

privilege. But best of all in St. John: *Behold . . . that we SHOULD BE CALLED and WE ARE the sons of God.* In this however, as in all, our Lord Himself gave the word: *If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed;* that is, by the possession of a place among the children, and the children's freedom. *If God were our Father, ye would love Me:* here, as the context shows, regeneration or the possession of new life is meant.

1 Jno. iii. 1
2: *καὶ
ἐλευθ,
ἀδελφ.
Σιν.*
John viii.
36, 42.

REGENERATION.

Regene-
ration.

Regeneration is the final and decisive work wrought in the spirit and moral nature of man when the perfect principle of spiritual life in Christ Jesus is imparted by the Holy Ghost. Many and various descriptions of this fundamental change are given in Scripture: showing its relations to the several Persons of the Trinity, to the penitent faith of the recipient, to the means employed in effecting it. The best method of acquiring a clear view of the teaching of the word of God on this subject is simply to arrange and classify these descriptions.

I. The Divine Agent in the new life is the Holy Trinity, Whose agency is that of generation and creation: each of these terms being respectively the centre of a circle of phrases.

Divine.

1. The Persons of the Sacred Trinity are Severally Agents. It is said of the Father: *Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth. You hath He quickened.* So God, generally, or God and the Father; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . Who hath begotten us again! The Son quickeneth whom He will. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly, περισσόν:* the higher, deeper, fuller life which is the result of Christian regeneration, in contradistinction to the preliminary life that precedes the new birth, as well as to the imperfect privilege of the older economy. It is, however, the adoption of sonship which is more expressly ascribed to the Son: *to them gave He power to become the sons of God by privilege who were born of God.* But the Holy Ghost is the specific Agent: as

The
Trinity.
Jas. i. 18.
Eph. ii. 1.
1 Pet i. 3.
John v.
21.
John x.
10.

Jno. i. 12,
13.

O THE ADMINISTRATION OF REDEMPTION.

1 Cor. xv. 45. John iii. 6. the Administrator of redemption He is a quickening Spirit. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. There is no more exact translation of New-Testament thought into ecclesiastical phrase than that which gave the Holy Ghost the title: τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ζωοποιόν, the Giver of life.

2. The Divine operation presents three general classes of terms. (1.) Some refer to generation. The simplest is that of begetting: every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him, τὸν γενήσαντα. The idea is modified in St. Peter's 1 Pet. i. 3. begotten us again, ἀναγενήσας. In one passage the mother's function is used in the original, though disguised in the translation: of His own will begat He us: ἀπεκύησεν, as before in ver. 15 the same peculiar verb is employed, bringeth forth death. These are united in the general word quickening: the Son quickeneth whom He will, ζωοποιεῖ. This is modified again: quickened us together with Christ. St. John's is a remarkable variation on the thought: whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him. All these descriptions are very impressive as adopting and applying to Christians the sacred language first used of the

John i. 14. ONLY BEGOTTEN GOD.

(2.) Many others refer to creation. St. James unites this idea with the former: begat He us . . . that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures. It is both creation, new creation, and the secondary creation of renewal. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: κτίσις, creation or creature. He is created in Christ Jesus unto good works. It is however a secondary creation, or reduction of the soul to order out of its chaos: by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, ἀνακαινώσεως. Here we must remember the analogy of the genesis of all things at the beginning: there was an absolute creation of matter, or calling that which was not into being; and there was the subsequent fashioning of that matter into forms which constitute the habitable Cosmos. The latter is the creation on which the Scripture most dwells: whether it regards the physical or it regards the spiritual order. Just as the sleeper is dead and the dead is only asleep,—awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead,—so the creation is only a renewal, while the renewal is no less than a creation. The two sometimes are united. And have put on the new man, τὸν νέον, which is renewed, τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον.

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ἀναγεοῦσθαι; and that ye put on the new man, τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. It is well to note, without pressing too far, the distinction between the two forms, νέος and καινός, and their combinations. The former refers to time: the new man is entirely different from his FORMER self. The latter refers to quality: the new man is different from his former SELF, and the idea of a great change is more marked. In these passages the creating act of God is regarded as a process issuing in the new character; as a process in which He uses the co-operation of man. But in another passage the creating idea is used rather of a definite act: *for we are His workmanship, ποίημα, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* We are saved apart from our own works, through a new work of God, which prepares us for works which then are good: good because they spring from a renewed nature, are performed under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and for ever renounce all claim to goodness independent of His grace.

Eph. iv.
23, 24

Eph. ii.
10.

