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ARTICLE I.

THE SABBATH.

“THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN.”

Philosophers tell us that all the forces of nature are indestructible. They may go from one form to another, and thus seem to pass out of existence; but, in reality, they are imperishable. The first ray of heat which came to the earth from the sun, though it may have been millions of years ago, exists to-day, somewhere, in some one of its Protean forms.

While physical force is thus, in the divine providence, immortal, it nevertheless wearies and grows tired. Illustrations, which are proofs of this, are easily given. Razors lose the power of acquiring an edge after they have been in constant use for a long time. In such cases, it is necessary simply to allow them to rest a while, and they are again ready for service. As a matter of actual observation, it has been found that the iron or steel of a railway track becomes brittle and liable to dangerous breakage, if it is subjected to the constant pressure and jar of passing trains. If there are suitable intervals of repose, the same number and weight of trains may pass over the track without serious injury. The same fact is observed with regard to cannon; and is, indeed, a truth of universal observation.

A more familiar illustration may better serve our purpose. Moses commanded that the seventh should be a year of rest for the land. There was an economic reason for this, which every

farmer of the present day can appreciate. Even in the rich soils of the Mississippi Valley, it is found that he is the prudent husbandman who, by a judicious rotation of crops, allows each of his fields a stated jubilee of rest.

But not only when physical force allies itself with vegetable life, does it find a periodic season of rest essential to its highest efficiency; but also when it appears as the servant of animal volition. No man, who owns a splendid horse, will suffer the noble animal to exert himself to the utmost of his power, from day to day, without an interval of rest. Put to a daily stress of unremitting toil, he might serve his master, we may say, for three hundred days. If allowed to rest at proper seasons, he would be efficient for the labor of three times three hundred days.

The necessity for a Sabbath to inanimate nature and to the lower animals, proceeds entirely from their relations to man. No metal would ever need molecular rest but for its use in the service of man. So it is with our fields. In their natural condition, they enjoy an almost perpetual rest. It is only when they are brought under cultivation, and made to yield their harvests to the reaper, that they require a jubilee of repose. So also with the animals. The horse, the donkey, the ox, on their native plains, know nothing of the labors of the yoke or the collar, and therefore need no day of respite from their toils. But when man harnesses them to his service, their weary muscles beg for a regular time of rest. Thus, in this lowest sense, we see that "the Sabbath was made for man."

Man is made of the dust of the earth. This statement of Moses is confirmed not only by chemical analysis, and by the food which he eats, but also by the heap of dust which he becomes in the grave. The same iron of which our razors are made, the same earths, acids, and alkalies which form our soil, are found in these bodies of ours, which are so curiously and wonderfully made. The same animal life which flashes forth from the eye of the war-horse, is found, in a higher and more refined form, in the warrior that bestrides him. Man's body is material, and the home of the ordinary physical and vital forces which we see in nature all around us.

These bodily powers are definite and limited. They can accomplish so much, and no more. When they become exhausted, they must rest, or ruin is the result, sooner or later. For this reason night comes upon the earth, and claims half of the hours of the year as her own. This is nature's call from the daily toil of physical labor. As the shadows lengthen and the sun hides himself behind the western hills, the woodman lays his axe upon his shoulder and the reaper his scythe, the carpenter puts up his hammer and saw, and the mason his trowel; and they all hie homeward to eat their evening meal and to commit themselves to the arms of "balmy sleep, tired nature's sweet restorer." What could the laboring man do, were there no night and no sleep to respite him from his daily toil!

This nightly rest, sweet and gracious as it is, is not enough for the man of faithful industry. The soil which we cultivate has its yearly winter rest, when it goes to sleep in its bed of sheeted snow. It awakens in the spring, with its energies renewed for another summer's harvest. But it finds itself not so strong this year as it was last; nor last year as it was the year before. It is becoming enfeebled by its annual efforts to produce. It begs for rest, not only during the hush and chill of winter, but also while it may enjoy undisturbed the vernal showers and the summer's invigorating sun. So it is with man. He rises with each morning's freshness, and undertakes anew the duties of the day. For a few days he fails to realise an abatement of his vigor; but ere long he finds that he is not so strong now as he was ten or fifteen or twenty days ago. He finds that he is becoming wearied, that he needs a *day* of rest. His nightly repose is not sufficient for him. He wants a respite when the free sun can shine upon him; when he can *realise* that he is not the slave of toil; when he can be conscious that he has laid aside the harness of the struggle for his daily bread.

Thus it is that the Sabbath comes in to relax the tense muscles of man and beast. The pampered favorite of the stall may be indifferent to such a day. He is brought into service for only an hour or two each day, that he may give his lordly owners an evening airing. But the faithful animal whose neck feels

the collar from early morning to dewy eve, finds the day of weekly rest all that he ever knows or dreams of heaven. So the human idler, who fails to realise that "life is real, life is earnest;" whose hardest toil is to devise ways for killing time, may care not for the weekly Sabbath. But the industrious, sun-browned mechanic, the toiling accountant, the man of busy brain—the men who make this world a place worth the living in—these "heroes of the strife" can sing with hearty emphasis,

"Welcome, sweet day of rest."

For every man and for every animal that fill their sphere in life, the Sabbath is not only a delight, a luxury; it is an indispensable necessity. Man is so made that he must have it, or his body is materially fatally injured. Again we say, "The Sabbath was made for man."

But man is not only an animal, he is a *mind*. Work of muscle and rest of muscle do not tell all of human history. This mind of his wants to know. Indeed it aspires to be fed, with as ardent an appetite as that which urges him to his daily toil for bread. If he gives his days to labor and his nights to sleep, when shall he attend to the cravings of his mind, that begs for light? When can he pursue that search for knowledge which is one of the inborn, insatiable cravings of his nature? Is he no more than a brute? The lessons of the world's history in the past; the wonders of the heavens above him; the equal wonders of the earth, and air, and sea around him; the mysteries of his own curiously constructed body; the mightier mysteries of his own immaterial mind—when shall he learn these, if he is to be the chained galley-slave to a life of incessant toil? During the week, he may seem but little more than the horse, at whose side he performs his daily task. On the Sunday, the horse eats and sleeps and rolls and runs. But his master sits down to read, and walks around to think, and his mind opens and grows and matures, and rejoices in the acquisition of new stores of truth. Truly may we again say, "The Sabbath was made for man."

