

Salvation Inwrought and Wrought Out.

Metaphysicians have woven many a complex fabric of thought, touching the connection of human and divine agency, in the development of Divine life in the soul. And speculation may find it an endless theme.—And yet there is a practical view of it which is eminently simple and fully satisfactory, for all practical uses. We are exhorted to work out our salvation, because God works it in us. Here the two agencies are set in mutual relations, as intimate and necessarily connected, as in drawing in and the throwing out of breath in the functions of natural life. We must breathe out the breath of spiritual life, because God breathes it into us. All man's agencies in the religious life, may be easily comprehended under the idea of exhaling the breath which the Holy Spirit of life has breathed into him. And God's agencies may be expressed by his inbreathing the breath of Divine life into us.

If this be a true illustration, it is plain that we can breathe out no more than God breathes into us, and that God will breathe into us no more than we breathe out. The functions of life can be stopped by a refusal either to inhale or to exhale the breath; and those of Divine life may be stopped, either by God's withholding the breath he breathes into us, or by our suppressing that breath, and refusal to exhale it. Or to change the form of the illustration, we have need to be careful, both as to the in-breathing and as to the out-breathing.—We are to know that all our life is to come from God, and to open our hearts to him by constant and fervent prayer, that they may be invigorated by the breath of his life. And we are to be as careful that our active powers, animated by this breath, shall be kept in exercise. Thus the breath both inhaled and exhaled, will have full expansion.

If this be so, we see the folly of the excuse for inaction, which may draw from their dependence on Divine agency. The case of such may be fitly represented by one carefully holding his breath, and refusing to spend that which God has already given him, because he is dependent on God for the next, and he knows not whether God will give him another. He thinks to himself, "I cannot breathe out the air, which is now in my lungs, for the supplies for the next breath are not in myself. I must wait till God insures me the next breath, before I dare to release that which I now have." But the healthy man breathes right on, pouring out that which rushes freely in at every expansion of his lungs. And his in-breathing and out-breathing mutually aid each other. So the unbeliever caviling at the economy of grace, which supplies the breath of Divine life from above, pleads that he can do nothing, because he can only work out what God works in him—because he has not been set forth to live a life independently of the Great Source of life—because he cannot live without drawing in as well as pouring out his breath.

Metaphysically, there is a great mystery in this matter of breathing. But practically nothing is easier. It is the point of comparison for the easiest things to be done. We say of them, they are as easy as it is to breathe. So metaphysically, there are inextricable difficulties about human and Divine agencies in Divine life. But to the humble Christian, who lives by faith, it is as natural as breath to work out salvation, while God works in him both to will and to do. This is indeed the breathing process of his Divine life.

The wonder is, that professed theologians should find a stumbling block here, in the very centre of the field of their inquiry—in the simple fact that God works in us both to will and to do. One of Calvin's opponents found in his writings, which are in Latin, the expression—*operatur in nobis velle*, "works in us to will" and pronounced it one of Calvin's dreadful dogmas—not knowing that it was the very words of the Latin translation of the Bible.—It is strange that men learned in the Bible, should find a "dreadful dogma" in that which gives us the very process of the soul's respiration.

Isaiah's Vision of Christ's Glory.

It was God whom Isaiah saw—it was God whom all the host of heaven worshipped—it was God who sat upon the throne so lofty, so white, so radiant; but it was God in my nature—God in the flesh of man. And if it be further asked, to what period of Emmanuel's history the vision belongs, we would say that the prophet saw him at the time when, "having purged our sins, he went on high, and sat

down at the right hand of the majesty of God." Once there was a man on earth who had the form of a "servant," and was "without any comeliness for which he might be desired."—That man was Jesus! But now he has dipped his raiment in the sun, "and is clothed with these royal garments down to the feet."—Once a mob surrounded a helpless prisoner, and cried, "Crucify, crucify!" That was Jesus. But now, "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." "Once they took a man and platted a fillet of sharp thorns for his diadem, and pressed it cruelly upon his temples. That was Jesus! But "on his head now are many crowns." Once they hung a man upon a cross, and great was his shame, and awful his agony. That was Jesus! But "now honor and majesty are before him—strength and beauty are in his sanctuary." Once a man went down, not merely into the grave, but descended into the lower parts of the earth." That was Jesus! But "now he has ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." At Isaiah's date, Jesus, it is true, had neither been manifested or slain—far less exalted.—Nevertheless the vision anticipates all events connected with him; and conducting us amidst the heavens after that the Son of God has returned thither, shows us the man of grief and conflict, now "the only potentate."—Our Lord has been to earth—he has been at Bethlehem—in the wilderness—in the garden—on the cross!—but in the very flesh in which he contended and vanquished, he has entered again within the veil, "to reign before his ancients gloriously!"

