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ARTICLE IV.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

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THE history of the christian sabbath presents an instructive topic of inquiry. The relations of the Christian to the Jewish sabbath, the sentiments of men in different ages and countries respecting the sanctity of the day, and their various customs connected with the observance of it, furnish an inviting field of inquiry which has not escaped the notice of German scholars. One of these authors, who has written with great ability, has nobly dared to lift his voice in defence of the divine authority of the Lord's day, and fearlessly rebuke the profanations of it which the customs of the country have sanctioned for many ages, and which even its theology continues still to authorize. Under these circumstances, we hail with peculiar interest the slightest indication in protestant Europe, of the rise of better principles respecting the sanctification of the sabbath. As philanthropists, as patriots, as Christians, we rejoice in any indication, from whatever quarter, of the rise of a higher tone of public sentiment in regard to the religious observance of the day. While therefore the public attention is directed anew to this subject, we have thought that a brief sketch of the opinions of the church in past ages respecting it, might be acceptable to the readers of this journal. We shall confine ourselves particularly to a review of the doctrinal sentiments of the church in relation to the christian sabbath, beginning with the instructions and example of Christ and his apostles.¹

Some have maintained that all the analogies between the Jewish and the christian sabbath are only fortuitous coincidences in the mode of celebrating two religious solemnities, which yet have no relation to each other. The theory, however, is only a gratuitous assumption in direct contradiction to the whole tenor both of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and of the teachings of Christ. These unitedly indicate that the economy of the Old and of the

¹ In the preparation of this article, the author has drawn indiscriminately from the author to whom allusion has been made, "*Der Tag des Herrn und seine Feier* von Dr. F. Liebetrut, Berlin, 1838," and from such other sources as were accessible to him.

New Testament, is one and the same. The calling of Abraham, the covenants, and the promises to him and to his posterity, the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt, the establishment of the theocracy, the sacrifices, the types and shadows, the law and the prophets all look forward to the accomplishment of God's gracious plan of salvation through Christ Jesus. They are only so many stages in the development of this grace. The Old Testament points to the New. The promulgation of the law leads on to the proclamation of the gospel. So the Jewish and the christian sabbath have one and the same end, connected with the great scheme of salvation to man. His religious instruction, his spiritual edification is the principal design of both. This end they accomplish by means having a strong analogy, and yet adapted to the economies of the Old and of the New Testaments to which each respectively belongs. We should bear this consideration in mind in contemplating the instructions and example of Christ. He is the Mediator between the covenants, the connecting medium between them, by whom both are united as different parts of the same continuous plan of salvation.

In this connection, it is particularly observable that Christ, who came to fulfil all righteousness, being himself made under the law, established the law of the sabbath both by his instructions and his example. He sanctified the day, religiously obeying the spirit and the letter of the fourth commandment, though far from conforming to the requirements of pharisaical austerity. Being Lord also of the sabbath he neither annulled nor modified the existing ordinances of God respecting it; but explained and enforced them. *Matt. 12: 1—8. Mark 2: 23—28. Luke 6: 1—5.* In these expositions, not one iota of the law is abated. Its spirit and intent are rather explained and enforced. Having full power to excuse himself and his disciples according to circumstances from the observance of the day, he gave them no authority to violate it at their convenience or discretion. The sabbath was made for man; but made to be enjoyed, not to be abused or neglected at his pleasure. The violation of it defeated the end for which it was given, and left the sabbath-breaker a sinner before God.

Our Lord's expositions proceed on the principle that the fourth commandment is not restricted to the Mosaic law. It is far reaching, embracing in its application the gospel dispensation as truly as the Jewish. The law and the prophets were until John. Then began a new dispensation. The kingdom of God was preached. One dispensation passes away and another cometh; but sooner

shall heaven and earth pass away than one tittle of the law fail. In this law that of the sabbath was included. Christ himself continued to keep it. It is particularly observable that while the former dispensation is passing away, the sabbath is sustained inviolate and extended into the latter without any explanation or modification in order to adapt it to the new economy. On this subject we have no new commandment.

The law of the sabbath is also a part of the *moral law*; and as such is of perpetual obligation. The Mosaic laws relating particularly to the Jews had their fulfilment in Christ. They were annulled in the abrogation of that religious system to which they belonged. But the law of the ten commandments remains in full force under the new dispensation. It is still the duty of men to worship God only, to honor their parents, to keep the sabbath, to observe all the laws of the ten commandments. Between the decalogue and the Mosaic ritual, there runs a line of demarcation clear and broad, and distinctly defining the limits of the two. Each of these great commandments of the decalogue was incorporated with the peculiar institutions of the Jews. But was any one of them lost in the abrogation of that religion? Shall children cease to honor their father or mother because the duty is no longer enforced by the peculiar laws of the Jews, nor fulfilled after their manner? So of the sabbath. Those precepts, rites and ceremonies, relating to the observance of it, which were applicable to the Jews only, were abrogated with the Levitical law. But the law of the sabbath remains still the same,—stern, inflexible, immutable, eternal. It was given, not to Abraham and his seed, but to Adam and to all his posterity. Limited to no people, restricted to no period of time, it is exceeding broad. Wide as the world is its command, lasting as eternity its requirements, and high as heaven its rewards to those who remember the sabbath to keep it holy. We repeat it, Judaism is not Christianity. The Jewish is not a christian sabbath. But both Jews and Christians are bound by the same high command, to remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. We are to keep it, not indeed as Jews, but as Christians. It is God's own command unabated still. Not one jot or tittle of it has passed away with the exploded ritual of the Jews. There it stands in all its majesty, fixed and changeless as the awful mount on which it was given. Change has succeeded to change. One system of religion after another has arisen, and flourished, and fallen, but the mount of God has stood, frowning in the stern and solemn majesty in which it at first looked out upon the

troubled hosts who stood afar off quaking with fear while Jehovah spake. So the law of God, given on Sinai, has remained unabated, unimpaired by all the revolutions of time or changes of religion.

The apostles and their Jewish converts, far from separating themselves from their people, continued to observe, with great care, the rites of the Jewish religion. Even after having been enlightened into the spirit of the gospel, after having learned that Christians of all nations were to be gathered into one fold under one Shepherd, after Paul and Barnabas had been sent unto the gentiles, the primitive Christians continued carefully to keep the law of their fathers. The great apostle of the gentiles himself, on his last return to Jerusalem, consented, agreeably to the will of many thousands who were jealous for the law, to conform to their ceremonial rites of purification. Acts 21: 20 seq. Even when a prisoner at Rome, he could appeal to the Jews that he had committed nothing against the custom of their fathers. Acts 28: 17. Comp. 25: 8. 24: 12, 13 and 23: 5. This fact is of special importance, inasmuch as only in the writings of this apostle there are passages which seem, in any measure, to militate against the religious observance of the sabbath.