We have not yet exhausted the important facts of human nature. Man not only has body and mind; he has what is more

valuable than either—spirit or *soul*. This spirit or soul of his has crying needs. It is its misfortune, however, to be too often put into the background. Man's physical wants press upon him with an urgency which will admit of no denial. It is a constant struggle for bread with the poor; with the rich it is an equally constant struggle for money. The poor may make their daily bread; the rich may heap up their golden treasures. But is this all? Is there nothing more for which to live? Suppose there were no eternity, no living beyond the grave; would the purposes of life all be reached when we gain our bread and hoard our gold? The soul cries indignantly, No! No, indeed, no, we cry into the dull ear of a materialistic age. Man's soul must and will assert itself. Its social instincts, revealing a vast network of relationships by which it is connected with all other souls, clamor for recognition. The man is a father, a husband, a son, a brother, a citizen, a friend, a neighbor. If he be a father, solemn duties arise out of this relationship. When shall he consider them? When shall he question himself as to the fulfilment of these duties? When shall he incite himself to a more faithful discharge of them? During all the week, the claims of business press so heavily and so steadily upon him, that these sacred duties are hushed into silence. He must have time to give to their consideration.

Man has other moral interests that claim his attention. Indeed, we are here brought face to face with the most solemn questions of his being. This soul of his, what is it? Whence came it? Whither goeth it? Truth, right, duty—what are they, and what claims have they upon the soul of man? The truth—has it been spoken? The right—has it been loved? Duty—has it been done? Sin—what is it? Its reality forces itself upon the conscious experience of the soul. Yes, the soul knows that it has sinned. This is an awful fact; shall it be blinked, forgotten, denied? Shall the soul have no time to look this question full in the face, and consider the nature and the consequences of its sinfulness? Shall there be given to it no rest, no quiet hour in the hurly-burly of life, when it may realise its depraved condition and seek for some measure of relief?

Duty and sin gain an infinite intensity of meaning when they lead the soul to the brink of time, and bid it peer into the mysteries of *eternity*. Is it possible that man may live forever? Is it probable that he will live forever? Nay, is it certain that he must live forever? If so, what interests of time can compare with the enduring realities of eternity? Day by day, hour by hour, man's energies are stretched almost to their utmost tension by the pressing occupations of this life. Must he thus go on, month after month, year after year, until, without a moment's thought, his bark is suddenly launched upon the shoreless sea of eternity? There must be eddies in the river of life; harbors of quiet, in which he may look to the condition of his boat, and see whether it is ready for that voyage, on which no repairs can be made, and from which no traveller has ever returned.

There is another word, small indeed, but with which man has an infinite concern. How the thoughts leap from the brain at the mention of the name of God, the infinitely holy, the infinitely good, the infinitely great! Man's relationships to God are the highest and holiest which he sustains. God is our Creator: his hand hath made us, and not we ourselves. God is our father: he takes care of us; we are the sheep of his pasture and the people of his hand, and his dependent children. God is our Saviour: he knows that we are sinners, wicked sinners; miserable sinners: he knows that we deserve death; but he takes no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. He loves our souls; he wants us to live, and to live with him forever. So earnest is his desire for our salvation, that he has given his Son to die for us. God is our judge; he will bring every thought and word and deed into judgment. If his mercy we refuse, his justice we shall not despise.

Is this God, in himself and in his relations to us, worthy of our attention? Shall we give ourselves up to worldly cares, to selfish interests, to human concerns, and have no time in which we may consider what we owe to him? Every grateful, every true heart will spurn the thought, and say, Let us think of him in the freshness of the morning hour, in the heat of the noonday strife, in the quiet weariness of darkening twilight, and

in the hush of spirit as sleep comes slowly stealing o'er the senses. But lest he should be forgotten, as he too often is, amid the pressing cares of our daily struggles, let us set apart some holy hours as sacredly his own, which we will give wholly up to thoughts of him, of the soul, of duty, of sin, of salvation, of eternity. Once more we say, emphatically, "The Sabbath was made for man."

Let us stop a while now and gather these thoughts together. They are all one. Man's body needs a day of rest. It must have it, or seriously suffer. Man's mind needs a day for special culture. It must have it, or be dwarfed for the want of it. Man's soul, especially, needs a day that it may call its own: a day when the world, and flesh, and sense shall all be held in obedience, and when the concerns of the soul shall have first attention. Man's hopes and fears, his sorrows and joys, his desires and affections, all demand this. His duties and his sins unite in the claim; while his relations to his God make it solemnly imperative. In the very necessities of man's condition there must be for him a Sabbath.

This is no mere matter of policy or expediency. It reaches far beyond this. It is one of the essentials of human nature. Is the rudder indispensable to a ship? The ship might sail a few days or weeks without one. But it would be at the mercy of every gale and the plaything of every storm, and liable, at any moment, to find its coffin in the trough of the sea, or its grave in the treacherous quicksands. So man may live upon the earth without a Sabbath; but it would be a life fraught with peril to the dearest interests which he should cherish.

Were man an unfallen being, his healthy soul, pure in its every thought and heavenly in its every aspiration, would ask for one day of furlough from the service of the flesh, that the Spirit might commune with God, and feast itself upon the pleasures of the soul. But man is now a wreck in body, mind, and spirit. The necessities of the Sabbath are immeasurably increased by his fallen condition. Look especially at the soul. It is consciously sinful; and, as a result, it is consciously guilty. These are terrific thoughts, if they be rightly seen. Sin and

guilt constitute the very essence of hell. We said that man was conscious of them both. This is true to a limited degree. But it is the culmination of man's woful condition in the fall, that he is, to so large a degree, insensible of the awful evils which he has brought upon himself. His daily pursuits serve to increase this spiritual deadness. He must be aroused, or he is lost. If there be nothing but the humdrum of his daily life, his thoughts will never be stirred to look within at the lurking demon in his own heart; or ahead, to see the Nemesis whose glaring eyes confront him in the future. If he would be saved from this hell within him, he must be stirred and brought to think. For the welfare, for the very life, of his immortal soul, in danger of sinking down to an eternal death, he must have a time when he can look within, and see his danger; can look without, and find his Calvary; can look above, and behold his heaven.

The Sabbath is thus the poor man's friend, the toiler's rest, the teacher of the ignorant, and the saviour of the fallen. It is the golden ladder of heaven, resting upon the rocky pathways of earth, on whose angel-travelled rounds the soul may mount upward to the skies. "*The Sabbath was made for man.*"

"THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD."

Thus far we have discussed this question from a human standpoint. We have laid more stress upon this part of the discussion, because we think that it is a feature of the subject to which sufficient importance is not usually attached. We feel justified in saying, that, in a very important sense, the Sabbath is man's Day—in that it is to him the most needful, and the most fraught with blessings, of all the seven. We have the highest authority for saying that "the Sabbath was made for man."

