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OF

# THE SABBATH

AND

## FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK;

SHOWING THE

## BIBLE RECORD OF THE SABBATH

AND THE MANNER IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN  
SUPPLANTED BY THE HEATHEN  
FESTIVAL OF THE SUN.

~~~~~  
BY J. N. ANDREWS.  
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## PREFACE.

WHEN the claims of the Bible Sabbath are brought to bear upon the consciences of men, various excuses are framed with which to evade their force. Some affirm that Sunday is the true seventh day; others that one day in seven is all that is essential to the proper observance of the commandment; another class affirm that no one can tell what day is the true seventh day; and a still more numerous class profess to believe that Sunday has, by divine authority, obtained the place of the ancient Sabbath. And it is not unfrequently that persons are met with, who, in one conversation, attempt to maintain all these positions.

It is believed that nothing can present so direct a refutation of these discordant and unscriptural positions as a plain narrative of facts relative to the Sabbath of the Lord and the heathen festival of the sun.

The steps by which Sunday has arisen to its present position need only to be known in order to satisfy every mind that it has obtained the supremacy by violence and fraud.

Whoever will trace the persistent efforts for ages, of kings, emperors, popes and councils, to establish Sunday in place of the day divinely sanctified, may find ample proof that these two days are not identical; that

Sunday is not the true seventh day; and that the reckoning of the days of the week has never been a matter of doubt.

It will also be seen that the seventh-part-of-time theory was invented soon after the Reformation of the sixteenth century, by men who professed to follow the Bible, in order to justify themselves in retaining the venerable day of the sun, instead of returning to the observance of the ancient Sabbath.

The testimonies presented in this work are from the writings of first-day historians, and are given in the words of the authors.

The work embraces but a small part of the testimonies bearing on this subject. Hereafter, if Providence permit, they will be presented more at length.

To the fear, so often expressed, that the discussion of this subject will do hurt; and that it would be better to induce men to keep Sunday well than to show them that they are not observing the true Sabbath, we have only to cite, in reply, the words of Christ: "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Of the Sunday festival itself we say, in the words of the Lord of the Sabbath, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

J. N. A.

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## HISTORY OF THE SABBATH

AND

## FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE BIBLE RECORD OF THE SABBATH.

THOSE who observe the Sabbath of the Lord are able to show that it is a divine institution. "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." Gen. ii, 3. To sanctify is "to separate, set apart, or appoint to a holy, sacred or religious use." *Webster*. It was by this act of the great Creator that the Sabbath was made for man. Ex. xx, 11; Mark ii, 27. As God has never taken this blessing from the seventh day, and has never given to secular purposes the day which he here "set apart to a holy use," the original institution still exists. As he has never sanctified another day as a weekly Sabbath, the Sabbath of the Lord is the only Sabbath institution. Ex. xx, 10.

It is often said by those who deny the institution of the Sabbath at the creation, that the Jewish writers entertain the same view, and deny the primal origin of the Sabbath. To correct this impression we quote from the celebrated Jewish historian Josephus, and from his distinguished contemporary, Philo Judæus. Josephus writes thus:

"Moses says that in just six days the world and all that is therein was made. And that the seventh day was a rest and a release from the labor of such operations; WHENCE it is that we cele-

brate a rest from our labor on that day, and call it the Sabbath; which word denotes rest in the Hebrew tongue."\*

And Philo says:

"But after the whole world had been completed according to the perfect nature of the number six, the Father hallowed the day following, the seventh, praising it and calling it holy. For that day is the festival, not of one city or one country, but of all the earth; a day which alone it is right to call the day of festival for all people, and the birth day of the world."†

As God made the Sabbath in Paradise, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy, it follows that it is not Jewish, not a carnal ordinance, not a yoke of bondage, but a sacred institution made for the well-being of the human family while yet upright. The great Creator rested first on the seventh day and was refreshed. Ex. xxxi, 17. The Son of God who kept his Father's commandments, followed this example, [John xv, 10; Ex. xx, 8-11], and thus, also, did the entire church, so far as inspiration gives us the facts.

After giving the institution of the Sabbath, the book of Genesis, in its brief record of 2370 years, does not again mention it. This has been urged as ample proof that those holy men, who during this period were perfect and walked with God in the observance of his commandments, statutes and laws, [Gen. v, 24; vi, 9; xxvi, 5], all lived in open profanation of that day which God had bless-

\*Antiquities of the Jews, Book I, chap. 1, §1.

†Works, Vol. I, §30.

ed and set a part to a holy use. But the book of Genesis also omits any distinct reference to the doctrine of future punishment, the resurrection of the body, the revelation of the Lord in flaming fire, and the judgment of the great day. Does this silence prove that the patriarchs did not believe these great doctrines? Does it make them any the less sacred?

But the Sabbath is not mentioned from Moses to David, a period of five hundred years during which it was enforced by the penalty of death. Does this prove that it was not observed during this period? The jubilee occupied a very prominent place in the typical system, yet in the whole Bible a single instance of its observance is not recorded. What is still more remarkable, there is not on record a single instance of the observance of the great day of atonement, notwithstanding the work in the holiest on that day was the most important service connected with the worldly sanctuary. And yet the observance of the other and less important festivals of the seventh month, which are so intimately connected with the day of atonement, the one preceding it by ten days, the other following it in five, is repeatedly and particularly recorded. Ezra iii, 1-6; Neh. viii, 2, 9-12, 14-18; 1 Kings viii, 2, 65; 2 Chron. v, 3; vii, 8, 9; John vii, 2-14, 37. It would be sophistry to say that this silence respecting the day of atonement, when there were so many instances for it to be mentioned, proves that that day was never observed; and yet it is actually a better argument than the similar one urged against the Sabbath from the book of Genesis.

The reckoning of time by weeks was established in Gen. i, ii. This period of time is marked only by the recurrence of the sanctified Rest-day of the Creator. That the patriarchs reckoned time by weeks and by sevens of days, is evident from several texts. Gen. xxix, 27, 28; viii, 10, 12; vii, 4, 10; 1, 10; Job ii, 13. That the reckoning of the week was rightly kept appears evident from the fact that in Ex. xvi, Moses on the *sixth* day declares that "to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." Verses 22, 23.

But if the opponents of the Sabbath claim that a knowledge of the true seventh day was lost in the patriarchal age, we will now show that before God gave the ten commandments he pointed out the true seventh day in a manner which could not be mistaken. First. By a direct miracle God caused the fall of a certain quantity of manna each day of the week to the sixth day when there was a double quantity. Ex. xvi, 4, 5, 29. Second. On the seventh day, which Moses calls the Sabbath, there was none. Verses 25-27. Third. That which was gathered on the sixth day kept good over the seventh, whereas it would corrupt in the same length of time on other days. Compare verses 23, 24, with verses 19, 20. This threefold weekly miracle continued the space of forty years. Verse 35; Josh. v, 12. The fact is settled, then, beyond all controversy, that the Sabbath of the Lord which was made in Paradise, was here directly pointed out by God himself. And to this important testimony we add the declaration of Nehemiah ix, 13, 14, that God made known to Israel his holy Sabbath.

No one pretends that the true seventh day was lost by the Jewish church after this. And it is certain that as late as our Lord's crucifixion they observed the true seventh day. They rested upon the day enjoined in the fourth commandment; namely, the day which the Lord rested upon and hallowed at creation. Luke xxiii, 55, 56; Ex. xx, 8-11; Gen. ii, 3.

Since the record of inspiration closed, the Jews and the Christians, each scattered in every land under heaven, have carefully kept the reckoning of the week. If a mistake in this reckoning had been made, a discrepancy would at once manifest this; for it is certain that every Jew and every Christian under heaven could not at the same time make the same mistake. The fact that there is no such discrepancy is decisive testimony that such mistake has not been made. Consequently we have the true seventh day from creation.

When God gave his law in person, in the hearing of the people, by the fourth precept of that law he solemnly enforced the observance of the holy Sabbath. Ex. xx, 8-11. In explicit language the great Law-giver states the reason why he made the Sabbath, and the time when this act was performed. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore [i. e., for this reason] the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." This is the reason why God made the Sabbath. It is the same reason that is stated in Gen. ii, 3.

The act by which God made the Sabbath is here stated with distinctness. It was his act of

blessing and hallowing his Rest-day. The time when this act was performed is here given as in Gen. ii, 2, 3; namely, the close of the creation week. And it is worthy of note that in thus giving the fourth commandment, God calls the seventh day the Sabbath at the time when he thus placed his blessing upon it. This most effectually shuts the mouths of those who deny the institution of the Sabbath at creation.

The great design of the Sabbath was that there might be a standing memorial of God's act of creation. Its observance would have saved the world from atheism and idolatry; for it has ever pointed back to God, the great first cause; and it has ever pointed out the true God, the great Creator, in distinction from "the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth."

We have now considered three important facts in the history of the Sabbath. First, its institution at creation; second, the fact that the true seventh day was pointed out to Israel; and third, the grand law of the Sabbath, the fourth commandment.

As we proceed in this investigation we notice that there are three different Sabbaths in the Bible. First, the *weekly* Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day. Ex. xx, 10. Second, the *annual* sabbaths of the Jews, the first, tenth, fifteenth, and twenty-third days of the seventh month. Lev. xxiii, 24, 27-32, 39. And, third, the *septennial* sabbath of the land, the seventh year. Lev. xxv, 1-7.

The Sabbath of the Lord was instituted at creation, and at Sinai was embodied in the royal law, every precept of which, according to James ii, 8-12, is still binding upon us. But the

sabbaths of the Jews and the sabbath of the land were instituted in the wilderness, and embodied in the hand-writing of ordinances with the feasts, new-moons and ceremonies of the Jewish church. That hand-writing of ordinances, which was a shadow of good things to come, was nailed to the cross by our Lord, thus taking all these festivals out of the way.

The most precious blessings are promised to those who observe the Sabbath of the Lord. Isa. lvi; lviii, 13, 14. And it is worthy of notice that this prophecy pertains to a period of time when the salvation of the Lord is near to be revealed. Heb. ix, 28; Isa. xlv, 17. The blessing is promised to the sons of the stranger, the Gentiles, [Ex. xii, 48, 49; Isa. xiv, 1; Eph. ii, 12,] as well as to the people of Israel. If they will keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord while dispersed in the four quarters of the earth, God will bring them again to his holy mountain. The promises here made by the prophet shall be verified when the outcasts of Israel and the sons of the stranger shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. Matt. viii, 11.

Notice the distinction between the Sabbath of the Lord and the sabbaths of the Jews, as presented in the prophets. Of the perpetuity of the former let us judge after reading Isa. lxvi, 22, 23, where we are informed of its observance in the new earth. But the Lord assures us by the prophet that the latter shall cease. Hosea ii, 11. The fulfillment of this prophecy may be read in Col. ii, 14-17. The weekly Sabbath is styled "the Sabbath of the Lord," "my Sabbath," &c. Ex.

xx, 10; Isa. lvi, 4; Eze. xx, 12-24; xxii, 8, 26. The annual and septennial sabbaths are styled, "her sabbaths," and "your sabbaths." Hosea ii, 11; Lev. xxiii, 32; xxvi, 34, 35, 43; 2 Chron. xxxvi, 21; Lam. i, 7.

Though the scriptures nowhere teach or authorize the change of the Sabbath, yet they plainly point out the power that should do this. Let the reader compare Dan. vii, 25, with the history of the papal power, and carefully mark its acts of changing and mutilating the divine constitution, the ten commandments.

We have seen the grand law of the Sabbath embodied in the decalogue. We come now to the New Testament. That our Lord did not destroy that law, or lessen our obligation to obey it, he clearly teaches in Matt. v, 17-19. And we may with the utmost safety affirm "that the apostles did not disturb what their Lord left untouched." Rom. iii, 31; James ii, 8-12. We say therefore that the New Testament teaches the perpetuity of God's law, and *for that reason does not re-enact it.*

Our Lord came to "magnify the law and make it honorable." Isa. xlii, 21. He kept his Father's commandments, and solemnly enjoined obedience to them, pointedly rebuking those who made them void that they might keep the traditions of the elders. John xv, 10; Matt. xix, 16-19; xv, 3-9. "The Sabbath was made for man," says the Saviour, "and not man for the Sabbath." Mark ii, 27. If the Sabbath was made for man, then it belongs alike to Jews and Christians, and to all our race. The statement carries the mind back to the creation of our race, and evinces that

the Sabbath was made in immediate connection with that event. On the one hand our Lord rebukes the Pharisaic observance of the Sabbath; on the other he rebukes with equal force that class of modern teachers who affirm that the Sabbath of the Lord which Infinite Wisdom made *for* man before the fall, was one of those sabbaths which were *against* him, *contrary* to him, and taken out of the way at the death of Christ. Col. ii.

The fact that those who had been with Jesus during his ministry, "rested the Sabbath-day according to the commandment," after his crucifixion, and resumed labor on the first day of the week, [Luke xxiii, 55, 56; xxiv, 1,] shows clearly that they knew nothing of the supposed change of the Sabbath. Yet Jesus testifies that all things which he had heard of his Father he had made known unto them. John xv, 15. The fact that God has never *sanctified* the first day of the week, shows plainly that it is not sacred time, and not a divinely instituted Sabbath. The fact that God has never required us to rest on that day shows that its observance in the place of the Sabbath of the Lord, is a clear instance of making void the commandments of God to keep the traditions of men. Mark vii, 6-13; Prov. xxx, 6.

