

A SERMON

ON THE

Obligation, Perpetuity,

AND

IMPORTANCE,

OF THE

SABBATH.

DELIVERED IN PORT-GIBSON, MISS.

NOVEMBER 21st, 1830,

BY

JEREMIAH CHAMBERLAIN.

PC J. S. GIBSON:

PRINTED BY BENJ. F. STOCKTON.

∴ ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴

1831.

Port Gibson, November 23d, 1830.

REV. DR. CHAMBERLAIN,

Dear Sir--At a meeting of some of the citizens of this town, at the court house, on Monday last, the undersigned were appointed a committee to convey to you the acknowledgments of the meeting, (and of the citizens generally,) for the Discourse "on the Sabbath," pronounced by you here on Sunday last; and to request of you a copy for publication.

A resolution to print and distribute *Five hundred copies*, met the decided and unanimous approbation of the meeting and of the citizens; and a subscription to defray the expenses of publication was promptly filled.

All this has been done under the thorough conviction that you have at heart most earnestly the welfare of man and of this community, and that you are ready to contribute any means in your power calculated to effect this end:—and therefore will not withhold the Discourse on that important portion of the Divine Law, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy."

The views presented by you in that sermon, and the illustrations, together with the privileges and benefits of the sabbatical institution, as set forth and enforced therein, upon the philanthropist, patriot, and christian, are such as to warrant us in the expectation that good may and will, under the blessings of Providence, result to this community from its publication.

Such are the reasons and motives of this meeting and community, in this request, and resolution to distribute it; and we believe they will meet your warm approbation *and aid*.

Respectfully,

P. A. VANDORN,
A. W. PUTNAM, } COMMITTEE.
J. S. CARRAWAY, }

Bethel, November 29, '30.

GENTLEMEN: Your very polite letter of the 14th inst. requesting for publication a copy of the sermon delivered by me in your village, on the 1st. was recd this morning. Herewith send you the only copy I have. The delicacy of my health at present, and my

constant and pressing duties, forbid an attempt to transcribe it in any reasonable time. You have it just as it was delivered.

It is but proper to remark that a few weeks previously to writing this sermon, I read with pleasure and profit a valuable tract written by Dr. Gardiner Spring, on the Importance of the Christian Sabbath. This tract was not in my possession when I wrote, nor is it now; whilst I know that many of the best ideas contained in the sermon are derived from Dr. Spring's tract. This acknowledgment is made, because the apparent quotations are not marked as such. My inability to transcribe it at present prevents me from pointing out the passages derived from the respectable source above mentioned. But as it was written for the purpose of doing good, and is now unexpectedly submitted for publication for the same purpose, it will be inconsistent to make any further remarks.

I am, Gentlemen, with high respect, your sincere friend,

JER. CHAMBERLAIN.

Hon. P. A. VANDORN,
A. W. PUTNAM, Esq.
Doct. J. S. CARRAWAY.

SERMON.

Ex. 20, 8. "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy."

It is the duty of the ministers of the gospel, to discuss the grand rules of moral conduct, frequently, and to recommend and enforce their observance by all the motives in their power. This, in one respect, is the leading business of their profession; for the object of the gospel upon mankind, is to promote holiness of heart and life. And in this light every gospel sermon may be considered as a moral lecture, in-as-much as it explains moral duties, and presents and enforces moral obligation.

It is also their duty to raise their voice against the progress of popular error, and to arrest, if possible, the tide of vice. And they are bound to "*cry aloud and spare not,*" when they see the prevalence of abounding wickedness. The faithful execution of this duty is commonly attended with happy consequences. Those who are not too far advanced in iniquity, take warning and retrace their steps. And if the community have passed the boundary of reformation, it tends to hasten the crisis, and bring on the convulsions by which society may be purified. These remarks are illustrated by every history of the world, either sacred or profane, ancient or modern.

At the present day, there is no commandment in the Bible so much abused as the one to which your attention is, this day, called. None upon which the public mind so much needs to be enlightened, and none in which there is so much perversion, and against which there is such a mighty effort made by some leaders of popular opinion. And unless seasonable and speedy remedy be applied, the day is just at hand, when this subject will be the test between christians and infidels,—between the advocates of the bible and the despisers of the gospel. And it is true that many men who profess to love the bible, and perhaps are sincerely

attached to the gospel of Christ, and who at present are considered as opposed to the strict observance of the Lord's day, but who would abhor the idea of belonging to that class of men who *reject* the gospel.

There is, therefore, much reason for cool, calm, and dispassionate investigation of this subject at a time like the present. This is not a time for prejudice,—there is no room for passion,—the question is one of too momentous a character to be settled by sectional feelings or by party politics. It is to be the deciding point, whether we will be *christians* or *not*.—whether we will regard the institutions of our fathers, or plunge into a sea of anarchy and confusion. I hope, therefore, that you will give me your unprejudiced attention whilst I attempt the discussion of the *obligation*, the *perpetuity*, and the *importance*, of the sabbath.

