

political relations. And while every encroachment upon Protestant liberty of speech, and liberty of instruction, is promptly met and manfully repelled; yet, let not the intermeddling of Popish Priests and Prelates, be excused by the example of the Protestant ministry; let no man be allowed to believe that he is politically proscribed and disfranchised because of his religion. Especially let it not be believed that the Church, in the discharge of her functions, as a witness and a teacher of the truth, is a party to such a result.

Moreover, it is important to preserve the distinctive character of the Church as a Witness Bearer, from a disposition to confide this whole controversy, and its connected duties, to the hands of individuals and irresponsible associations. We disparage no labourer in this field, and no combination of efforts to diffuse the truth. But the Church has her own work to do, and she only can do it aright. She owes missionary work to the benighted Romanist, no less than to the benighted Hindoo, and she owes it to herself no less, to select the agents and supervise the execution of that work. Why has she left it so largely and so long in other hands? Why are her efforts so stunted in this direction, compared with the importance of the field? The whole power of the Papacy is mainly expended now, upon Protestant countries, and yet how little of the power of the Church is expended upon the deluded followers of Rome. God has still his "bidden ones" within the pale of that mystic Babylon, but how faint our echo *of* his voice, saying "Come out of her my people, and be not partakers of her plagues."

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ARTICLE V.

GOD'S REST, OUR REST.\*

[by A.F. Dickson]

Egypt had bound Israel with a thousand chains of violence and craft; but the sword of the Lord had cut sheer through them all, and his people "went out with

\*Suggested by Heb. iii., and iv.

a high hand." Sore and terrible had been their bondage there, so that they "groaned" under it with a hopeless and utterly servile lamentation; but their cry went up unto God. Beyond their thought, and even against their will, he wrought out a mighty salvation for them.

It is a daily mistake among men to imagine that God's plans are direct, simple, quickly reaching their conclusion, in a victory palpable to us in our gross estimation of them. If a purpose of his becomes apparent to us, we look for an immediate conclusion of it; a few days more must unfold the whole of it, and something new begin. So judged the Hebrews, because Jehovah had "brought them forth with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,"—had riven the waters, and congealed the deep flood in the heart of the sea, so that the waves stood up like a wall on the right hand and on the left,—had destroyed the mighty oppressor of their race, even when they felt the hot breath of his chariot-horses on their necks, and had broken the power of that fierce nation for generations to come,—they thought the agony was past. They either hoped that the sands of Arabia would suddenly blossom for them like the rose, and the solitary wastes of Midian sing aloud for joy at their coming; or at least, that fountains would spring up spontaneously along their way, and rich food mysteriously lavish itself upon them in the desert, and the mountain walls of Canaan open wide their rocky gates at their approach, so that "the promised land" should be theirs without an effort. Manifestly they were disappointed when silence, bareness, and thirst looked grimly out upon them from the hills, and bare rocks and a howling wilderness hemmed them in.

Unlike their father Abraham, who waited with iron constancy and undying hope the fulfilment of a promise that was delayed a quarter of a century,—unlike him, they had no patience with their almighty Deliverer. The pledge that was not fully redeemed to-day, was, in their view, already falsified. The oath of the unchangeable God was as the idle wind to their unbelief, if fulfillment did not tread upon the heels of promise as thunder follows the lightning.

No doubt, the discipline upon which they were put,

was almost intolerably severe; but it was the introduction to glory and privilege unequalled on earth. David confessed it, when he said: "He hath not dealt so with any nation." Their powers were kept at their utmost tension. Day after day they marched through rocky and barren solitude's; mothers with their children, men with their armour and their herds. Fatigue and thirst wore out their energies, foes beset them by pitched battles and sudden ambush; yet they must press on and on—whither? To the graves appointed them! Twelve hundred thousand dead must people the wilderness of Sin, or hew out their tombs in the rocks of Horeb. For they that come from Egypt "could not enter in" to Canaan, "because of unbelief." "God sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest." "Hope deferred," though it was righteously deferred, "made their hearts sick;" their faith failed them, and they were cut off from his people.