That sanctified time exists in the gospel dispensation, or, in other words, that there is a day which belongs to God, is clear from Rev. i, 10. That the "Lord's day" is the Sabbath-day, is plain from Isa. lviii, 13. As the Sabbath was made for man, we find it under all dispensations, and in every part of the Bible. Those therefore who profane the Sabbath, sin against God, and wound their own souls.

## CHAPTER II.

## EARLY APOSTASY IN THE CHURCH—VALUE OF TRADITION IN DETERMINING WHAT IS TRUTH.

The book of Acts is an inspired history of the church. The apostles and their fellow-laborers during the period which is embraced in its record, were upon the stage of action, and under their watch-care the churches of Christ preserved their purity of life and doctrine. We look upon these apostolic churches as bright models for all coming time. This book fitly connects the narratives of the four evangelists with the apostolic epistles; and thus joins together the whole New Testament.

But when we leave the period embraced in this inspired history, we enter upon altogether different times. There is, unfortunately, great truth in the severe language of Gibbon: "The theologian may indulge the pleasing task of describing religion as she descended from heaven, arrayed in her native purity. A more melancholy duty is imposed on the historian. He must discover the inevitable mixture of error and corruption, which she contracted in a long residence upon earth, among a weak and degenerate race of beings."<sup>\*</sup>

What says the book of Acts respecting the time immediately following the labors of Paul? In addressing the elders of the Ephesian church Paul said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away dis-

\*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. xv.

ciples after them." Acts xx, 29, 30. It follows from this testimony that we are not authorized to receive the teaching of any man because he lived immediately after the apostolic age, or even in the days of the apostles themselves. Grievous wolves were to enter the midst of the people of God. If it be asked how these are to be distinguished from the true servants of God, this is the proper answer: Those who spoke and acted in accordance with the teachings of the apostles were men of God; those who taught "otherwise" were of that class who should speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them. In a word, then, the oracles of God are our standard of appeal. We will bring men to that, and not lower that to the teachings of men.

What say the apostolic epistles? To the Thessalonians it is written: "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess. ii, 3, 4, 7, 8.

To Timothy in like manner it is said: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and

doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. iv, 2-4.

These texts are most explicit in predicting a great apostasy in the church, and in stating the fact that that apostasy had *already* commenced. The Romish church, as the eldest in iniquity, prides itself upon its apostolic character. In this chapter of the epistle to the Thessalonians, that great antichristian body may indeed find its claim to an origin in apostolic times vindicated, but its apostolic character most flatly denied. And here we have a striking illustration of the truth we are now setting forth. An evil thing does not thereby become a good one, even though it originated in the very days of the apostles. At its commencement everything is either right or wrong. If right, it may be known by its agreement with the divine standard. If wrong at its origin, it can never cease to be such. Satan's great falsehood which involved our race in ruin six thousand years ago, has not yet become truth. Think of this, ye who worship at the shrine of venerable error. When the fables of men obtained the place of the truth of God, he was thereby dishonored. How then can he accept them as a part of that pure devotion which he requires at our hands! They that worship God must worship him in *spirit* and in *truth*.

That these predictions of the New Testament respecting the great apostasy in the church were

fully realized, the pages of ecclesiastical history present ample proof.

Dowling in his History of Romanism thus remarks: "There is scarcely anything which strikes the mind of the careful student of ancient ecclesiastical history with greater surprise, than the comparatively early period at which many of the corruptions of Christianity, which are embodied in the Romish system, took their rise; yet it is not to be supposed that when the first originators of many of these unscriptural notions and practices planted those germs of corruption, they anticipated or even imagined they would ever grow into such a vast and hideous system of superstition and error, as is that of Popery. . . . Each of the great corruptions of the latter ages took its rise in a manner which it would be harsh to say was deserving of strong reprehension. . . . The worship of images, the invocation of saints, and the superstition of relics, were but expansions of the natural feelings of veneration and affection cherished towards the memory of those who had suffered and died for the truth."\*

The early apostasy of the professed church is a fact which rests upon the authority of inspiration not less than upon that of ecclesiastical history. "The mystery of iniquity," said Paul, "doth already work." We are constrained to marvel that so large a portion of the people of God were so soon removed from the grace of God unto another gospel.

What shall be said of those who go to this period of church history, and even to later times, to correct their Bibles? Paul said that men would

\*Book II, Chap. 2, § 1.

rise in the very midst of the elders of the apostolic church who should speak perverse things, and that men should turn away their ears from the truth, and should be turned to fables. Are the traditions of this period of sufficient importance to make void God's word?

The learned historian of the Popes, Archibald Bower, uses the following emphatic language: "To avoid being imposed upon, we ought to treat tradition as we do a notorious and known liar, to whom we give no credit, unless what he says is confirmed to us by some person of undoubted veracity. . . . False and lying traditions are of an early date, and the greatest men have out of a pious credulity, suffered themselves to be imposed upon by them.†

Dowling in his History of Romanism bears similar testimony: "The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants!" Nor is it of any account in the estimation of the genuine Protestant *how early* a doctrine originated, if it is not found in the Bible. He learns from the New Testament itself, that there were errors in the time of the apostles, and that their pens were frequently employed in combatting those errors. Hence if a doctrine be propounded for his acceptance, he asks, Is it to be found in the inspired word? Was it taught by the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles? . . . More than this, we will add, that though Cyprian, or Jerome, or Augustine, or even the fathers of an earlier age, Tertullian, Ignatius, or Irenaeus, could be plainly shown to teach the unscriptural doctrines and dogmas of Popery, which, however, is by no means admitted, still the

†History of the Popes, Vol. I, p. 1.

consistent Protestant would simply ask, Is the doctrine to be found in the Bible? Was it taught by Christ and his apostles? . . . He who receives a single doctrine upon the mere authority of tradition, let him be called by what name he will, by so doing steps down from the Protestant rock, passes over the line which separates Protestantism from Popery, and can give no valid reason why he should not receive all the earlier doctrines and ceremonies of Romanism, upon the same authority.\*

Dr. Cumming of London thus speaks of the authority of the fathers of the early church: "Some of these were distinguished for their genius, some for their eloquence, a few for their piety, and too many for their fanaticism and superstition. It is recorded by Dr. Delahogue, (who was professor in the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth,) on the authority of Eusebius, that the fathers who were really most fitted to be the luminaries of the age in which they lived, were too busy in preparing their flocks for martyrdom, to commit anything to writing; and, therefore, by the admission of this Roman Catholic divine, we have not the full and fair exponent of the views of all the fathers of the earlier centuries, but only of those who were most ambitious of literary distinction, and least attentive to their charges. . . . The most devoted and pious of the fathers were busy teaching their flocks; the more vain and ambitious occupied their time in preparing treatises. If all the fathers who signalized the age had committed their sentiments to writing, we might have had a fair representation of the theology of the

\*Book II, Chap. 1, §§ 3, 4.

church of the fathers; but as only a few have done so, (many even of their writings being mutilated or lost,) and these not the most devoted and spiritually minded, I contend, that it is as unjust to judge of the theology of the early centuries by the writings of the few fathers who are its only surviving representatives, as it would be to judge of the theology of the nineteenth century by the sermons of Mr. Newman, the speeches of Dr. Candlish, or the various productions of the late Edward Irving.\*

Wm. Reeves in his Translation of the Apologies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian and others, uses the following strong language: "The church of Rome has had all the opportunities of time, place and power, to establish the kingdom of darkness; and that in coining, clipping and washing the primitive records to their own good liking, they have not been wanting to themselves, is notoriously evident."†

Dr. Clarke says: "We should take heed how we quote the fathers in proof of the doctrines of the gospel; because he who knows them best, knows that on many of those subjects, they blow hot and cold."‡

A single instance taken from the Bible will illustrate the character of tradition and show the amount of reliance that can be placed upon it. "Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; (which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord which is he that betrayeth thee?) Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?"

\*Lectures on Romanism, p. 203. †Vol. II, p. 375.

‡Autobiography of Adam Clarke, LL. D., p. 134.

Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" John xxi, 20-23.

Here is the account of a tradition which started in the very bosom of the apostolic church, which nevertheless handed down to the following generations a falsehood. Observe how carefully the word of God corrects this error. We conclude this chapter by presenting in contrast the two rules which divide christendom.

#### RULE OF THE ROMANIST.

"If we would have the whole rule of christian faith and practice, we must not be content with those scriptures which Timothy knew from his infancy, that is with the Old Testament alone; nor yet with the New Testament, without taking along with it the traditions of the apostles, and the interpretation of the church, to which the apostles delivered both the book and the true meaning of it."\*

#### RULE OF THE MAN OF GOD.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii, 16, 17.

\*Note of the Douay Bible on 2 Tim. iii, 16, 17.

## CHAPTER III.

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY FOR FIRST-DAY  
OBSERVANCE.

The first day of the week is now very extensively observed as the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath. It is therefore proper that we should examine the foundations of this institution that we may learn whether they were laid by the Most High; whether it is a divine institution, or one of human invention which has usurped the place of the Bible Sabbath. In determining this question we shall bring forward every witness that purports to have spoken on the point in the first century of the church, or in the early part of the second century. We shall not be understood as elevating tradition to the level of Bible testimony; far from it; but by presenting every mention of the first day during this period, whether by inspired or uninspired writers, we shall have furnished the reader with every fact that can be adduced in support of this institution. This testimony is summed up by two eminent church historians, Mosheim and Neander; and so completely do they contradict each other that it is a question of curious interest to determine which of them states the truth. Thus Mosheim writes respecting the first century:

"All Christians were unanimous in setting apart the first day of the week on which the triumphant Saviour arose from the dead, for the solemn celebration of public worship. This pious custom, which was derived from the example of the church of Jerusalem, was founded upon the express appointment of the apostles, who consecrat-

ed that day to the same sacred purpose, and was observed universally throughout all the Christian churches, as appears from the united testimonies of the most credible writers."\*

Now let us read what Neander, the most distinguished of church historians, says of this apostolic authority for Sunday observance.

"The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday. Perhaps at the end of the second century a false application of this kind had begun to take place; for men appear by that time to have considered laboring on Sunday as a sin."†

How shall we determine which of these historians tells us the truth? Neither of them lived in the apostolic age of the church. Mosheim was a writer of the eighteenth century, and Neander of the nineteenth. Of necessity they must learn the facts in the case from the writings of that period. There are certain documents which have come down to us from the first century and from the early part of the second century. These writings contain all the testimony which has any claim to be admitted in deciding this case. These documents are, first, the inspired writings of the New Testament, second, the reputed productions of such writers of this period as are supposed to mention, the first day; viz., the so-called epistle of Barnabas; the epistle of Pliny to the emperor

\*Maclaine's Mosheim, Cent. 1, Part II, chap. 4, §4.

†Rose's Neander, p. 186.

Trajan, and the epistle of Ignatius. These are all the writers prior to the middle of the second century—and this is late enough to amply cover the ground of Mosheim's statement—who can be introduced as even referring to the first day.

The questions to be decided by the testimony are these: Did the apostles by express appointment set apart Sunday for divine worship? (as Mosheim affirms.) Or does the evidence in the case show that the festival of Sunday, like all other festivals was always only a human ordinance? (as is affirmed by Neander.)

We begin with the four gospels, and present each mention of the first day in the words of the sacred writers. Matthew uses the following language: "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary to see the sepulcher." Chap. xxviii, 1. Mark mentions the first day as follows: "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun. Now, when Jesus was risen early, the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene." Chap. xvi, 1, 2, 9. Luke also bears testimony as follows: "And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day, according to the commandment. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with

them." Chap. xxiii, 56; xxiv, 1. John completes the testimony of the gospels: "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in their midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." John xx, 1, 19.

Every mention of the first day in the four gospels is now before the reader. What is the sum of this testimony? 1. That Christ arose on the first day of the week. 2. That the Sabbath is the day preceding the first day of the week. 3. That the Sabbath was kept after our Lord's crucifixion according to the (fourth) commandment. 4. That labor was resumed on first-day morning. 5. That Jesus came into the room that evening where the ten were assembled. If this last circumstance should be adduced as proof that the disciples were celebrating the resurrection day, it is then worth while to inquire into the case with particular care. Mark has preserved for us a complete explanation. He mentions the same circumstance as follows: "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." Chap. xvi, 14. From this testimony we ascertain that the disciples, who had one common abode, [Acts i, 13,] were assembled, not for Sunday commemoration, but to eat supper; and that our Lord upbraided them because of their refusal to believe those who had seen him after his resurrection.

There is another text, indeed, in the gospels, which is claimed to refer to the first day of the week. It is the second meeting of Christ with his disciples. "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." John xx, 26. But there is no mention of the first day in this text. Moreover there is very strong reason to believe that the meeting here mentioned did not occur upon that day. For the first meeting of Christ with his disciples took place at the very close of the first day of the week. The day as measured in the Bible begins and ends at sunset. Lev. xxiii, 32; Deut. xvi, 6; Mark i, 32; Gen. i. In other words it is reckoned from evening to evening, and the evening begins at sunset. The day of Christ's resurrection was far spent when the two disciples, in company with Jesus himself, arrived at Emmaus. Luke xxiv, 29. While eating supper the Saviour was made known to them in breaking bread. Then they arose and returned to Jerusalem, a distance of seven and a half miles. Verse 13. It was after this that Jesus met with the ten as they were eating supper and upbraided them for their unbelief respecting his resurrection. It follows therefore that this was in the very expiring moments of the first day of the week, and if our Lord remained even a short time with them, his interview must have extended itself into the second day of the week. Verses 33-49. It was AFTER EIGHT days from this meeting that he was again seen of them, which we respectfully submit could not have been on Sunday again, even should we allow the claim

of first-day advocates that "after eight days" means just a week. We leave the four gospels therefore with a decided conviction that they contain neither precept nor example in support of first-day observance.