This fact, however, does not exhaust its nature or its purposes. It is also the *Lord's Day*. It is "the day which the Lord hath made." It is "the Sabbath of the Lord our God."

God's relations to this holy day are very simple and easily stated. All creatures are his; and yet he keeps the angels as the ministers of his immediate presence. All men are his children; and yet among them there is the sacramental host of

his elect. All the tribes of Israel were his people, and yet he took Levi as the tribe of his inheritance. All Christians are his servants, and yet there are those whom he makes, in a peculiar sense, the ministers of his sanctuary. The silver and the gold are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills; and yet he claimed the special sanctification of the tithe. All the days are his, for he makes the outgoing and incoming of every morning and evening to rejoice; and yet there is one day which he crowns with peculiar glory, which he calls by his own name, and which he claims as specially his own.

God's regard for this day is shown in several ways. In the drama of creation, the first six acts represent the Deity as active, producing, and garnishing the worlds. In the seventh, the work is done, and the Infinite rests from his labors. Six days he worked, on the seventh he rested. Not that his omnipotence was weary, much less exhausted, but that he might teach, by example, a lesson to his intelligent children.

He does not confine himself to silent example. "He rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." He blessed the day; he made it a happy day. He sanctified it; he made it a holy day. This is the statement of the oldest record of which man has a knowledge. It may be even an Eden record. The first chapter of Genesis, with the first three verses of the second, may possibly have been written by Adam himself. This, however, cannot be told, and is not necessary to our thought. Suffice it to say, that this is the first record of human history. It is enough for us to know that the very next recorded act of God, after the creation of man, was the blessing and sanctification of a Sabbath for his benefit. From the introduction of man upon the earth, the seventh day is made by the Divine Lawgiver to bear a character peculiar to itself; it is solemnly set apart for the very purpose for which we have already found a natural necessity in man himself. God had so made man that he needed such a day; and so, from the very first, he exempted it from the ordinary cares and duties of life, and sanctified it to all the high and holy purposes of a Sabbath.

Adam was the first natural head of the race. Noah was the second. In his life we find proofs, somewhat dim to be sure, of the continuance of the Sabbath law. Moses was not, indeed, a third great head of the family of man; but what he wrote has moulded the religious character of the world of God's people for more than fifteen centuries. So then, no mortal man of any age has exerted such an extended influence over the human mind as he. He was the patriarch of the race in a higher meaning than was Adam or Noah. To him we may look for positive and authentic indications of God's will to man. Of all mere men that ever lived he deserves, by unmistakable preëminence, the title of the divine lawgiver.

God himself descends to the top of Sinai, and so awful is his presence that neither man nor beast can pass beyond the sacred limit. He calls Moses, however, to the very top of the smoking mount; and there, for forty days and nights, he holds him in face to face communion with himself. He not only speaks his will to him on many questions, but upon all the fundamental, permanent, universal relations of man, he expresses himself with peculiar force. On them he does not content himself with the spoken word; but "with his own finger," upon the granite of the everlasting hills, he writes those laws which he knows are as broad as humanity and as universal as the relations of man. In the very midst of these, preceded by those which lie at the basis of man's relations to his Maker, and followed by those which tell his natural and unchangeable duties to his fellow-men, God wrote on the enduring stone, "*Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.*" Could he have shown his will in a more solemn way than this?

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." So "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; so that he was to man the manifestation of the Deity in flesh. To his life on earth may we look for clear and definite light as to the divinity of the Sabbath. If he, by precept and by example, disregards the day, then we

may consider it a mere question of expediency, whether we shall observe it or not. But if, on the other hand, he constantly hallowed the day, using it only for those purposes for which it was specially sacred, then we have the clearest possible testimony that, in God's estimation, it is a holy day. To state these alternatives is to answer them; for no one has ever read the fourfold history of the life of the Son of God on earth whose mind has been left in doubt on this question. No word or act of the blessed Saviour can be construed into a disrespect or even carelessness as to the Sabbath; but on the contrary, while avoiding a Pharisaical extreme, he never failed to honor its holy hours.

It may be well to notice a strong, though indirect, proof of this. When the Messiah came, he gathered about him the choicest spirits of the Jewish theocracy,—humble, and even sinful, though they were when he found them. Among the number was a small band of women, remarkable for the pure, unselfish, devoted, love which they gave him. These listened to his teachings, and watched his life through the whole period of his earthly ministry. To please him was their highest joy. When he was finally betrayed, condemned, and crucified, they still clung to him with an undying love. He was taken from the cross late on Friday afternoon,—too late for embalming before burial. These women were anxious to pay to his body this last tribute of respect. Now let us read the story as told by Luke: "That day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 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 sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared." These women were so eager to do their holy work for the Saviour's body that they went to the sepulchre very early in the morning after the Jewish Sabbath was past. Yet they had learned, from the instructions and example of our Lord, to regard the Sabbath with so much veneration as to consider it a desecration of the day to prepare upon it his body for its final burial.

So far we have sought to learn God's will as to the observance of the Sabbath. We are now to inquire into the special relations which the day bears to Him. For man, we have seen that it is a day of rest and spiritual exercise. But it is also called the Lord's Day, the Sabbath of the Lord our God. It is so styled not only because it was ordained by him, but also because he claims its hours as sacred to himself. The wife gives up her husband to his daily task, and loves him for his labors on her behalf, while she is bereft of the pleasures of his company. But when the evening meal has been eaten and the lamps are lit, she expects him to sit with her and the children around the family fireside. This is the holy family hour, and it must be held sacred for the joys and duties of the hearthstone. So the Lord says to us, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." It belongs to him and is to be devoted to his service.

The assertion of this claim to the day by God would seem to be sufficient; indeed, it is sufficient. But even if he had not preferred the claim, it would have been none the less valid. The setting apart of a portion of our time as sacred to the worship of God, is a duty, whose obligation will press itself upon every enlightened conscience, as growing out of the natural relations of man to his Creator. If man be a dependent being, he should acknowledge that dependence. If he be indebted for life, for health, for food, for all his daily comforts, to the assiduous providence of one Strong Arm, one Omniscient Eye, and one Loving Heart, it is surely becoming in him to make a suitable return of gratitude. If he be a sinner, he should confess his sin. If, despite the daily goodness of his God, he is a daily transgressor of his law, ungrateful for that goodness and disobedient to divine authority; then surely he should have some hour for penitence, in which to acknowledge his wrong and to ask forgiveness from his offended Father. If, beyond all this, he be a saved sinner, rescued from the awful consequences of his guilt by the sovereign grace of his God; saved from the death of his soul by the death of his Saviour, God's only and well beloved Son; then, who can, for a moment, question his obligation to praise and adore our

God of such infinite compassion and love? For all these things there must be time; not only time, but a set time. The engrossing pursuits of this world and the depraved tendencies of his nature, all make it necessary that some certain season be consecrated for these holy purposes. Otherwise they would certainly be neglected.