What a Saviour, then, is our Saviour!—His visage was so marred—more than any man—and his form more than the sons of men; but "behold my servant! he hath prospered; and so shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high." Men and brethren, look and wonder! The green earth, lying under the rays of evening, is beautiful—the still waters, gliding in sweet murmurs to the deep are pleasant—the stars of midnight are glorious in their very silence. What more bright and more sublime than the sun when it prepares to run, like a bridegroom, its race? Yet in all these there is no beauty, no sweetness, no lustre compared to what beams forth from the man Christ Jesus, "sitting on his throne." Most lovely is the world to you—most excellent all the world contains—now ever on your lips!—now near your heart!—But, O! if once the soul has had a view of Christ in his gloriousness, there only will it rest. There, in one surpassing beam, blaze all the rays of the infinite, supreme, eternal, holy Godhead, and we cannot help exclaiming with David, "O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who has set thy glory above the heavens."

A Selfish Religion.

"Self," says the pious and learned Halyburton, "was the animating principle of the form of religion I observed. I desired to have as much religion as would save me from hell, and take me to heaven, and no more."—The sentence just quoted was written by Halyburton, after he had obtained a good hope through grace. He was delivered from resting upon a foundation which, it is to be feared, is the only support of the religion of many professing Christians.

Those who desire religion only for the safety that it affords, may be sure that their religion is selfish and unsound. The truly converted man loves holiness for its own sake. He would desire to be delivered from sin, even if it were certain that no painful consequences would follow indulgence in it. He loves to do God's will.

Another characteristic of a selfish religion, is reliance upon one's own exertions for acceptance with God. There are those who think that heaven will be given them if they devote themselves to the service of God. They know that their obedience is not perfect, and hence their claim to heaven is not perfect; but this defect, they suppose, will be remedied by the merits of Christ. They rely for acceptance with God upon their resolution and effort in connection with the merits of Christ. They regard Christ's merits as making up for deficiency of their own.

The truly converted man does not rely upon his own resolutions and efforts in the slightest degree. He relies solely upon the merits of Christ. He has been brought to see that a holy God can be satisfied with nothing short of a perfect righteousness. He knows that he cannot reach that perfection; that he must have

the perfect righteousness of Christ or perish. He strives to obey God not because he expects heaven in consequence, but because he desires to meet the obligations he is under to God; because he loves God.—*N. Y. Observer.*

Preaching the Doctrine of Election.

Sometime since we were assisting an Old School brother, in a Church to which he stately ministered, at a communion season, and in one of our discourses we were led by the text to speak passingly and briefly of the doctrine of election. Though we said but little, and did not give the doctrine, by any means, much pre-eminence, as our general subject did not require it, he seemed to be glad that we had said no more, and expressed rather an aversion to the discussion of the topic to any considerable extent. The feelings of this brother were by no means singular; and the occurrence suggested to us the question, Why the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, as exhibited in electing grace, is so much avoided? It cannot be because it is not plainly revealed, for it stands out clearly on the pages of the Bible. It cannot be because it is not important, for, if it had not been, God would not have revealed it so prominently. Properly understood and believed, it has a most important influence on Christian experience and practice, and, indeed, it is impossible to form the highest description of Christian character without it. It may be preached so as to produce much vain jangling, or so that some will "wrest it as they do the other Scriptures to their own destruction;" and yet again, it may be so presented as to exalt God and humble man, and wake up hope in his ruined heart. The Scriptures never present the doctrine as a mere matter of speculation, but always in its practical or experimental bearings. The apostle Paul, after discussing it thoroughly in the ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, closes with the practical application, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is your reasonable service."—This truth is here classed among the mercies of God; and rightly, too, for if there were no election there would be no salvation. If God did not choose man, and call him, he never would come, and there would be no encouragement to preach the Gospel. But we write not to explain or discuss the doctrine just now, but to urge our brethren to study and preach it more. Properly understood and presented, it will awaken the warmest gratitude in Christian hearts, and will break down the proud confidence of a sinner, when other truths seem to fail.—*Central Chris. Herald.*

Renovating Power of the Bible.