The book of Acts, which mentions the Sabbath frequently, [chap. xiii, 14, 42-44; xv, 21; xvi, 13; xvii, 2; xviii, 4,] contains but a single allusion to Sunday. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, (ready to depart on the morrow,) and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted." Acts xx, 7-12.

From the fact that many lights were burning in the place of worship, it is evident this was a night meeting. The preaching of Paul till midnight, and the sleep of the young man, confirm this fact. This night meeting was on the first day of the week. We have already seen that the days of the week are reckoned from sunset to sunset. Consequently this night meeting on the first day of the week, was after sunset of what is now termed Sat-

urday evening; for at sunset of Sunday evening the first day of the week is past. The conclusion is that Paul waited till the Sabbath was past, had a farewell meeting with the disciples the evening with which the first day commenced, which from its interest was protracted till morning, and at break of day on Sunday morning he departed on foot for Assos, and thence for Jerusalem. This scripture is an incidental proof of Paul's regard for the Sabbath, as he waited till it was past before resuming his journey. And it is a direct proof that he had no idea of Sunday as a sacred day.

To show that we have not misstated the facts respecting this meeting at Troas we quote the language of a learned first-day advocate, Prof. H. B. Hacket of Newton Theological Institution. In commenting on this scripture he says: "The Jews reckoned the day from evening to morning, and on that principle the evening of the first day of the week would be our Saturday evening. If Luke reckoned so here, as many commentators suppose, the Apostle then waited for the expiration of the Jewish Sabbath, and held his last religious service with the brethren at Troas, at the beginning of the Christian Sabbath, i. e., on Saturday evening, and consequently resumed his journey on Sunday morning. But as Luke had mingled so much with foreign nations, and was writing for Gentile readers, he would be very apt to designate the time in accordance with their practice."\*

In other words, Prof. H. freely acknowledges that Paul resumed his journey on Sunday morning, unless Luke adopted the Pagan mode of com-

\*Commentary on Acts, pp. 329, 330.

mencing the day in the place of that divinely ordained. Kitto makes a similar concession. He comments thus on the text:

"It has from this last circumstance been inferred that the assembly commenced after sunset on the Sabbath, at which hour the first day of the week had commenced, according to the Jewish reckoning, (Jahn's *Bibl. Antiq.*, § 398,) which would hardly agree with the idea of a commemoration of the resurrection."\*

The only remaining text in which the first day is mentioned is 1 Cor. xvi, 1, 2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

Here is an "express appointment of the apostle's" respecting the first day of the week. And as it is the only appointment in the New Testament relating to that day, it is worth our while to determine whether it is an appointment of the day for religious worship or not. What was to be done that day? Let every one of you lay by him in store. Where would each individual place what he designed for the poor saints, if this direction were obeyed? By himself. Greek, *παρ' ἐαυτοῦ* "with one's self, i. e., at home."† Is this text then an "express appointment" of Sunday as a day of worship? So far from it, those who obey this text must on that day be at their own homes, and where they can examine their own worldly affairs.

\*Kitto's Biblical Cyclopedia, art. Lord's day.

†Greenfield's Lexicon.

It is true Justin Edwards D. D. in his so-called Sabbath Manual, brings forward this text as proof that Sunday was the day of religious worship with the early church. Thus he says: This laying by in store was not laying by at home, for that would not prevent gatherings when he should come."\*

Such is his language as a D. D. making out a hard case. But in his Notes on the new Testament, where he speaks as a critic and a scholar, he owns the truth in explicit language, though he squarely contradicts what we have already quoted. Thus he comments on this text: "*Lay by him in store; at home. That there be no gatherings; that their gifts might be ready when the Apostle should come.*"†

Such is the New Testament record respecting the first day of the week. That it furnishes no apostolic authority for Sunday celebration must of course be apparent to every individual. If there were needed further testimony than has been already presented that this day has no claim to be called the Christian Sabbath, the fact that our Lord never mentioned the day in any manner is quite to the point. Surely that day is not the Sabbath of Christ which he never mentioned.

But some will ask, Is it not justly called the Lord's day seeing that John himself calls it such when he says, [Rev. i, 10,] "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day?" But John does not say that this was the first day of the week; how do you know that he meant that day? It is answered that the

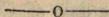
\*Sabbath Manual, published by the American Tract Society, p. 116.

†Notes on the New Testament, published by the American Tract Society, p. 286.

day was familiarly known by that name in John's time, and therefore it was not necessary that he should define it. Unfortunately this statement is false. Matthew, Mark, Luke in his gospel and in the Acts, John, and Paul in 1 Corinthians, all have occasion to name the day of Christ's resurrection, and each one of these holy men, guided by divine inspiration, calls it the first day of the week. These are all the instances in the N. T. in which that day is undoubtedly meant, and not one of these cases applies any such title to Sunday. This is not all. John the evangelist was the writer of the book of Revelation. Moreover he is believed to have written his gospel *after* his return from the isle of Patmos. In that gospel he follows the other sacred writers with the plain name of first day of the week. And of the so-called fathers, as we shall presently see, there is not one who applies the title of Lord's day to Sunday, until the time of Tertullian, more than 100 years after the book of Revelation was written. What day then is the Lord's day? The Father says himself, "The Sabbath is my holy day:" and the Son affirms that he is Lord of the Sabbath. Isa. lviii; Mark ii. There is no record that he has divorced this holy day and chosen another. Therefore this day which he reserved for himself at the beginning, and which he claimed as his in the moral law, is alone entitled to the name of Lord's day.

Such is the New Testament record respecting the first day of the week. That it contains no express appointment of Sunday for the solemn celebration of public worship, and that there is no example of the church at Jerusalem on which to

found such a precept is perfectly apparent. Hence the statement of Moshiem so far as the New Testament is concerned is without foundation in truth.



#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE EPISTLES OF BARNABAS, PLINY AND IGNATIUS.

We leave the solid ground of the New Testament, and enter the field of tradition, and of forgery. The three documents which have come down to us, as written in the period next following the apostles, we are now to examine. These are all that remain to us of a period more extended than that embraced in the statement of Moshiem. He speaks of the first century; we summon all the writers of that century and of the following one to the time of Justin Martyr, A. D. 140, who mention the first day of the week. Thus the reader is furnished with all the data in the case. •We quote from the so-called epistle of Barnabas what that says on the point:

“Lastly, he saith unto them: “Your new moons and your sabbaths I cannot bear them. Consider what he means by it; the sabbaths, says he, which ye now keep, are not acceptable unto me, but those which I have made; when resting from all things, I shall begin the eighth day, that is, the beginning of the other world; for which cause we observe the eighth day with gladness, in which Jesus arose from the dead, and having

manifested himself to his disciples, ascended into heaven.”\*

It might be supposed that Moshiem would place great reliance upon this quotation, as purporting to come from an apostle, and as speaking such acceptable words. Yet he frankly acknowledges that this epistle is spurious. Thus he says: “The epistle of Barnabas was the production of some Jew, who, most probably lived in this century, and whose mean abilities and superstitious attachment to Jewish fables, show, notwithstanding the uprightness of his intentions, that he must have been a very different person from the true Barnabas, who was St. Paul’s companion.”†

In another work Moshiem says of this epistle: “As to what is suggested by some, of its having been written by that Barnabas who was the friend and companion of St. Paul, the futility of such a notion is easily to be made apparent from the letter itself; several of the opinions and interpretations of Scripture which it contains, having in them so little of either truth, dignity or force, as to render it impossible that they could ever have proceeded from the pen of a man divinely instructed.”‡

Neander speaks thus of this document: “It is impossible that we should acknowledge this epistle to belong to that Barnabas who was worthy to be the companion of the apostolic labors of St. Paul.”§

\*Epistle of Barnabas, xiv, 9, 10.

†Ecc. History, Cent. 1, part II, Chap. ii, § 21.

‡Historical Commentaries, Cent. 1, § 53.

§Rose’s Neander, p. 407.

*Hoake to air Barnabas p 257*

Of the epistle ascribed to Barnabas, Milner says: "It is a great injury to him to apprehend the epistle, which goes by his name, to be his."\*

Kitto speaks of this production as "the so-called epistle of Barnabas, probably a forgery of the second century."†

The earliest of church historians places this epistle in the catalogue of spurious books. Thus he says: "Among the spurious must be numbered both the books called, 'The Acts of Paul,' and that called 'Pastor,' and 'The Revelation of Peter.' Besides these the books called 'The Epistle of Barnabas,' and what are called 'The Institutions of the Apostles.'"‡

As a specimen of the unreasonable and absurd things contained in this epistle, we quote a single verse: "Neither shalt thou eat of the hyena: that is, again, be not an adulterer; nor a corrupter of others; neither be like to such. And wherefore so? Because that creature every year changes its kind, and is sometimes male, and sometimes female."§

Thus first-day historians being allowed to decide the case, we are authorized to treat this epistle as a forgery. And whoever will read its ninth chapter—for it will not bear quoting—will acknowledge the justice of this conclusion. This epistle is the only writing purporting to come from the first century, except the New Testament, in which the first day is even referred to. That

\*History of the Church, Cent. 1, Chap. xv.

†Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature, art. Lord's Day.

‡Eusebius Ecl. History.

§Epistle of Barnabas, ix, 8.

this furnishes no support for Sunday observance, even Moshien acknowledges.

The next document that claims our attention is the letter of Pliny, the Roman governor of Bithynia, to the emperor Trajan. He says of the Christians of his province: "They were accustomed on a stated day to assemble before sunrise, and to join together in singing hymns to Christ, as to a deity; binding themselves as with a solemn oath not to commit any kind of wickedness; to be guilty neither of theft, robbery nor adultery; never to break a promise, or to keep back a deposit when called upon."\*

This epistle of Pliny certainly furnishes no support for Sunday observance. The case is presented in a candid manner by Coleman. He says of this extract: "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."†

Although Moshien relies on this expression of Pliny as a chief support for Sunday, yet he speaks thus of the opinion of another learned man: "B. Just. Hen. Boehmer would indeed have us to understand this day to have been the same with the Jewish Sabbath."‡

This testimony of Pliny's was written only a few years subsequent to the time of the apostles. It relates to a church which had probably been found-

\*Goodrich's Church History; Milner's Hist. Church, Cent. 2, Chap. i.

†Ancient Christianity Exemplified, p. 528.

‡Historical Commentaries, Cent. 1 § 47.

ed by the apostle Peter.\* 1 Pet. i, 1. It is certainly far more probable that this church, only forty years after the death of Peter, were keeping the fourth commandment than that they were observing a day never enjoined by divine authority. It must be conceded that this testimony from Pliny proves nothing in support of Sunday observance.

It remains that we examine the epistle of Ignatius so often adduced for Sunday as a divine festival. He is represented as saying,

"Wherefore if they who were brought up in these ancient laws came nevertheless to the newness of hope; no longer observing sabbaths, but keeping the Lord's day, in which also our life is sprung up by him, and through his death, whom yet some deny: (by which mystery we have been brought to believe, and therefore wait that we may be found the disciples of Jesus Christ, our only master:) how shall we be able to live different from him; whose disciples the very prophets themselves being, did by the Spirit expect him as their master.†"

Such is the language of Ignatius as often quoted for Sunday-keeping. But when we refer to the epistle of Ignatius as written by himself in Greek, we discover the fraud that has been palmed off upon the world. That there may be no chance to say that fraud is committed in this work, the whole matter shall be laid before the reader in the language of Kitto, a learned first-day writer. Thus

\*See Clarke's Commentary, Preface to 1st and 2d Peter.

†Ignatius to the Magnesians, iii, 3-5.

he presents the original of Ignatius with comments and a translation as follows:

"We must notice one other passage as bearing on the subject of the Lord's day, though it certainly contains no mention of it. It occurs in the epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians, (about A. D. 100.) The whole passage is confessedly obscure, and the text may be corrupt. The passage is as follows:

*Εἰ οὖν οὐ ἐν παλαιοῖς πράγμασιν ἀναστροφέντες, εἰς καινότητα ἐλπίδος ἦλθον — μηκέτι σαββατίζοντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ κυριακὴν ζωὴν ζῶντες—(ἐν ἡ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν ἀπέτελεν δι' αὐτοῦ &c.) Ignatius ad Magnesios ἡ ιβ.*

"Now many commentators assume, (on what ground does not appear), that after *κυριακὴν* [Lord's] the word *ἡμέραν* [day] is to be understood. . . . Let us now look at the passage simply as it stands. The defect of the sentence is the want of a substantive to which *αὐτοῦ* can refer. This defect, so far from being remedied, is rendered still more glaring by the introduction of *ἡμέρα*. Now if we take *κυριακὴ ζωὴ* as simply 'the life of the Lord,' having a more personal meaning, it certainly goes nearer to supplying the substantive to *αὐτοῦ* . . . Thus upon the whole the meaning might be given thus:

"If those who lived under the old dispensation have come to the newness of hope, no longer keeping Sabbaths, but living according to our Lord's life, (in which, as it were, our life has risen again through him, &c.) . . .