But on this word—"His rest, "My rest,"—Paul suddenly rises to another thought. *God has a rest.* It is said that, on the seventh day, he "rested." Into that rest, of which, Canaan was but a symbol and a faint foreshadowing, he bade his ancient people enter; and it "remaineth" for them unto this day. He has himself, partaken of it; Christ has entered it; the redeemed shall dwell there.

Let us dwell a little on this thought—*God's rest, our rest.* And first, let us think of it as *God's rest.* "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Such is the sublime and simple record.

The works which God created and made were the six day's wonders of the creation. In his arms he had gathered up the clouds and seas, and formless energies of chaos,—shaped a planet, and poised it in space. Light and life, obedient to his word, descended from Heaven and sphered it in lustre and in hope. A mist went up from the earth and watered it, and God blessed the lands with verdure, and fruit, and shade. The air, the plains,

the sea, teemed with busy happiness. He touched the silent soil, and man sprung up from the dust of the ground,—received into his nostrils the breath of life,—became a living spirit, the earthborn representative of his almighty Father.

The character of “work” was given to this achievement,—not by the fact that God expended greater effort, or put forth unusual exertion then and there, but by the fact that it was a *peculiar* effort, and that attributes which generally (so to speak,) lie back and are kept in abeyance, wrought here, and were manifested before the angels. Instead of leaving the display of power to natural laws and second causes, he now put himself in direct contact with events, and was seen to carry out the mighty plan.

This done, God returned into his rest. The voice august, no longer uttered creating words. The Hand divine withdrew that mysterious energy which moulded living creatures or struck out worlds. The new kingdom was established; and the contenting stars and the joyful sons of God inaugurated it with shouts and heavenly anthems. But clouds and darkness, and silence, enshrined the throne. Omnipotence seemed to have returned into itself. Self-sufficing, impregnable, victorious, its work done, that secure, majestic Might needed no flashes of mere display to make it glorious. Thus God rested.

But as God's “work” was not labor, so his “rest” was not inaction. Forty centuries later, Christ declared “My Father worketh hitherto,” (*i.e.* has been working till now.”) For him to cease all action would be, not merely to abdicate his throne, but to change and deny his nature. His heart had not ceased from love, and therefore, his hand must persist in goodness. There were the angels to be sustained and blessed; the countless worlds to be governed; the new subjects to be taught and fed, and watched. He is the keeper of the universal fold—the shepherd of an innumerable people—the king of heavenly armies—the teacher and present friend of his new-made children.

But it was rest in this sense; that this particular enterprise was finished, and,—with the addition of a new

department to His kingdom,—its *routine* proceeded as of old. His attributes returned to their wonted order of display. It is His *nature*, one may say, to be a Governor,—to rule His vast empire by comprehensive and happy laws,—to breathe out and to receive love,—love pure, supreme, immortal,—over that domain He has made populous with loyalty and joy. In this, His right and natural position, the whole universe shows a symmetry, a beauty, and a bliss, in which He finds divinest honor and delight. He reigns, and is obeyed: He loves, and is adored: He shines, and is worshipped. This, I say, is the normal state of things; government by love is to us, God's glory and his life. In this, therefore, his last splendid self-revelation as Creator was merged. In this he "rested."

Yet once more: we must enlarge upon this thought a little to fill out our idea of God's rest. Advancing from the particular, instance, the seventh day, we must learn what that general condition is, of which he can partake with his little children.

It is the having accomplished worthy ends. A holy thing done,—a wise counsel fulfilled, an era is *set* among the ages. There is a fixed point upon which the necessary powers centered, and to which, as to a date and a landmark, events that follow may be referred. That to which previous deeds pointed, and for which they prepared the way, is at last accomplished: the long purpose is lost in the present fact. History now may take breath; suspense is ended; the consummation is come. Thus it was in this case. God's eternal purpose took form at the creation, as the chaos did. The light he spoke into being illumined his counsels for his creatures, and made known his will to them. On the seventh day, intention had become achievement. It was the broad, bright border-line,—that first Sabbath,—between two eras,—that which ended in creation, and that which began in man.

