

The Editor's Private Corner. When Was the Sabbath Changed?

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The following questions, "When did they change the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first day? Why did they do so?" were sent to the New York *Tribune*, by a reader of that journal. The brief answer, which follows, was given in that journal, and is very clear and explicit. We reprint it in hope that it may help others who have similar queries, and stimulate them to further investigation. The only question that remains to be answered is, "How can men who know these things pacify their consciousness in observing the human institution instead of the Divine?"

1. The first observance of Sunday that history records was in the fourth century, when Constantine issued an edict (not requiring its religious observance, but simply abstinence from work) reading, "Let all the judges and people of the town rest and all the various trades be suspended on the venerable day of the sun." At the time of the issue of this edict, Constantine was a sun-worshipper; he refused to unite with the church until on his death-bed (337). At the church council in 538 the religious observance of Sunday was recommended, but very little attention was paid to it. In 780 Aleuin, an English prelate, became the spiritual adviser of Charlemagne, when for the first time it was formally declared that the fourth commandment covered the first day of the week; but this declaration was observed by comparatively few, and for eight centuries thereafter Sunday was observed far more as a day of sport and festivity than as a religious one. The English parliament sat on Sundays, and English courts were held on that day, down to the reign of Elizabeth. In 1593 Dr. Nicholas Bound, of Suffolk County, England, published a work called "The True Doctrine of the Sabbath," in which he maintained, not that Sunday was divinely appointed as a Sabbath, but that the obligation to observe a Sabbath was divine. It was as late as at the opening of the seventeenth century when the Puritans in England began the practice of calling Sunday the Sabbath.

2. There never were, and are not now, any satisfactory reasons given for the calling and observing of Sunday as the Sabbath day. Bishop Potter says: "Their [the Puritans] warrant for what they did [with reference to Sunday as a Sabbath], whether we look for it in the pages of the New Testament or in the traditions of Catholic Christendom, was neither substantial nor sufficient."