The apostle and the converts to Christianity from the Jews considered themselves adherents still to their people and to their own national religion. Finding in Christ the fulfilling of the law and of the prophets, they continued in the spirit of the gospel, the worship of the Old Testament. They seem not to have been conscious when or where or how the ancient economy was abrogated, and the gospel dispensation introduced. But, in process of time, the one was gradually discontinued and fulfilled in the other. *The observance of the Lord's day as the first day of the week was at first introduced as a separate institution.* Both this and the Jewish sabbath were kept for some time; then the christian began to take precedence of the Jewish sabbath; finally, the latter passed wholly over into the former, which now took the place of the ancient sabbath of the Israelites. But their sabbath, the last day of the week, was strictly kept in connection with that of the first day, for a long time after the overthrow of the temple and its worship. Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish sabbath was continued in the christian church, but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued.

No historical record, sacred or profane, has informed us of the

first celebration of the Lord's day, the first day of the week, as the christian sabbath. It doubtless was very early; probably from the first communication of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The first day of the week had been signalized by the resurrection and the ascension of our Lord; and now again in the fulfilment of his promise in the miraculous shedding forth of the Holy Ghost upon his disciples while, in joyful expectation of the event, they were all assembled in one place for the worship of their ascended Saviour. From this time, it is to be presumed, that they continued to meet on this day, forever memorable by these remarkable events. No law was requisite for this purpose. The impulse of their own hearts was enough to bring them together on each return of this eventful day. From this time, after the example of these primitive believers it is presumed that the churches continued to distinguish this above all others as their great day for the joyful remembrance and religious worship of our Lord.

When Paul was at Troas the disciples came together, apparently according to established custom, on the *first day of the week*, to break bread; on which occasion the apostle preached to them. Possibly, however, they may have come together on this day to listen to Paul, because he was about to sail thence on the day following; so that the passage is not conclusive proof of the habitual observance of the Lord's day by those Christians.

The apostle also directs the Corinthians, *on the first day of the week*, to lay aside for charitable purposes a certain sum, according as the Lord had prospered them. Here we have, at least, a distinct notice of the reckoning by weeks. What directed the apostle to specify the *first day of the week* rather than the seventh? Is it replied, that it may have been accidental, unintentional; but is this credible? How much more probable the conjecture, rather how irresistible the conviction, that these contributions were to be made on the occasion of the stated meetings of the Corinthians, and that this day was designated with special reference to the religious observance of the Lord's day?

John, in Patmos, was in the spirit on the *Lord's day*. Whence this early and familiar use of the expression to denote a specific day? It is an appellation, descriptive of a certain day, given without explanation as if well understood and in common use. Here is a fair presumption, if not a conclusive inference, that the day was already known by this name because observed as the sabbath of the christian church.

These are all the passages in the New Testament upon which any reliance can be placed as evidence of the religious observance of the Lord's day by the apostolical churches.

In this connection certain passages from the writings of Paul, which have been thought by some to be opposed to the divine authority of the christian sabbath, deserve to be considered. Certain false teachers had come among the Christians in Galatia, urging upon them a strict attention to the Mosaic ritual. To guard against their influence, and to prevent the Galatians from turning back to the bondage of Judaism, the apostle says, "Now after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage. Ye observe days and months and times and seasons." Gal. 4: 9, 10. The sabbath is not once named. The whole in its connection shows plainly that Paul had no reference to the religious observance of this day. His sole object was to guard the Galatians against a slavish subjection to the traditions of the Judaizing teachers.

Of the same polemic character is the language of the epistle to the Colossians. They again were in danger of being "led away by the enticing words of men's wisdom, and a vain philosophy; after the rudiments of this world and not after Christ." To secure them against such delusions, he says, "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of a new moon, or of the sabbath days." Col. 2: 16. By this injunction, he would warn them, not against the right observance of the sabbath, but against the perversion of this and other solemnities as though they could obtain the divine favor by scrupulous attention to these; and not alone by faith in Christ. The caution of the apostle has reference only to abuse of the sabbath. With the doctrine of the Lord's day under the gospel dispensation it has no concern.

In the church at Rome there were two parties. The one restricted themselves to a vegetable diet, and practised other austerities in the observance of certain days. Rom. 14: 2, 5, 6. The other regarded those austerities as not only unauthorized, but opposed to the spirit of the gospel. The object of the apostle is to reconcile these two parties, and lead them to judge charitably respecting one another in these things. Each may be presumed to act conscientiously, but however that may be, "to his own master he standeth or falleth. Why therefore judge or set at nought thy brethren?" Here again the apostle has no reference to the

question respecting the religious observance, either of the sabbath of the Jews, or of the Lord's day.

In view of these passages, it appears that the apostle gave no positive instructions respecting the nature of holy time, or the religious character either of the sabbath, or of the Lord's day. He only offers negative objections against false views of Jewish festivals. His remarks have reference only to the temporary errors which were obtruded upon those churches, and not to any principle or ordinance respecting the sabbath, or any sacred seasons. He only seeks to guard the churches against a bigoted, superstitious adherence to rites which are opposed to the spirit of the gospel.

Soon after the age of the apostles, the evidence becomes clear and full that the sabbath was solemnized in the christian church for religious worship, and kept as holy unto the Lord.

Just after the conclusion of the same canon, and the death of John the apostle, a persecution was instituted against the Christians in Bithynia in Asia Minor. Pliny, the Younger, in reporting to the emperor the prosecutions that had been held against them, mentions, that they were accustomed to meet on a certain stated day, *stato die*, before it was light, for the worship of Christ as God. This statement is evidence that these Christians kept a day as holy time, but whether it was the last, or the first day of the week does not appear.

The testimony of Justin Martyr, about forty years later, and within the first half of the second century, is full and explicit. "On the day which is called *Sunday*, all the Christians living either in the city or country, meet together for religious worship." Apol. 1. c. 67. p. 83. Their worship consisted in the reading of the Scriptures, prayer, exhortations and the celebration of the Lord's supper. The reasons for commemorating this day he also states expressly, "On *Sunday* we all meet together, because it was on the first day, God, changing the darkness and chaos, created the world, and Jesus Christ, our Saviour, rose from the dead; for on the day before Saturday they crucified him, and on the day after Saturday, which is Sunday, he appeared to his apostles and disciples, and taught them the things which we require you to observe."

This sacred day was usually denominated *ἡ κυριακή*, *dies Dominicus*, the Lord's day; but sometimes, also, *Sunday*, *dies solis*, *ἡ τοῦ ἡλίου ἡμέρα*, in compliance with the common phraseology, and when it was necessary to distinguish the day in addressing

the heathen. During the early ages of the church it was never entitled "the sabbath;" this word being confined to the *seventh day* of the week, the Jewish sabbath, which, as we have already said, continued to be observed for several centuries by the converts to Christianity.

