

So much has been written about the entrance, that we fear this "Highway" may have seemed like a succession of commencements. There is a continual advance, and many distinct stages of progress, in this walk of faith, but nevertheless the entrance is mostly as clearly defined to the Christian as was the passage of the Jordan to the Israelites redeemed out of Egypt. Alas, that so many who have beheld the grapes of Eschol, who have heard the united testimony of the faithful spies, and who have been urged to an immediate entrance, should have shrunk from stepping upon the land, and, through unbelief, come short of the Rest that remaineth for the people of God! It is indeed, they argue, for the specially gifted of heaven, but "not for me"—forgetting that all distinctions between men have, in God's sight, been obliterated, first by their common ruin, and then by the common grace opened to all by the cross of Christ. Such know how they would be the first to answer a similar plea in regard to the forgiveness of sins; but they strangely cling to their unbelief, and the alleged impossibility of such as they are ever entering into Rest. Once more entreating them to allow such unbelief no apology or quarter, we would speak a little to those who, having believed, "do enter into Rest."

Although we look forward to the time when the Church, the Bride of Christ, shall find rest in her Lord's bosom, when Israel shall rest in the land under the rule of Messiah, and when even the dumb creation on the manifestation of the sons of God shall rest from its groaning: yet there is a present Rest, a Sabbath-keeping of the soul (Heb. iv. 9, margin), into which many hearts have definitely entered by faith. Self has ceased to be the centre of its own little world, and One worthy of being so has become the absorbing object of its affections, existence, and hopes. As is expressed of an earthly affection by the poet—

"Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight."

The soul has learned and is learning the lesson of forgetfulness of self, and of all that is behind. The vision of Jesus has not only put sins away, but human righteousness vanishes before it. The light of day not only dispels the darkness, but it hides the stars which shone in the darkness. Not only are past sins forgotten, but every ground of self-confidence, and even the soul's past progress; for it is reaching forward, in an infinite progression, toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

As the Christian advances on the "Highway of holiness," occupied with Jesus, rather than with temptation or sin, there is found the simplicity of a child, who does not analyze his emotions, but with naturateness gives play to them. The effort to love and the self-reproach of the heart for wandering affections are gone, for the soul has learned to dwell in love, and thus to dwell in God. (1 John iv. 16.) Although this Rest may not come in all its fullness at once, when the soul first finds victory over the world, it is the result of walking in the Spirit, and it grows imperceptibly as a holy habit in the Christian, who becomes conscious of it rather by its results than by any effort in its attainment. If effort there be, it is the effort to cease from his own works, that he may enter into Rest.

Thus the Christian becomes as a little child, and is trained in the kingdom of heaven, which consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. He knows his deliverance from the power of darkness, and his translation into the kingdom of God's dear Son, as a present, inward, realized fact. He finds the accomplishment of that promise, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be beloved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to