"On this view the passage does not refer at all to the Lord's day; but even on the opposite supposition it cannot be regarded as affording any pos-

itive evidence to the early use of the term 'Lord's day,' (for which it is often cited), since the material word *ἡμέρα* [day] is purely conjectural."\*

The learned Morer, a clergyman of the church of England, confirms this statement of Kitto's. He renders Ignatius thus:

"If therefore they who were well versed in the works of ancient days came to newness of hope, not sabbatizing, but living according to the dominical life, &c., . . . The Medicean copy, the best and most like that of Eusebius, leaves no scruple, because *ζωήν* is expressed and determines the word dominical to the person of Christ, and not to the day of his resurrection."†

Thus it appears that in the New Testament and in the uninspired writers of the period which we have referred to, there is absolutely nothing to support the strong Sunday statement of Mosheim. Of the three epistles, we have found the first a forgery, the second speaks of a stated day without defining what one, and the third would say nothing of any day if the advocates of Sunday had not interpolated the word *day* into the document. We can hardly avoid the conclusion that Moshem spoke on this subject as a doctor of divinity, and not as a historian; and with the firmest conviction that we speak the truth, we say with Neander, "The festival of Sunday was always only a human ordinance."

\*Kitto's *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, art. Lord's Day.

†Dialogues on the Lord's Day, pp. 206, 207. London, 1701.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE SABBATH AND FIRST DAY IN THE FIRST CENTURIES AFTER CHRIST.

It must be borne in mind by the reader that the writers we are now about to quote are all first-day observers, with the exception of the infidel Gibbon, and evidently no friends to the Sabbath. Hence it is that they call the Sabbath of the Lord, the Jewish Sabbath, and represent its observers as heretics; while they exalt the heathen festival of Sunday, and give it the title of Lord's day. Of the observance of the Sabbath in the early church, Morer speaks thus:

"The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the day in devotion and sermons. And it is not to be doubted but they derived this practice from the apostles themselves."\*

But notwithstanding this confession that the Sabbath was transmitted to the primitive church by the apostles themselves, Morer speaks of the ancient Sabbath-keepers as heretics, and he denounces them as holding strange notions, very much as Sabbath-keepers of the present day are set forth by religious journalists. It must ever be remembered that the Sabbath-keepers are not speaking for themselves, but their adversaries are speaking for them, a forlorn prospect that they will escape contumely. He says:

"Of the same stamp were the Nazareæ who retained the Sabbath; and though they pretended to

\*Id. p. 189.

believe as Christians, yet they practiced as Jews, and so were in reality neither one nor the other.

About the same time were the Hypsistarii who closed with these as to what concerned the Sabbath, yet would by no means accept of circumcision as too plain a testimony of ancient bondage. All these were heretics, and so adjudged to be by the Catholic church. Yet their hypocrisy and industry was such as gained them a considerable footing in the Christian world. So that though the Lord's day had got a very great figure and was well supported by those who presided in religious matters, yet for a long while the Sabbath-day kept its ground, and both together were respected as two sisters.\*

Yet Gibbon speaks of these Nazarenes as in reality the apostolic church of Jerusalem. Thus he testifies :

"The Jewish converts, or, as they were afterwards called, the Nazarenes, who had laid the foundations of the church, soon found themselves overwhelmed by the increasing multitudes, that from all the various religions of polytheism enlisted under the banner of Christ. . . . The Nazarenes retired from the ruins of Jerusalem to the little town of Pella beyond the Jordan, where that ancient church languished above sixty years in solitude and obscurity."† This testimony shows that the Nazarenes are not to be spoken of contemptuously, even though they were observers of the ancient Sabbath.

\*Id. pp. 66, 67.

†Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. xv.

Of the Sabbath and first day in the early ages Coleman speaks as follows :

"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."\*

This is a most explicit acknowledgement that the Bible Sabbath was for ages strictly kept. It is true that he speaks of the first day of the week also, yet his subsequent language shows that it was a long while before it became a sacred day.

Thus he speaks of Sunday: "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."†

That "Sunday was always only a human ordinance," is most explicitly confessed by Coleman in the following language respecting the change of the Sabbath: "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."‡

Coleman next relates the manner in which this Sunday festival which had been nourished in the bosom of the church, usurped the place of the

\*Ancient Christianity Exemplified, p. 527.

†Id. p. 529.

‡Id. p. 530.

Lord's Sabbath; a warning to all Christians of the tendency of human institutions, if cherished by the people of God, to destroy those which are divine. Let this important language be carefully pondered. He speaks thus: "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. . . . 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."\*

Thus is seen the result of the apparently harmless Sunday festival in the church. A viper was nourished into life by the great adversary, which, when it was of sufficient strength, destroyed the Sabbath of the Lord.

But were not these Sabbath-keepers confined to the converts from the Jewish nation? The learned Giesler bears a very explicit testimony on this point. He says: "While the Jewish Christians of Palestine retained the entire Mosaic law, and consequently the Jewish festivals, the Gentile Christians observed also *the Sabbath* and the passover, (1 Cor. v, 6-8), with reference to the last scenes of Jesus' life, but without Jewish superstition. In addition to these, Sunday, as the day of Christ's resurrection, was devoted to religious services."†

This eminent historian of the church testifies that the Bible Sabbath was observed by the Gen-  
\*Id. p. 531. †Eecl. History, Vol. I, Chap. ii, § 20.

tile Christians, who also paid some respect to the passover in memory of our Lord's suffering at that festival, and to Sunday as the day of Christ's resurrection. The supplanting of the Sabbath by Sunday as a consequence after ages had elapsed, we have already noted.

But does not Moshien contradict this statement of Giesler, and affirm that the Sabbath was confined to the Jewish converts? We quote his language, and also the authority on which he rests his denial that the Gentiles observed the Sabbath.

Moshien says: "The seventh day of the week was also observed as a festival, not by the Christians in general, but by such churches only as were principally composed of Jewish converts, nor did the other Christians censure this custom as criminal and unlawful."\* To support this denial of the Sabbath in the Gentile churches, Moshien cites in the margin, as his authority, the letter of Pliny to Trajan. He says: "The churches of Bithynia, of which Pliny speaks in his letter to Trajan, had only one stated day for the celebration of public worship; and that was, undoubtedly, the first day of the week, or what we call the Lord's day."

A weighty reason indeed to prove that the Sabbath was not regarded by the Gentile Christians. The churches of Bithynia observed a stated day for divine worship; therefore the Gentile Christians neglected the Sabbath. Such reasoning is unworthy of a historian, and belongs rather to one determined to sustain himself right

\*Eecl. History, Cent. 1, Part II, Chap. iv, § 4.

or wrong. Who shall affirm that this was "undoubtedly" Sunday? Rather, who shall deny that this was the day of which the Most High has said, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God?" For this was the stated day of religious worship with Christ and his apostles. Luke iv, 16; Acts xiii, 14, 42, 44; xvi, 13; xvii, 2; xviii, 4.

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CHAPTER VI.

CAUSES WHICH ORIGINATED AND PROMOTED THE SUNDAY FESTIVAL—JUSTIN. MARTYR—TERTULLIAN—FIRST INSTANCE OF LORD'S DAY AS A NAME FOR SUNDAY—FIRST TRACES OF RESTING ON THAT DAY—"DOMINICUM SERVASTI?" "HAST THOU KEPT THE LORD'S DAY?"

The consequences which result from adding to or taking from the word of God cannot be estimated by the magnitude of the first acts. Every corruption of doctrine and practice in the church begins with apparently unimportant departures from the divine standard. Thus in the early churches men began with sincere hearts to venerate things which God had never ordained; and from such a beginning these human ordinances increased in strength until, not satisfied with an equality with the commandments of God, they supplanted them altogether. It was thus with the festival of Sunday, and the Sabbath of the Lord.

That Sunday had some regard paid to it at an early age, not from divine command, but from veneration of the day of the resurrection, appears from the historians already quoted. And Moshieim speaks of *Friday* as receiving the like regard. Thus he says: "It is also probable that Friday, the day of Christ's crucifixion, was early distinguished by particular honors from the other days of the week."\*

And the same writer adds: "Many also observed the fourth day of the week, on which Christ was betrayed; and the sixth, which was the day of his crucifixion."†

From what causes, then, was the day of the resurrection able to distance the day of the betrayal and the day of the crucifixion, since they stand on the same foundation, namely, voluntary observance, and once were nearly equals in rank? It is reasonable to conclude that some powerful cause has contributed to elevate Sunday, since that day has now obtained the place of the Bible Sabbath in a weekly celebration, while good Friday is observed but once a year, and the fourth day of the week has lost its honors entirely.

At the time when the early church began to apostatize from God and to foster in its bosom human ordinances, the heathen world—as they had long done—very generally observed the first day of the week in honor of the sun. Many of the early fathers of the church had been heathen philosophers. Unfortunately they brought with them many of their old notions and principles.

\*Eecl. History, Cent. 1, Part II, Chap. iv, Note †.

†Id. Cent. 2, Part II, Chap. iv, § 8.

Particularly did it occur to them that by uniting with the heathen in the day of weekly celebration they should greatly facilitate their conversion. But we must permit a first-day historian to relate these facts. Thus Morer says:

“It is not to be denied but we borrow the name of this day from the ancient Greeks and Romans, and we allow that the old Egyptians worshiped the sun, and as a standing *memorial* of their veneration, dedicated this day to him. And we find, by the influence of their examples, *other* nations, and among them the Jews themselves, doing him homage; [2 Kings xxiii, 5; Jer. xliii, 13;] yet these abuses did not hinder the fathers of the Christian church simply to repeal or altogether lay by the day or its name, but only to sanctify and improve both, as they did also the pagan temples polluted before with idolatrous services, and other instances wherein those good men were always tender to work any other change than what was necessary, and in such things as were plainly inconsistent with the Christian religion; so that Sunday being the day on which the Gentiles solemnly adored that planet, and called it Sunday, partly from its influence on that day especially, and partly in respect to its divine body (as they conceived it) the Christians thought fit to keep the same day and the same name of it, that they might not appear causelessly peevish, and by that means hinder the conversion of the Gentiles, and bring a greater prejudice than might be otherwise taken against the Gospel.\*

In a word, then, the engrafting of the first-day

\* Dialogues on the Lord's Day, pp. 22, 23.

festival upon the stock of a paganism gave to it the wonderful vitality which it has ever possessed. It thus made common cause with heathenism, and when at a later period as we shall shortly notice, the emperor Constantine made a law in behalf of the heathens' venerable day of the sun, the *Christian* festival of first-day engrossed to itself all the authority of the empire, and overtopped even the divine institution of the Sabbath. But this shall be noticed in its place.

JUSTIN MARTYR is so often mentioned by first-day Sabbath advocates, that we must not omit to quote his testimony. Before his conversion he was a pagan philosopher. He wrote about A. D. 140. Of his writings, Milner says:

“Like many of the ancient fathers he appears to us under the greatest disadvantage. Works really his have been lost; and others have been ascribed to him; part of which are not his; and the rest, at least, of ambiguous authority.”\*

If the writings which pass as his are to be credited, there is little propriety in the use made of his name by first-day Sabbath advocates. He taught that the Sabbath institution itself was wholly abrogated, and there is no intimation in his words that the Sunday festival which he mentions was other than a voluntary observance. Thus he says:

“Upon Sunday we all assemble, that being the first day in which God set himself to work upon the dark void, in order to make the world, and in

\* Hist. Church, Cent. 2, chap. iii.

which Jesus Christ our Saviour arose from the dead."\*

It is to be carefully noticed that Justin assigns no divine authority for this observance, and that he does not designate the first day of the week, as Christian Sabbath, or Lord's day, or by any word expressing faith in it as a divine institution. On the contrary he calls it by its heathen name, and excuses the observance of this pagan festival by mentioning from the Scriptures such events as he could call to mind that had happened on that day. In his "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew" he treats the Sabbath with the utmost contempt, uttering among other falsehoods the following:

"It was because of your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers, that God enjoined you to observe the Sabbath."† After classing the Sabbath with the Mosaic rites he affirms of it and them, "there is no need of them, since Jesus Christ, the Son of God was by the determinate counsel of God born of a virgin in the seed of Abraham without sin."‡ So that Justin sets aside the fourth commandment as well as the Mosaic sacrifices; and well he might if it were true that God instituted the Sabbath on account of the wickedness of the Hebrews. Yet the Sabbath Manual which teaches the perpetuity of the Sabbatic institution, and that it is to be observed by keeping the first day of the week, gravely aduces Justin—a man whose reputed writings nev-

\*Justin Martyr's First Apology, translated by Wm. Reeves, p. 127.

†Brown's Translation, p. 59. ‡Id. p. 63, 64.

er mention the Sabbath but with a sneer—as teaching the same doctrine with itself. It is however but charitable to remind the reader of the testimony of Milner respecting the spurious character of the works ascribed to Justin. If however they are genuine they are a strong proof that Sunday was not known in his time by the name of Lord's day; for he twice mentions the day in his first apology as "the day called Sunday."