The epistle of Barnabas, whoever may have been the author, was written within the period of time now under consideration. This author says, "We observe the *eighth day* with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead, and, after his manifestation, ascended up into heaven." Ep. c. 15.

Tertullian, at the close of the second century, says, "We celebrate Sunday (*diem solis*) as a joyful day." Apol. c. 16. "On the Lord's day (*die Dominico*) we think it wrong to fast or to kneel in prayer." De Corona Mil.

"A true Christian," says Clement of Alexandria, contemporary with Tertullian, "according to the commands of the gospel, observes the Lord's day by casting out all bad thoughts, and cherishing all goodness, honoring the resurrection of the Lord, which took place on that day."

Dionysius of Corinth, of the same age, in a letter to the church of Rome, preserved by Eusebius, mentions their faithful observance of the Lord's day, and their reading of the Scriptures on the occasion. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 4. c. 23.

These authorities are sufficient to show that the Lord's day was observed by Christians of the second century for religious worship. The use of the term by those writers may fairly be assumed as explanatory of the same expression in Rev. 1: 10, which, in connection with 1 Cor. 16: 2 and Acts 20: 7, and illustrated by usage of the church in the age following, justifies the belief that from the beginning the Lord's day has been observed in the christian church. At first, and for several centuries, it was kept in connection with the Jewish sabbath; but by degrees the observance of the latter fell into disuse, and the former has ever since continued to be the sacred day of the christian church.

No law or precept appears to have been given by Christ or the apostles, either for the abrogation of the Jewish sabbath or the institution of the Lord's day, or the substitution of the first for the seventh day of the week. The reasons for keeping the first day in preference to the seventh, have been already stated from Justin Martyr. They are more fully explained by Leo the Great, of the fifth century. "On this day the world had its origin. On the same day, through the resurrection of Christ, death came to an

end, and life began. It was upon this day also that the apostles were commissioned by the Lord to preach the gospel to every creature, and to offer to all the world the blessings of salvation. On the same day came Christ into the midst of his disciples and breathed upon them saying, 'Receive the Holy Ghost.' And finally on this day the Holy Ghost was shed forth upon the apostles! So that we see as it were an ordinance from heaven evidently set before us, showing that on this day, on which all the gifts of God's grace have been vouchsafed, we ought to celebrate the solemnities of christian worship."¹

In this review of the development of the christian sabbath, one cannot fail to recognize the divine guidance of that good Spirit which leads into all truth. Under this peculiar oversight, the observance of the Lord's day was ordered, while yet the sabbath of the Jews was continued; nor was the latter superseded until the former had acquired the same solemnity and importance which belonged, at first, to that great day which God originally ordained and blessed. The design and end of both was indeed the same, the extension of God's grace to man. The Lord's day was, in reality, the same to the people of God under the new dispensation, that the sabbath was to the people of Israel. Each was the great central point of its own dispensation respectively, the cardinal principle in the system, and the chief means of the spiritual edification of the people.

No sooner was Constantine established upon the throne, than he began to bestow special care upon the observance of the Lord's day. He required his armies to spend the day in devotional exercises. No courts of judicature were to be held on this day; no suits or trials in law prosecuted; but, at the same time, works of mercy, such as the emancipation of slaves, were declared lawful.² Subsequently, christian emperors confirmed and extended these decrees. All public shows, theatrical exhibitions, dancing and amusements were strictly prohibited. Similar decrees were also passed by various councils, requiring a faithful attendance upon public worship and a strict observance of the day, by solemn suspension of all secular pursuits and abstinence from amusements and vain recreations.³

The historical facts in regard to the observance both of the an-

¹ Cited by Augusti Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. III. p. 548.

² Euseb. Vit. Const. Lib. 4. c. 18—20. Cod. Just. Lib. 3. tit. 12. De Feriis.

³ Conc. Sardic. c. 11. Carthag. IV. c. 24. 88. Matic. II. c. 11, etc.

cient sabbath and of the Lord's day as holy time, may be summed up in the following particulars :

1. Both were observed in the christian church down to the fifth century, with this difference, that in the Eastern church both days were regarded as joyful occasions, but in the Western the Jewish sabbath was kept as a fast.

2. Both were solemnized by public religious assemblies for the instruction and spiritual edification of the hearers and for the celebration of the Lord's supper.

3. The sabbath of the Jews was kept chiefly by converts from that people and on their own account ; who, though freed from the bondage of the law, adhered in this respect to the custom of their fathers. But in time, after the Lord's day was fully established, the observance of the sabbath of the Jews was gradually discontinued and finally was denounced as heretical. As the light of the morning star gently fades before the rising sun, yet both lingering awhile together in the horizon, each subserving, alike, the will of heaven, and conspiring, to a common end ; so the Jewish and the christian sabbath, these lights of the moral world, in harmonious action, fulfilled their original destiny ; the less continually waning before the increasing splendor of the greater light.

While the evidence of the *usage* of the apostolical and primitive church in the religious observance of the Lord's day is sufficiently explicit, it is not a little remarkable that the *doctrine* of the early fathers on the subject is equally equivocal. No direct precept, as has been observed, is given in the New Testament authorizing the substitution of the first for the seventh day of the week, or establishing the sanctity of the Lord's day. The apostle Paul, as we have seen, simply rebukes the pharisaical superstitions of Judaizing teachers, in their observance of the sabbaths and other festivals, without any reference to the divine authority for the Jewish or christian sabbath, or the substitution of the one for the other.

In like manner, whatever is said by the early christian fathers on this subject, is of the same negative and uncontroversial character, and directed to the same end. They strenuously oppose the mingling of both Jewish and pagan superstitions with the solemnities of the Lord's day, without clearly defining their sentiments respecting it. Many passages occur in their writings which show that the idea of the christian sabbath was clearly defined and deeply impressed on their minds ; but we seek in vain either

for any explicit authority for the sacredness of the Lord's day as *holy time*, or for its particular relations to the sabbath of the Jews. In their controversial writings generally, they treat rather of the contrast between the economy of the Old and the New Testament, than of their connection. The same is true of the Jewish and of the christian sabbath. They are contrasted rather than compared. The pious sentiments of the primitive Christians lead them strictly to keep the Lord's day; and in doing this, they acted in conformity with the will of God, and fulfilled his original and gracious design in giving man a sabbath. Under the impulse of their own religious feelings, they were a law unto themselves, for the right observance of the day of the Lord, without any explicit command from heaven, or any abstract theory of their own. "We assemble on the sabbath," says Athanasius, in the fourth century, "not to pervert our minds with Judaism, for we do not turn aside to observe false sabbaths; but we meet on the sabbath to worship Jesus, the Lord of the sabbath." The Jewish sabbath even, was kept as holy unto the Lord our Saviour, and in this way was finally superseded by the christian sabbath. "The Lord," says this father, in the same connection, "has now transferred the sabbath to the Lord's day."¹

When, however, we turn from this view of the subject to the controversial writings of the early fathers, in which they are opposing the spirit of the Jewish religion, they seem, in their zeal to oppose these errors, to contradict, in doctrine, the practice of the church. Justin Martyr disowns the original idea of the Lord's day. The sabbath is, in his view, when disputing with Trypho the Jew, only a temporary institution of the Jews. He goes further. He not only considers the sabbath to be adapted to the Jews, in condescension to their peculiar proneness to forget God, but all the Mosaic ritual has, with him, no higher intent. Neither does he recognize any intimate connection between the Jewish and the christian dispensation. But in all this he only writes as a controvertist of the Jews. How different the view which he would have had of the sabbath, had he taken into consideration the real object of all the types and forms of the Old Testament. Then would he have seen that as that introduced the gospel dispensation, so the sabbath was a part of that scheme of grace and of mercy which was accomplished in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the outpouring of his Spirit.

