

## THE RIGHT TO REST.—No. 3.

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But other reasons than those presented in the previous articles may be considered valid as concerns one's right,—yes, one's duty, toward himself and friends, when, after years of faithful service, comes the question as to whether or not the details of Association work shall longer claim his care.

There may have been no hypercritical allusions by either jealous or thoughtless tongues concerning either the man's aims or his methods. Although very active, he may neither by faction nor by clique have been viewed as a boss, or a usurper. Nothing unpleasant may ever have reached his ear from the ever-present face-friend or back-foe. Nor may there have been rivals who desired his place, nor yet men who did not themselves care to serve the society, but, notwithstanding, delighted in spreading insinuations concerning those who are ever making sacrifices of time and money in behalf of the society.

All innuendoes, all unkind criticisms such as these may have been kept from his ears by his real friends, to whom they had been purposely told or slyly repeated, but who refused to please the persons making such attacks, by transmitting their remarks to the man for whose ears they had been so insidiously uttered. He may have been fully advised concerning remarks made by personal antagonists, and either indifferent to their processes, or unwilling to withdraw from affairs more important than personal discussions. All inside the Association may be, and may ever have been pleasant to this man of Association work and sacrifice, and yet he may justly have reasons for desiring rest.

Be this as it may, is it not sufficiently valid for him to say—I am tired, very tired? Or, may he not ask—Am I not now old enough to have earned a needed rest?

Again, men's tastes change, their ambitions are not always such as they were when in youth. Nor in the yellowness of age are they the same as in preceding days of youthful strength. There may come a time in the record of the man, when in his very prime, without apparent cause, without a reason that can be formulated into words, problems that until recently held his enthusiasm, become a task instead of a pleasure. Gone, he knows not why, are the ambitions that possessed him the preceding year—or all the years that lie behind. No longer does the heart spring when present themselves matters that once gave inspiration. Former sources of joy become now insipid, the pleasures of former works are now as irksome tasks. A change that simply *is*, has come unannounced. The man no longer is the man he was in former times. Appreciating these conditions better and more fully than can friend or acquaintance, he now craves the rest that change of effort gives him. But a short time previously it would have been a pleasure to go on in Association affairs—now *pleasure* means the dropping of all such complications. He craves to be relieved, he asks it in all kindness to others, and in justice to himself. He has no excuse other than a desire to *rest*—he offers none other than a longing begotten of weariness.

No bitterness is in his heart—he is as anxious as ever in behalf of the progress of the Society, yet he craves nothing further in Society responsibilities. To him

the Association's cause is yet dear, the friends of the Association are as close and beloved as formerly. And yet, he wishes to rest—he needs the mind tranquility that comes in rest.

The fact is, the current of his life has insidiously changed. The old is gone, a new has taken its place. He is no longer the man of times gone by—to continue him by persuasion or otherwise in his place or elsewhere, is both to wrong the man, and risk the good of the Society.

Indifference is now his part—duty may hold him in place, but duty cannot replace enthusiasm and zeal. To be indifferent to a cause is to become dissatisfied, to be dissatisfied is to become a fault-finder—from fault-finding to peevishness and personalities is but a step. The danger of all this lies before any man who feels the touch of indifference and asks rest both as a right to himself, and for the sake of the Society. In such a case as this, it is the duty, and should be the pleasure of an Association, to finally help this man to do his last, best service to himself.

Nor is it our part, as Society members, to insist on a reason for the desire to resign activity. Valid reasons can perhaps not even to himself be given. Is it not our duty to graciously and gratefully thank the man who has so long and so faithfully given us his time? Is it not our duty to look upon his past services as privileges we have enjoyed, and by which the Society has profited? Is it not our duty to not only acquiesce in his request, but to help this friend who needs rest, to the rest that comes in the needful change? Life's altered hopes, ambitions and ideals sooner or later involve every man who moves in the world of thought and action.

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*Later—(1920).* These years ago this writer prepared three manuscripts on the subject, "The Right to Rest." Two have been lost, perhaps never to be found. The third is this day taken from the old files and read, not without profit to himself.

Lest some friend imagine that he held himself then in view, he will now state that it was another, who no longer requires rest such as then was needed.

Lest another friend might ask, does this old manuscript appeal because you now, after passing the three score years and ten milestone, seek relief from care—are you becoming peevish and bitter, or indifferent—he will reply, Friends old and new are as dear as they could ever have been. The hours of work each day are as many as in middle life. May they be so to the end.

But, comes now the necessity of closing the chapter, of picking up and re-reading fragments such as this, "The Right to Rest," of destroying correspondence that might bring pain to others, of burying from sight all evidences that speak of stormy times gone by, of looking upon human differences in the passing along as natural and necessary incidents in life, of maintaining his attempt to follow the lasting motto—"Faith, Hope and Charity" and, may the records show that of these, "the last shall be first."

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