TERTULLIAN, the oldest of the Latin fathers wrote about A. D. 200. He excuses the Christians of his time for their Sunday observance, affirming that they were not worshipers of the sun, however their observance of Sunday might indicate it. His language clearly shows that there were in his time Sabbath-keepers, of whom, however, he speaks most contemptuously. He says:

"Others with a greater show of reason, take us for worshipers of the sun. These send us to the religion of Persia, though we are far from adoring a painted sun, like them who carry about his image everywhere upon their bucklers. This suspicion took its rise from hence, because it was observed that Christians prayed with their faces towards the east. But some of you likewise out of an affectation of adoring some of the celestial bodies wag your lips towards the rising sun; but if we, like them, celebrate Sunday as a festival and day of rejoicing, it is for a reason vastly distant from that of worshipping the sun; for we solemnize the day after Saturday in contradistinction to those who call this day their Sabbath, and devote it to ease and eating, deviating from the

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old Jewish customs, which they are now very ignorant of."\*

Milman, author of the "History of Christianity," in his notes on Gibbon, speaks thus of Tertullian: "It would be wiser for Christianity, retreating upon its genuine records in the New Testament, to disclaim this fierce African, than identify itself with his furious invectives, by unsatisfactory apologies for their unchristian fanaticism."†

Kitto with his usual candor testifies that it is in Tertullian that we meet with the first authentic instance of the term Lord's day as applied to Sunday. Thus he says: "The earliest authentic instance in which the name of the Lord's day is applied . . . is not till A. D. 200, when Tertullian speaks of it as "die Dominico resurrectionis;" (De Orat. § 23;) again, "Domineum Diem;" (De Idol. 14;) and Dionysius of Corinth (probably somewhat later) as *ἡμέραν κυριακήν* [Lord's day.]‡

Kitto speaks further of Tertullian and Dionysius as presenting the first traces of resting from labor on Sunday. Thus he says:

"But in these last cited writers we trace the commencement of a more formal observance. Thus the whole passage in Tertullian is:—'Solo die Dominico resurrectionis non ab isto tantum (genuflexione) sed enim anxietatis habitu et officio cavere debemus, differentes etiam negotio ne

\*Wm. Reeves' Translation of the Apologies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian and others. Vol. I, pp. 238, 239.

†Dec. and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. xv, remarks appended to note 72.

‡Cycl. Bib. Lit. art. Lord's Day.

quem diabolo locum demus;' [i. e.,] on the day of the Lord's resurrection alone we ought to abstain not only from kneeling, but from all devotion, to care and anxiety, putting off even business, lest we should give place to the devil."\*

It is this language of Tertullian that Neander quotes to sustain his modest statement, already quoted in connection with the language of Mosheim that "perhaps at the end of the second century a false application of this kind [that is of the Sabbath law to Sunday] had begun to take place; for men appear by that time to have considered laboring on Sunday as a sin."† In the margin, Neander cites these very words of Tertullian as his authority.

Here let us note a few important facts which we have learned from the historians already quoted. First. That the first faint trace of resting from work on Sunday is found at the end of the second century in the above cited words of Tertullian. Such is the testimony of Kitto and Neander. We shall find hereafter in Mosheim a curious confirmation of the fact that the observers of Sunday for a long period did not cease their labor on that day. Second. That the first instance in which Sunday is dignified with the title of Lord's day is A. D. 200, more than 100 years after John uses the term. And it is curious to note that in the writings of the intervening period, i. e., from John to Tertullian those testimonies that are adduced in support of Sunday, are silent respecting any sacred title. Thus in the so-called epistle of Barnabas it is called "the

\*Id. †Rose's Neander, p. 186, and marginal note.

eighth day." Pliny's epistle which is so much relied on to support Sunday, and which it is highly probable refers to the Sabbath, speaks of "a stated day." The epistle of Ignatius is indeed quoted as calling Sunday the Lord's day. But as has been already shown it is by one of the grossest frauds that this is done. The material word "day" is wanting, and without this the language of Ignatius has not the least appearance of sustaining Sunday. The apology of Justin Martyr twice mentions the day, and each time calls it the day of the sun. More than a hundred years therefore elapsed from the death of the last apostle before the "venerable day of the sun" began to acquire either a sacred name or character.

We must not omit a brief notice in this place of the statement that the early martyrs when upon trial for their lives were tested by the question whether they had kept the so-called Lord's day. This is gravely stated in Justin Edwards' Sabbath Manual, though he carefully refrains from citing his authority for the statement. I have at length ascertained this and will now present the statement, and also what Mosheim says of the work upon which it rests for authority. Thus the [Sunday] Sabbath Manual says:

"Hence the fact that their persecutors, when they wished to know whether men were Christians, were accustomed to put to them this question, viz., 'Dominicum servasti?'—'Hast thou kept the Lord's day?' If they had they were Christians. This was the badge of their Christianity, in distinction from Jews and pagans. And if they said they had, and would not recant, they

must be put to death. And what, when they continued steadfast, was their answer? 'Christianus sum; intermittere non possum;'—'I am a Christian; I cannot omit it.' It is a badge of my religion, and the man who assumes it must of course keep the Lord's day, because it is the will of his Lord; and should he abandon it, he would be an apostate from his religion.\*"

This statement, so interesting to first day observers, is not to be found in any of the standard first day historians or martyrologists. This omission can only be accounted for from the fact that they knew the statement to be fabulous. It is to be found however in an old Latin work of Ruinart entitled, *Acta Martyrum*. Of the character of this work for veracity Mosheim says:

"As to those accounts which have come down to us under the title of *Acta Martyrum*, or "the Acts of the Martyrs," their authority is certainly for the most part of a very questionable nature; indeed, speaking generally, it might be coming nearer to the truth, perhaps, were we to say that they are entitled to no sort of credit whatever."†

Such is the character of the work from which this story is taken. It is not strange that first day historians should leave the repetition of it to theologians.

\*Sabbath Manual, p. 120.

†Historical Commentaries, Cent. 1, § 32.

## CHAPTER VII.

CONSTANTINE'S SUNDAY LAW—IT WAS A PAGAN EDICT—CONSTANTINE A HEATHEN AT THE TIME—HIS FITNESS TO LEGISLATE FOR THE CHURCH—HIS LAW RAISES SUNDAY TO HIGH AUTHORITY THROUGHOUT THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

In the year 321 Constantine having ascended the throne of the Roman empire, put forth the following edict for Sunday observance:

"Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun; but let those who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture; because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines; lest, the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by heaven."\*

Another authority confirms this statement: "Constantine the Great made a law for the whole empire (A. D. 321), that Sunday should be kept as a day of rest in all cities and towns; but he allowed the country people to follow their work on that day." †

Respecting this law Moshem bears the following important testimony:

"The first day of the week, which was the ordinary and stated time for the public assemblies of the Christians, was in consequence of a peculiar

\* *Corpus Juris Civilis Constantino*, Coss, 321.

† *Encyc. Am. art. Sabbath.*

law enacted by Constantine, observed with greater solemnity than it had formerly been."\*

This is a striking confirmation of the testimony already presented that the Sunday festival for a long period was not a day of abstinence from labor. The edict of Constantine gave full permission to all sorts of agricultural labor on that day; yet says Mosheim it caused the day to be "observed with greater solemnity than it had formerly been."

The learned Morer speaks very explicitly with respect to Sunday observance prior to Constantine's law. Thus he says: "The Lord's day had no command that it should be sanctified, but it was left to God's people to pitch on this or that day for the public worship. And being taken up and made a day of meeting for religious exercises, yet for 300 years there was no law to bind them to it, and for want of such a law, the day was not wholly kept in abstaining from common business; nor did they any longer rest from their ordinary affairs (such was the necessity of those times) than during the divine service." †

Such was the manner of Sunday observance prior to the time of Constantine. As his law caused the day to be "observed with greater solemnity than it had formerly been" it is worth our while to examine the character of this law. We have the most direct testimony that this was a pagan edict, and that it did not express the slightest regard for the day as a Christian festival. In other words that it enjoined the pagan festival of the sun, and did not make any allusion to the day

\* *Eecl. Hist. Cent. iv, Part II, chap. iv, § 5.*

† *Dialogues on the Lord's day, p. 233.*

as a Christian festival. The law as already quoted is express on this point. It is the venerable day of the sun that he commanded men to observe. That there may be no mistake respecting this important point we quote the testimony of Milman, the learned editor of Gibbon. Thus he testifies :

“The rescript commanding the celebration of the Christian Sabbath, bears no allusion to its peculiar sanctity as a Christian institution. It is the day of the sun which is to be observed by the general veneration ; the courts were to be closed, and the noise and tumult of public business and legal litigation were no longer to violate the repose of the sacred day. But the believer in the new paganism, of which the solar worship was the characteristic, might acquiesce without scruple in the sanctity of the first day of the week.” † And he adds : “In fact, as we have before observed, the day of the sun would be willingly hallowed by almost all the pagan world.” §

We have already spoken of the fact that the Sunday festival received its chief support from the fact that the pagan world very generally observed the day. Hence we see the venerable day of the sun enjoined for the observance of the whole Roman empire. First-day leaders had sufficient tact to use this decree for their own especial advantage. That the case may appear in its true light let us suppose that instead of the first day of the week, Constantine had enjoined the seventh. And that instead of calling it the Sabbath of the Lord, he had termed it by its heathen name, the day of Saturn; (for this day was dedicated to Saturn by the

\*History of Christianity, p. 289. †Id. p. 325.

heathens, as first-day was to the sun.) If the seventh day had thus been forced on the world, would it have been anything else than a heathen festival to those who were thus compelled to observe it, and would not the law be justly called a heathen law? If by reason of such a law, the Sabbath-keepers in the church had gained the ascendancy, would it not be due to the power of a heathen law, rather than to respect for the seventh day as a divine institution? It was by virtue of just such a heathen law that Sunday obtained the pre-eminence both in church and state. Professed Christians had the same excuse for adopting it then, that they have for retaining it now, viz., it was commanded by law, and observed by the world. And they had the same reason for rejecting it then that we have now, viz., it is a heathen festival that has stolen the place of the Lord's Sabbath. Such being the case, even a ripe old age cannot mellow it into a divine institution, nor make its observance acceptable obedience to the fourth commandment.

In confirmation of what has been said of this edict as a heathen law, we shall show that Constantine himself was a heathen when this law was enacted, and that he remained such for several years. His pagan character is thus described by Gibbon : “His liberality restored and enriched the temples of the gods; the medals which issued from his imperial mint are impressed with the figures and attributes of Jupiter and Apollo, of Mars and Hercules; and his filial piety increased the council of Olympus by the solemn apotheosis of his father Constantius. But the devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly direct-

ed to the genius of the sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology; and he was pleased to be represented with the symbols of the god of light and poetry. . . . The altars of Apollo were crowned with the votive offerings of Constantine; and the credulous multitude were taught to believe, that the emperor was permitted to behold with mortal eyes the visible majesty of their tutelar deity. . . . The sun was universally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Constantine.\* In a note on the same page Gibbon says: "The panegyric of Eumenius, which was pronounced a few months before the Italian war, abounds with the most unexceptionable evidence of the pagan superstition of Constantine, and of his particular veneration for Apollo, or the sun."

Moshem bears an important testimony on this point. It will be noticed that he places Constantine's conversion two years later than his Sunday law. Thus he says:

"After well considering the subject, I have come to the conclusion, that *subsequently to the death of Licinius in the year 323 when Constantine found himself sole emperor, he became an absolute Christian*, or one who believes no religion but the Christian to be acceptable to God. He had previously considered the religion of one God as more excellent than the other religions, and believed that Christ ought especially to be worshiped: yet he supposed there were also inferior deities, and that to these some worship might be paid, in the manner of the fathers, without fault or sin. And

\* Dec. and Fall of the Roman empire, chap. xx.

who does not know, that in those times, many others also combined the worship of Christ with that of the ancient gods, whom they regarded as the ministers of the supreme God in the government of human and earthly affairs.\*\*

Marsh, in his Ecclesiastical History speaks of Constantine's religious character as follows: "The religious sincerity of the man, who in a short period effected such amazing changes in the religious world, is best known to Him who searches the heart. Certain it is that his subsequent life furnished no evidence of conversion to God. He waded without remorse through seas of blood, and was a most tyrannical prince."†

If any further confirmation of the pagan character of his Sunday law is asked for, we cite two or three items relating to it. Thus Gibbon says: "He artfully balanced the hopes and fears of his subjects, by publishing in the same year two edicts; the first of which enjoined the solemn observance of Sunday, and the second directed the regular consultation of the Aruspices."‡ And in the margin of that page he says: "Constantine styles the Lord's day *dies solis*, [i. e., day of the sun,] a name which could not offend the ears of his pagan subjects." In other words, the same year that he enjoined the solemn observance of the venerable day of the sun, he directed the regular consultation of the Aruspices, i. e., divination by examining the entrails of beasts slaughtered in sacrifice to the gods? A noble set of well-matched edicts.

\* Historical Commentaries, Cent. iv, § 7.

† Period iii, Chap. 5. ‡ Dec. and Fall, Chap. xx.

Of this latter edict Jortin says: "There is a law of Constantine, which shows that himself was not altogether free from pagan superstition, in which he orders the *Aruspices* to be consulted if any public edifice was struck with lightning."\*

And Milman says of it: "In case of the royal palace being struck by lightning, the ancient ceremonies of propitiating the deity were to be practiced, and the *Aruspices* were to declare the meaning of the awful portent."†

That this Sunday legislator deserves the appellation of heathen rather than of Christian will hardly be disputed. A few words respecting him as a man will complete our view of his fitness to legislate for the church. This man when elevated to the highest place of earthly power caused his eldest son Crispus to be privately murdered, lest the fame of the son should eclipse that of the father. In the same ruin was involved his nephew Licinius, "whose rank was his only crime, and this was followed by the execution perhaps of a guilty wife."‡

Such was the man who did more than any of his predecessors to elevate Sunday to that rank which it has since possessed. The dragon of the Apocalypse thus issued its edict, and the world has bowed before it. In subsequent chapters we shall trace the persistent efforts of kings, emperors, popes, and councils to compel the world to submit to this pagan institution. We shall find at a period a little subsequent to the Reformation, that

\*Ecl. Hist., Vol. i, § xxxi.

†Hist. of Christianity, p. 290.

‡Dec. and Fall, Chap. xviii.