¹ Hom. De Sement, Vol. II. p. 60. ed. Paris.

Tertullian also, in his controversy with the Jews, assumes a position similar to that of Justin. He argues, indeed, that the economy of the Old Testament was preliminary to that of the New. But instead of proceeding to infer that the Jewish sabbath sustained a similar relation to that of the christian church, he contents himself with the bold assertion that to Christians *all days were holy*. God, according to Tertullian, had given general laws, applicable to all men, previously to the Mosaic law. Under such laws had Adam, Noah, Lot, Melchisedec, and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, lived. To prove, then, the necessity of the sabbath and circumcision, it must be shown that these were also indispensable to Adam, to Abel, and to all the saints who lived before the giving of the law to Moses. But as this cannot be affirmed of the rite of circumcision, so he includes the sabbath under the same category; treating it only as a temporary institution, belonging to a code of laws equally limited in their application. Such is his course of reasoning;¹ according to which, in fact, the sabbath is only a temporary institution of the Mosaic law. He seems never to have opened his mind to a just view of the real nature of the law of the sabbath, nor to have noticed the fulfilment of it in the keeping of the Lord's day in the christian church.

Clement of Alexandria seems also to have maintained with Tertullian that the Christian's whole life should be one perpetual sabbath holy unto the Lord. "Not on certain stated days, but without intermission, should we honor the Saviour throughout our lives."²

Origen again offers similar sentiments respecting the keeping of the sabbath. "He only keeps a true feast unto the Lord who faithfully fulfils his duty, praying always; and, by his prayers, presenting an acceptable offering to God without the shedding of blood. Whoever therefore would keep the Lord's day aright, or any other festival of the church, must even abide by the Lord in thought, word and deed. Such an one is even with the Lord and keeps a perpetual sabbath unto him. But the greater part who claim to be believers and are not, and who neither will, nor can keep such a sabbath—these need an opportunity for religious instruction, even though it be not continual."³

These authorities clearly show that the primitive fathers were far from establishing any new institution for religious worship. Even though right in practice they were wrong in theory; or

¹ Adv. Judaeos, c. 1—5.

² Strom. Lib. VII. c. 7.

³ Contra Celsum, Lib. VIII. c. 21—23.

rather their theoretical views of the Lord's day, so far as they are now known, were the crude conceptions of minds biased by controversy. Whatever they have said of the christian sabbath is chiefly of a *negative* character; appearing rather what it is not, than what it is.

The Roman Catholic church, in process of time encumbered their worship with a multitude of ceremonies, surpassing those even of the Jewish or pagan ritual. The superstitious notion also became current in the church that merely the outward observance of festivals and of fasts was well pleasing to God. In opposition to these superstitions, the reformers engaged with such spirit that they not only found no time for a thorough discussion of the true doctrine of the sabbath, but in their zeal to oppose these errors, ran, themselves, into the contrary extreme. In these stormy polemics, they, like the early fathers, contented themselves with negative principles in regard to holy time; and, in their lack of established positive principles, contradicted in theory their own usage. Seldom did they discuss the true principle, or inquire into the scriptural idea of holy time; but they abundantly controverted the false theories and vain superstitions with which the Catholics had encumbered the sabbath in common with their other festivals. In doing this the reformers assumed the general position, "That neither rites of worship, nor religious solemnities, were of divine appointment or indispensably necessary; but that all these were from time to time to be adopted, or changed according to the peculiar circumstances of different churches; so that they might best promote the religious instruction, the edification and the devotions of the people." In conformity with these views, the creeds, confessions and catechisms of that period, treat all sacred seasons, including the sabbath, as merely *human institutions*, having in mind the commendable purpose of correcting the abuses of the Roman Catholic church. Here was the fatal mistake of the reformers. They gave up the divine institution of the holy sabbath, without once subjecting its claims to a careful examination on their own merits as presented in the word of God. They classed it with other festivals of the church, as a *human ordinance*, which they were at liberty to receive, to reject, or to reform at pleasure.

The Augsburg Confession classes the Lord's day under the same category as Easter, Whitsuntide, and the like;—merely human ordinances. "The ancient sabbath," it pretends to say, "the church has not abolished, but God himself has taught us that we are not bound by the law of Moses," and much more to the same

effect. "The Scriptures have abrogated the sabbath, teaching that all the ceremonial law of Moses after the revelations of the gospel, may be omitted."¹ The fourth commandment, according to Luther's exposition in his Larger Catechism, applies only to the Jews, and in its obvious and grosser sense, *ad externum et crassum illum sensum*, it applies not at all to us Christians.² Enlightened Christians, according to the same perverted exposition, have no need of religious solemnities, but for the common people, to men servants and maid servants, such a day of rest must be very grateful; and important withal, as affording an opportunity for acquainting themselves with the word of God, and for devotional purposes. To spend the day therefore in tipping-shops and grovelling sensualities, would really be quite an abuse of the Lord's day in the estimation even of this renowned reformer. Hase Lib. Sym. p. 423. We honor the memory of Luther; we admire his transcendent genius, his lofty daring, and dauntless energy in defence of the truth; and now, after the lapse of three centuries, we stand amazed at the sight of the mighty impress of his great mind which he has left on the millions of Germany. But what thanks can they owe him for withholding from them that great day, which God has ordained to be the same through all time and equally rich in blessings to all who shall remember to keep it holy unto him. Had the true light of the sabbath dawned on his mind, had he given to reformed Europe this priceless boon, next to redeeming grace, the noblest gift of God, how fra-

¹ Qui judicant ecclesie auctoritate pro sabbato institutum esse diei Dominici observationem necessariam longe errant. Scriptura abrogavit sabbatum, quae docet omnes ceremonias Mosaicas post revelatum evangelium omitti posse. Et tamen quia opus erat constituere certum diem, ut sciret populus quando convenire deberet, apparet ecclesiam ei rei destinasse diem Dominicum.—Hase, *Libri Sym^o ici*, p. 43.