The history of the sabbat' is briefly this: It was instituted in the beginning of the world, when there was but one man and one woman on the face of the earth. It was incorporated with the moral law, and forms one of the ten commandments written by the "*finger of God*" upon the tables of stone.—And in the church of God it has been observed in every age down to the present day. It is contained in the first page of the bible and is mentioned in the last record given by God to man. The original institution of the sabbath is mentioned in the 2d chap. of Gen. 2d and 3d verses, and is in these words: "*And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*" The plain meaning of this passage is this: that God appointed the seventh day of the week, and devoted it to commemorate his resting from the work of the creation of the world. To *sanctify*, signifies to set apart or dedicate to a particular, specified object; and the reason for sanctifying or setting apart the seventh day was, because the work of creation was now completed;—and this fully explains the object to be commemorated and the way in which the day is to be observed. It is to be a day of rest from labor. But God not only sanctified, but also *blessed* the seventh day. To *bless* signifies to *make happy*, when it is used in reference to men; and when it is used in reference to days, or seasons, or inanimate things, it signifies that in them we are to be happy. The seventh day is one then in which we are to find happiness. The ordinary business of our first parents was to keep

and dress the garden of Eden,—but on the seventh day they were required to rest from labor, and to enjoy happiness. There can be no doubt but that the truly pious, as were our first parents, there is no happiness so great as that which is enjoyed in devout worship of the true God;—adoration and praise constitute the chief happiness of heaven. And now the complete interpretation of this passage, which is the original institution of the sabbath, is this:—that the seventh day is to be a day of rest from labor, and to be spent in the worship of God. Man was created on the sixth day of the week,—the first day of his life was therefore a sabbath; and ever after he spent six days in dressing the garden, but on the seventh he rested in imitation of the example of God, and spent the whole day in paying divine honors to God the Creator.

This is a plain and simple interpretation of this passage, and we apprehend that no other fair interpretation can be given of it. The sabbath is therefore the first ordinance ever given to man, and is, in an important manner, connected with every other ever afterwards given. And it is worthy of remark, that traces of it are to be found among almost all the nations of the earth. Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Arabians, Bactrians, Persians, and even Asiatic Indians, exhibit traces of a stated day of rest from labor, and of devotion to the duties of religion. Some of these nations even mention the seventh day as devoted to this purpose. With this 2d chapter of Genesis in our hands, this coincidence among nations and people, far removed from each other both in situations and general habits, is perfectly natural. But without this book no explanation of this fact can be given. With this book in our hands, the explanation is simply this.—Here we find that it was a law given by the creator to the original parents of the human family,—and through them it was handed down to their posterity.

I shall take the liberty in this place, of making a remark on the brevity used in relation to the institutions mentioned in the beginning of the bible. It is this: The history of the creation and of the whole human family for near two thousand years is contained in about six or seven pages. We can, therefore, expect nothing but a few general and prominent facts, and these facts not given in the form of minute narrative. And thus we find the subject of the creation,—the institution of marriage,—the appointment of man as lord of this earth,—the temptation and transgression of our first parents,—the abounding of wickedness,—the establishment of a church,—the origin

of arts and sciences,—the general deluge and the dispersion of the descendants of Noah over the face of the whole earth, with many other important things, given in a very few words. In such a history, then we could not expect any one institution to be minutely described. Its appointment is mentioned, and in its existence afterwards we are to find many of its peculiarities. But in this history we find the institutions of the seventh day as a sabbath.—It was made sacred to rest,—and a day of gladness and joy. This is the day in which *“the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.”* Job, 38, 7. In this history we find the institution of the sabbath in such language too, and with attending circumstances that its nature and the duties required in it, are easily learned. And I do believe that no other institution before the flood is so clearly described as the institution of the sabbath.

We are the more careful in our explanation of those verses containing the original institution of the sabbath, because some men endeavor to destroy its sanctity and escape from its obligation by asserting that it was an institution peculiar to the Israelites and entirely abrogated by the gospel. But in those words which we have been examining, we find its solemn appointment, *“when as yet sin was not born, nor Satan fell, nor Adam sinned.”* And therefore nothing can be so absurd as to suppose that it formed a part of the Mosaic institutions and was peculiar to them. It was given to the original pair of the human family and along with the other institutions appointed at that time to continue in full force through all ages and dispensations, as long as the human family shall continue on the face of the earth.