grave doctors of divinity come forward to prove that Sunday-keeping is acceptable obedience to the fourth commandment. During all this period we shall find a remnant still retaining the ancient Sabbath of Jehovah.

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#### CHAPTER VIII.

KIND OF SUNDAY OBSERVANCE WHICH OBTAINED AFTER CONSTANTINE—AN OBSOLETE SUNDAY ARGUMENT—SABBATH IN THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES—DECREES OF EMPERORS AND COUNCILS IN BEHALF OF SUNDAY.

It is very evident that Sunday became a day of rest from secular business after centuries of effort to bring about that result. Kitto speaks thus of Sunday observance in the period of the ancient church, and the ages following:

"Though in later times we find considerable reference to a sort of *consecration of the day*, it does not seem at any period of the ancient church to have assumed the form of such an observance as some modern religious communities have contended for. Nor do these writers in any instance pretend to allege *any divine command, or even apostolic practice*, in support of it. Chrysostom (A. D. 360) concludes one of his Homilies by dismissing his audience to their respective ordinary occupations. The council of Laodicea (A. D. 364), however, enjoined Christians to rest [*σχολάζειν*] on the Lord's day. To the same effect is an in-

junction in the forgery called the *Apostolical Constitution*, (vii, 24), and various later enactments from A. D. 600 to A. D. 1100, though by no means extending to the prohibition of all secular business."\*

In the fifth century Sunday labor was not deemed any violation of the day. St. Jerome speaks thus of the lady Paula, his especial disciple:

"Paula with the women, as soon as they returned home on the Lord's day, sat down severally to their work, and made clothes severally for themselves and others."†

Morer justifies this Sunday work with the frank confession that the number of hours assigned for piety was not then well explained. That is, the church had not yet legislated sufficiently upon this subject. Thus he says:

"If we read that they did any work on the Lord's day, it is to be remembered that this application to their daily tasks, was not till their worship was quite over, when they might with innocency enough resume them, because the length of time or the number of hours assigned for piety was not then so well explained as in after ages."‡

Morer bears the following important testimony concerning Jerome's time: "Christianity had got into the throne, as well as into the empire. Yet for all this, the entire sanctification of the Lord's day proceeded slowly: and that it was the work of time to bring it to perfection, appears from the several steps the church made in her constitu-

\*Cyclopedia Biblical Literature, art. Lord's day.

† Dialogues on the Lord's day, p. 234.

‡ Id. p. 236.

tions, and from the decrees of emperors and other princes, wherein the prohibitions from servile and civil business, advanced by degrees from one species to another till the day got a considerable figure in the world."\*

It seems that at this time there were two classes of Sunday teachers; the one strenuously laboring to make Sunday a day of entire abstinence from business; the other wishing it to be kept as a festival in which, when not assembled for worship, it should be proper to engage in usual business. The festival party in the third provincial council of Orleans obtained an enactment (canon 21) which "allowed many sorts of innocent work to be done upon the day. This was in the reign of Childebert."†

But the stricter sort were not to be put down in this manner. Lacking scripture to sustain themselves, they presented the following weighty argument, which from some cause, modern first-day advocates have forgotten. For their benefit we present it in the words of Morer: "Yet still the others went on their way; and to induce their proselytes to spend the day with greater exactness and care, they brought in the old argument of compassion and charity to the damned in hell, who during the day, have some respite from their torments, and the ease and liberty they have is more or less, according to the zeal and degrees of keeping it well."‡

And not satisfied with this most powerful argument, they back it up with miracles, and as we shall presently see, with judgments and calamities

\*Id. pp. 236, 237. †Id. p. 67. ‡Id. p. 68.

also. Thus Morer testifies: "For fear the doctrine should not take without miracles to support it, Gregory of Tours furnishes us with several to that purpose."\*

That the Sabbath was very generally observed at the close of the fourth, and commencement of the fifth, century, is evident from the following language of the historian Socrates, who lived at that time. He says: "For although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, refuse to do this. The Egyptians in the neighborhood of Alexandria, and the inhabitants of Thebais, hold their religious meetings on the Sabbath, but do not participate of the mysteries in the manner usual among Christians in general."†

And Lardner adds: "Sozomen, about the same time, says likewise, that at Constantinople, and almost everywhere, except Rome and Alexandria, Christians assembled on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week."‡

It will now be proper to trace the edicts of emperors and kings in support of Sunday; then we will notice those of the councils of the church.

Constantine's law, A. D. 321, which was the first of the kind, has been noticed already. "About the year 381," says Morer, "Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius being emperors, an edict came forth to prohibit all shows on the Lord's day."§

\*Id. p. 68. †Eecl. Hist., Book v, Chap. 22.

‡Credibility of the Gospel History, Vol. x, Chap. 85.

§Dialogues on the Lord's Day, p. 258.

A. D. 469. The emperor Leo published an edict in which he says: "The Lord's day we decree to be a venerable day, and therefore free it of all citations, executions, pleadings, and the like avocations. Let not the circus or theatre be opened, nor combatting with wild beasts be seen on it. . . . If any will presume to offend in the premises, if he be a military man, let him lose his commission; or if other, let his estate or goods be confiscated." And this emperor determined to mend the breach in Constantine's law, and thus prohibit agriculture on Sunday. So he adds: "We command therefore all, as well husbandmen as others, to forbear work on this day of our restoration."\*

Morer says of Burgundy and France: "In the year 588, Gunthrum, king of Burgundy, and about two years after, Clotair, king of France, and two centuries forward, Pepin, another king of France, made laws to the same effect."†

Ninth century. Various Sunday laws were enacted in this century. Thus Morer says that Charlemagne "published this edict: We do ordain, as it is required in the law of God, that no man do any servile work on the Lord's day. . . . This law was backed with the authority of the church; yet in a little time, by the remissness of Lewis his successor, it became very feeble. Thereupon an address was made to the emperors, Lewis and Lotharius, that they would send out some precept more severe than what was hitherto extant, to strike terror into their subjects, and force them to forbear their ploughing, pleading, and marketing, then grown again into use; which was done

\*Id. pp. 259, 260.

†Id. p. 260.

about the year 853; and to that end a synod was called at Rome under the popedom of Leo IV.

"In this century the emperor [of Constantino-ple] Leo, surnamed the philosopher, restrained the works of husbandry, which, according to Constantine's toleration, were permitted in the east. This same care was taken in the west, by Theodorus, king of the Bavarians, who made this order, that 'If any person on the Lord's day yoked his oxen, or drove his wain, his right side ox should be forthwith forfeited; or if he made hay and carried it in, he was to be twice admonished to desist, which if he did not he was to receive no less than fifty stripes.' About the year 1174, the emperor Emanuel Comnenus, [of Constantinople,] confirmed the decrees of his predecessors.\*"

It is a first day historian who writes the above. He adds: "Thus the civil power proceeded. Nor was the church backward to assist in a point that so much concerned her well being. And therefore we find a great many canons [of councils] on the same subjects . . ."

"About the year 364 sat the council of Laodicea, which required Christians not to Judaize in keeping the Sabbath, but prefer the Lord's day before it, and thereon rest from labor, if they could."†

This law of the church against Sabbath-keeping shows that there were observers of the Sabbath at this time, and also indicates a stricter observance of Sunday.

Morer proceeds: "About the year 401 was held the fourth council of Carthage, which punished those with excommunication, who, neglecting the

\* Id. pp. 261, 262. † Id. page 262.

solemn worship of God on this and other sacred times, spent the day in plays and the like diversions. And in another council in the same city not long after, it was the request of the bishops to the emperors, 'that all sights and shows should be laid aside on the Lord's day.'

"Under Clodovius, king of France, met the bishops in the first council of Orleans, where they obliged themselves and their successors, to be always at church on the Lord's day except in sickness. . . . By a council at Arragon about the year 518, it was decreed that no bishop should pass judgment in any civil controversy on the Lord's day. . . . The third council of Orleans resolved that men should rest on that day, from husbandry, dressing vines, sowing, reaping, hedging and the like. . . . "And because, notwithstanding all this care the day was not duly observed, the bishops were again summoned to Mascon in Burgundy by king Gunthrum, and there they framed this canon: 'Notice is taken that Christian people, very much neglect the Lord's day, giving themselves as on other days to common work; to redress which irreverence, we warn every Christian who bears not that name in vain, to give ear to our advice, knowing we have a concern on us for your good, and a power to hinder you to do evil. Keep then the Lord's day, the day of our new birth.'

"About a year forward, there was a council at Narbon, which forbid all persons of what country or quality soever to do any servile work on the Lord's day. But if any man presumed to disobey this canon he was to be fined if a freeman,

and if a servant, severely lashed. . . . In the year 590 a synod was held at Auxerre in Champain, where it was decreed that 'no man should be allowed to plow nor cart or do any such thing on the Lord's day.' . . . The third council of Toledo took notice in their canons of a great neglect of the Lord's day in Spain."\*

Gregory the great was pope from 590 to 604.† He exhorted the people to "expiate on the day of our Lord's resurrection what was remissly done for the six days before."‡

Morer may be allowed to continue this account. He says: "At Chalons in Burgundy, about the year 654 there was a provincial synod which decreed that 'none shall plow or reap on the Lord's day, or do any other thing belonging to husbandry on pain of the censures of the church;' which was the more minded, because backed with the secular power, and by an edict menacing such as offended herein; who if bondmen, were to be soundly beaten, but if free, had three admonitions, and then if faulty, lost the third part of their patrimony, and if still obstinate were made slaves for the future. . . . The twelfth council of Toledo in Spain forbid the Jews to keep their own festivals, but so far at least observed the Lord's day as to do no manner of work on it whereby they might express their contempt of Christ or his worship."§

These were weighty reasons indeed for Sunday observance. Nor can it be thought strange that

\* Id. pp. 263-266.

† Bowers' History of the Popes, Vol. I, pp. 390-424.

‡ Dialogues on the Lord's Day, p. 282. § Id. p. 267.

in the dark ages a constant succession of such things should eventuate in the universal observance of that day. Even the Jews were to be compelled to desist from Sabbath observance and to honor Sunday by resting that day.

According to Morer the sixth general council at Constantinople in the year 692 decreed "that if any bishop or other clergyman, or any of the laity absented himself from the church three Sundays together, if a clergyman, he was to be deposed; if a layman, debarred the holy communion."\* And he adds:

"At Dingsolinum, a synod met about 772 which decreed that if any man shall work his cart on this day, or do any such common business, his team shall be presently forfeited to the public use, and if the party persists in his folly, let him be sold for a bondman. . . . Charlemagne summoned the bishops to Friuli in Italy where they decreed that all people should with due reverence and devotion honor the Lord's day. . . . Under the same prince another council was called three years later at Frankford in Germany, and there the limits of the Lord's day were determined from Saturday evening to Sunday evening."†

The five councils of Mentz, Rheims, Tours, Chalons and Arles were all called in the year 813 by Charlemagne. It would be too irksome to the reader to dwell upon the several acts of these councils in behalf of Sunday. They are of the same character as those already quoted. The council of Chalons however is worthy of being noticed in that, according to Morer,

\* Id. p. 268.

† Id. pp. 268, 269.

"They entreated the help of the secular power and desired the emperor [Charlemagne] to provide for the stricter observation of it. Which he accordingly did and left no stone unturned, to secure the honor of the day. His care succeeded; and during his reign the Lord's day bore a considerable figure. But after his day it put on another face."\*

The aid of the pope was very acceptable at this juncture. The same historian says in continuation of the story: "And thereupon pope Eugenius in a synod held at Rome about 826 gave directions that the parish priest should admonish such offenders and wish them to go to church and say their prayers, lest otherwise they might bring some great calamity on themselves and neighbors."†

All this however was not sufficient and so another council was summoned. At this council the famous lightning argument of Justin Edwards was made use of. Thus our author continues:

"But these paternal admonitions turning to little account, a provincial council was held at Paris three years after in 829, wherein the prelates complain that 'the Lord's day was not kept with reverence as became religion, which was the reason that God had sent several judgments on them, and in a very remarkable manner punished some people for slighting and abusing it. For (say they) many of us by our own knowledge, and some by hearsay know, that several countrymen following their husbandry on this day have been killed with lightning, others being siezed

\* Id. p. 270.

† Id. p. 271.

with convulsions in their joints have miserably perished. Whereby it is apparent how high the displeasure of God was upon their neglect of this day.' And they conclude that 'in the first place the priests and ministers, then kings and princes, and all faithful people be beseeched to use their utmost endeavors and care that the day be restored to its honor, and for the credit of Christianity more devoutly observed for the time to come.'\*\*

"It was decreed about seven years after," says Morer, "in a council under Lewis the godly, that neither pleadings nor marriages should be allowed on the Lord's day."‡

Three years after this, in another synod at Rome under pope Leo IV it "was ordered more exactly that no man should from thenceforth keep or frequent markets on the Lord's day, no not for things to be presently eaten, nor to do any work belonging to husbandry."‡

A. D. 858. "The Bulgarians," says Morer, "sent some questions to pope Nicholas, to which they desired answers. And that [answer] which concerned the Lord's day was that they should desist from all secular work."§

A. D. 895. The council of Friburgh in Germany, under pope Formosus decreed that the Lord's day men "were to spend in prayers and devote wholly to the service of God, who otherwise might be provoked to anger."||

A. D. 1050. A council was held at Coy in Spain, under Ferdinand king of Castile, in the

\* Id. p. 271. † Id. p. 272. ‡ Id. p. 272.

§ Id. p. 273.

|| Id. p. 274.