The necessity for this fixed day of worship is not only individual, it is also social. Were men isolated beings, then might each man choose a Sabbath for himself. But man is born into society. He is born one of a family, one of a civil society, one of a church. Not only as an individual does he need to thank God for his providence, confess his sins, and praise him for his salvation; but the same duties are also involved in his social relations. God is the Lord of the family, of the community, of the Church. When shall the people meet to confess their common sins, to offer their common praises, to supplicate for common blessings, to thank for common mercies, if there is no time fixed for the purpose?

THE SABBATH A COMMON AND NOT A STATUTE LAW.

What has been said so far has all been designed to converge to the establishment of one point, which is the fundamental one in the idea of the Sabbath. It is the settlement of the question, Whether the Sabbath is a moral or a positive institution.

To settle this question, we must have clear ideas as to the distinction between a moral and a positive law. These terms, as here used, are technical, and employed in a peculiar sense. In the common use of the words, a moral law may be positive, and a positive law may be moral. But, as employed in this discussion, they are mutually exclusive of each other.

A moral law is, 1. One which arises from the natural and essential relations of the beings which it governs. Obedience to parents on the part of their children is thus a natural or moral law. 2. A moral law requires no formal enactment to make it obligatory. If God had never commanded children to obey their parents, it would nevertheless be their duty to do so. A moral law may, however, be commanded; and they all are in the Book

of books. 3. A moral law is universal; that is, it is obligatory on all who sustain the natural relations out of which it arises. It is the natural duty of all children, Jewish or Gentile, Christian or heathen, to obey their parents. 4. A moral law is perpetual; that is, it must continue so long as the natural relations which produce it continue. It was the duty of Cain and Abel to obey their parents. It is the duty of every child now living to do the same. It will always be the duty of every child to obey its parents. Corresponding to this natural duty of children is the duty of their parents to love them. The love of parents to their offspring is also a natural law. A moral law, thus, is *natural, self-authenticating, universal, and perpetual*.

A positive law, on the other hand, is, 1. One which grows out of the accidental relations of those whom it governs. The duty of Abraham to sacrifice Isaac was certainly not a natural one. It arose out of that accident in his life, in which God wished to make a trial of his faith. 2. A positive law requires the enactment of competent authority to make it obligatory. Had not Abraham been commanded to slay Isaac, or had he been commanded by improper authority, his act would have been an attempt to murder. 3. A positive law is limited to the individual or the class who are specially commanded to obey it. The duty of Abraham to sacrifice his son, by no means makes it imperative on any other father to attempt the same. 4. A positive law may be temporary. The command to slay Isaac was binding upon Abraham for some three or four days. It ceased the moment that God said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad." If Abraham had persisted, he would have been a murderer. The offering of sacrifices, circumcision, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are all instances of positive institutions.

Is the Sabbath law a natural, self-evident, universal, and perpetual law? Or, is it merely accidental, partial, temporary, and positive? The Sabbath is a *natural* law; that is, it is founded upon the natural and essential relations of men. This has already been shown to our complete satisfaction. Man bears relations to all his fellow creatures and to his Creator; natural relations, which make the Sabbath a necessity. We have seen that the

very iron of our railroad tracks needs a periodical rest. The producing fields of our farms need it. Our beasts of burden need it. Our servants and employees need it. We ourselves need it, for our bodies, for our minds, for our souls. Man's relations to his Creator demand the observance of a Sabbath for worship. It is thus apparent that the Sabbath is not a mere convenient expedient, found desirable under certain conditions. It is a necessity for man, growing out of the most important facts in his own constitution and in his relations to others. This first point decides all the rest. If the necessity for the Sabbath, as founded upon man's natural relations, is once perceived, then we see that it requires no direct and formal commandment to make it obligatory; that it is a law, which must bind all men, at all times.

We declare then, again, that the Sabbath is a *self-authenticating* law. We are aware that we are putting forth a very high claim, when we make this assertion. The whole question of principles, whether in matter, mind, or morals, is one of the most interesting of the present day. The whole tendency of advancing knowledge is to lessen the number of elements in every department of inquiry. Nevertheless, we assert, that, as oxygen is a first principle in matter, and a belief in consciousness is a first truth in mind; so the obligation to keep a Sabbath is a fundamental, regulative law in morals. There may not be more than half a score of these first truths in ethics, but we maintain that the Sabbath is one of them.

When it is asserted that it is a self-evident obligation, we state exactly what we mean. As soon as any rational man perceives that his animals, his servants, his body, his mind, his soul, his relations to God, all require a Sabbath, he at once feels the obligation, without any argument to convince him. Every enlightened mind knows that the Sabbath is demanded by all the facts just stated; so that its natural obligation is immediately apparent upon the bare statement of the facts concerning it. That the propriety of the Sabbath may be seen, that its obligation as a moral law may be felt, it is not needful that any authority, human or divine, should command its observance. The fact that it

has been commanded does not disprove this, any more than the command not to steal proves that honesty is not a natural, moral obligation. Indeed, all of the fundamental moral obligations are directly enjoined in God's holy word.

Again, the Sabbath is a *universal* law; a law for all men, everywhere. It is a law for the savage and the civilised; for the American, the European, the Asian, the African; for the seaman and the landsman; for the farmer, the merchant, the miner, the manufacturer; for the rich and the poor; for the servant and his master; for the learned and the ignorant; for the professional man and the artisan; for the saint and the sinner. There are none so low that it does not come down to them with its cornucopia of blessing; there are none so high that it does not reach them with its voice of authority. It is a law for man as man.

Finally, the Sabbath is a *perpetual* law. There is nothing in it of a temporary character. There is no reason why one age should need it and another should dispense with it. Founded as it is in the very essentials of man's nature, it began with his creation; belonged to him in his Eden purity; went with him in his banishment from the garden; crossed with him in the ark, that pontoon bridge, from the old to the new world; went with him in the dispersion from Babel; and now, after six thousand years of human history, is as young and fresh as when it first began its march as the companion and benefactor of man. There has never been a period in the past when it was not needed. We cannot conceive of one in the future when it will be obsolete.

THE SABBATH, WHAT IS IT?

Its Essential Features.

The answer to this question has underlain the whole of the previous discussion. The special object which we now have in view is to distinguish between its essential and unessential features.

The Sabbath is an institution designed to meet certain felt wants of man's nature. The first of these is the need of REST.