² Luther in commenting upon the fourth commandment says: Hoc praeceptum, quantum ad externum et crassum illum sensum attinet, ad vos Christianos non pertinet. Est enim externa quaedam res, sicut omnes aliae Veteris Testamenti constitutiones, certis quibusdam ritibus, personis, temporibus et locis destinatae, quae omnes jam per Christum liberae factae sunt.

Caeterum, ut hinc Christianum aliquem intellectum hauriamus pro simplicibus, quidnam Deus hoc in praecepto a nobis exigit, ita habe; Nos dies festos celebrare, non propter intelligentes et eruditos Christianos, hi enim nihil opus habent feriis, verum primo etiam corporalis cujusdam causae et necessitatis gratia, quam et natura docet et exigit; nimirum communis multitudinis gratia, servorum, ancillarum, qui per totam hebdomadam laboribus servierunt, ut et ipsi diem habeant, qua ab operibus respirantes seimet ex labore reficiant et corpora fessa quiete firmare queant.—Hase, *Libri Symbolici*, p. 424.

grant had been the name of Luther in all the earth; how sweet in heaven, the song of those countless millions more who then had come to join their blest voices before the throne in the services of an eternal sabbath.

But there was one great reformer who had drunk deeper at the sacred fountain; one there was of more patient investigation, of calmer temper and clearer intellect. Had even his discriminating eye discerned, amidst the papal superstitions with which it was disguised, the day of God, the lost, neglected sabbath;—had he had the discrimination to bring out the sabbath of the christian church from the mass of saints' days and festivals of the Romish church, where it had been disguised so long, like some ancient gem of priceless value, buried beneath the rubbish of many generations, but disinterred at last, and revealed to the admiring eye radiant still in all its original lustre,—had John Calvin given to the world this hidden treasure—the sabbath of the Lord our God—what a benefactor would he have been to the world! To that single act we might have ascribed an influence, more permanent and various in its effect on the character and destinies of men and of nations than that of any other in the whole history of the reformation. The benign influence of the sun in the heavens is not clearer than that of the sabbath upon the whole English race in England, Scotland and America. Though received from the Puritans at a late hour in the period of the revolution, it has changed, entirely and forever, the whole history of these countries; and, through them, the history of the world. It marks a wide and everlasting distinction between their religion and that of any other nation on the face of the earth. They have a sabbath—a *christian sabbath*, holy unto the Lord, according to God's command. With the exception of the countries just named, the sabbath is a *holy-day*, of human appointment, for rest, for recreation or for religious worship at the pleasure of each one.

From the period of the reformation until the rise of neological sentiments, near the middle of the last century, the Lutheran church continued gradually to adopt higher and more scriptural principles respecting the sanctity of the Lord's day. Like the primitive church, their practice was generally in advance of their theory in relation to the observance of the day. To detract from the honor due to Christ as Lord of all, these modern neologists began anew to controvert the divine authority of the christian sabbath, and to blend it again with other festivals of the church. Their intention was to lead off the church from the observance of

it as the *Lord's day*, commemorative of our Saviour. They accordingly denied that it had any connection either with the Jewish sabbath, or with the moral law. Both the pulpit and the press joined in this unrighteous work of secularizing it. The consequence was that, in their anxiety not to honor the Son even as they honor the Father, men ceased even to honor God the Father by the keeping of his commandments. There is indeed a redeeming spirit still lingering in the church. A few, like our author announced in the beginning of this article, boldly assert and defend the divine authority of the christian sabbath. Many more, by voluntary association, have covenanted one with another religiously to keep the day, and by all appropriate means to encourage others to the performance of the same duty without either affirming or denying its divine character. Still it is deeply to be lamented that the great majority, even of the evangelical party in the church, adhere to the sentiments of their great reformer, consenting in principle and in practice to the latitudinarian principle that the Lord's day is merely a human institution, unauthorized by the word of God. It is accordingly, with the sober, religious part of the community, a day of pastime and of *innocent recreation*, as they call it. To such as are so inclined, it affords a convenient opportunity for attendance upon public worship; the religious observance of it is restricted to the two brief hours so employed.

Such at the present time, is the sabbath, with a few exceptions, throughout the reformed churches of Germany. Certain festivals of the church, the relics of popish superstition, even at this day, are more scrupulously kept; and, as the writer has often been assured, are regarded as more sacred even than the sabbath! So truly do these reformed churches themselves need a more thorough reformation. Great and and glorious as was the reformation, it was but a reformation *begun*;—a correction of some old abuses and errors; not a *regeneration* as life from the dead. Even as a reformation, it was inadequate, incomplete. It was arrested early in its high career; and there it lingers still, low in the distant horizon, the sun it was hoped of a brighter day, its beams yet feebly struggling through the mists that dimmed its rising. Heaven speed its way, so that it may hold on its course, shining more and more, and scattering over protestant Europe a cloudless light.

As a practical illustration of these latitudinarian principles respecting the Lord's day, we give from our author a sketch of a sabbath in Germany both in the city and in the country.

In direct opposition to the law and the intent of the Lord's day,

it is a season of worldliness and sin, with the single exception of the observance of public worship. Even the appropriate instructions of this day, in many places are superseded; and the teachings of the sanctuary, accommodated to the maxims of the world and the spirit of the age. In the cities and large towns, in noise and bustle, it is hardly distinguished from the other days of the week, and scarcely recalling many even of the higher classes from their labor for the enjoyment of repose and worldly pleasures. The public officers of State, from the highest to the lowest, almost without exception, and in direct violation of law, disregard the day.

The lower orders, even less restrained by the laws, imitate the demoralizing example of their superiors; and the more so, because the Lord's day greatly increases their gains. Tobacconists, musicians, rum-sellers, rope-dancers, and all those whose business it is to minister to the pleasures of men, respectively depend on Sunday as the best day, for the exercise of their craft. Accordingly every kind of business proceeds on this day as on any other, until suspended, so that the people may participate in the public amusements. The ware-houses and stores are everywhere open, and the multitude of customers, gives melancholy evidence that the tradesmen in opening their shops, do but accommodate themselves to the spirit of the times. The noise of the work-shop, the rattling of machinery, the rumbling of mills, and the strokes of the steam-engine with its hoarse and heavy respirations everywhere disturb the stillness of the sacred day, here, alas, hardly known even by name. Here is the blacksmith at his forge; and there, a gang of laborers upon the scaffold. In one direction they are busy in preparing their carriages for a party of pleasure; in another, is the teamster with his weary beast toiling at his load; and on every side the post-coaches, pressing eagerly on in their destined routes. At the sound of fife and drum, the people are running together at the corner of the streets to a bear-dance; the mendicant minstrel is wailing forth his music with his hand-organ in the courts and lanes, and multitudes of criers are calling out at the top of their voices to draw the greedy crowd to come and taste of their dainties.