II. As wrought in man, regeneration is described in many ways: there is a greater variety of indirect and figurative definitions of this blessing than of any other in the covenant of grace.

Wrought
in Man.

1. The terms indicating the spiritual birth take the lead. Christians are *born of God*, ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ; they are *children of God*; they are *born again*, ἀνωθεν, which is the same as *from above*: indeed the expression has rather a local than a temporal meaning, and is strictly from above, or from heaven, that is, *born of God*, according to St. John's interpretation in the epistle. As describing regeneration it must have the preeminence, being our Lord's own first and only formal word on the subject. When He adds: *the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit*, we are taught that the preliminary grace of the Holy Ghost has its mysterious issue in the new birth of him who *has been born* (ὁ γεγεννημένος, in the perfect, the completion of a process). It is, as we have defined it, the full filial life. The word distinguishes the new product from *that which is born of the flesh*; it is a παλιγγενεσία, and indicates the bestowment of a new life according to the original idea of man in the Divine mind.

New Birth
1 John iii.
9, 10.
John iii.
3.

John iii.
8.

John iii.
3, 6, 7.

2. It is a resurrection from a state of death; from death, and

Resurrec-
tion

- not merely a rising up generally from sin : *as those that are alive from the dead.* (1.) It is therefore the same man who was *dead in trespasses and sins* ; and the idea seems to be that the new man is raised up within the old : to be nourished and grow while the latter dies. This follows the analogy of our Lord's words : *except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.* The old nature is mortified with Christ and the new rises from it. But the analogy in other respects fails. The true life of the spirit is life in death, and death unto life ; but it is not the dissolution of the new nature that feeds the new germ. (2.) Hence the stricter view of this interior new birth is that of a resurrection in the fellowship of the risen Saviour, and connects it with the fellowship of His atoning death unto the condemnation of sin. In other words the new life is the counterpart of the death to the law.
- Rom. vi. 13. Eph. ii. 1. John xii. 24. With Christ. Rom. vi. 4, 5, 7. Rom. vi. 6, 11. Col ii. 13, iii. 5. Spiritual Circumcision. Jer. iv. 4. Rom. ii. 29.
- Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.* He that is united to the Redeemer by faith, of which baptism is the sign, is *justified from sin* ; but this cannot be without a spiritual resurrection with Him, of which the rising out of the water is the symbol, as descending into it is the symbol of the former. In this passage regeneration is regarded rather as a process following the instantaneous death : *that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.* Hence the expression, *Reckon ye also yourselves [to be] dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* The same instantaneous life with Christ, followed by the same death in life of spiritual mortification, is taught in the Colossian epistle. *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses. . . . Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.* (3.) Spiritual Circumcision therefore with Christ is another aspect of the same truth. *The uncircumcision of your flesh* is spiritual death as contrasted with *dead in your sins* as the condemnation of the law. And in this fulfilment of the symbol, in the taking away the *foreskins of your heart*, that inward circumcision which is *that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter*, we have the New-Testament

antitype of a large series of Old-Testament types of the future regeneration.

3. It is the introduction into a new world. This follows from the former: the children of this resurrection are quickened or raised into *newness of life*. They have new tastes, appetites, dispositions, senses adapted to a new state of things. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* Of this change our Lord spoke when He said: *except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Christians, having ascended with Christ, sit in the heavenly places; they are required therefore to set their affection on things above. This aspect of the new birth conjoins it with Illumination. It is *Let there be light!* in the soul. *For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts:* which connects the New-Testament spiritual genesis, or palin-genesis, with the natural one of the Old Testament.

4. It is sharing, in a deeper sense than any yet referred to, the life of Christ. Our Lord at the outset of His teaching spoke of *that which is born of the Spirit*: at the close He represented regeneration as being union with Himself: *I am the Vine, ye are the branches. Because I live ye shall live also.* And, between these, He spoke of Himself, received by faith, as the life of the soul. *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you.* This is sometimes said to be *Christ in you*, and Christ *formed in the nature*. It is more than a federal fellowship in His death and life, such as results from faith in the common Redeemer and exhibits regeneration in some sense as a corporate blessing. It is the mystical communication of a certain Divine-human virtue of the Saviour's being which cannot be defined in words. Thus we become *partakers of the Divine nature*. To this referred one of those profound sayings which our Saviour uttered, without interpretation, to be pondered by His people for ever: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it MORE, περισσόν, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

5. It is a new law established in the heart; according to the terms of the evangelical covenant: *I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.* The law set up within

A New
World.
Rom. vi. 4

2 Cor. v.
17.
State of
Existence.
John iii.
5.
Eph. i. 20.
Col. iii. 2.
Illumina-
tion.
Gen. i. 3.
2 Cor. iv.
6.

Life of
Christ
Imparted.
John iii. 6.
John xv.
5.
John xiv.
19.
John vi.
53.
Col. i. 27.
Gal. iv. 19.