This is a want of the body and of the mind. They who gain their bread by the honest and manly toil of daily labor with their hands, need the day to rest their wearied muscles; they whose sphere in life is to work with busy brain, not only from rosy morn to twilight eve, but until the noon of night, find that they need a time of rest.

The Sabbath is, for the soul of man, a day of WORSHIP. This does not express the whole truth, but may, to every thoughtful mind, suggest it. Indeed the Sabbath is preëminently the SOUL'S DAY. The other days are appropriated to the activities and special wants of mind and body. The Sabbath is the day for the soul; the day when its interests shall be uppermost; when its energies shall be exercised; when its needs shall be supplied. It is the day for soul-examination, for soul-confession, for soul-thankfulness, for soul-nourishment, for soul-culture. It is also, considering the chiefest of the soul's duties and pleasures, the day for soul-worship of the great Jehovah.

These are the two essential facts of the Sabbath—rest for mind and body, and worshipful activity for the soul. A day which combines these is a Sabbath, no matter when it may come, no matter what else it may have or may not have. A day which lacks both or either of these, cannot properly be called a Sabbath.

At first view these might seem rather incongruous elements. At any rate, it might seem that one was not essential to the other. This, however, is a mistake. The rest of the body is essential to the proper activity of the soul, peculiar to this day. In fact, the body rests on this day, not only for its own sake, but also that it may allow, by its quietness, a due attention to be given to the interests of the soul. The rest is thus not only an independent end, but is also a means in order to an even higher end, the culture and worship of the soul. To the brute, the Sabbath is simply a day of rest; to man, it is a day of rest and worship.

Its Unessential Elements.

There are several of these. 1. Its *memorial* character. From the creation of man to the institution of the Passover, it com-

memorated the completion of God's creative work. This is true, whether the six days of Genesis be measured by twenty-four hours, or by an immense creative cycle. The first Sabbath celebrated the close and consummation of the work; and so it continued to do, week by week, for twenty-five hundred years. At that time, it did not lose this first memorial feature; but simply, for a select portion of the human family, combined with it another. It became to the Jew, from the time of the Passover, a memorial of his wonderful deliverance, by God's help, from the slavery of Egypt. It was to him what the Fourth of July is to us, the anniversary of his independence.

We will observe that neither of these ideas is inconsistent with the essential conception of the Sabbath. They are rather helpful to it. The first memorial truth, the resting of God from his creative work, suggests the rest of man from his daily toil; the second, enkindling the gratitude of the Jew for his escape from Egyptian bondage, would well give zest to the day as a time of thankful worship to his divine Deliverer.

For four thousand years, one or both of these two great facts were commemorated by the weekly Sabbath; and they were worthy of such commemoration. But now a more important event, by far, than either of these occurs; an event in which both body and soul of every man, Jew and Gentile, have an infinite interest. The first creation is a wreck; there is a new, a recreation, which shall never fail. The first deliverance is a shadow; there is a new redemption, more costly, more glorious, from a bondage of soul worse than that of the Nile. If the first creation and the first deliverance were worthy of celebration, how much more so are these? So the Christian heart has felt; and now, for more than eighteen centuries, the Sabbath has been the perpetuating memorial of that day when the Son of God completed the regeneration, and ordained the new Passover for the sacramental host of his elect.

We see that this is right. The memorial idea is no essential part of the Sabbath; for we can easily conceive a day perfectly fitted for both rest and worship, which would nevertheless commemorate no event in human history. It is an accidental ele-

ment. As such it is helpful; but as such, it may be changed for good reasons; and may, if thought best by the Lawgiver, be dispensed with altogether.

2. The *proportion* of our time which we should give to the Sabbath is another unessential fact. There is nothing in the nature of things, prior to the teaching of experience, by which we can tell whether the Sabbath should be every third, every fifth, every seventh, every tenth, or every fifteenth day. This is a point upon which we must have positive instruction, or else wait until we can learn from actual trial how much of rest we need for our bodies, and how much of culture and worship we require for our souls. God has settled this question for us authoritatively, wisely. He knows exactly how much of our time we need for daily duties, and how much for those of the Sabbath; and he has accordingly fixed and designated every *seventh* day as the proper Sabbath for man. Had he seen that one-fifth of our days was needed for this purpose, he would have so directed; had he thought one-tenth sufficient, he would have so ordained.

A positive law, when enacted, is morally obligatory upon all to whom it applies. Still, by its very nature, it is subject to modification or repeal. So that, should the divine Lawgiver ever find reason to change the proportion of sacred to secular time, he could do so without any violation of the essential law of the Sabbath. Had our Saviour done so when he was upon the earth, or through his apostles after his ascension, it would have been entirely proper, and would have left the original Sabbath idea substantially unchanged.

Uninspired man, however, has no right to modify or nullify the laws of God. If he says that the seventh day is holy, we are rebels against his authority if we say, No, the fifth or the tenth day is the proper Sabbath. Infidel France, as we know, attempted this to her sorrow and shame. Her tenth day Sabbath bore bitter fruits for her.

We are sure that God has not selected the seventh day capriciously. It may amuse our fancy to recall to mind the several facts which seem to reveal on his part a partiality for the

number seven. There were seven cycles of creation; seven years and seven times seven years as the periods of Jewish husbandry; seven weeks from the Passover to Pentecost; seven holy sprinklings of the Levitical law; seventy years of the Babylonish captivity; and seventy weeks of the Messianic prophecy of Daniel. In the Apocalypse, the number seven is of repeated mention: seven churches, seven thunders, the dragon with seven heads and seven crowns, seven plagues, seven angels, and seven golden vials. A lunar phase is seven days; a solar ray has seven colors; we are said to have seven senses; and many diseases have morbid periods of seven days, or multiples of seven. These facts, we say, may amuse us; but they are hardly of a character to throw any positive light on this discussion. In his wisdom, our heavenly Father has told us that every seventh day is to be to us a Sabbath. For this he had a sufficient reason.

3. The *particular day of the week* on which the Sabbath shall fall is, in itself, unessential. Outside of the divine ordinance, it would matter not whether we keep the first, second, third, or any other day of the week, as sacred for rest and worship. Thus, we are told that the ancient pagan Greeks observed Monday; the Persians, Tuesday; the Assyrians, Wednesday; the Egyptians, Thursday; the Mohammedans, Friday; the Jews, Saturday; while Christians regard Sunday as the Sabbath. Indeed, were we to start on a journey around the world, our Sabbath day would be constantly changing with the daily change of our meridian. If every congregation of Christians on the earth, as they now belt its circumference, were to unite in the worship of God at noon on Sunday, to spend an hour in his praise, no two of them, fifteen degrees apart, would be engaged in the solemn service at the same time. It is not the special twenty-four hours of Sunday, at the meridian of Jerusalem, that are the holy day of this earth. It is every seventh day at each spot, where a weary body and a grateful penitent soul may be found.