It is serene repose in the consciousness of right deeds and a right heart. The calm that follows action is almost involuntarily a time of *review*. Our deeds array our principles and set them forth to us, as to others. In returning to rest, he who has acted returns into his general

course of feeling, tempered by his last resolves and his last deeds: The ruling thought re-asserts its sway; the great ends of being stand confessed and are sought with the old regard; the heart that was happy regains its joy; the wounded spirit repeats its grief. Thus, we are told of Jehovah, as he completed his wonderful work, in the closing of the 16th day, that he "saw everything he had made, and behold it was very good." It was the first soft twilight hour of God's rest. For, as of old, he looked forth upon his kingdom, the work of his hands,—he took in, with that all-comprehending glance, this new territory in his domain,—and returning thus to the eternal course of his perfect blessedness, he resumed that grand repose,—the consciousness of mighty deeds, and of infinite love.

The second thought we propose to set forth is this—in our faith and love we begin here to partake of God's rest: we also look back upon an effort and an achievement; we also behold with a deep delight its steadily unfolding results; we also come out from our effort into a certain permanence and security of happy feeling: the very thought that spreads out into a waveless happiness in him, shines, a little lakelet of content and rest, in us.

He, says the Apostle,—“he that hath entered into rest *hath ceased from his own works*, as God also from his.” The crisis of our histories arrives and confronts us. We have lived in unbelief and sin, long years; this treacherous world has spread out its charms before us, and received our affection; the heart's early tenderness, that was awed by the simplest infant thought of God,—that wept at the sorrows of the dear Redeemer and longed for his love,—that trembled at the thought of judgment and owned the terror of hell,—that early tenderness is all encrusted with self-deceptions and idolatries, grown callous under the threats of the law and the pathos of the Gospel. But through these strong defences flies the “barbed arrow,—sharp in the heart of the King's enemies.” Conscience awakes; fear shouts to us through his shrill trumpet; God looks down in his holy jealousy, and withers our spirits with dismay and shame; temptations and terrors multiply; resolutions

break like ropes of sand; all our efforts prove abortive, and ruin stares us in the face.

At last we remember Christ the Lord; God's holy Spirit brings that precious thought upon us, and invests it with significance and hope. Now, therefore, after so long a time, we come distinctly to understand that there is a way of escape by him: not only that there is no other name given under Heaven, but also that his name is given as the key to our difficulties,—the name whereby we may be saved. We advance a step farther; we see that he is beautifully good, eminently true and trustworthy,—that he simply demands reliance on him, and obedience as the daughter of reliance. Thus then, in some hour of storm, when the heart's whole frame is shaken by self-accusation, conflict and despair, by a sudden revulsion the scourged and desperate thoughts fly out to Christ Jesus the Lord. Suddenly there is a great calm.

"At once a calm and heaving sleep  
Fell o'er all the glassy deep."

The rescued heart looks back and sees the victory achieved—how, it knows not; it may never know; but that it is, the healed wounds, the risen hope, the springing health, eloquently witnesseth, there is rest in that still remembrance of escape,—that look back from the protecting shield upon foes discomfited and disarmed!

But, besides all this, there is rest in watching the results of this, first illustrious event, as they unfold in our histories. Many things are born of it; our lives are populous with deeds and joys that owe their being to this that we have trusted in Christ. It was not so, perhaps, in our expectation. When we were convince of sin and looking to religion, as the thing we must achieve, with more of fear than hope, our unwilling hearts paralyzed with conscience, and recounted many things we would "have" to do, many to forego. For days without number, swelling into a life of years, we should be obliged to pray, and study Scripture, and meditate,—confess sin, keep good resolutions, stir up and maintain certain feelings,—affect Christian society, oppose the sceptical and vicious world, keep a conscience void of

offence towards God and man. What an overwhelming prospect! Endless efforts to be made, uncounted pleasures to be refused,—gain to be sacrificed,—in short, a life of absolutely unbroken watchfulness, self-denial and toil to be entered on and lived steadfastly out to its end! Who has not entertained this thought, and shrunk from ensuring such a future?