Besides this positive authority for the sabbath, much additional and collateral evidence may be collected from the peculiar conduct of the patriarchs, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the phraseology of the historian, to be found in the book of Genesis, and the first part of the book of Exodus.—But at present I shall pass it all over and invite your attention to the 16th chapter of Exodus. The Israelites had just escaped from bondage, and were in the wilderness. The subject of gathering manna is thus introduced: *“Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them whether they will walk in my law or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.”* 4, 5.—The children of Israel had been complaining of their

hardships, and now God had resolved to give them abundance, and see whether they would keep his law or not. From the creation of the world until this time, no direct mention was made of the sabbath, and in this place the observance of the seventh day is mentioned as belonging to the law of God. It appears that Moses did not give them any instruction in relation to the collection of a double quantity on the sixth day, for the express purpose of putting their regard for the law of God to the test. The history of their conduct on this occasion is in the following language. "*And it came to pass, on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and all the rulers came to Moses, and he said to them, this is that which the Lord hath said, to-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord.*" 22d. In this case their conduct proceeds from habit. They had made provision for their usual rest on the seventh day. But as they were now in new circumstances, the rulers were in doubt whether this old law was still to be observed; and accordingly came to Moses for instruction. He informs them that their conduct was right, and that the next day was the holy sabbath. No manna fell on the seventh day. Here then is another complete evidence of the existence of the sabbath in no way connected with the ceremonies of the Levitical institutions. And here is proof of the observance of the sabbath resulting from a principle of *habit*. And although the Israelites had been in severe bondage for four hundred years,—and although they were much given to idolatry, and much disposed to murmur against the providences of God, yet they had not wholly forgotten the sabbath. And again we must be permitted to remark, that nothing can be more absurd than to assert that the institution of the sabbath belonged to the Levitical law, and consequently was abolished by the gospel.

We will now call your attention to the fourth commandment, contained in the decalogue, written by the finger of God on the tables of stone: "*Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy; Six days shall thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle nor thy stranger that is within thy gates, for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and ha'lowed it.*"—This commandment is not introduced in the same manner with the other commandments. It is introduced as an old law, and requires the

Israelites to *remember it*. And that this is the fair interpretation of it, we are not left to doubt; for the reason assigned for its observance appeals to the original institution of it at the beginning of the world. "*For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.*"

Thus much on the *obligation* of the sabbath; and we are prepared to assert that it rests upon the express command of God. And in the Old Testament more is said in relation to the observance of this commandment, than any other of the whole decalogue. The authority is the same,—the sanctions are the same, and of course the obligation to obedience must be the same with the other commandments contained in the moral law. There cannot therefore be the least shadow of a doubt in the mind of any one, but that it was of the highest obligation upon all those who lived under the Old Testament dispensation.

The second question on the subject of the sabbath relates to its *perpetuity*. Is this law of perpetual obligation? We might answer this question by asking, why is it not perpetually binding? It was a law in the Garden of Eden before the introduction of sin,—it was a law for two thousand years before the existence of the ceremonial laws of the Israelites,—it is incorporated in the moral law, which is perpetually binding,—it was of high and solemn authority, and protected by a rigid vigilance for 2000 years, under the Levitical laws. It was a law from the creation of the world through every dispensation down to the time of our Saviour, and therefore we ask, why is it now not a law? What abolished it? Or why is it now not as necessary as under the Old Testament? And is not the reason for its observance now as good as in the days of Adam, or in the days of Moses? "*For the Lord rested on the seventh day and blessed it.*" If it were important then to remember the creation of the world, why is it not so now? If it were important then to adore the living God for the revelation of his character, and to have a particular day devoted to this purpose, why is it not so now?—No satisfactory answer can be given to these questions. At least no answer in the negative has as yet been given, which has the appearance of giving satisfaction.—And the only objection against the perpetuity of the sabbath, with any reference to the scriptures, is this, that it has been abolished by the gospel. But here we ask for the passage in which it is abolished: This demand has been made for centuries, and diligent search has been made, but there is not a passage, nor even

an expression in the New Testament which can at all bear any such interpretation.

The Jews complained that our Saviour broke the Sabbath, and some professing christians pretend that he abolished the law requiring its observance, by healing the sick on that day. These complaints of the Jews were utterly without foundation, for such works were always lawful. It had always been consistent with the observance of the sabbath to perform the works of mercy and necessity. For instance it had always been lawful to *draw a sheep out of the pit that had fallen in on the sabbath*. The Jews were extremely desirous to find fault with our Saviour, and as they could discover no sin in him, they were determined to pervert his works of benevolence to such extent as to create a prejudice against him.

Again, the Jews complained that he broke the sabbath by permitting his disciples to pluck ears of corn and eat them when hungry. Here again they were making complaint against a work, which had always been lawful; "*for the sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath.*" It is an institution accommodated to the situation of man, and not man to the institution. But men who are resolved to carry their point can always pervert the meaning of the most plain precepts, and misrepresent the most benevolent character to such extent as to have at least a *pretence* for their conduct. But we ask again for the passage which abolishes this venerable law respecting the sabbath. Where is the expression of our Saviour, or the part of *his* conduct, or of his disciples or apostles, which removes the command for the sabbath from the moral law? There is none.