It is not enough that military parades, and public reviews of whole regiments engross a great part of the day; not enough that the sound of the sabbath-bell mingles with the clang of martial music and the roar of cannon, but the din of business and the pursuit of pleasure so disturb the rest, and desecrate the sacred-

ness of this holy day, that what God ordained to be a blessing to man, he has converted into a curse.

Towards the close of the day parties of pleasure on foot, in carriages, and on horse-back, are everywhere seen confusedly hasting away in pursuit of pleasure; each according to his inclination and ability. There is an eager rush to houses of public amusement, which are everywhere open, and in which with games at cards and nine-pins, with circular rail-ways, with carousing and dancing, and sports of every description, the Lord's day is commemorated. But we cannot even allude to the numberless forms of riotous mirth, to which multitudes resign themselves. A hundred places are open where, by change of scene, from hour to hour they may diversify their amusements and indulge in the most unrestrained and shameless excesses. The common people who, in total neglect of the public worship of God, spend the day in ungrateful toil, when their work is done, as if in eager haste to redeem the pastime which they have lost, press away to their beer-stands, coffee-houses, and dancing-halls. The day closes with the exhibitions of the opera-house, the circus and the theatre.

In the country, as well as in the city, the sabbath is profaned by secular pursuits and worldly pleasures of every description. The noise of the teamster and the traveller breaks the slumbers of the morning. The sound of the fife, the voice of the criers in the street, offering for sale their various supplies for the table, and all mingling their clamor with the bustling preparations for the business and amusements of the day—distract one's early devotions. On our way to the house of God, here we pass a Jew, hawking his wares; and there, the penny-post from the city, with a crowd about him; while, in the distance, some tradesman, with a loud voice, is calling one back to examine his goods; then we go to the house of God, hoping there, in the stillness of its devotions, to enjoy unmolested the privileges of the Lord's day. Vain hope! There stands the minister before the altar, but the voice of prayer is drowned by the din and clamor from without. Many are the vacant seats within; few having separated themselves from the noisy multitude to unite in the worship of God.

As the assembly retire, they are met by a company of musicians, who, having impatiently waited for their return, now boldly strike up their notes and draw around them a company of idlers; while, in another direction, all, both old and young, are hastening away,

at the call of the drum, to the exhibition of some travelling caravan, or strolling play-actors. The young men of the village are now returning from the city—where, in the morning, they went to attend a military parade; but not a few of them are lingering behind, attracted by the revelry of such scenes. Some officers of government, in the afternoon, summon the villagers to his office on public business, where they are compelled to remain, however reluctantly, until the close of the day, perhaps for the transaction of the business which the public agent prolongs at his pleasure. An assessment is to be made, or payment is required for a school-tax, and the poor are filled with anxiety to meet the demand. The herdsmen, the watch, and the field officers, are to be paid; and this again sets half of the village in commotion. They bring out their hay and their grain for the payment of these public servants, and the distribution to them of their portions respectively often ends in an angry quarrel. The noise and tumult of the scene close at last with drinking and carousing. Thus, in every way, the sacred day is desecrated and profaned; so that it is hardly possible for those who are disposed, to remember it to keep it holy. And yet many, even of the clergy, forbear all attempts to arrest or rebuke the abounding profanations of it.

Such is the sabbath in Germany; such the practical results of departing from the law of the Lord respecting it, and disowning the divine authority of this sacred institution, which God ordained to be kept holy unto himself. Who, in view of the recital, can fail to reflect with wonder and with sorrow upon that blindness which still rests upon all protestant Europe in regard to the sacredness of this holy day? But we rejoice in the consideration that England and America have better learned the law of the Lord, and in keeping of the sabbath have a great reward. The perverse dogmas and superstitions of the church, for a long time withheld from the English reformers, the blessings of the sabbath. But there was among them a venerable class of men, who learned at last to discriminate between the ordinances of the church and the commands of God. They clearly saw that while the church had consecrated many days as holy unto the apostles, saints and martyrs, the Lord Almighty had ordained one day in seven to be kept forever as holy unto himself. Casting away the ordinances of men, and receiving only the commandment of God, they began anew, in defiance of ecclesiastical authority and the persecutions of prelatical power, to keep the Lord's day. Their

sentiments prevailed over all opposition; and the nation at length received from them the divine institution.

The Puritans, those stern defenders of the faith once delivered to the saints, to whom England is so deeply indebted for her religious liberties, and from whom we have received the priceless inheritance of our civil and religious privileges,—these have the immortal honor of first giving to the christian world the sabbath. They first asserted the divine authority of the day by a clear exposition of the law of God respecting it. This fact ought to be better known and pressed upon the notice of the public. It deserves to be held in grateful and everlasting remembrance in honor of those noble men.

The individual, who first promulgated the true doctrine of the christian sabbath, was the Rev. Nicholas Bound, D. D. of Norton, in the county of Suffolk, in England. After receiving a regular education at Cambridge, he was beneficed at this place; but in 1583, when subscription to Whitgift's three articles was rigorously imposed upon the clergy, he, with about sixty other ministers of the same county, refused to subscribe; and was accordingly, with them, suspended from the ministry. About the year 1595, he published a famous book, entitled "*Sabbatum veteris et novi Testamenti, or The true Doctrine of the Sabbath.*" In this book he maintained "that the seventh part of our time ought to be devoted to God—that Christians are bound to rest on the Lord's day, as much as the Jews were on the Mosaic sabbath, the commandment about rest being moral and perpetual; and that it was not lawful for persons to follow their studies or worldly business on that day, nor to use such pleasures and recreations as are permitted on other days."¹ This book spread with wonderful rapidity. The doctrines which it propounded called forth from many hearts a ready response, and the result was a most pleasing reformation in many parts of the kingdom. "It is almost incredible," says Fuller, "how taking this doctrine was, partly because of its own purity, and partly for the eminent piety of such persons as maintained it; so that the Lord's day, especially in corporations, began to be precisely kept; people becoming a law unto themselves, forbearing such sports as yet by statute permitted; yea, many rejoicing at their own restraint herein." The law of the sabbath was indeed a religious principle, after which the christian church had, for centuries, been darkly groping. Pious men, of every age, had felt the necessity of divine authority for

¹ Brooks's *Lives of the Puritans*, Vol. II. pp. 171, 172.

sanctifying the day. Their conscience had been in advance of their reason. Practically they had kept the sabbath better than their principles required.