That seventh day, for four thousand years, was the last day of the week. Since the resurrection morn, the Christian heart, guided by the inspired impulses of the early disciples, has recog-

nised the divine will as setting apart the first day of the seven as holy to himself. For this a full and sufficient reason is suggested to every soul that gratefully remembers Calvary, and that rejoices in the vacant tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

In addition and subordinate to this grand reason for the change, it may be that our Father would teach us by it another useful lesson. The old Sabbath taught the Jew that one day in seven was holy. As it came after a week of toil, it may have suggested to his mind that its principal purpose was to give him rest. The new Sabbath is the first day of the week, and suggests the higher thought, that in the enjoyment and faithful use of its sacred privileges, we will be better fitted for the duties, temptations, and trials of the coming days of labor. Beyond that, it teaches us that we are to give our first thoughts to our souls, our first time to God. If there is to be but one day in our last week on earth, let that day be a precious Sabbath.

Just here we may recall to our recollection the fact that the early Christians, amongst whom the Jews predominated, celebrated both the last day and the first day of the week. The last day they commonly called the Sabbath, while the first was gratefully named the Lord's day. As the Jewish element grew proportionately smaller, the observance of the old Sabbath gradually became obsolete, and the Lord's day was joyfully and lovingly substituted for it.

"On the seventh day reposing, lo! the great Creator stood,
Saw the glorious work accomplished—saw and felt that it was good;
Heaven, earth, man, and beast have being, day and night their courses
run—

First creation—infant manhood—earliest Sabbath—it is done.

On the seventh day reposing, Jesus filled his sainted tomb,
From his spirit's toil retreating, while he broke man's fatal doom;
'Twas a new creation bursting, brighter than the primal one—
'Tis fulfilment—reconcilement—'tis redemption—it is done."

Da Costa.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

The whole of the Sacred Scriptures is God's word to man.
As such, every page, and verse, and line, and word is significant.

Some portions, however, are relatively more important than others. Leaving out the direct utterances of him who spake as never man spake, there is no passage in all the volume of superior interest to that which records the ten commandments. The circumstances under which they were given, were of the most solemn character. They were written, not upon papyrus or parchment,—still less were they simply spoken,—they were written upon the enduring stone, the symbol of the everlasting. They were written, not by Moses at God's dictation, but, as we are expressly told, by the finger of God himself. When examined, their importance fully justifies the solemnity of their utterance. They are found to contain, as the Westminster Catechisms say, a summary of the moral law. Our duty to God and to man is all found comprehended in these few but momentous words.

The fourth commandment occupies a peculiarly significant place in this divine collection. It is manifest that the first of these commands have reference to our duty to God, while the last as plainly relate to our human obligations. To which of these two classes does the fourth belong? It is commonly said, as our *Catechism for Young Children* teaches, that the first four commandments teach our duty to God, and the last six our duty to our fellow-men. These statements are true, and yet they do not express the full truth.

It is true that the fourth teaches us a part of our duty to God. It tells us that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord our God; that he rested upon that day, and that we must, for this reason, keep it holy. One of the chief objects of the day is to bring God, in all of his relations, before the human soul, and to remind us of our obligations to him. In the hurry and bustle of a busy, selfish world, we are so apt to forget him, and to neglect our duty to him, that we need the holy Sabbath to bring us to his footstool, and to teach us the sweetness of a constant dwelling near his mercy-seat.

So much is undoubtedly true. But is this all of the Sabbath? Is it exhausted in its direct relations to the Deity? Manifestly not. There are other and important duties peculiar to the law of the Sabbath, which have direct reference to our duties to the

lower animals, to our fellow-men, and to ourselves. We are solemnly enjoined to make it a Sabbath to our man-servant, to our maid-servant, to our cattle, and to the stranger that is within our gates, as well as to ourselves.

Indeed it is the striking peculiarity of this commandment, that it has reference to the *entire circle of our relations*: beginning with the brutes, and ending with our God. The Sabbath is thus the universal law. It is this for three reasons: 1. All are expected to obey it. God himself, as he tells us, reverences the day; and he requires all of his earthly children to do the same. 2. It concerns all the relations which man sustains. He owes Sabbath duties to the animals, to his fellows, to himself, and to his God. 3. It is *the conservator of all the other commandments*. As it is the great duty-day of the soul, it brings all of the obligations of man to the bar of his conscience, that he may question himself as to them all. For this reason a Sabbath-loving man is a God-fearing and a man-regarding soul. For this reason a Sabbath-keeping community is always not only a religious, but a moral, just, and humane society.

In the light of these facts, the position of the fourth commandment is deeply significant. It is not placed in the midst of those relating directly to our divine duties, nor in the midst of those referring immediately to our human obligations. It is by the side of both, and between the two classes—God having placed it there, as though it were the **KEYSTONE OF THE GREAT ARCH OF HUMAN DUTY**. Such indeed it is; and he who removes it from this God-given place, must not be surprised if he finds all the other commandments fall to ruin with it.

HOW IS THE SABBATH TO BE SANCTIFIED?

This is the practical point of the discussion; and yet a very few words upon it will be sufficient to guide every honest, intelligent mind. When we learn the purpose of the day, we know how it should be observed. A work-day should be spent in work; a sport-day in sport; a fast-day in fasting. The Sabbath is a rest-worship day, and should therefore be passed in restful worship, and in worshipful rest.

It is a REST day. "In it thou shalt not do any work." This is the letter of the law. It has been unfolded and interpreted for us by the infallible Lawgiver himself. He tells us plainly what we may do with propriety on this day.

1. Works of *necessity*. Matthew xii. 1-4. The disciples satisfied their hunger, on their way to the synagogue, by rubbing the grain from the heads of wheat, which they plucked by the wayside. Our Saviour justifies this by the example of David eating the shew-bread. Here we learn that what is needful to the support of life may be done upon the Sabbath. But does this justify travelling, supervising our farms, social visiting, and extensive cooking upon this day? It certainly does not. If this rule were kept in its spirit, it would be found that there is very little physical labor which is necessary to be done upon this day.

A conscientious regard for the day will lead us to anticipate the enjoyment of its rest, by seeking to do all that is possible to be done on the day preceding the Sabbath. For example, if we are travelling, we can arrange our journey in such a way that the close of Saturday will find us either at home, or at some place appropriate for the Lord's day. If we are housekeepers, we will prepare, by extra labor upon Saturday, to save ourselves and others all unnecessary work upon the day of rest.

