



The Sabbath Recorder.

New York, March 4, 1847.

CONCLUDING LECTURE ON THE SABBATH.

On Sunday evening last, Mr. Brown delivered his concluding lecture upon the subject of the Sabbath. He commenced by saying, that he had now unfolded the distinguishing doctrine of that class of Christians known as Sabbatharians or Seventh-day Baptists. They hold that the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday, is the only Sabbath enjoined by the Bible, and that it is their duty, on that day, to lay aside all worldly business, to assemble for the public worship of God, and to occupy the entire day in such exercises as are in strict consonance with the nature of a Sabbath. They begin their Sabbath at the closing in of the evening on the sixth day of the week, and end it at the same hour on the seventh day, according to the injunction of Scripture, "from evening to evening shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths." On the first day of the week, they claim it to be their privilege freely to attend to their ordinary work as on any working day. In respect to all other doctrinal points, they agree with the Baptist denomination generally; holding with them to the congregational form of church government, and that each church has a right to manage its own affairs, without being amenable to any ecclesiastical judicatory, bishop, or pope. In illustrating their views of the Sabbath, he had aimed to magnify the Word of God, and to build upon it. He had shown, however, that in the department of history, they have nothing to be ashamed of; the ancient Sabbath having been recognized by the Christian Churches of the East for at least six hundred years, and having found advocates here and there throughout the thousand years of papal darkness. No Protestant denomination can trace its organization farther back than the Reformation, although nearly every denomination claims to have discovered some traces of its principles at an earlier period, particularly among the Waldenses. The observers of the seventh day claim to be quite equal to their fellow Christians in this respect. In presenting the scriptural argument, he had aimed to show that the Sabbath was a commemorative institution, designed to be a standing monument against Atheism and Idolatry, which purpose it could not serve, unless it was observed as originally given upon the seventh day of the week;—that it was an important part of the religion which God would have proclaimed to all men in all ages of the world;—that although the Sabbath was one of those institutions which theologians call positive, yet it was bound up with a code of laws confessedly moral, and therefore formed an important part of that system of religion usually denominated the Moral Law;—that it was not designed to be limited to the nation of Israel, but was intended for all mankind;—that those texts of Scripture usually adduced to prove a transfer of the sabbatic rest to the first day of the week, prove no such thing;—and that the argument in favor of the first day, drawn from a supposed analogy between the work of redemption and that of creation, was unsound, the analogy being altogether defective.

These arguments, Mr. Brown thought it not too much to suppose, had made an impression upon the minds of some of his hearers too strong to be easily effaced. This impression he had from the outset designed to make if possible. But he did not design merely to unsettle their minds with regard to the sacredness of a day they had been accustomed to venerate. He had a higher and holier object, which was to bring them to obedience to the law of God. Many professing Christians, even after their judgment is thoroughly convinced, so that they will give it as their deliberate opinion that the seventh day of the week is the true Sabbath, and that the Bible requires no other, still rest quiet in the neglect of duty. Do they mean to say that God is not worth minding? Such is the language of their actions, although they would be horror-struck at the idea of speaking out such a blasphemy from their lips. God has said that his wrath is revealed against such as hold the truth in unrighteousness; that those who know their Master's will, and do it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; that the soul that doeth aught presumptuously, reproacheth the Lord. Indeed, sterner rebukes, and more startling admonitions, are dealt out against those who act contrary to the convictions of their judgements than against any other class of persons. Such conduct has a most disastrous influence upon the hearts of those who are guilty of it. It is only by means of the truth that God sanctifies his people and makes them free. Hence those who resist even one item of truth, not only deprive themselves of just so much of its sanctifying power as resides in the portion which they reject, but they commit an act of rebellion against God, thus hardening the conscience, and rendering themselves less susceptible of sanctifying impressions from the rest of God's word. Such conduct on the part of Christians also operates disastrously upon those who witness it. It strengthens unbelieving sinners in their determination to resist the whole system of gospel truth. Though the Christian himself may act under the mistaken notion that he is rejecting only a very small item of truth, yet the most fearfully mischievous results may hang upon it.