But there is still another plea for setting aside the sabbath from the christian church. It is this—That it was entirely ceremonial, and along with the Jewish sacrifices it fell when the sacrifice of the cross was made. We think this plea sufficiently answered already, and will therefore in addition, give it, only, a passing remark. For it would be strange indeed to find a merely ceremonial law placed in the midst of a code of moral laws; and this code too the most succinct that could be given of moral duties—and this code too honored with being written *by the finger of God himself on tables of stone*—and preserved with the most solemn care. It would be strange indeed to find a law connected with ceremonial sacrifices, placed in the midst of a code of laws where sacrifices are not once mentioned. We might as well pretend that any or all the other laws of this code are ceremonial as that

the sabbath was connected with Jewish sacrifices, and with them was abolished. All the other laws had as much connection with the Jewish sacrifices, as the sabbath. Why then invade this sacred decalogue and question the authority or perpetuity of one of its holy precepts?

So far from abolishing it, our Saviour sanctions it—for when speaking of this same code of laws, he says, "*Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I come not to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.*" Mat. 5, 17, 18.

In the history of the apostles, mention is made of the sabbath with such circumstances as to leave no doubt but that they esteemed it a day for sacred rest, and worship of the true and living God. In the epistles of the apostles and the revelation of St. John, the sabbath is mentioned as a day peculiarly devoted to the worship of God. In the first page of the Bible and the last record of divine inspiration the sabbath is instituted, commanded, sanctified, remembered and loved. In all ages of the world from the creation to the present moment, and among all nations where the Bible is known, we find the existence of the sabbath and sabbatical institutions.—I call this a flood of testimony;—an amount of authority, which nothing can resist where the Bible is known, loved and obeyed.

Before I entirely drop this part of my subject, I will make one passing remark on the change which has taken place from the seventh to the first day of the week. And although many men have given themselves much labor on this subject, I will, at present at least, give it but one remark.

On this day, "*the first day of the week,*" our blessed Redeemer burst the bars of death, and proclaimed that the redemption of sinners was made complete.

On this day of the week the gospel was first preached by the apostles.

On this day of the week was the glorious day of Pentecost, when the christian church was first established and three thousand members added to it.

On this day of the week, the apostles were in the habit of assembling together and worshipping Jehovah Jesus—and publishing salvation in his name.

On this day of the week, the churches were in the habit of making contributions for the poor saints at Jerusalem.

And this day, *the first day of the week*, is emphatically styled *the Lord's day* by the apostle John.

And from the days of the apostles down to the present hour, this day, *the first day of the week*, is devoted by christians in all lands, and of almost every name, to the worship of the Lord our Redeemer.

And, now, why create difficulties about this change? There is no difficulty. For by consecrating one-seventh of our time, we commemorate the creation of the world, and imitate the example of God; for after six days' labor, the seventh is devoted to the worship of God the creator; and by observing the first day of the week we commemorate the greatest event the world ever saw, and worship Jehovah Jesus, our glorious Redeemer. And the truth is, those persons who create difficulties on this subject manifest a spirit to shake the foundation on which the whole institution rests, and to abolish all its solemn and sacred restraints.

And on this part of the subject I conclude that the first day of the week is the christian sabbath—not abolishing the original institution, but accommodating it to the purposes of the christian church. . . And it is connected with every thing that is tender, lovely and cheering in the gospel of Christ, and desirable and glorious in anticipation in eternity. Under the Old Testament the *sabbath* was a day of rest, so is the *Lord's day* a day of rest under the New. Under the Old Testament it was a day of blessedness—*“the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.”* On the Lord's day, under the New Testament, a new song of joy was raised. The saints that slept in their graves arose;—ransomed captives sang the song of sweet deliverance;—liberated prisoners sang the song of freedom—the dying sang the song of victory. *“Death itself is swallowed up in victory, O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

It would be entirely consistent with the character of this discourse to consider, how the christian sabbath should be observed. But we are compelled to defer this discussion to some other opportunity;—and at present I will only quote to you the succinct though complete definition of the duties of the christian sabbath as contained in our admirable catechism. *“The sabbath”* says the catechism, *“is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and spending the whole time in the private and public exercises of God's worship; except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.”*

B

The last subject of enquiry at present is this: Is the sabbath an *institution of importance*? In answer to this enquiry I present to you the following considerations.

1. To the christian religion it is all important. It appropriates a special time to the worship of God. It calls off the attention of men from the pursuits of pleasure, covetousness and folly, to serious reflection and honest enquiry about God and eternity. It accommodates external circumstances to the convenience of all men, and enables them to worship God without interruption. And so long as this institution remains, religion will find a place in the world.

Under the government of Israel, when the sabbath was observed, religion flourished, and when it was neglected, religion died.—When it was sanctified, all their other institutions were preserved, and when it was neglected, idolatry was soon introduced. While it was sanctified their nation was safe—but when it was neglected, they soon became a prey to their surrounding foes—their government fell—their city was sacked—their temple was burnt, and themselves were carried away into bondage.