Here it is proper for us to remember that there is a peculiar temptation to violate the rights of others. We may enjoy the Sabbath of rest for ourselves, and we may suffer nothing but an inevitable necessity to deprive us of it; but are we equally careful that our horses and cattle, our servants and employés, shall have the same privileges undisturbed? We may like an elaborate meal upon Sunday; and for us there may be no labor in its preparation. But does that justify us in expecting or even allowing our industrious wives, or our faithful servants, to spend most of the day of rest in thus ministering to our enjoyment? It is too often the case, that they who most need a respite from labor are thoughtlessly or wickedly deprived of it.

It may be asked, Does the running of ferries, of steamers, of railroads, and of furnaces, come under the law of necessary work? To this, it may be answered in brief, that neither the running of

ferries, of railroads, nor of iron furnaces, can be properly regarded as a work of necessity, suitable for the Sabbath. Their operation on this day is not essential to life or to its reasonable comforts. In case it should be, then it would be lawful. The running of steamers on our rivers or inland lakes is not necessary upon the Lord's day. Upon the high seas, where more than six days is necessarily consumed in making the voyage, there is no violation of the Sabbath law. In iron furnaces it is necessary to keep up the blast, but beyond this nothing more need or should be done. In all such cases, where there is a sincere desire to do right, but few mistakes will be made. Too often, however, the love of money overcomes our sense of right.

2. The Master tells us, (Matthew xii. 10-13,) that there is another class of deeds appropriate for this day. He heals a man with a withered arm. This is a typical act: for by it he means to teach us that all acts of *mercy* are suited to the Sabbath. "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." This does not mean that we are to devote the whole of its sacred hours (except in rare emergencies) to labors of compassion. This would deprive us of the rest that we need. It does mean, however, that in visiting the sick and in relieving distress, we are not violating the proprieties of the day.

3. There is still a third class of labor which is suited to the sanctity of the Lord's Day. Our Saviour, Matthew xii. 5, says, that the Jewish priests, in the offering of the temple sacrifices on the Sabbath, though it involved much labor, were guilty of no wrong. Indeed, the ministers of religion of every age have been compelled, by the very nature of the case, to do some of their hardest work upon the Sabbath. The sexton must take care of the sanctuary, and see that it is comfortable for the worshippers. Mothers must make their children ready for the Sunday-school, and for the hour of public worship. Teachers must give one hour's earnest, honest labor to the pupils of their class at the Sabbath-school. Parents must teach their children and servants the truths of God's word. All of these may and must be done upon the Lord's Day; and all of these involve work. In country districts, there is the additional labor of harnessing a conveyance

to carry us to the house of praise. All this is needful, and all this is right. Such labors may be classed as works of *worship*.

It may be well, however, even here to guard ourselves against possible error. If we work our horses all the week, we should not use them on the Sabbath—not even to carry us to church. This may be easily avoided, even by the poor. Let the faithful animal rest upon Saturday afternoon; and then we may use him half of the Lord's Day.

Again, it is possible to run into a ruinous extreme in the religious labors of the Sabbath. There are those who teach in a morning Sunday-school, attend the regular forenoon service, teach another class in an afternoon school, and join the congregation in the evening worship. Some would insist that one Sabbath-school and one public service is enough for the great majority; indeed, is enough for all men. One of the evils of our religious life is that it is too public. We need more of meditative, private, closet piety.

The rest of the Sabbath is not violated by works of necessity, of mercy, or of worship. But let us be careful that we do not mistake the nature of its rest. Is the day to be spent in sleep? Is idleness the rest which it enjoins? Are its hours to be passed in frivolous dissipation? Do we need a beer-garden, or a pleasure promenade or drive, to enable us to rest properly on this day? If we were brutes, then these things might be so. Man needs sleep, he needs quiet, he needs relaxation. But upon the Lord's day he can secure all these, and yet be well employed during all of its sunlit hours.

Here we are naturally led to remember that the Sabbath is not for rest alone. It is a day for WORSHIP; for the culture of the soul. For man, this is its highest, most needed purpose. The whole of the Sabbath is to be devoted, as far as possible, to this object. When we consider the necessary interruptions which the most earnest soul cannot avoid, it will be found that there will not be more than ten or twelve hours left to the solemnly important duties of the soul. Three or four of these will be occupied in the exercises of public worship. These, every heart that appreciates the day will greatly enjoy. It will say

weekly, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord." "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

"Beyond my brightest joy,
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise."

Some six or eight hours we may have every Lord's Day for our private religious duties. If we are parents, one-half of this time we must give to our children. No part of our life can be more solemnly interesting than this. Outside of a daily example, no influence which we exert upon children equals the work of Sunday training. If we neglect it altogether, then, of course, we raise our children, measurably, as though they were heathen. If we give but a few hurried moments to it, we will teach them that religion is of such trivial importance that it may be properly despised. If we make it a task to ourselves and to them; if we impress them with the idea that their Sunday training, their reading of the Bible, their study of the Catechism, their religious conversation, is a kind of punishment; then they will soon learn to hate it all. If, however, with love for them, love for the work, and love for our Saviour, we seek to make it a serious but pleasant service, we shall find that, by God's blessing, they will regard it as the Eden hour of the week; and that it will mould their young hearts into a sincere faith and earnest love to the Redeemer.

A few hours we can claim exclusively for our own souls. These can and will be happily and profitably spent in the study of God's word, in prayer for his grace, in meditation upon his goodness, in self-examination, in communings with the Saviour, in storing the mind with religious knowledge, and in plannings for future usefulness. Thus shall we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus shall we bring

heaven down to our own hearts, and realise the richest blessings of the Lord's Day.

"How sweet a Sabbath thus to spend,
In hope of one that ne'er shall end!"

The Sabbath is a day of rest and worship. On it, let us rest as worshippers; and let us worship as resting. Rightly understood, its rest is worship; and its worship is rest.

While the Sabbath is the religious day of the week, no truly pious heart will limit his religion to its holy hours. If we spend the Lord's Day aright, it should leave such a savor of holiness within our hearts as to sanctify them for all the week. Piety which shows itself upon the Sabbath alone, is of a very suspicious character.

Our use and our enjoyment of the Lord's Day are an excellent practical test of our Christian character. If we make it a real Sabbath, and enjoy it as such, welcoming its regular return as the feast-day of the soul, then we may thank God that he has thus renewed our hearts, and given to us a true spiritual appetite. If, however, we make it a day of carnal pleasure, and neglect or despise its spiritual privileges, we have reason to fear that our heart is not right in the sight of God, and our soul is not meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

THE SABBATH AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Without undertaking an elaborate discussion of this point, we shall endeavor to give, in a few words, the true relations of the Sabbath to the civil government.