When the claims of the Sabbath are presented, some persons endeavor to quiet their consciences with the idea that by keeping the first day of the week they comply with the spirit of the law, although they do not comply with the letter of it. This idea was answered by showing that the spirit of a law may embrace more than what the letter of it requires, but never less—just as the law, "Thou shalt not kill," embraces the prohibition of even angry emotions. And certainly, if the spirit of the law never requires less than the letter, it cannot be met by the performance of something directly different from what the letter of it enjoins. Sunday-keeping, instead of being a compliance with the spirit of the Sabbath law, is an entirely different thing, and does not pretend to commemorate the same event.

There are other persons who, when the claims of the Sabbath are urged, comfort themselves in the assurance that the first day of the week must be a heaven-approved institution, because the observance of it has been attended with such great blessings. But who knows that God has put his blessing upon the first day of the week? The preaching of the Gospel on that day may have been blessed to the conversion of multitudes of souls. But then the divine blessing was not upon the day, but upon the truth; and had the same truth been preached on any other day to the same people, no doubt the blessing would have been quite as great. In all this reasoning, a false cause is assigned for the effects. God has overruled the observance of the day for good, but has not placed his blessing upon it. The seventh day needs not the evidence drawn from such occurrences, since it has the express declaration of the Bible, that "God blessed and sanctified it." In this connection, the lecturer expressed himself firmly of the opinion, that the observance of the first day of the week has, on the whole, been a curse to the world rather than a blessing. The adoption of it conceded a fundamental principle of Popery, that the church has power to ordain festivals, and to command men under sin for the neglect of them. Besides, by making void an express command of God, it led to erroneous and perverse reasonings about the divine law, which resulted in the multiplication of heresies and sects that have arrayed themselves in hostility to one another. Those who consider what a curse Popery has been to the world—how she has carried upon her front the names of blasphemy, and has made herself drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus—will be slow to admit that the introduction of the Sunday festival, which gave countenance to the papal system, was a blessing.

The lecturer then took up the objection that the discussion of the Sabbath question tends to mar the existing union among Christians, and to introduce confusion. He showed that the only union to be desired is a union in the truth. Those who refuse to consider and embrace the truth, instead of promoting union thereby, pursue a course exactly adapted to perpetuate discord, and to retard the time when all the followers of Christ shall be one, as He and the Father are one. Having thus answered the principal objections raised by inquirers, the speaker closed his series of lectures by a solemn appeal to his hearers to "buy the truth and sell it not."

On Sunday evening next Mr. Brown proposes to preach a discourse at the Chapel upon the subject of Christian Union, which the public are invited to attend.

ENCOURAGING MISSIONARY REPORT.

To the Editor of the Sabbath Recorder:— I have just returned from a missionary tour in Lewis and Jefferson Counties, where I spent about six weeks, laboring principally in Pinkney, Lewis Co., and Philadelphia, Jefferson Co. I left home on the 5th of January, and arrived in Pinkney on the 8th, where I found a precious revival in progress. A Seventh-day Baptist church, consisting of twenty members, had been organized about two weeks before, by a council from the church at Adams. About two-thirds of the members were from the church at Adams; one was from the Methodist Church; the rest were recent converts, who were baptized by brother Langworthy.

I tarried in Pinkney and vicinity something like four weeks, preached nearly twenty discourses, visited most of the families, baptized five persons, and received eight into the church, two of whom embraced the Sabbath while I was there. There is a prospect of farther additions soon.

I left Pinkney, and went to Philadelphia, where I met brother Varnum Hull, who had been laboring there a few days, but who left for Diana the next. There are a few Sabbath-keepers in Philadelphia, who, until within a few months past, were in the observance of the first day. I found a number of families who were pretty thoroughly convinced of the truth of the seventh-day Sabbath, some of whom I am satisfied will soon commence its observance. A number more said they would investigate the subject, and, if convinced, would embrace it. I found the religious denominations, consisting of Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists, very jealous of Seventh-day Baptists, and it was apparent that they used a secret influence to prevent people from hearing me. Of course my congregations were small, especially at the commencement. There were, however, some honorable exceptions. I found it difficult to get up appointments which would be generally attended, as there would be other appointments, either religious, literary, or social, which would pre-

vent my getting a full congregation. It seemed that I was the occasion of making Pilate and Herod friends. I tarried in this region about ten or twelve days, preached eight times, attended two prayer meetings, and one temperance meeting, where I heard an excellent lecture from the celebrated Mr. Coffin, made a number of family visits, distributed a number of Sabbath Tracts, and held conversation with a number of individuals on the subject of religion in general, and the Sabbath in particular, with some apparent success.