“*Surely my sabbaths*” said God to the Israelites, “*ye shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.*” Ex. 31, 13. It was a sign of the true religion then; it is so still. The recurrence of this day, brings with it the recollection of the facts it is intended to commemorate. To the antediluvians it brought with it the recollection of the work of creation and all its attendant and splendid circumstances. To the Israelites it brought with it, in addition to this, the recollection of their deliverance from bondage—their sacred law and solemn institutions with all their encouraging privileges. To the christian, in addition to all this, it brings with it the recollection of our Redeemer’s triumphant resurrection with all its glorious and cheering consequences. Besides this, it is calculated to excite investigation into the truth of our holy religion. And so long as the resurrection of our Lord is believed as an uncontroverted fact, will the true religion exist. And so long as the sabbath exists, this fact can never be successfully denied. It is the grand monument of the redemption of man visible to the whole human family, and constantly recurring and presenting itself to the eyes of the world. Destroy this monument, and the facts it commemorates will soon be denied—and as its ruins waste away, so will all recollection of the creation and redemption of man perish. Destroy this monument of the true religion,

and there will soon be no stopping place on this side the gloomy dungeon of Atheism, or the bloody slaughter-house of superstition.

The importance of the sabbath to the christian religion was well understood by all those rulers and politicians who have exerted themselves to destroy the christian church. It formed an insurmountable barrier in their way. Their wishes could never be accomplished so long as it was permitted to remain. They found that with the sabbath, the church could survive persecution.—And therefore from the time of Julian the apostate, till the present moment, opposers have directed their attention to destroy the salutary restraints of the sabbath, as one of their first steps in the accomplishment of their wishes. Julian the apostate abolished the sabbath, with the avowed intention of utterly exterminating the christian religion.—For this same purpose did Mahomet abolish the sabbath. This example has been followed by the leaders in the late French revolution. They determined to make complete work in exterminating the christian church; and lest the policy of having a stated day of rest might possibly have some connection with our holy religion, they not only abolished the christian sabbath, but also by law appointed every tenth day, as a day of rest, gaiety and pleasure. From their frightful example, in flooding the loveliest portion of the earth, with crime, anarchy and blood, it is hoped that all future governments will take warning.—Indeed there is nothing in the life of Julian, nor in the government of the Ottoman empire, to induce enlightened politicians to follow their example. But the French revolution is a bloody buoy on a dangerous sea to alarm all future adventurers.

And now with this view of the subject, let me ask, what are we to think of those men who have avowed themselves as infidels, and are making exertions to create a prejudice against the christian sabbath in the popular mind?—And what are we to think of those nominal christians who are disposed to lower the authority of the sabbath?—And what are we not to dread when our sabbath is openly, publicly and authoritatively profaned? You may deny to us the honors of the government—you may deny us the prominent or even common rights of citizens—but leave us our sabbath and its rights and privileges, and we do not fear.—We therefore come to this conclusion, that the sabbath is the strong hold for maintaining the christian religion. If this be safe, the garrison is safe. If this be safe, the country is still unconquered. But let this strong hold once fall, and the whole country lies exposed, and

one part after another must inevitably fall, until the whole land is one continued field of desolation.

This reason alone, is sufficient, in our estimation, to demonstrate the utility and importance of the christian sabbath; for with the christian religion every other important blessing and cheering hope must enter.—But there are other considerations in favor of this holy institution, which must find a place in the affections of every enlightened patriot, and every other man who identifies himself with the best interests of human society. Some of these considerations I will now mention.

1. The sabbath promotes the intellectual improvement of society. He who conscientiously regards the sabbath, is employed either as a teacher or a pupil. He either hears or reads. He either occupies the place of instructor at home or abroad, or he is employed in the sanctuary of the Lord's house. The farmer, the mechanic, and even the servant have time for intellectual improvement on this day. A sufficiency can be heard or read, to furnish subjects for reflection and mental discipline for a whole week. It is not the man who has read most books, who knows most, or has the best improved mind; but it is he who has read with understanding. To read little, and that little well selected, and well digested, is the sure way for mental improvement, and the acquisition of useful knowledge. Rapid readers are generally mere smatterers.

The subjects upon which a man's thoughts are commonly occupied on this day are of such a nature as to awaken every faculty of the mind—excite investigation, and fully employ the whole energies of the soul. A few hours of such reading will furnish matter for a week's digestion.

Carry the sabbath to the most abject of the human family, and in proportion as you subject them to its influence, do you elevate their character. The reason is plain; for it appropriates one-seventh part of their whole life to the means of mental improvement. The youth who has just reached manhood, has received three whole years of important instruction; not in a hurried or rapid manner, but at stated times and after regular intervals, sufficiently long for reflection, so that he may make every important idea he has heard or read, his own property. From this we may easily calculate what improvement might be made in the course of forty, fifty, sixty, or seventy years. Ignorance and barbarism form no part of the character of the men who revere and sanctify the Lord's day.