Public sentiment, however, was still unsettled respecting this new doctrine of the sabbath, though few at first violently opposed them. "Learned men were much divided in their judgments about these sabbatarian doctrines; some embraced them as ancient truths consonant to Scripture, long disused and neglected, now seasonably revived for the increase of piety. Others conceived them grounded on a wrong bottom; but because they tended to the manifest advance of religion, it was a pity to oppose them; seeing none have just reason to complain, being deceived into their own good. But a third sort flatly fell out with these propositions, as galling men's necks with a *Jewish yoke*, against the liberty of Christians;—that Christ, as Lord of the sabbath, had removed the rigor thereof, and allowed men lawful recreations;—that this doctrine put an unequal lustre on the *Sunday*, on set purpose to eclipse all other holy days, to the derogation of the authority of the church;—that this strict observance was set up out of faction, to be a character of difference to brand all for libertines who did not entertain it."¹

No open opposition, however, was at first manifested against the sentiments of Dr. Bound. No reply was attempted for several years; and "not so much as a feather of a quill in print did wag against him." His work was soon followed by several other treatises in defence of the same sentiments. "All the Puritans fell in with this doctrine and distinguished themselves by spending that part of sacred time in public, family, and private devotion." Even Dr. Heylin certified the triumphant spread of those puritanical sentiments respecting the sabbath, while he discloses his inveterate hatred of them in the following terms: "This doctrine, carrying such a fair show of piety, at least in the opinion of the common people, and such as did not examine the true grounds of it, induced many to embrace and defend it; and in a very little time it became the most bewitching error and the most popular infatuation that ever was embraced by the people of England."

Such hostility to the doctrine soon became general on the part of the established clergy. Without attempting a refutation of the doctrine, "they exclaimed against it as putting a restraint upon christian liberty; as putting too great a lustre upon the Lord's day;

¹ Fuller's Church Hist. of Britain, Book IX. p. 228.

and as tending to eclipse the authority of the church in attending festivals."¹

Mr. Thomas Rogers, author of a commentary on the Thirty-nine Articles, was the first to attempt a public refutation of these puritanical notions respecting the sabbath. The doctrine of the puritans he characterizes as an "odde and new device of theirs," and he charges them with setting forth "from an odde corner and after a new fashion, which we little thought of, their sabbath speculations. Such was their cunning set upon us afresh again, by dispersing them in printed books, which for ten years space before, they had been in hammering among themselves to make them compleat." In conclusion, the worthy churchman proposes to himself the rare consolations of his death-bed, in the vain hope, with which he flattered himself that he had utterly suppressed this dangerous tenet. "It is a comfort to my soul, and will be to my dying hour, that I have been the man and the means that the sabbatarian errors and impieties are brought into the knowledge of the State." Archbishop Whitgift, in 1699, suppressed Dr. Bound's book, and ordered that it should not be reprinted. And Popham, lord chief justice, did the same the year following. "These, indeed," says Dr. Heylin, "were good remedies, had they been soon enough applied; yet not so good as those which were formerly applied to Coppin and Thacker, who were hanged at Bury for spreading Brown's books against the church." Such was the amiable spirit of these christian men towards those who plead for a religious observance of the christian sabbath.

But these efforts at extermination only propagated more extensively the scriptural doctrine of the sabbath. Though condemned by the chief justice, says Fuller, "these sabbatarian doctrines took the privilege to pardon themselves, and were published more generally than before. The price of the doctor's book began to be doubled, as commonly books are then most called on when called in; and many who hear not of them when printed inquire after them when prohibited; and though the book's wings were clipt from flying abroad in print, it ran the faster from friend to friend in transcribed copies; and the Lord's day in most places, was most strictly observed."² Whitgift died soon after the suppression of the book, and in 1606, Dr. Bound published a second edition of his book with large additions. "And, indeed, such was its reputation that scarcely any catechism or comment was pub-

¹ Brooks's Lives of the Puritans, Vol. II. p. 172.

² Church Hist. of Britain, B. IX. p. 229.

lished by the stricter divines for many years, in which the morality of the sabbath was not strongly recommended and enforced." The subject, indeed, became the principal controversy of the age. It changed to a great extent the topics of discussion in the church. Hitherto the dispute of contending parties had been about the *ceremonials* of religion; now, it was directed to the *doctrines* of the Scriptures. Among these, that of the christian sabbath was first in order and importance.¹

The subject was renewed in the following reign in consequence of the Declaration for Sports on the Lord's day by James I, May 24, 1618. In this declaration he signified his royal pleasure, "that after the end of divine service his good people should not be disturbed, letted or discouraged from any lawful recreations; such as dancing either of men or women, archerie for men, leaping or vaulting, or any such harmless recreations; nor from having May-games, whitsun-ales, or novice-dances, and setting up of May-poles, or other sports therewith used, so as the same be had in due and convenient times without impediment or let of divine service." This declaration, having the sanction of public authority, opened a flood-gate to all manner of licentiousness, and overwhelmed the church in new trials. The declaration was promulgated in Lancashire, and ordered to be read in all the parish churches. But many conscientiously refused to comply with the injunction. Others thought to comply and then to compromise with their conscience by publicly exposing the sinfulness of such sports. The moral sentiments of multitudes were shocked by this authorized desecration of the Lord's day. Indeed it is not, says Fuller, "so hard to believe as sad to recount what grief and distraction thereby was occasioned in many honest men's hearts." The king, however, relaxed the severity of the decree and few were finally ejected from their livings by refusing to publish his declaration.

Greater trials, however, awaited the defenders of the sabbath in the next reign under Charles II and at the instigation of archbishop Laud. Upon a complaint made by the people, the lord chief justice Richardson had made an order suppressing Sunday revels, church-ales and clerk-ales,² and requiring every minister to

¹ Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, Vol. I. p. 543. Hetherington's Westminster Assembly, p. 53.

² Church-ales are when the people go from afternoon prayers on Sunday to their lawful sports and pastimes in the churchyard, or in the neighborhood in some public house where they drink and make merry.

Clerk-ales are so called because they are for the better maintenance of the

publish it yearly. Laud had the address to cause the chief justice to receive a severe reprimand from the king with an injunction to revoke his order; and to sustain himself in his pious zeal, his grace, the archbishop, procured a letter from the bishop of Bath and Wells, certifying on the testimony of seventy-two of his clergy, "that the late suppression of the revels was very unacceptable, and that the restitution of them would be very grateful to the gentry, *the clergy*, and the common people." The justices of peace were of a contrary mind and signed a petition to the king declaring, "that these revels had not only introduced a great profanation of the Lord's day, but riotous tipping, contempt of authority, quarrels, murders, etc." Thus we are presented with the extraordinary spectacle of *the laity* petitioning for the religious observance of the Lord's day, and *the bishop and his clergy* pleading for the profanation of it! The prayer of Laud and his party, however, prevailed; and the order was revoked. Further to obliterate from the minds of the people these puritanical notions of the sabbath, Laud instigated the king to republish his father's "Declaration of the Sports to be used on Sundays after divine service." This was accordingly done, Oct. 18, 1633. After citing the words of king James's declaration, authorizing these sports, Charles proceeds to say, "Out of a like pious care for the service of God, and for suppressing those humors that oppose truth, and for the ease, comfort and recreation of his majesty's well deserving people, he doth ratify his blessed father's declaration." He also gave command that this decree should be published in all the parish churches.

