eight Lectures* (the Bampton Lecture for 1860). By JAMES AUGUSTUS HESSEY, D.C.L., &c.

2. *The Christian Sabbath, viewed in the light of Reason, Revelation, and History, with Sketches of its Literature.* By the Rev. JAMES GILFILLAN, Stirling. 2d Edition. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliott. 1862.

These two works have already taken a high place in the recent theological literature of our country. On the subject of the Lord's-day, they are the most important English works that have appeared in this generation.

Dr Hessey's work is a very admirable sample of what the Church may expect from such an institution as the Bampton Lecture, planted in the rich and generous soil of English Christian scholarship. It exhibits a great *amount* of learning, and considerable ability and eloquence. Its leading positive doctrine, that the Lord's-day is Apostolic, Scriptural, divine, is one which we would be glad to see heartily embraced by the powerful Church of England; and which we are thankful to find so ably advocated, in a position so well fitted to gain a favourable hearing to the truth. But regard for truth constrains us to add, that the merits of the work, unquestionably high, are counter-balanced by serious defects. It is the production of a first-rate general scholar, who has set himself to "get up" a work for an occasion, rather than of one who has been long familiar with the subject, and who speaks from the fulness of mature meditation. Its learning is much more imposing in appearance than sound in reality, and bears evidence of having been accepted from one-sided authorities at second-hand. Its views on the form of Lord's-day observance, though, we believe, sound in the main, indicate considerable confusion of mind, unripeness or crudeness of thought: the lecture on this subject strikes us as singularly weak, inconclusive, and even self-contradictory. And above all, while its positive doctrine is well defended against the ecclesiastical theory, yet Dr Hessey is no less earnest, if not somewhat bitter and supercilious, in advocating a *negative* doctrine against what he calls the Sabbatarian or Puritan theory—a negative which withdraws from his

own positive doctrine its living foundation in the system of revealed truth, and so far seriously injures that cause, of Lord's day observance, which the author has at heart.

Mr Gilfillan's work is a sample still more admirable of what may be achieved, unaided, by a laborious minister who earnestly sets himself to the study of a subject. To the rhetorical qualities of its English contemporary it makes no pretension: perhaps it will make the deeper and more lasting impression on this very account, that it is written in the style of a quiet and earnest thinker, and lacks the pungency of platform address, or polemical pamphleteering. Its temper is much in its favour: with all the earnestness of a Christian apologist, Mr Gilfillan has none of the rancour of a controversialist. His learning, less imposing in its form than Dr Hesse's, is really more conscientious, thorough, and exhaustive. His view of the subject is much more comprehensive, especially in its practical applications to man, in all his interests, material, mental, and spiritual, individual, domestic, social, and political—the work, throughout, is redolent of the pastorate. Mr Gilfillan teaches with authority, as one who is no novice, but has long and deeply thought on the subject of which he speaks. Ripeness, meditation, is written on every page. His work is no mere big pamphlet; a work which would not have been *got up* for an occasion, but must have *grown* out of the labours of a studious life. It is a thorough *book*—reminding us, by its fulness of learning, thought, and earnest Christian wisdom, of the great works of our great old divines. Above all, Mr Gilfillan teaches, we believe, for substance, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, on the subject. And in all our recent literature we know not one other work that approaches his work in value, as a veritable treasury of argument and information, of all that a Christian minister or man most needs to know on the subject of “the Christian Sabbath.”—(*British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, January 1, 1863, pp. 93, 94).

It is due also to Mr Cox, and to the public, to make some mention here of his work on "The Literature of the Sabbath Question." A master of the subject will find Mr Cox's work very valuable as well as interesting, on account of the vast and varied information it contains. But one who is not a master, if he take Mr Cox for his guide, is not unlikely to land in utter scepticism, or spiritual softening of the brain, corresponding to the *chaotic* character of the book.