The influence of the Bible upon the moral powers of man possesses ineffable value. Here the Bible acts with a sort of instantaneous impulse. It assumes an authority which supercedes every other law, and controls every purpose of the will. Here it solves every moral doubt, not by the tardy process of reasoning, but by the speedy decision of a well-informed conscience. Here it exerts a power in determining the conduct from which there is no appeal, casting down vain imaginations, and communicating a holy energy to enfeebled, degenerate nature. In confirmation of this idea, I could refer to the records of piety in every age.

It has been my lot, to occupy a section of country far removed from the seat of your benevolent operations. The South, on which the indulgence of Providence has conferred so many advantages of soil and climate, like other places, has felt the salutary influence of the Bible question. The increase of copies, has invited an increase of readers, and the reading has resulted in a melioration of morals. At a late anniversary which I there witnessed, when the annual report of one of your auxiliaries was exhibited, a gentleman who had exercised high judicial functions, and who had not at the time entertained much partiality for the Scriptures, stated, among other things which had come under his own observation, that the augmentation of Bibles in his circle of duty, had diminished the frequency of criminal cases, and penal inflictions. That many places where he had been in the habit of administering justice, and where he had beheld the most debasing atrocities of immoral conduct, were so changed in the space of a few years, as to present a new moral aspect; that instead of outrage and profanation, he had seen the sobriety and uprightness which belong to good members of society and useful citizens.

Under the existing system of pious effort, the Bible travels with the hardy emigrant, who goes to explore the wilderness in quest of a new home. It makes a part of the furniture of his rude cabin, and supplies a topic of useful and pious conversation for himself, his wife and little ones.

Is there no Devil?

An Episcopal clergyman travelling in England relates the following dialogue as having occurred in an omnibus. It is another "short method" of disposing of the Universalist doctrine of no devil.

First Universalist. (Addressing his friend.) Well, sir, were you at the Hall last evening to hear our friend Rushey?

Second Universalist. No, I was not.

F. U. That was a pity, for Rushey did the business manfully; you know the subject *whether there is any evidence of the being and personality of the devil.* I assure you he gave the most solid and positive proofs that there is *no devil.* And, indeed, there cannot be found now-a-days, any man of common sense who believes in the existence of the devil, or who will attempt to prove such a doctrine; I say, (looking our divine full in the face) no man of common sense can believe in such an absurdity.

Divine. Sir, I lay claim to common sense, without pretending to anything more, and I believe that there is a devil.

F. U. Ah! do you sir? do you, indeed? I am astonished, I am astonished! Believe there is a devil! believe there is a devil! after what Mr. Rushey has said, and many others besides, who have with equal clearness proved the contrary. O, no, sir, there is no devil! it is only a trick of the priests; there is no devil.

D. I suppose, sir, you believe in the Scriptures.

F. U. O, yes, sir, to be sure I do: it was from the Scriptures Mr. Rushey gathered his proofs.

D. Well, then, do we not read again and again of the devil in the Scriptures?

F. U. Truly, sir, truly; but *devil* means only an *evil conscience!*

D. Ah, indeed! an evil conscience; an evil conscience; let us try it: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them"—an *evil conscience* came also among them! and the Lord said unto Satan and the Lord said unto an *evil conscience.*

F. U. O, sir, you need not go any farther there—to be sure, it does not mean *evil conscience* there.

D. Well, sir, we will try it in another case; "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil"—to be tempted of an *evil conscience.*

F. U. (A little mortified.) Why, yes, it does not seem to hold good there neither.

D. Let us try it once more: "And there was a good way off an herd of swine feeding. So the devils—the *evil conscience*—besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine; and he said unto them, Go; and when they—they—the *evil conscience*—were come out, they—the *evil conscience*—went into the herd of swine.

The evil conscience of the Universalist was troubled and he was dumb.

"The World hath not Known Thee."

THEN what hath the world known?—Not known God! Not known him with whom it has to do! Not known its Savior—its best Friend! What then does it know, to purpose? If you inquire of the world, it will not only tell you, that the present age in particular is the most illuminated of any; but it will tell you of its wonderful discoveries in science, its great knowledge in politics, its progress in the arts, &c. Some will profess to tell you what progress religion has made in the world; and they will go on to say more, as knowing what progress it will make; the world is so illuminated—so comprehensive!

Now, with all this knowledge, discovery, and instruction, I read the text, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee!" Not known thee! and yet so wise? With all its little discoveries, cannot it discern the things belonging to its peace? Then, it is but telling me of the bustle and industry of ants—of the ingenuity and politics of bees! All this is trifling to him who wants a shelter.

AN APHORISM.—The true value of any thing is its worth in eternity—what it will bring in another world.—*John Wesley.*