These measures revived the controversy respecting the morality of the sabbath; and, at the same time, involved the adherents to this doctrine in renewed trials and persecutions. Bradbourne of Suffolk had published five years before, A Defence of the most ancient and sacred ordinance of God, the Sabbath Day. The bishop of Ely was now commanded by the king to write a refutation of this book, and Drs. Pocklington and Heylin soon followed on the same side, denying that there is any divine right or moral obligation to observe the Lord's day, and affirming that it

parish clerk, and there is great reason for them, says his lordship, "because in poor country parishes where the wages of the clerk are but small, the people thinking it unfit that the clerk should attend at church and not gain by his office, send him provision, and then come on Sundays and feast with him, by which means he sells more ale, and tastes more the liberality of the people than their quarterly payment would amount to in many years."

depends entirely upon *ecclesiastical authority*. Both ecclesiastical and civil authority was employed to enforce the public desecration of the day by morris-dances, May-games, church and clerk-ales, and all similar kinds of revelling. Such of the clergy as refused to publish the king's declaration, were suspended, deposed, excommunicated, or imprisoned, according to the nature of their offence. Many of the suspended ministers, reduced to great distress by the loss of their livings, repaired to Lambeth and petitioned to be restored; to these Laud coolly replied, that "if they did not know how to obey he did not know how to grant their petition." One Mr Snelling offered publicly to vindicate his refusal to publish the declaration, but the archbishop refused to hear him, alleging that "whoever should make such a defence it should be burnt before his face, and he laid by the heels." In the fulfilment of this threat, this pious minister was accordingly deposed and thrown into prison, where he continued for many years, suffering at the hands of christian men the loss of all things for conscientiously remembering the sabbath day. "It were endless to go into more particulars; how many hundred godly ministers in this and other dioceses," says Mr. Prynne, "have been suspended from their ministry, sequestered, driven from their livings, excommunicated, prosecuted in the high commission and forced to leave the kingdom for not publishing this declaration, is experimentally known to all men."

These agitations of the public mind gave rise to a sect of enthusiasts whom the reader will readily identify with a certain class at the present day who, from serious observers of the sabbath, have advanced to such strange perfection as to keep all days holy, and to do any deed without sin. The characteristics of these men are clearly sketched in the quaint but graphic style of our historian. "Here it is much to be lamented that such, who at the time of the sabbatarian controversie, were the strictest observers of the Lord's day, are now reeled by their violence into another extreme, to the greatest neglecters, yea contemners thereof. These transcendants, accounting themselves mounted above the predicament of common piety, aver they need not keep any, because they keep all days as Lord's days, in their elevated holiness. But alas, christian duties, said to be ever done, will prove never done, if not *sometimes* solemnly done. These are the most dangerous levellers, equalling at all times, places and persons; making a *general confusion* to be *gospel perfection*."

Against all opposition, the scriptural doctrine of the sabbath

continued more and more to prevail. The fury of prelatical zeal against it gradually abated; opposition ceased; and, finally, even the church of England, and the whole nation, received the sabbath of the Puritans as an institution of the Lord's appointment. It is questionable, perhaps, whether the church of England has ever acknowledged, heartily and universally, the divine authority of the holy sabbath. Some high in honor in that church, like Dr. Paley, have firmly denied it. And not a few, we apprehend, have indefinite, indistinct notions of the scriptural authority which sets it apart, distinct from all other days, as holy time. It is indeed a holy day. But is it not a holy day *of the church*;—sanctioned by the usages and canons of the church, rather than by the supreme authority of God's law? The canon of the church of England on this subject is as follows: "All manner of persons within the church of England shall from henceforth celebrate and keep the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, *and other holy days*, according to God's will and pleasure and the orders of the church of England prescribed in that behalf." Canon 13. The *Lord's day* is included in the same category as other holy days; and the observance of all enforced by the same considerations,—the will of God and *the authority of the church*; as though it were merely a solemnity of the church, like Ash Wednesday or Good Friday. But we would fain believe that better sentiments on this subject prevail in the body of that communion.

England, Scotland and America accordingly enjoy a christian sabbath. To them it is what God originally designed it should be in all the earth;—a day of blessing and of mercy to man. But how melancholy the reflection that they only, among all the nations of Christendom, enjoy a christian sabbath. It is truly sad to witness the desecrations of the sabbath even in protestant Europe. But to a son of the pilgrims, who loves this day of the Lord, wearied with the perpetual hurrying to and fro of the multitude in that strange land; saddened at the sight of the gay throngs that crowd every place of amusement, in pursuit of every conceivable form of merriment and of guilty pleasure; sickened at the sound of revelry and noisy mirth mingling with the notes of martial music, the bustle of the military parade, and the din of business;—to such an alien from the land of the pilgrims, it is most refreshing to enjoy, once more, a day of sacred rest in his native land, or in that fair and happy island from which his fathers came. Even in busy London, that vast metropolis of the world, the sacred suspension of secular business, the deep repose

of that tumultuous city as the sabbath returns, the stillness of the hallowed day, its sacred associations, its solemn rites and divine instructions enforced by the solemnities of the sanctuary,—these all are a cordial to his thirsty spirit. In the enjoyment of such a sabbath he feels how blessed, above all other days, is the one which the Lord hath made.

ARTICLE V.

THEOLOGICAL ENCYCLOPAEDIA AND METHODOLOGY.

Translated from the unpublished Manuscripts of Prof. Tholuck of Halle, by Edwards A. Park.
(Continued from Vol. I. No. II. p. 367.)

B. The various Departments of Dogmatic Theology.

§ 24. I. *The arrangement of Proof-texts, and the Dogmatic Theology of the Bible.*

THE first duty of the student in the department of systematic theology is, to collect the *dicta probantia*. The arrangement of these proof-texts, (*τόνοι*.) belongs to the department of "Topics." The collections which have been hitherto made of such passages are unsatisfactory. They contain those texts only which express a truth absolutely and directly, but omit those which simply involve and imply the same truth.

The department of Biblical Dogmatic Theology is immediately derived from that of Topics. In other words, the system of Christian faith is expressed with simplicity, in sentences which are founded on the proof-texts of the Bible. In addition to the simple statement of the Christian principles, this department will allow an exegetical proof that the principles are taught in the Bible, and also a brief scientific confirmation of them. In this department, as in that of Topics, we have no satisfactory Treatise for students. The older writers, as Zachariae, are prolix and devoid of taste. Storr and Knapp have given us the best works that we have of this character.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the name Biblical Dogmatic Theology has been used in a different sense from that which is given above. It has been applied to the science which is more properly called Dogmatic History. Certain theo-