I think that if a missionary, in whom were united the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove, were sent there at the proper season of the year, a respectable Seventh-day Baptist Church might be established. The season most favorable for missionary operations, I think, would be the fall of the year, as soon as the evenings become long enough to hold evening meetings. I recommended to the friends of the Sabbath to hold regular Sabbath meetings, and when they could not have preaching, to hold prayer and conference meetings. This advice they approved of, and I think it will be adopted. I gave them an assurance that I would use my influence with the Central Association to send them a missionary next fall. ELI S. BAILEY.

BROOKFIELD, Feb. 19, 1847.

CHURCH ACTION ON ODDFELLOWSHIP.

The following Preamble and Resolution, together with a Report by a Committee appointed for that purpose, were adopted by the Seventh-day Baptist Church at Pawcatuck, R. I., at a meeting held Feb. 14, 1847:—

Whereas, in the opinion of this church, the institution of Oddfellowship, and other Secret Societies, are unnecessary in the promotion of Christianity, benevolence, and truth;—in their nature dangerous to republican institutions;—and corrupting in their influence upon the church and the world;—

Resolved, That it is inconsistent with our professions to countenance or aid them, and we shall deem it a subject of grief for any of our brethren to unite with or continue in their Society.

The following is an abstract of the Report adopted:—

In considering the subject presented to your Committee, they will confine their observations more particularly to the Order of Oddfellows, as embodying the essence of all that is good or evil in kindred societies. Bound together by the holiest ties of association, and a common interest that knows no selfishness, the Christian Church has justly been regarded as the great engine for the advancement of civilization, benevolence, and truth. It was instituted to carry on to a glorious consummation the work begun by its great Head, viz. the salvation of souls and the melioration of the condition of mankind. Pure in its principles, and expansive in its benevolence, no mystery may be thrown around its actions to hide them from the world. "Ye are the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid; let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It is her peculiar province to cheer the widow and orphan in their afflictions, to relieve the destitute, to undo the heavy burdens which a selfish world has bound on the helpless, and to be forward in every enterprise calculated to benefit mankind and lead them to God. Such being the design of its great Founder, we may safely conclude, that any other association not necessarily growing out of this, which has for its object the accomplishment of the same ends, is unnecessary in the promotion of Christian benevolence and truth, and without a warrant from Christ the living Head.

Having thus briefly premised the design and duty of the church, we come to examine the principles and practices of Oddfellowship, so far as the veil of mystery which it has drawn around itself admits of development, that the church and community may better judge whether it is worthy of their confidence. Holding honor and truth as its motto, charity and benevolence its cause, friendship and peace its standard, love and unity its shield; composed alike of professed Christians, men of the world, haters of God, profane swearers, Sabbath-breakers, &c., styling themselves "sons of light;" they "seek to restore the unity of the race, which the unhappy divisions of the Christian church have so deplorably disturbed, and to realize in a more beautiful and efficient form the holy ideas of charity, love, and brotherhood." See Modern Eleusinia, page 44. Such is their object, as given by one of their members, who professes to be not only a disciple of Christ, but a preacher of his word. They characterize the Eternal as the Supreme Grand Master, "whose approbation alone they seek." The kingdom of heaven they represent as the Grand Celestial Lodge above, and promise to its votaries an entrance there through the efficacy of Oddfellowship alone. The proof of this is from their own documents. See Introduction of Narragansett Lodge, No. 7.

"If we faithfully perform our duty as men and ODDFELLOWS, be assured that heaven will shed its rays of light and glory around the impressive emblems of our Order. The tear on the widow's cheek shall be succeeded by the widow's joy; the orphan shall be rescued from penury, want and ignorance; and the reign of humanity shall not cease, until by all the dwellers on earth its plastic influence shall be enjoyed in the peaceful bowers of a second paradise, more beautiful than the first." "To accomplish so glorious a consummation, may we ever continue to cherish the sacred principles of our beloved institution—to guard well the avenues to our temple against improper intrusion, and then, should a storm of persecution surround us with the chilling influence of

its cold and icy wind, a stronger than Moses will guide and safely conduct us to the land of peace and rest, where we will better understand the sacred principles of Friendship, Truth, and Love."

"To him of benevolent heart and broad philanthropy, it is the home of the heart, and, next to his own fireside, the shrine of his best affections."