In addition to this means of intellectual improvement furnished by this sacred day, we may add the means for

mental improvement furnished by sabbath schools.—In these schools are collected together, the child that is beginning to lisp—and the aged father of seventy years. They include every age and almost every condition of the human family. In these United States there are 6,654 of these schools belonging to the American Sunday School Union, which employs 61,372 teachers, and furnishes instruction to 411,009 pupils. This immense number is instructed by the American Sunday School Union alone. To this we may add those belonging to the Methodist and Episcopal churches who do not unite with other christians in this noble enterprize, at least 150,000. Making the round number of 560,000.* About the one-tenth of these receive instruction no where else. With what propriety and with what mighty force, do these benevolent institutions make an appeal to the philanthropist, the patriot and the statesman?—While the general government, and every State are making contributions for literary purposes—yet the sabbath and sabbatical institutions are giving instructions to a vastly greater number *charitably*, than is furnished by legislative aid, or the millions of funds drawn from the public treasury. Scarcely do our babes find themselves in a world of life, and thought, and vision, till they are encircled by the light of the christian sabbath.—In the midst of this light they live, and grow, and learn, and ~~and~~, and enjoy.

2. The sabbath is an important means of promoting domestic comfort and convenience, and personal neatness. The laboring classes of society, on other days, have scarcely time to give a thought about their domestic comfort, or their personal appearance. And the classes of society called the business classes, have time for little else than their speculations, bargains and sales. The recurrence of this day brings with it, reflections of domestic retirement and the enjoyment of sweet tranquility. These reflections exert an influence on the business of the ensuing week.

The duties of public worship always excite the expectation of meeting and mingling with friends and neighbors. And this is always accompanied by some regard for personal appearance. And accordingly preparations are made for this purpose by every man who regards the Lord's day. From a respect for Him who instituted this

*This statement is taken from the New-York Observer.

day, and the important facts it is intended to commemorate, he resolves according to his means to appear arrayed in apparel which shall comport with the dignity and importance of the occasion. But whilst it requires attention to decency and personal neatness, it also forbids all extravagance and gaudy ornaments.—In this respect it is different from all other species of assemblages. The occasion is too solemn and important for the display of vanity and folly. It is not the fancy of changing fashion, nor the eye of a corrupt taste, which is to be gratified. There is no place here for a display to attract the gaze of senseless admirers. The eye to be pleased, is the eye of God.—The rich and attracting ornaments therefore are a pure heart—a clear conscience—an humble spirit, and ardent piety. A good taste will always accommodate external appearance to correspond with these graces, and comport with all the circumstances of the occasion.

3. It furnishes to all classes of society the means of relieving, so far as human aid can go, the wants—the pains and the sufferings of the poor—the sick and the dying. The engagements of many classes of the human family are so constant in all working days, that they have not leisure to visit the poor, the sick or the suffering, who may happen to be around them. In order to feel for them we must go and see them: The sabbath furnishes this leisure, and indirectly commands these duties by expressly stating that they are not forbidden,—as well as the example of our blessed Redeemer.

To civil society, even in a temporal point of light, there is perhaps not a greater blessing, than general love and affection among the citizens. There is surely no stronger bond of union than this. For if love universally prevailed there would scarcely be need for civil law.—These christian acts of charity and visits of love, are not soon, if ever, forgotten. They form that sweet bond of union, which is implied in the term *neighbor*. They are reciprocated, and soon the society feels like one household.—Coldness of heart and indifference to the wants and afflictions of the human family form no part of the character of the men, who revere and sanctify the sabbath.—Is there a poor, starving family near?—this day furnishes the means of ascertaining the fact, and a portion of it is spent in supplying their wants.—Is there one near in affliction or distress?—a portion of this day is devoted to visit the sick—to comfort the afflicted—and to sympathize with the distressed and bereaved.—Is there one on a dying bed?—He is visited—the consolations of the gospel

are pressed upon him—he hears the fervent prayer of the righteous, for his triumph over death—and the song of Zion, in the victories of the glorious Redeemer. The sabbath is the poor man's wealth—the starving man's feast—the sick man's consolation, and the dying saint's foretaste of glory in Heaven.

4. The sabbath promotes national prosperity. I do most firmly believe in the overruling providence of God, and so does every other man who believes in the existence of a Supreme Being. Without His blessing no nation can prosper. He is jealous for his honor. "*Them that honor me*" says Jehovah, "*I will honor.*" The national prosperity of the Israelites was expressly predicated on their observance of the sabbath. And most faithfully did the Lord observe his solemn declaration with them; and most fearfully did he execute his threatenings upon them for their disobedience. Seventy years was their land waste, and they themselves in most direful bondage, for their disregard of this holy day. The same things under similar circumstances have occurred since and will occur again. The Ottoman Empire, embracing many portions originally the most fertile, and formerly the most populous and wealthy of Europe, Asia and Africa, is now little better than a barren waste, with the mark of a curse visibly impressed upon it. The French Revolution was a bloody drama, in which the obliteration of the sabbath formed a prominent scene.—And why should not these consequences flow from the profanation of the sabbath?—Think not that this is enthusiasm. For if the promise of God be attached to it, this does not make it unnatural or irrational.—This consequence is naturally and irresistibly deducible from the positions which we have already established. Intelligence, general good will and affections, self-respect, and elevation of character, are fruits of the sabbath, and are indispensably necessary to any permanent government. If they be wanting, a good, or free, or permanent government is also wanting. And in what degree soever any of them be wanting in the community, will slavery, anarchy, and degradation prevail.