But when, by God's help and blessing, we have heartily accepted all this, and whatever else may be involved in self-consecration to hire,—when at last we have entered on the work and are striving in good faith to keep our covenant with the Lord,—behold our wonderful redemption and rest. Much of the future was wrapped up in the past; the resolutions we were so painfully to keep, grow silently into habits; some of the pleasures we were to deny ourselves have lost their charm, while others are withering and growing powerless daily; the enemies we were to fear, and watch, and heroically beat down under our feet are dead or dying. Just as the balloon's whole ascension is involved in the cutting the cords that bind it down, just as every foot it rises is so much removed from the earth's attractions and its own downward tendency,—so the Christian's victories all depend on that first stormy, but auspicious hour, and every step of progress sets him free. In this steady unfolding of results, this gradual developement of powers, this slow unclouding of his western sky, is there not rest?

Yet more notably do we enter into God's rest in this—that the feelings we attain are the same in kind as his. Of course we must make allowance here for the fact that we regard him with emotions he can never share, but by a Father's tender sympathy with his children. Our gratitude for redemption, our shame at having so bitterly grieved and injured him, our fear that we shall yet offend and leave him,—these are all our own. But there are others that we lost when we lost God's image, to which he has brought us back in restoring the faint outlines of that image. To these Peter refers, when he calls the children of God “partakers of the Divine nature.”

Faith itself, when we look at it closely, is not without this godlike character: for we can trust that only which



we have come to realize and know, and we can comprehend those feelings only with which we sympathise. "It is the heart alone," a wise philosopher has told us, "that can understand the heart." This is the reason why sin is always unbelieving, and that repentance and faith are inseparable. God looks with complacent confidence upon the angels, because their pure hearts answer to his heart. We rest on him, because there is begun in us a nature like his own. Thus, though in one view,—

"Faith and hope are given  
But as our guides to yonder sky—  
Soon as they reach the verge of Heaven,  
Lost in that blaze of truth they die."

Yet, in another aspect, faith is immortal. Mutual confidence is the life of Heaven; to that our faith aspires. In its humble measure therefore—bringing, as it does, relief to our fears, and putting joy into our hearts,—it makes us partakers of God's rest.

Yet more accurately is this true of love—for God is love. It was to love, as the perennial outflow of goodwill and blessing, that he returned when he "rested." The ineffable communion of the Three in one—their smile upon the angels, which throbbed through Heaven in light,—the long procession of bounties and delights that flowed out like a river from the throne and filled all human hearts with food and gladness,—these were the forms and the fruit of love in Heaven. Whosoever, therefore, is verily born of God, loveth. That most exquisite and tender of all joys is springing up within him: the old conflict of self against self, passion against passion, lust against prudence and pride, and shame, is swept away. A real delight in the beauty of God's holiness, a supreme devotion to his will and honor, a hearty sympathy with his wise and pure desires, is shed abroad within us, and nerves us to self-denial and devoted loyalty. We are brethren, too, to all his children. Love begins, at first feebly, then in a stronger and a warmer stream, to run through all our actions: and love is born of God, and knoweth God. Thus, at our infinite distance, with our torpid and purblind hearts, like Herschel before the sun, we dimly reflect his light, and re-

peat, amid the darkness, his bright benignant glory. The consciousness of this is rest; and it is like God's rest.

In Heaven, God's rest becomes fully and forever ours. The conflict that had only been subsiding in life is now ended—has died in our death, has been sealed up in a perpetual tomb. No hard question, no doubtful venture, no lukewarm zeal, no lame, suspicious half belief, no remonstrant conscience, no dexterous self-deceiving subtleties, no wasted labors: a land of certainty, and safety, and goodness!