Such is their language, and such undoubtedly is the meaning intended to be held out to a large class of its votaries who have long sought to climb to heaven by some other way, and to enter the portals of bliss without the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, and the humiliation and self-abasement that characterize the followers of the lowly Redeemer. We view it as one of its worst features, that while such is its manifest tendency, it has an air of religious sanctity thrown around it, to allure the unguarded professor into its fine-woven snare, and secure his influence in the propagation of its own pernicious sentiments. It stands the great competitor of the church, and the antagonist of religion, aiming directly at the overthrow of the one, and the subversion of the other. Claiming "the heart's best affections," which, next to our own fireside should ever cluster around the church and its interests, it draws them off and centers them around an institution professing to aim at the same ends, while it embraces many who are hostile to the religion of Jesus Christ, and who would glory in its downfall. Professing to ensure the present enjoyment of the sacred fruits of friendship, love, and truth, it perverts those social virtues, which are as expansive as the universe, by making the payment of money an indispensable prerequisite; thus rudely dragging those heaven-born attributes of religion down to the mean level of dollars and cents. By withholding membership from those who are unable to contribute to its funds, and in general confining its beneficence to its own members, it excludes those most worthy of the consoling effects of charity and benevolence, and resolves itself, in essence and fact, into a Mutual Insurance Association, for the benefit of its own members. We object not to this feature of the institution, while passing under its own appropriate name; but we believe such benevolence is but the effusion of selfish hearts, unworthy of the name, and in all its features unlike the benevolence inculcated by the great Head of the church. Whatever may be the character of its meetings, (except so far as thought best to publish,) the stamp of eternal secrecy is placed upon them. The fettered victim can never know the depth of the pit till he pays for the privilege of sinking still deeper, and pledges himself never to reveal the scenes it may unfold.

Bound together from one end of the nation to the other—their designs and proceedings veiled from the view of the world, and even through its own members, except as they pass through the successive steps of the higher orders—with a rapidly-increasing fund—we cannot but view it as an engine of immense power, and dangerous to all our republican and religious institutions.

Again, we are presented with an association, professedly organized to promote morality, secure the triumph of truth, turn the widow's tears of grief to joy, and bring peace to the sorrowing sons of earth, expressly forbidding the discussion of national, political, local, or religious subjects, such as slavery or abolition, temperance or anti-temperance, moral reform, &c. Now, in the effects of the enumerated evils and remedies is involved the misery or happiness of all men, and therefore they open to the Christian an extended sphere of philanthropic and benevolent action. But, as an Oddfellow, he is forbidden to give utterance to a single emotion touching these questions; and the causes and remedies of all the ills of earth cannot be mentioned in an Oddfellow's lodge-room dedicated to friendship, love, and truth.

It claims Christianity as its central idea, and affirms without qualification, "that there is no human institution which has so many claims upon our reverence and sympathy"—that there is no religious organization, no Christian church, more vigilant in watching over the conduct, or more strict in its discipline of its members." While it professes "to have done more for the civilization of the world, and the progress of society, than all other means combined," and to receive none but moral men to its mysteries, no religious test is required, and its doors are thrown open to violators of every precept of the divine law, thus virtually admitting that swearing, Sabbath-breaking, &c., are consistent with morality and religion.

Having thus taken a brief view of the design and duty of the church, and also of the claims and professions of Oddfellowship, we are led to inquire, What fellowship can exist between them? The former, in its designs, is as expansive as the universe, and as pure and disinterested as the source whence it emanated; while the latter, making equally high pretensions, lowers the standard of benevolence to a mere name, undermines the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and is in its tendency dangerous to republican institutions, and corrupting in its influence upon the world. What communion, then, can they have without a compromise of principles which all Christians cherish? "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath light with darkness, and righteousness with unrighteousness; and what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" In coming to the conclusions expressed in the preamble and resolution, we entertain no other than the warmest sentiments of Christian affection for those our brethren who may differ with us. We doubt not their sincerity and good intentions, and cherish a hope that a candid review of the subject will induce them to renounce it as opposed to Christianity and the best interests of the church. JONATHAN MAXSON, JR., Com. DARWIN E. MAXSON, Secy.