Slavery and the sabbath can never be found united. A nation of slaves has never yet been found, and never will, who enjoyed the rich blessing of a christian sabbath. Send this institution, with its privileges and advantages, to any people, and you at once send them knowledge and virtue. The strongest barrier against the usurpations of kings, princes and *priests*, in the world, is the institution of the christian sabbath. For this we appeal to facts. Very little

liberty is known in Portugal, Spain, Naples, Rome, or Russia, and there is but little influence of the sabbath known there. And over the whole world the best test of the freedom of their government is the existence of the sabbath, or institutions possessing the peculiarities of the christian sabbath; and the manner in which they are regarded. If it be a kingdom professing christianity, let the question be, how is the sabbath sanctified! And if the answer be, that it is disregarded and profaned, you may conclude with certainty that it is sunk in ignorance, vice and slavery. And if it be a heathen nation or one of antiquity, let the question be: have they any institution or institutions, which furnish the advantages peculiar to the Christian Sabbath! And if the answer be in the negative, you may conclude with certainty that it is a nation of slaves.

But let no one conclude that the christian sabbath is favorable to ecclesiastical or spiritual domination. For here we can appeal to facts. And throughout the whole nominal christian church, liberty of conscience and free and bold investigation are in the precise ratio with the sanctification of the sabbath. Wherever the ecclesiastical authorities endeavoured to make usurpations over the liberty, rights and consciences of the people, they have first lowered the authority and sacredness of the sabbath. And wherever ecclesiastical tyranny exists, there the sabbath is only nominally known, while all its peculiarities are suppressed. And in our investigations, let the question be, How is the sabbath regarded and sanctified! And if it be profaned, you may conclude with certainty that there is little piety among the ecclesiastical authorities, while bigotry and superstition reign among the people, and abject slavery is their condition. Look at Spain with her bull baits on the sabbath. Look at Portugal, Naples, Rome, South America, and Mexico, with their sabbath festivals, processions, balls, theatres, shows: and what was New Orleans but a few years ago, with their Sunday masquerades, circus, balls, theatres, and congo dances,—when the library of the Rev. Mr. Smith was committed to the flames,—and his person secretly conveyed into this territory for fear of the assassin's dirk, or the dungeon of the criminal's prison? But if the answer to this question be, that the sabbath is revered, its restraints honored, and the positive duties performed, there liberty

* This fact in relation to his father, was received from Mr. Luth Smith, of Louisiana.

exists,—the bible is read and understood, and piety abounds. With these facts before us, what are we to think of those men who fear the sanctification of the sabbath?—Let this institution be destroyed, and away will waste free and honest inquiry,—our seventy thousand sabbath schools will gradually die away, and our five hundred and sixty thousand sabbath school scholars will find other engagements for this day than the study of the scriptures,—the bible will be neglected, and the succeeding generations will grow up ripe for that sect now rapidly extending over our land, distinguished for ages in enslaving the public mind; and at present assisted with thousands drawn from the coffers of other lands, which have been filled and are still filling by the power of unlimited usurpations.

Once more on this point: By *national prosperity*, I mean the prosperity of the individuals that compose the nation. The sabbath promotes industry and health, and prevents pauperism and wretchedness. By furnishing regular rest, it introduces system into business, and affords an opportunity for the wearied and exhausted bodily powers to recruit their strength. Without system, very little can be done in any business, and the recurrence of the sabbath assigns to every day its own business, keeps up a constant vigilance,—and the work advances with ease and expedition. This is true not only in theory but has been demonstrated ten thousand times by actual experiment. Neither man nor beast can long endure constant and uninterrupted effort of any kind. Rest is necessary, and actually expedites business. This is no paradox: for who could long exist without sleep, or preserve his faculties of mind or body? Yet this occupies, with its accompaniments, near the one half of our whole time. Besides, regular sleep is all important,—and irregular sleep is ruinous to both health and habits and business. So are regular and irregular rest. With what freshness and vigor does every man commence business on Monday morning? And more can be accomplished with this regular rest, than by a constant every day effort. Let this regular day of rest be abolished,—and our nature still demanding some,—irregular rest will be the consequence, which will soon introduce confusion in business, and end in idleness. Nor is this mere theory; facts are abundant, and all men of observation know its truth from their own experience.