Like God's rest in this—that the work is *fully done*. With him, there was no returning after the Sabbath to complete the plan,—no forgotten purposes to fulfil,—no unsuccessful attempt to be undertaken again,—no chasm in the rounded earth to fill up,—no lacking company in the mighty armies of nature. It was essential to the perfectness of his rest that it should follow *a finished work*. The outstretched, creative faculties gathered themselves up into the cloud of light; for the emergency they had evoked and employed was past. So in Heaven, the whole, long life-battle will have been fought out, the consummation of our hopes and labors perfectly achieved. In God's strength we undertook to reinstate him in a rebellious heart—to turn out the stubborn idolatries that had taken root and flourished there—to break up the hard and evil will that rejected him and brought forth only sins, and passions, and fears,—and to bring him back into his vineyard, unquestioned Lord there,—the Gatherer of all our little harvest. And behold, it is done! The whole, bright spirit is his own.

We sought to make it pure as well as loyal. We were ashamed of the vile thoughts and sordid worldliness that harbored there; and with a resolute and holy jealousy we cast them out. Slowly and painfully we removed each stain, receiving the heavenly help without which, we can do nothing, and into their place brought in hope, and peace, and communion with God. This also, is done; Christ's righteousness and the Holy Spirit have "presented us faultless with exceeding joy," before our Father. We aimed, again, at self-developement and Christian maturity. We felt and lamented the feeble-

ness of all good things in us; we set ourselves to grow stronger,—to attain “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” This, too, is accomplished; the time of weakness,—the time of stumbling, the time of childish helplessness, has passed away. We have attained our growth and are armed with angel's strength.

Like His rest in this—that the thing done is a *creation*. It was no working up of old materials, the making of this noble world: He called it out of nothing by His word. Thus also, the new heart that enters Heaven is no old heart refitted or repaired. Love to God does not ripen out of self-love, or obedience out of wilfulness, or loyalty out of rebellion, or tender affection out of a hard and carnal wickedness. “Behold, I make all things new; old things have passed away” and vanished forever. In their place come trust, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost. So, now the new man is created, and the old nature swept away into oblivion and darkness, we enter into divine, eternal rest.

Likest God's rest in this—that order and beauty, and glory are the continual outcome of this work,—our immortal inheritance. When Jehovah finished his creating work, all was faultless, happy, glorious. He looked down from his lofty throne and rejoiced in his admirable and perfect deed. Yea, and though sin has marred God's excellent handiwork, the glory and the bliss enure to him as of old; it is the same revelation, though Satan and rebel man contradict or pervert it. When Christ our Lord returned to Heaven, he beheld the work of mercy finished,—his reign begun, his people assured to him, the heavenly mansions built and ready to receive the ransomed multitudes. His foes were vanquished, his travail ended, his kingdom established. “To him,” therefore, “shall the gentiles seek, and *his* rest shall be glorious.” When we lay down these fleshly bodies in the grave,—when faith has triumphed over both life and death,—when the last temptation has been met and overcome,—when that “last enemy” shall have been “destroyed,”—there shall remain for us an immortal body, an eternal victory, an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that fadeth not away. Then shall we sing with Paul—“I have fought the good fight, I have

finished my course, I have kept the faith! Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge shall give me."

Return, then, unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee! Let the sweetness of what surely shall be, quench the bitterness of what is. Look patiently across these lengthening shadows to that momentary night, which alone parts the evening from the "perfect day." Shall thy entering into rest fail "because of unbelief?" Remember, *it will not fail for any other cause.*

Lean heavily upon the Lord's arm! Fear not,—try its strength by the large burden rolled off upon it. He who talked with Adam while the twilight wind blew softly, will talk with thee, if thou walk with Him; and His words shall be of welcome and of rest. Return then, my soul! Hasten out of all these thy wanderings into the King's highway. Shake off these vile companions, sloth, passions, and worldly wisdom. What though, in that pure air, that arduous beginning of bliss, pain and toil beset this gross body? What though the outward man perish? It is enough that thou art renewed in His image day by day; the life also of Jesus shall be manifest in thee!

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#### ARTICLE VI.

#### EARLY HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father and he will shew thee; thy elders and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he in-

VOL. VIII.—NO. 3.

8