days of pope Leo IX, where it was decreed that the Lord's day "was to be entirely consecrated to hearing of mass."\*

"The council of Lyons sat about the year 1244, and it restrained the people from their ordinary work on the Lord's day, and other festivals on pain of ecclesiastical censures."

A. D. 1282. "The council of Angeirs in France forbid millers by water or otherwise to grind their corn from Saturday evening till Sunday evening." †

A. D. 1322. "This year a synod was called at Valladolid in Castile, and then was ratified what was formerly required, that none should follow husbandry, or exercise himself in any mechanical employment on the Lord's day, or other holy days, but where it was a work of necessity or charity, of which the minister of the parish was to be judge. †"

A. D. 1532. The council of Bourges uses this language: "The Lord's day and other festivals were instituted for this purpose, that faithful Christians abstaining from external work, might more freely, and with greater piety devote themselves to God's worship." § They forgot, however, that when the fear of God is taught by the precept of men such worship will not be accepted. Isa. xxix, 13; Matt. xv, 9.

The council of Rheims, which sat the next year, made this decree: "Let the people assemble at their parish churches, on the Lord's day, and other holidays, and be present at mass, sermons and vespers. Let no man on these days

\* Id. p. 274. † Id. p. 275. ‡ Id. p. 275. § Id. p. 279.

give himself to plays or dances, especially during service." And the historian adds: "In the same year another synod at Tours, ordered the Lord's day and other holidays to be reverently observed under pain of excommunication.\*

A. D. 1534. In a synod which assembled this year the truth was thus confessed: "Let all Christians remember that the seventh day was consecrated by God, and hath been received and observed, not only by the Jews, but by all others who pretend to worship God; though we Christians have changed their Sabbath into the Lord's day. A day therefore to be kept, by forbearing all worldly business, suits, contracts, carriages, &c., and by sanctifying the rest of mind and body, in the contemplation of God and things divine, we are to do nothing but works of charity, say prayers and sing psalms." †

We have thus traced Sunday observance in the Catholic church down to a period subsequent to the reformation. That it is an ordinance of man which has usurped the place of the Bible Sabbath is most distinctly confessed by the council last quoted. Yet they endeavor to make amends for their violation of the Sabbath by spending Sunday in charity, prayers and psalms: a course too often adopted at the present time to excuse the violation of the fourth commandment. Who can read this long list of Sunday laws, not from the "one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy," but from emperors and councils, without adopting the sentiment of Neander: "The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a hu-

\* Id. p. 280.

† Id. p. 282.

man ordinance?" The efforts to establish Sunday observance in England will next engage our attention.

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CHAPTER IX.

SUNDAY OBSERVANCE IN ENGLAND.

The observance of Sunday in this country is mainly derived from England. Hence we have a peculiar interest in the origin of Sunday observance in England. Morer gives the following account:

A. D. 692. "Ina, king of the west Saxons, by the advice of Cenred his father, and Heddes and Erkenwald his bishops, with all his aldermen and sages, in a great assembly of the servants of God, for the health of their souls, and common preservation of the kingdom, made several constitutions, of which this was the third: 'If a servant do any work on Sunday by his master's order, he shall be free, and the master pay thirty shillings; but if he went to work on his own head, he shall be either beaten with stripes or ransom himself with a price. A freeman if he works on this day, shall lose his freedom, or pay sixty shillings; if he be a priest, double.'"

"In the year of our Lord 747 a council was called under Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Egbert king of Kent, and this constitution made: 'It is ordered that the Lord's day be celebrated with due veneration, and wholly devoted to the worship of God. And that all abbots, and priests, on this most holy day, remain in their

respective monasteries and churches, and there do their duty according to their places."\*

A. D. 784. "Egbert, archbishop of York, to show positively what was to be done on Sundays, and what the laws designed by prohibiting ordinary work to be done on such days, made this canon: 'Let nothing else, saith he, be done on the Lord's day, but to attend on God in hymns and psalms, and spiritual songs. Whoever marries on Sunday let him do penance for seven days.'"

A. D. 876. "Alfred the great, was the first who united the Saxon Heptarchy, and it was not the least part of his care to make a law, that among other festivals this day more especially might be solemnly kept. . . . And whereas the single punishment for sacrilege committed on any other day, was to restore the value of the thing stolen, and withal lose one hand, he added that if any person was found guilty of this crime done on the Lord's day, he should be doubly punished." And Morer adds that these laws, "at the league between Gunthrum, king of the Danes, and Edward, son and successor to the said Alfred, were again ratified in the year 905, or soon after, and the penalties inflicted as mentioned before."

"King Athelston, followed the examples of his father and grandfather, and in the year 928 made a law that there should be no marketing or civil pleadings on the Lord's day, under the penalty of forfeiting the commodity, besides a fine of thirty shillings for each offence."

In a convocation of the clergy about this time it was decreed that all sorts of traffic and the hold-

\*Jd. pp. 283, 284.

ing of courts, &c., on Sunday, should cease. "And whoever transgressed in any of these instances, if a freeman, he was to pay twelve oræ, if a servant, be severely whipt."\*

"About the year 943, Otho, archbishop of Canterbury, had it decreed that above all things the Lord's day should be kept with all imaginable caution, according to the canon and ancient practice."

A. D. 967. "King Edgar commanded that the festival should be kept from three of the clock in the afternoon on Saturday, till daybreak on Monday.

"King Ethelred the younger, son of Edgar, about the year 1009 called a general council of all the English clergy, under Elfeagus, archbishop of Canterbury, and Wolston, archbishop of York. And there it was required that all persons in a more zealous manner should observe the Sunday, and what belonged to it.

"Henry II entered on the government about the year 1155. Of him it is reported that he had an apparition at Cardiff (in South Wales) which from St. Peter charged him, that upon Sundays throughout his dominions, there should be no buying or selling, and no servile work done."†

But it seems that all these decrees of kings and canons of councils which we have cited, did not accomplish the work of establishing the sacredness of Sunday. We are now to learn what was done to accomplish this object. Morer introduces it thus :

"In the year 1201 in the beginning of king

\*Id. pp. 284-286.

†Id. pp. 286-288.

John's reign, Hubert Walter being archbishop of Canterbury, Eustachius, abbot of Flay, returned into England, and preaching the word of God from city to city, and from place to place, he forbid markets to be held on the Lord's day. . . . To keep up the people's spirits, the abbot produced a divine warrant, or mandate from heaven, for the strict observation of the Lord's day, in the words following :

"\*AN HOLY MANDATE touching the Lord's day, which came down from heaven unto Jerusalem, found on St. Simeon's altar in Golgotha, where Christ was crucified for the sins of all the world, which lying there three days and three nights, struck with such terror all that saw it, that falling on the ground they besought God's mercy. At last the patriarch and Akarias the archbishop, ventured to take up with their hands the letter of God, wherein it was thus written :

"I am the Lord who commanded you to keep the Lord's day, and you have not kept it, neither repented of your sins ; I caused repentance to be preached unto you and you believed not ; then I sent the pagans among you, who spilt your blood on the earth, and yet you believed not ; and because you did not observe the Lord's holy day, I punished you a while with famine, but in a short time I gave you fullness of bread, and then you behaved yourselves worse than before. I again charge you, that from the ninth hour on Saturday until sunrising on the Monday, no man presume to do any work, but what is good, or if he do let him repent for the same. Verily I say unto you,

\*Apud Spelman & Binium.

and swear by my seat and throne, and by the cherubim which surround it, that if you do not hearken to this my mandate, I will send no other letter unto you, but will open the heavens, and rain upon you stones, wood and scalding water by night, so that none shall be able to provide against them. I say ye shall die the death for the Lord's day; and other festivals of my saints which ye have not kept; and I will send among you beasts with the heads of lions, and the hair of women, and the tails of camels, which being very hungry shall devour your flesh. And you shall desire to flee to the sepulchres of the dead, and hide you for fear of those beasts. And I will take the light of the sun from your eyes, and send such darkness that not being able to see, you shall destroy each other. And I will turn my face away, and not in the least pity you. I will burn your bodies and hearts of all them who do not keep the Lord's day. Hear then my words, and do not perish for neglecting this day. I swear to you by my right hand, that if you do not observe the Lord's day, and festivals of my saints, I will send pagan nations to destroy you."\*

Such was the first attempt in England, after the apparition of St. Peter, A. D. 1155, to supply divine authority for Sunday observance. "It shows," as Morer quaintly observes, "how industrious men were in those times to have this great day solemnly observed."†

And Morer adds: "To that end it was again produced and read in a council of Scotland, held under pope Innocent III, about two years after, \*Dialogues on the Lord's Day, pp. 288-290. †Id. p. 290.

A. D. 1203, in the reign of king William, who passed it into a law that Saturday from twelve at noon ought to be accounted holy, and that no man shall deal in such worldly business as of feast days were forbidden. As also that at the tolling of a bell, the people were to be employed in holy actions, going to sermons and the like, and to continue thus until Monday morning, a penalty being laid on those who did the contrary. About the year 1214, which was eleven years after, it was again enacted, in a parliament at Seone, by Alexander III, king of the Scots, that none should fish in any waters, from Saturday after evening prayer, till sunrise on Monday, which was afterwards confirmed by king James I."\*

Such are the steps by which Sunday was established in Scotland. We return to the history of Sunday laws in England.

"In the year 1237, Henry III being king, and Edmund de Abendon archbishop of Canterbury, a constitution was made requiring every minister to forbid his parishioners the frequenting of markets on the Lord's day, and leaving the church, where they ought to meet and spend the day in prayer and hearing the word of God. And this on pain of excommunication."†

A. D. 1358. "Istippe, archbishop of Canterbury, with very great concern and zeal, expresses himself thus: 'We have it from the relation of very credible persons, that in divers places within our province, a very naughty, nay, damnable custom has prevailed, to hold fairs and markets on the Lord's day.' . . . Wherefore by virtue of canonical obedience, we strictly charge and com-

\*Id. pp. 290, 291.

†Id. p. 291.

mand your brotherhood, that if you find your people faulty in the premises, you forthwith admonish or cause them to be admonished to refrain going to markets or fairs on the Lord's day. . . . And as for such who are obstinate and speak or act against you in this particular, you must endeavor to restrain them by ecclesiastical censures and by all lawful means put a stop to these extravagances.

"Nor was the civil power silent; for about that time king Edward made an act that wool should not be shown at the staple on Sundays and other solemn feasts in the year. In the reign of king Henry VI, Dr. Stafford being archbishop of Canterbury, A. D. 1444, it was decreed that fairs and markets should no more be kept in churches and church-yards on the Lord's day, or other festivals, except in time of harvest."\*

Such were the steps by which Sunday observance became general in Great Britain. The people were restrained "by ecclesiastical censures," backed by the severe penalties of civil law. And as these were not sufficient to establish the sacredness of the venerable day of the sun, an apparition of St. Peter, and a roll written by God himself, completed the chain of evidence in its support.

We have now traced this observance to a time when these arguments in its support would hardly avail. The light of the Reformation was just beginning to dawn upon Europe, and the fables and superstition of the dark ages were, as a matter of course, beginning to be dissipated before the light of advancing day. It would be naturally supposed that

\*Id. pp. 293, 294.

the pagan Sunday would fall from its high place when the sources of its former strength were cut off. But such was not the case. When the word of God was seen to be the only divine rule, and every thing else of no importance, it became necessary either to give up Sunday observance, or to justify it by the Bible. Strange as the case may appear, it was the Puritans of England who discovered that the pagan festival of Sunday was the day enjoined in the fourth commandment!

The ecclesiastical historian Coleman, a first-day Sabbatarian, thus records this important discovery:

"The true doctrine of the Christian Sabbath was first promulgated by an English dissenter, the Rev. Nicholas Bound, D. D. of Norton, in the county of Suffolk. About the year 1595, he published a famous book entitled, 'Sabbathum 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.' This book spread with wonderful rapidity. The doctrine 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 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 in regard to this new doctrine respecting the Sabbath, though few at first violently opposed it. 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 unto 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. No open opposition, however, was at first manifested against the sentiments of Dr. Bound. No reply was attempted for several years.

"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.

"This doctrine, [he says,] 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 was the origin of the seventh part of time theory; a doctrine most opportunely framed at the very period when nothing else could save the venerable day of the sun. With the aid of this theory, the pagan festival of the sun was able coolly to wrap itself in the fourth commandment and then to challenge obedience from all Bible Christians. It could now cast away the other frauds on which its very existence had depended, and support its authority by this one alone. It fastened itself once to the throne of the Roman empire; but now it had anchored itself by the throne of the Most High. And thus a day which God "commanded not nor spake it, neither came it in-

\*Coleman's Ancient Christianity Exemplified, p. 532.

to" his "mind," was enjoined upon mankind with all the authority of his holy law.

Charles I ascended the throne of England in 1625.\* He places this Sunday festival in the true light, viz., as of equal authority with Easter, when addressing the persons who were engaged in this vindication of Sunday as a divine institution. We quote from Morer as follows :

"I conceive, saith he to the new reformers in his reign, the celebration of this feast [Easter] was instituted by the same authority that changed the Jewish Sabbath into the Lord's day or Sunday. For it will not be found in Scripture where Saturday is discharged to be kept, or turned into Sunday ; wherefore it must be the church's authority that changed the one and instituted the other. Therefore my opinion is that those who will not keep this feast, may as well return to the observation of the Saturday, and refuse the weekly Sunday.†

\*Ency. Am. art. Charles I.

†Dialogues on the Lord's Day, p. 58.

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## CHAPTER X.