I believe that Mr Cox is thoroughly *honest*. But first, his mind appears to be *forensic* rather than *judicial*; so that—as contrasted, *e.g.*, with Principal Cunningham's great work on "Historical Theology," which is a magnificent judicial *charge* on the whole history of theological speculation—Mr Cox's work may be regarded as a laborious *pleading* on one side of the Sabbath question,—a pleading which, though honest, is the opposite of just. Second, Mr Cox shows himself to be a mere advocate rather than a true judge, not merely by taking a side—for the true judge will take the right side—but by an apparent incapacity of seeing what does not tell in favour of the side he has taken:—*e.g.*, the information he gives us is to a large extent in the *inverse ratio* of its real importance:—the stray utterances which are practically irrelevant, he gives at full length; the great leading facts, such as the deliberate utterances of Churches in their creeds, or of divines in their systems, he either does not give at all, or thrusts into a corner, or in some way manages to distort or misrepresent. And third, even his information, though very ample in its quantity, is very low in its quality: it is not like the information of a judge, luminous with *principles*; but like the information of a mere advocate, "got up" to serve the occasion,—in short, it is scrappy and superficial, rather than luminous and comprehensive, and thus strikingly contrasted with the information of Mr Maurice as exhibited in the following note (D).

D.

MR MAURICE ON THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

AFTER this work was completed, I saw the following extract from Mr Maurice, in a lecture by Dr Cairns of Berwick. The extract finely expresses the view which I had formed from independent study of the primitive Church teaching and practice:—‘Mr Maurice in his “Ecclesiastical History of the First and Second Centuries,” pp. 329–30: “The dread of Sabbatising, which Justin Martyr so faithfully expressed, and in which he felt so much to be involved, might have made him and many others afraid of sanctioning the new Sabbath—the weekly resurrection day—as a fixed ordinance of the Church. But it did not require their sanction. Like all other great institutions, ecclesiastical and civil, that have taken root in the modern world, it established itself without precept or pre-arrangement, by the force of an inward law which men could not control or fashion according to their pleasure. The day of rest had been asserted once for all by the revelation to the Jews, as one of the permanent laws of humanity, framed in conformity with a divine and eternal principle to which the divisions of time must at last adapt themselves. The Christian Church could not repeal the enactment. It could only say, The divine and eternal principle of rest was never fully developed till the resurrection. Those who believe in the resurrection *must* make the Lord’s-day their Sabbath. And this truth only dawned on them by degrees. They *found* themselves observing the day; in time they learned more or less clearly why they observed it.”—(apud Dr Cairns’s Lecture on “The Sabbath with reference to present difficulties,” as reprinted in the *Family Treasury*, January, 1866.)

E.

OPINIONS OF LEIGHTON.

I. THAT he *is no sceptic*.

1. *His* (parting) address to students of the University of Edinburgh:—

“Though this, I imagine, is the last address I shall ever have occasion to make to you, I will not detain you long from your studies, nor encroach on the time allowed you for recreation. This is, to be sure, the first time that some of you have heard me; but I have a great many others to bear witness of the constant design of all my dissertations in this place. They will testify, that the intention of all my discourses was, *that the form of sound words*, that is, the Christian doctrine, and consequently the fear and love of God, might not only be impressed, but also engraven upon your hearts in lasting and indelible characters It was my constant practice to establish those great and uncontroverted articles of our holy religion which are but few and clear; some part whereof are confirmed by the common consent of nations, and of all the human race; and all the rest by the unanimous voice of the whole Christian world. . . . The other class of the grand articles of religion are indeed peculiar to Christian philosophy, but believed in common by all the professors of that religion. These are the great foundations of our faith, and of all our hope and joy.”—(*Works, Pearson's Edition*, 1835. Vol. II. 543.)

To the same effect Leighton speaks from the grave, in his posthumous “Theological Lectures”—exhibiting a complete Calvinistic system, avowedly derived from the Bible as an external rule of faith.

2. Duty of ministers:—

“Every step of the way of our salvation hath on it the

print of infinite majesty, wisdom, and goodness—and this among the rest:—that men, sinful weak men, are made subservient in that great work of bringing Christ and souls to meet; that by the *foolishness of preaching* (or what appears so to carnal wisdom) the chosen of God are called, and come unto Jesus, and are made *wise unto salvation*; and that the life which is conveyed to them by the *word of life* in the hands of poor men, is by the same means preserved and advanced. This is the standing work of the ministry, and this the thing here bound upon them that are employed in it, *to feed the flock of God that is among them*. Jesus Christ descended to purchase a Church, and ascended to provide and furnish it, to send down His Spirit: *He ascended and gave gifts*, particularly *for the work of the ministry*; and the great use of them is this, *feed the flock of God*.

