

**THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY
THE PERUSAL OF
GILFILLAN: AND OTHER
AUTHORS, ON THE SABBATH**

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THOMAS B. BROWN

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THE PERUSAL OF GILFILLAN,

AND OTHER AUTHORS,

ON THE

SABBATH.

BY

REV. THOMAS B. BROWN,

Pastor of the Seventh-Day Baptist Church at Little Genesee, N. Y.

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PREFACE.

IF it should be said that the writer of the following remarks was not brought up in the observance of the Bible Sabbath, but was rigidly trained in the notion that the first day of the week is holy time under the gospel, it would weigh nothing with many readers. With others, it might possibly awaken curiosity to see whether a person, who had renounced an observance so important to the interests of religion and humanity as the Sunday festival is supposed to be, could be entitled to any consideration as a man of cleverness. But the writer would simply say, let the question at issue be tested by the Scripture of truth, and if the reader shall then become satisfied that the seventh day, the last day of the week, is the only Sabbath divinely authorized

—a supposition not over and above absurd— he need give himself no trouble whether this little book is the production of a wise man or a fool.

One thing, certainly, is worthy of his attention: that weak-headed persons have souls, to be saved or lost, as well as the wise and prudent; they have an obedience to render, as well as the most intelligent and quick-sighted; and the presumption is, that the will of God is set forth in terms adapted to their weakness, and not in that obscure and inferential way which requires the aid of logic for its interpretation. If the simple language of the Bible, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," conveys to plain unsophisticated minds that the last day of the week is the appointed rest-day for mankind; if such language is what the most ignorant can understand without difficulty; while the idea of the sacred character of the first day, under the gospel, is no where distinctly set forth, and the process by which the idea acquires a seeming plausibility is one which can be understood, and

clearly stated, only by those who have some compass of intellect: can there be any doubt in which direction lies the path of obedience? Therefore, if the observer of the seventh day can point to chapter and verse for his practice, and say, "Thus saith the Lord," the fact that he is a person of humble parts, and quite unlearned, instead of being an argument against the correctness of his practice, is a strong presumption in its favor; while, on the other hand, the fact that all the wise and prudent, the mighty and noble, the wealthy and illustrious, are in the observance of the Sunday, is one of the poorest considerations that can be alleged in its defense.

For the Bible claims to be a revelation of God's will to man; but if its doctrines and duties were stated in such a way that only the higher order of minds could understand them, its claims to be a divine revelation would be destroyed at once. So any religious observance, which claims to rest upon divine authority, should be clear and obvious to the most common minds.

We who keep the seventh day may, in the judgment of some, be but rustics in the world of letters, but we know that our institution has a Bible name, that it is enjoined upon us in clear and unmistakable terms, and enforced by such reasons as we can easily comprehend. The most illiterate among us can give a scriptural reason for his practice in Sabbath-keeping.



THOUGHTS ON THE SABBATH.

IT is a remarkable fact, that the day set apart for the public worship of God by the majority of Christians—the first day of the week—is not regarded as a Sabbath, to any great extent, by unconverted men. With many it is a day of recreation or amusement, with some a day of business, with others a day of journeying; while but few, outside of the religious circle, consider themselves guilty of sin when they fail to regard the day as holy to the Lord. It is not as if they were guilty of lying, or theft, or adultery, or any other offense against the Moral Law; for then conscience does not fail to remind them that they are under condemnation.

This fact greatly troubles our religious teachers, and leads to organized efforts for the promotion of the sanctification of the day. They hold Conventions; they form permanent Associations; they issue books and tracts, and send out Agents to distribute them; they invite distinguished men to lecture on the subject; in short, they do every thing they can in the way of moral suasion to accomplish their end, to say nothing of their repeated attempts to invoke legislative aid.

Nevertheless, the evil does not abate, but rather increases. If a slight improvement is effected in some places, the evil spreads more widely elsewhere. If the people are restrained to-day, to-morrow they break out with renewed violence. What is accomplished one year, is lost, or more than lost, the next. On the whole, it is questionable whether the most ardent advocates of Sunday observance feel any