Rev. Dr. BAIRD.—Dr. Baird returned to this country by the last steamer, from a tour of religious observation in nearly every part of Europe. On the 25th of January he gave, at Exeter Hall, in London, an account of his travels in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Malta, Turkey, Switzerland, France, and other continental countries, and explained the position and prospects of evangelical religion in each. His views are very encouraging, as they lead to the hope that a revival and extension of pure religion may be expected at no distant day. An English paper, after speaking of the Doctor's address, says:—

"We congratulate the religious bodies of America on the service they render to the cause of truth and liberty by the agency of our honored and distinguished friend. Europe is his debtor; and not a few of her crowned heads feel and own the obligation. With some of them he holds intimate personal intercourse, and by some of them he is honored with familiar correspondence. Nor would we forget that, by these services, he confers honor on his own, his native land. We have the testimony of a gentleman holding high office in France, that no American citizen has ever gained more of the confidence of enlightened Europeans, and done more to recommend his country and her best institutions to the attention and admiration of the subjects of monarchical governments. His large and comprehensive views—his benevolence—his philanthropy—above all, his unostentatious piety, fit him to become of on a large scale, the friend of freedom and of man. May he long live to benefit Europe and honor America!"

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN GERMANY.—The "London Universe" announces, upon authority entitled to implicit reliance, that the King of Prussia is about to issue an edict or law granting a very large measure of religious liberty to the inhabitants of his kingdom. The measure is understood to be so comprehensive that it will cover completely all such movements as those of Czerski, Ronge, and their adherents. In a word, whosoever is dissatisfied with the existing Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish modes of worship, may have such as they prefer, upon engaging to support it at their own charges, and to maintain a due regard to the existing laws which enforce good order and propriety. This act of the King is considered as constituting a most important epoch in the history of religion in Germany. It is worthy of the enlightened and excellent monarch of Prussia—a man who fears God, and seems desirous of doing what he can to advance the interests of true religion.

DR. WOLFF AND THE NESTORIANS.—The celebrated Dr. Wolff has published in a London paper a characteristic address to the "noble-minded and generous people of England," in behalf of the Nestorian Christians. He says that "the tyrant Bader Khan, a Kurd, whose cruelties and atrocities are well known, for his people inflicted upon myself, when traveling in Mesopotamia, in 1824, two hundred lashes, has threatened to exterminate the 'whole body.'" Hence he calls upon the people to petition Parliament for measures to stop "the horrid bloodshed now going on in Koordistan." He professes himself quite ready to face the Koordish tyrant, though he is "tired, fatigued, and worn out," by his late expedition to Bokhara, but has no doubt that Government will be able to adopt "more energetic measures than merely sending forth such a humble individual" as himself.

PASTORAL CHANGE.—The Rhode Island correspondent of the N. Y. Baptist Register, under date of Westerly, February 4, says: "The Seventh-day Baptist Church of this village is soon to change its pastor. The Rev. Mr. Campbell, a most devoted and faithful man, and one who will be a blessing to any community, is, on account of ill-health, to return to his old home at DeRuyter, and the Rev. Mr. Moore, from New Jersey, is expected to take his place. Mr. Moore appears to be a very fine man, and has lately united with that denomination, from among the Baptists. It is often a matter of congratulation with other denominations, that so many from the Baptists unite with them. It ought to afford Baptists equal joy, that they have so large a number of good men as to be able to afford so many efficient laborers to feeble denominations."

REVIVAL.—Rev. B. S. Williams writes to the Baptist Register, from Plymouth, Chenango Co., New York, that fifty-five, in that place, have recently given evidence of a change of heart; "numbers of backsliders have been reclaimed from the error of their ways, and many of the drooping sons and daughters of Zion have been revived, and led to exclaim, 'What hath God wrought!' Among the converts are a number of heads of families, and men of extensive influence. God grant that it may be welded henceforth on the side of God and truth."

THE HUTCHINSON FAMILY.—These inimitable singers have come to town again, and are to give a concert at the Broadway Tabernacle on the evening of March 5th. The character of their pieces is well known to be of the highest order, and the style of their execution has won almost universal applause. They deserve to be greeted with a full house.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE for February has been reprinted by Leonard Scott & Co., and was laid on our table just twenty-eight days after its appearance in Edinburgh. Among its contents are "Memoir of the late John William Smith, of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law," "Modern Italian History," "The Reign of George the Second," "The Early Taken," "A Ride to Magnesia," "Direct Taxation," &c. Published at 112 Fulton-st.