“Not to say any more of this usual resemblance of a flock, as importing the weakness and tenderness of the Church, the continual need she stands in of inspection, and guidance, and defence, and the tender care of the Chief Shepherd for these things; the phrase enforces the present duty of subordinate pastors, their care and diligence in feeding that flock. The due rule of discipline not excluded, the main part of this duty is, by doctrine, the leading them into the wholesome and *green pastures* of saving truths revealed in the Gospel, accommodating the way of teaching to their condition and capacity; and with this they should be, as much as possible, particularly acquainted, and suit diligently and prudently their doctrine to it.”—(Vol. I. 568.)

II. That he *condemns Dr Tulloch's one dogma*:—

“He is indeed our Father (Acts xvii. 28) as the Author of our being, beyond all the visible creatures. He breathed upon man *the breath of life*. But the privilege of this our natural relation, the sin of our nature hath made fruitless and comfortless to us, till we be restored by grace, and

made partakers of a new sonship : we are indeed the workmanship of God, but being defaced by sin, and considered in that estate, our true name is, *children of wrath*.

“ But the sonship that emboldens us to draw near unto God as our Father is derived from His only-begotten Son. He became the Son of man, to make us anew the sons of God. Being thus restored, we may indeed look back upon our creation, and draw out of it, to use in prayer with God, that we are His creatures, the workmanship of His hands, and He in that sense *our Father*. But, by reason of our rebellion, this argument is not strong enough alone, but must be supported with this other, as the main ground of our comfort, that wherein the strength of our confidence lies, that He is *our Father* in His Son Christ ; that by faith we are invested into a new sonship, and by virtue of that may call Him *Father*, and move Him by that name to help and answer us.”—(Vol. II. 328.)

III. That he *condemns Dr Macleod*, with whom Dr Tulloch “ entirely sympathises.”

1. As to the Decalogue in general :—

“ *God spake*. All that was spoken by His messengers the prophets with warrant from Him, was His word ; they but the trumpets which the breath of His mouth, His Spirit, made to sound as it pleased Him ; but this His *moral* Law, He privileged with His own immediate delivery. Men may give some few rules for society and civil life, by the dark light that remains in natural consciences ; but such a rule as may direct a man to answer his natural end, and lead him to God, must come from God Himself. All the purest and wisest laws that men have compiled, cannot reach that : they can go no higher in their course than they are in their spring. *That which is from the earth is earthly*, saith our Saviour.

“ He added to this speaking, the *writing* of them likewise, Himself in tables of stone, that they might abide, and be

conveyed to after ages. At first they were written in the heart of man, by God's own hand ; but, as the first tables of stone fell and were broken, so was it with man's heart : by his fall his heart was broken, and scattered amongst the earthly perishing things which were before whole and entire to his Maker ; and so, the characters of that law written in it were so shivered and scattered, that they could not be perfectly and distinctly read in it. Therefore it pleased God to renew that law after this manner, by a most solemn delivery with audible voice, and then by writing it on tables of stone. And this is not all ; but the same law He doth write anew in the hearts of His children."—(Vol. II. 363-4.)

2. As to the Fourth Commandment in particular :—

"All the other precepts of this law remaining in full force in their proper sense, it cannot but be an injury done to this command, either flatly to refuse it that privilege, or, which is little better, to evaporate it into allegories. Nor was the day abolished as a typical ceremony, but that seventh only changed to a seventh* still, and the very next to it : He who is *Lord of the Sabbath*, either Himself immediately, or by His authority in His Apostles, appointing that day of His resurrection for *our Sabbath*, adding to the remembrance of the first creation the memorial of accomplishing the new creation, the work of our redemption, which appeared then manifestly to be perfected, when our Redeemer broke the chains of death, and arose from the grave ; He who is the light of the new world, shining forth anew the same day that light was made in the former creation."—(Vol. II. 382.)

* "A quirk."—*Dr Macleod*.

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