But we have also said that it prevents pauperism and wretchedness. And here I appeal directly to facts. The most filthy, starved, and wretched of the human family, are found among those who habitually disregard the sab-

bath. Let us look for facts; Who are those that compose the poor, the begging, and the wretched, to be found on our highways, and exist in the alleys and commons of our towns and villages? We answer that they are the neglectors of the sabbath, or the families or the children of those who would not *keep the sabbath*. Visit our large cities, and the cities of christendom, and you will find those miserable, filthy wretches who swarm in the streets or crowd the alms-house, have issued from cellars or garrets which know no sabbath. In reference to national prosperity, and individual and domestic happiness, we are impelled to remark, that this institution of the sabbath was made in kindness to man.

5. The sabbath furnishes the means of establishing all sound morality, and is intimately connected with the foundation on which it rests. By the *foundation of morals*, I mean, the sanctions and motives connected with the rules of conduct. The motives are the rewards and punishments, —and the sanction is the undoubted pledge of a sufficient authority, that the laws shall be faithfully and rigidly executed: The foundation of morals connected with the christian sabbath, are the sanctions of God and the motives of eternity. Take away the sabbath, and you undermine this splendid foundation. Destroy this foundation and the whole superstructure must fall. From all human conduct remove the motives for rectitude resulting from the authority of God, and the importance of eternity, and you open a highway to hypocrisy—falsehood—intrigue—fornication—theft—adultery—incest, and murder:—to every individual crime and every national calamity. But do you ask why I attach all this importance to the sabbath? Because it is the grand business of this day, to teach, explain and enforce the operative principles of a sound morality. It is the grand business of this day to demonstrate the truth of our holy religion, and illustrate its glorious doctrines, and enforce obedience from the motives of God and eternity.

The sabbath protects against vice. He who sanctifies the sabbath, cannot entirely lose its wholesome restraints through the week.—Before men can be free in vice, or become giants in iniquity, this barrier must be broken down.—Here let me appeal to facts.—No villain regards the sabbath—No vicious family regards the sabbath—No worthless and immoral community regards the sabbath—No drunkard—robber—blasphemer—adulterer—murderer, regards the sabbath.—The remark of Chief Justice Hale, of England, is worthy of notice. It is this:

"That of all the persons, who were convicted of capital crimes, while he was on the bench, he found a few only, who would not confess, on enquiry, that they began their career of wickedness by a neglect of the duties of the sabbath, and vicious conduct on that day."—I have read the confession of many criminals, and every one that mentions the sabbath at all, corresponds with the statement of this distinguished Chief Justice of England. I should like to see a faithful record of the lives and vices of the actually guilty criminals, who crowd the dungeons of the more than thousand prisons of our country. In this black catalogue of black and frightful pictures, the violation of the christian sabbath would hold a prominent place: And I am sure it would not contain one name which had habitually sanctified the sabbath.—This is rational. For when is it that the poor man's children learn to "*fear God and honor the King?*"—It is on the sabbath.—When do the ignorant learn the ways of righteousness?—On the sabbath. When are the boisterous youth restrained?—When is it that the young transgressor hears the warning voice?—When are the consciences of the wicked alarmed?—It is on the christian sabbath accompanied by its salutary and blessed privileges.—Who then that loves God—that loves holiness—that loves a wholesome civil institution, that would not also love, revere, and sanctify the sabbath?

6. The sabbath is the great means of promoting true piety and holiness.

On this day the gospel is *preached*—we say emphatically *preached*. The terms of salvation are announced, and explained, and a free and full salvation is authoritatively offered to all men.

On this day dead sinners are awakened—enlightened, alarmed, convinced and converted. The character of the true God is exhibited, and loved and adored.

On this day our Saviour triumphed over the grave, and angels sang his victory—and it is still and shall continue to the end of time to be the *day of his victory*, and saints and angels join in concert to celebrate his triumph. It is a picture of Heaven.

On this day the good man makes it an especial business to examine his own heart and hopes for Heaven. His conscience is alive to all its pungent duty, and all the dark and secret hiding places of the heart are visited and reformed.—It is a day for humiliation and repentance for sins that are past, and means for amendment provided.

On this day the heavy laden sinner is lured to a mercy seat; where he finds peace to his wounded spirit.—The

doubts of the troubled and tempted are removed—and the hopes of the hesitating are strengthened and confirmed.

On this day the Bible is read—children hear of the babe of Bethlehem—the only begotten Son of God, and are instructed in the way of righteousness. The aged find a rest to weariness and a refuge from all their infirmities—mourners are comforted and the dying are saved.

Thus comes the sabbath every week laden with blessings to man—blessings temporal and eternal. It gives him rest, in time, and prepares for rest in eternity. It gives peace here, and prepares for permanent peace hereafter.—It makes man wise unto salvation in time,—and prepares him for glory in eternity. It brings with it seasonable, profitable rest for man and beast—knowledge for the ignorant—elevation of character and self-respect for all classes—good order to society—tenderness and sympathy for the distressed and suffering—prosperity to the nation—general good morals to the community.—A free and full offer of salvation to the whole human family—ardent lofty piety to the christian—and converts earth into a foretaste of Heaven.

WHO WILL NOT LOVE THE SABBATH?