SABBATH-KEEPERS IN EUROPE AT THE TIME OF THE REFORMATION—SABBATH OBSERVANCE INTRODUCED INTO AMERICA—SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS—SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS—THE ARMENIANS OF THE EAST INDIES ARE SABBATH-KEEPERS—THE CHURCH OF ROME ON THE CHANGE OF THE SABBATH—SYNOPSIS OF FACTS.

At the time of the reformation there were some,

at least, who adhered to the ancient Sabbath of the Lord. Thus Mr. Utter writes :

"Early in the sixteenth century there are traces of Sabbath-keepers in Germany. The old Dutch Martyrology gives an account of a Baptist minister, named Stephen Benedict, somewhat famous for baptizing during a severe persecution in Holland, who is supposed by good authorities to have kept the seventh day as the Sabbath. One of the persons baptized by him was Barbary von Thiers, wife of Hans Borzen, who was executed on the 16th of September, 1529. At her trial she declared her rejection of the idolatrous sacrament of the priest, and also the mass. 'Relative to Sunday and the holy days, she said the Lord God had commanded to rest the seventh day ; in this she acquiesced, and it was her desire by the help and grace of God, to remain and die as she was, for it was the true faith and right way in Christ.' In Transylvania there were Sabbath-keepers, among whom was Francis Davidis, first chaplain of the court of Sigismund, and afterward superintendent of the Transylvania churches. In France, also, there were christians of this class, among whom was M. de la Roque, who wrote in defense of the Sabbath, against Bossuett, Catholic bishop of Meaux."\*

In England, the promulgation in 1595 of Dr. Bound's new theory of the seventh part of time was the means of bringing into notice several advocates of the seventh day "who vindicated its claims with great boldness and ability. John

\*Manual of Seventh Day Baptists, p. 16. This is the only work in favor of the Bible Sabbath quoted in this history.

Traske began to speak and write in favor of the seventh day as the Sabbath of the Lord, about the time that the Book of Sports for Sunday was published under the direction of the archbishop of Canterbury, and king James I, in 1618. He took high ground as to the sufficiency of the Scriptures to direct in all religious services, and the duty of the state to refrain from imposing any thing contrary to the word of God. For this he was brought before the Star Chamber, where a long discussion was held respecting the Sabbath. . . . Traske was not turned from his opinion, and was censured in the Star Chamber. Paggitt's Heresiography says that he 'was sentenced, on account of his being a Sabbatarian, to be set upon the pillory at Westminster, and from thence to be whipt to the Fleet prison, there to remain a prisoner for three years. Mrs. Traske, his wife, lay in Maiden Lane and the Gatehouse prisons fifteen years, where she died, for the same crime.'\*\*

"Theophilus Brabourne, a learned minister of the gospel in the established church, wrote a book, which was printed at London in 1628, wherein he argued 'that the Lord's day is not the Sabbath day by divine institution,' but 'that the seventh day Sabbath is now in force.' . . . About this time Philip Tandy began to promulgate in the northern part of England the same doctrine concerning the Sabbath. He was educated in the established church of which he became a minister. Having changed his views respecting the mode of baptism and the day of the Sabbath, he abandoned that church, and became 'a mark for many shots.' He held several public disputes about his peculiar

\*Id. pp. 17, 18.

sentiments, and did much to propagate them. James Ockford was another early advocate in England of the claims of the seventh day as the Sabbath. He appears to have been well acquainted with the discussions in which Traske and Brabourne had been engaged. Being dissatisfied with the pretended conviction of Brabourne, he wrote a book in defense of Sabbatarian views, entitled, 'The doctrine of the fourth commandment.' This book, published about the year 1642, was burnt by order of the authorities in the established church.\*\*

A short time after this Sabbath-keepers were raised up in New England. Isaac Backus wrote a history of the Baptists in New England from their first arrival in the country till his own time. His preface is dated July 9th, 1777. He makes the following mention of Sabbath-keepers:

"In the beginning of 1665 Mr. Stephen Mumford, a Seventh-day Baptist, arrived from London at Newport, R. I., and Mr. Hiscox, Mr. Hubbard, and other members of Mr. Clarke's church soon embraced the keeping of that day; but in 1671 two or three men who had so done, turned back to the observation of the first day, which Mr. Hubbard and others called apostasy."†

Mr. Mumford "brought with him the opinion, that the ten commandments, as they were delivered from mount Sinai, were moral and immutable, and that it was an anti-christian power which changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. . . . In December, 1671, Stephen Mumford, William Hiscox, Samuel Hub-

\*Id. pp. 18-20.

†History of the Baptists in New England, p. 411.

bard, Roger Baster, and three sisters entered into church covenant together, thus forming the first Seventh Day Baptist church in America.”\*

From that time to the present the Seventh Day Baptists have maintained their position before the world as observers of the ancient Sabbath of the Bible. At the present time they have some sixty-eight churches in the United States, and about eighty ministers of the gospel. They have about 7000 members in their churches. They have a missionary station in the Chinese empire, and another at Jerusalem.†

The claims of the Bible Sabbath began to attract the attention of believers in the near advent of the Saviour, about 1844. “The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,” as constituting an important part of the third angel’s proclamation in Rev. xiv, have been preached by them in connection with their views of the near approach of the everlasting kingdom. There are, at the present time, it is estimated some ten thousand who are keeping the Sabbath of the Lord, and waiting the advent of his Son from heaven.

On the opposite side of the globe there is at the present time a numerous body of Sabbath-keepers, who have for many ages preserved the holy Scriptures, and retained its precepts and doctrines in their lives. A distinguished clergyman of the church of England a few years since visited the British empire in India, and bears the following testimony:

“The history of the Armenian church is very interesting. Of all the christians in Central Asia, they have

\*Manual of Seventh Day Baptists, pp. 39, 40.

†Id. pp. 39-56.

preserved themselves most free from Mahomedan and Papal corruptions. The pope assailed them for a time with great violence, but with little effect. The churches in lesser Armenia indeed consented to an union, which did not long continue; but those in Persian Armenia maintained their independence; and they retain their ancient Scriptures, doctrines and worship, to this day. ‘It is marvelous,’ says an intelligent traveler, who was much among them, ‘how the Armenian Christians have preserved their faith, equally against the vexatious oppression of the Mahomedans, their sovereigns, and against the persuasions of the Romish church, which for more than two centuries has endeavored, by missionaries, priests and monks, to attach them to her communion. It is impossible to describe the artifices and expenses of the court of Rome to effect this object, but all in vain.’

“The Bible was translated into the Armenian language in the fifth century, under very auspicious circumstances, the history of which has come down to us. It has been allowed by competent judges of the language, to be a most faithful translation. La Croze calls it the ‘Queen of Versions.’ This Bible has ever remained in the possession of the Armenian people; and many illustrious instances of genuine and enlightened piety occur in their history. . . .

“The Armenians in Hindoostan are our own subjects. They acknowledge our government in India, as they do that of the Sophi in Persia; and they are entitled to our regard. They have preserved the Bible in its purity; and their doctrines are, as far as the author knows, the doctrines of the Bible. Besides, they maintain the solemn observance of Christian worship throughout our empire, on the seventh day, and they have as many spires pointing to heaven among the Hindoos, as we ourselves. Are such a people then entitled to no acknowledgement on our part, as fellow Christians? Are they forever to be ranked by us with Jews, Mahomedans and Hindoos?\*

\*Buchanan’s Christian Researches in Asia, pp. 159, 160.

The church of Rome claims to have changed the Sabbath. We have traced the course of this apostasy for many centuries, and may therefore allow the Papal doctors to speak for themselves on this point. An eminent writer of that church uses the following language :

“Ques. Had the church power to make such change?

“Ans. Certainly, since the Spirit of God is her guide, the change is inspired by that Holy Spirit. The uniform, universal and perpetual tradition of all ages and nations, attest the antiquity of, and consequently the divine assent to, this change; even the bitterest enemies of God’s church admit and adopt it.

“Ques. Why did the church make this change?

“Ans. Because Christ rose from the dead upon Sunday, and rested from the great work of redemption; and because, on this day the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and on the church.”\*

Another of their divines, the Rev. Dr. Challoner, writes on the same point :

“Ques. What warrant have you for keeping the Sunday, preferable to the ancient Sabbath which was the Saturday?

“Ans. We have for it the authority of the Catholic church, and apostolic tradition.

“Ques. Does the Scripture any where command the Sunday to be kept for the Sabbath?

“Ans. The Scripture commands us to hear the church, [Matt. xviii, 17; Luke x, 16,] and to hold fast the traditions of the apostles. 2 Thess. ii, 15. But the Scripture does not in particular mention this change of the Sabbath. . . . So that truly, the best authority we have for this, is the testimony and ordinance of the church. And therefore those who pretend to be so religious of the Sunday whilst they take no notice of other festivals ordained by the same church authority, show that they act by humor, and not by reason and religion; since Sundays and holy days all stand

\*Cath. Catechism of Christian Religion.

upon the same foundation, viz., the ordinance of the church.”\*

Another of their writers uses similar language :

“Ques. How prove you that the church hath power to command feasts and holy days?

“Ans. By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church.

“Ques. How prove you that?

“Ans. Because by keeping Sunday they acknowledge the church’s power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin; and by not keeping the rest by her commanded, they again deny, in fact, the same power.†

These quotations from the Romanists may be fitly concluded with the following cutting reproof from another of their writers :

“The word of God commandeth the seventh day to be the Sabbath of our Lord, and to be kept holy: you [Protestants] without any precept of scripture, change it to the first day of the week, only authorized by our traditions. Divers English Puritans oppose against this point, that the observation of the first day is proved out of scripture, where it is said the first day of the week. Acts xx, 7; 1 Cor. xvi, 2; Rev. i, 10. Have they not spun a fair thread in quoting these places? If we should produce no better for purgatory and prayers for the dead, invocation of the saints, and the like, they might have good cause indeed to laugh us to scorn; for where is it written that these were Sabbath days in which those meetings were kept? Or where is it ordained they should be always observed? Or, which is the sum of all, where is it decreed that the observation of the first day should abrogate or abolish the sanctifying of the seventh day, which God com-

\*Cath. Christian Instruct<sup>o</sup>, pp. 209–211.

†Abridgement of Christian Doctrine.

manded everlastingly to be kept holy? Not one of those is expressed in the written word of God.\*

In concluding this tract it will be of interest to note in a brief manner the ground which we have passed over.

1. The Sabbath of the Lord was made for the human family before their expulsion from Paradise.

2. The knowledge of the true seventh day has been preserved to the present time.

3. The Bible Sabbath rests in the very bosom of the decalogue.

4. The New Testament teaches the perpetuity of the commandments, and most solemnly enjoins obedience to them.

5. The Bible does not contain a single hint that the Sabbath is changed to the first day of the week.

6. The Bible Sabbath was extensively observed for several centuries after Christ. The day of the resurrection, as also that of the betrayal and that of the crucifixion was early observed as a festival in the church. The same is true of the passover and pentecost.

7. Sunday, at the time of the early apostasy in the church, was extensively observed by the heathen world as a festival in honor of the sun.

8. The early fathers "thought fit to keep the same day and the same name of it that they might not appear causelessly peevish and thereby hinder the conversion of the Gentiles."

9. The epistle of Barnabas, which is the first historical document quoted to sustain Sunday, is a forgery.

\*A Treatise of Thirty Controversies.

10. The epistle of Ignatius is made to sustain Sunday by means of a gross fraud.

11. Justin Martyr was a no-Sabbath man. He speaks of the first day merely as the day of the sun, and as a matter of voluntary observance.

12. The term Lord's day is first applied to Sunday by Tertullian, A. D. 200.

13. It is in Tertullian's time that we find the first slight trace of abstaining from work on that day.

14. Justin Edward's statement that the martyrs were tested as Sunday observers is shown to be without foundation.

15. Constantine's Sunday law, A. D. 321, allowed all kinds of agricultural business; yet says Mosheim, it caused the day to be "observed with greater solemnity than it had formerly been."

16. This law which elevated Sunday to the highest rank throughout the Roman empire was made in support of Sunday observance as a heathen festival, and not as a Christian institution.

17. Constantine himself was a heathen at heart when he enacted this law.

18. In the fifth century Sunday labor was general in the church.

19. About this time men were taught that if Sunday were well kept it would bring relief on that day to the damned in hell.

20. The Lord's Sabbath was extensively observed in the fifth century.

21. The famous lightning argument of Justin Edwards in support of Sunday was first used by a council at Paris, A. D. 829.

22. In the year 1155 an apparition of St. Peter warned the king of England, Henry II, that upon

Sundays throughout his dominion no servile work should be done.

23. In the year 1201 a roll was brought into England, said to have fallen from heaven, in which the people were commanded to observe Sunday, and threatened in case of disobedience, that stones, logs of wood and scalding water should be rained upon them by night.

24. A council held in 1534 acknowledged that they were not keeping the day which God had ordained; nevertheless they exhorted the people to spend Sunday in prayers and psalms, as though this would make amends for their disobedience.

25. In the year 1595 the seventh part of time theory was invented. This has enabled Sunday-keepers from that time to this to enforce the day by the authority of the fourth commandment!

The same zeal that has been manifested in past ages to build up this Sunday institution is to be seen at the present time in the earnest efforts put forth to sustain it. Its advocates claim to be friends of the Sabbath. If they were such in reality, they would keep the day enjoined in the commandment. How can they convict men as transgressors for not observing Sunday, when the question comes directly home to themselves, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?"

From STATISTICAL VAULT

(J.N.A.)