1. The State should not command the discharge of a religious duty. The reason of this is that it is outside of the sphere of the State's authority; as the lawyers say, it is *ultra vires*. A physician, as such, cannot prescribe to one of his patients as to how he shall conduct his farming. This is no part of his legitimate professional business. So the State has no authority in religious matters; and a uniform experience has proven that all intrusion by it into this sphere has been unwise and hurtful in its consequences.

2. The State commands no act whose influences affect the

agent only. For this reason, there are no penal statutes against the attempt to commit suicide. This is the highest offence which one can commit against himself. Yet the laws of the commonwealth are silent with regard to it. It is not an answer to say that it bears its own punishment; that the self-murderer is his own executioner. This would be true, if every attempt at suicide were successful. Let a man make an effort to destroy himself, and fail; there is no penal law by which he can be indicted for an assault with intent to kill. Let a man destroy his own property without injuring that of his neighbor, and there is no civil law to condemn him. The reason of all this is, that the State is essentially a social institution, and is designed for the administration of our social, secular relations.

3. It is the province of the State to prevent any of its subjects trespassing upon the rights of others.

Applying these principles to the case before us, we are prepared to say:

1. That the State cannot properly require its subjects to observe any day of religious worship. It would not be proper for the State to enact a law declaring Sunday to be the Lord's day, and commanding all persons to observe it by reading the Bible and attending upon the services of the sanctuary. The State has no authority in such matters.

2. The civil government cannot require any individual to refrain from work and to rest on the Lord's day, unless his working interferes with the rest or worship of his neighbor. The State cannot punish a man for making shoes or cutting wood upon Sunday. However wrong these things may be, they are individual acts, involving the actors alone, and therefore the State cannot interfere.

3. The State may and should forbid any man to require either his animals, his servants, or his employees, to work upon the day of rest. This statement is founded upon the truth that the Sabbath, as a day of weekly rest, is a need, and therefore the natural right of every working man and working beast. It is their right, just as life and liberty, and the possession of their honestly

acquired property, and just and humane treatment, are their rights. As such, it must be enforced by the State.

Just here, another point may be made. One day of the week would, of itself, suit the State for a Sabbath of rest as well as another. It is important, however, nay, it is essential, that in every community there should be some *one* day recognised as the weekly rest. How shall the State fix that day? As a civil institution, it can properly be done only by its legitimate sovereign legislative power. In this Republic of ours the people are sovereign, and, through their State and National Legislatures, can determine which shall be the day of rest. As nine-tenths of our people are Christians, and, as such, observe Sunday as the religious Sabbath, it is the duty of the State authorities, as has been done, to declare the same day the civil Sabbath of the land.

4. The State is bound to protect its citizens in the enjoyment of their religious rights. The great mass of our people are Christians. As a conscientious duty they assemble on the Sabbath for the social worship of God. In this they are exercising a natural right, and are interfering with the rights of none others. They deserve the protection of the State in the unmolested enjoyment of this right; and no blare of trumpets, nor beating of drums, no hammering of iron nor rumbling of wagons along the stony streets, should be allowed to disturb them.

5. The State has no right to violate its own Sabbath. For wise reasons, it has made Sunday the civil Sabbath; has declared it a legal holiday; refuses to sanction the legality of business done on that day, except in emergencies; and yet the National Government of this country openly and persistently nullifies its own law, by requiring the carrying and distribution of the mails on its own appointed day of rest. How can its postal employees enjoy the Sabbath, when it requires them to work on that day?

6. In this, the State does a double wrong: it wrongs those whom it employs, and it wrongs those whom it does not. It wrongs its employees by depriving them of the rest of the Sabbath; but it deeply wrongs every Christian citizen of the country.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in this country has, more than once, forbidden its members to assist in this desecration of the Sabbath by acting as postmasters. In this it has done right. In fact, how could it do otherwise? If it be not wrong to work in the postal service on the Sabbath, then it is not wrong to work elsewhere. By no possibility can this be made a work of necessity; still less one of mercy or of worship.

We turn aside here, just a moment, to say that those Christians who attend upon the post-office on the Lord's day to get their mail, (and many of whom spend a large portion of its holy hours in reading their secular newspapers,) are guilty of aiding in this national violation of the Sabbath.

But the point which we are now making is this: no Christian can habitually desecrate the Lord's day; his conscience forbids it. No Christian, therefore, can properly enter the postal service of our country, where he is required to work regularly upon the Sabbath. This violation of the civil and religious Sabbath by our National Government, cuts off a large portion of its best citizens from a participation in a large measure of the civil service of the country. The Christian citizen has a right to be a postmaster; but the Government, by violating its own Sabbath, deprives him of that right.

THE SABBATH A PROPHECY OF THE MILLENNIUM AND OF HEAVEN.

Each recurring Lord's Day is a glorious privilege in itself. They are the pearls strung upon the thread of time; the oases in the desert of trial; the pleasant camping-places in the journey of life. All the precious things we know are associated with the Sabbath. Home, father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife, husband, children—all belong to it; for it is the home-day of the hearthstone. Bible, sanctuary, mercy-seat, the cross—all are linked in hallowed union with it. Tears, holy tears, belong to it; penitent tears, grateful tears, believing tears, hopeful tears.

Yes, hopeful tears. Its pleasures are not simply of the past, or of the present. The soul's vision grows keen in its pure and translucent atmosphere. It looks beyond the struggling and sometimes disheartening conflict of the present. It peers through

the clouds, the smoke, the mist, and sees the glory-lighted plains of victory in the distance. Those far-off table-lands come near; and there the soul sees the sword beaten into a ploughshare, the spear into a pruning-hook. The nations have forgotten the diabolism of war, and have learned the arts of peace. Knowledge has increased in the earth. Ignorance and superstition, error and fanaticism, are gone. Justice now waves her golden wand, and righteousness sits upon the throne, while earth and all its inhabitants "keep jubilee a thousand years." As each week has had its Lord's Day of rest and worship, so the centuries shall finally enjoy their millennial Sabbath.

But under the inspiration of the quiet twilight hour of the Lord's Day, the soul looks even beyond the millennial glory of earth. It reads, "There remaineth therefore a rest, a Sabbath-keeping, to the people of God." This truth gives wings to its faith, and it mounts up above the earth and beyond the stars; and in that "city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," it finds that there is a Sabbath of pure rest and holy worship; not for a few hours between a rising and a setting sun; not even for a brief millennial day; but forever and forever, in the presence of God and in the company of Jesus; a Lord's Day that shall never know a sorrow, and never know an end.