2 Peter i.
4.

John x.
10.
Rom. vi. 4

Law with-
in.
Heb. x.
16.

- is a definition of the new birth which connects it with justification :
 Rom. viii. *that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. Love is the*
 4.
 Rom. xiii. *fulfilling of the law.* This also connects it with the Holy Spirit,
 10.
 Rom. viii. *not only with His agency, but with His indwelling : the law of the*
 2. *Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.*
 Divine
 Image. 6. Lastly, regeneration is the renewal of man into the Divine
 Col. iii. image. This specific view is certainly not peculiar to St. Paul ;
 10, 11. *but he gives it special prominence : the new man which is renewed*
in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. A careful
 study of these words yields much important truth. (1.) The
 standard of the renewal is the original image in which man was
 created. At the moment of the impartation of the new life that
 image was restored, as is more directly affirmed in the parallel
 Eph. iv. *passage, which after God is created, τὸν κατὰ Θεὸν κτισθέντα :* the
 24. *new man was once for all created anew ; and the subsequent*
knowledge, and holiness of truth, are the end for which it was
created. (2.) When St. Paul adds, *where there is neither Greek nor*
Jew . . . but Christ is all and in all, he tells us that the new creation
 is specially related to Christ as the Archetype of this new image ;
 which indeed was true of the original image that sin defaced,
 but is now more fully revealed. (3.) While the mysterious
 regenerating act was the restoration of that likeness, it is implied
 that the renewal, for this is the term, is a process ever going on
 towards completion. The pristine image was by one offence
 marred ; but by many successive stages is it entirely restored.
 2 Cor. iii. *We all with open face beholding (or receiving) as in a glass the glory*
 18. *of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even*
as by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus the new image is gradually
 retrieved ; the Holy Ghost is filling up and deepening the outline
 continually ; and the regenerate life, like righteousness and sanctifi-
 cation, has its issue in perfection. As the one regeneration leads
 to a continuous renewal, so the one image re-engraved leads to a
 continuous transformation : *be ye transformed by the renewing of your*
 Rom. xii. *mind.* (4.) Once more, and this is of great moment, the object of
 2. *this change, or the subject of this renewal, is the whole spiritual*
nature of man. Not his body ; for its regeneration will be its
 Rom. viii. *resurrection : the body is (and remains) dead because of sin, and must*
 10. *undergo its penalty. Doomed as it is to dissolution it must be pre-*

sented in ceaseless oblation as the instrument of the spirit which is life because of righteousness, laid on the altar of service for the present and of hope for the future. But the spirit as the seat of reason, or the immortal principle in man, and the soul, as the same spirit linked with the phenomenal world by the body, are, in all their complex faculties which are a unity in diversity, brought under the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost. We read that *the natural man, ψυχικός ἄνθρωπος, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*: that is, the man whose spirit is subdued to the animal soul, *soulish, having not the Spirit*. But this does not signify that the soul itself, apart from the spirit, is the only defaulter: the spirit also is in the transgression; and the regenerate man becomes ὁ πνευματικός, *he that is spiritual*, only through his spirit being inhabited by the Spirit Divine. Neither is the soul without the spirit, nor the spirit without the soul, the seat of sin or the subject of regeneration. It is man who is renewed. (5.) Lastly, regeneration is therefore not the removal of anything infused by sin into the essence of the spirit or soul. It is not said that we receive a new nature: though no language is more common than this, it must be very carefully restricted and guarded. *Partakers of the Divine nature* we are; but as received into our own nature renewed. The heart is the man, the self; and the promise is, *a new heart also will I give you*.

7. We cannot review these various aspects of the new life without being impressed with the feeling that it is in some sense the central blessing of the Christian covenant. Justification is unto life, and this life is devoted to God in sanctification. But the life, as the life is in Jesus, is the unity of all. *I am the Way, the Truth, and THE LIFE*. The last book of the New Testament tells us that all its teaching concentrates in the *Word of Life, περὶ τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς*: this testimony revolves again in its last accents: *this is the true God and eternal life*, words which closely follow St. John's last and most striking summary of the entire doctrine of the new birth. *Whosoever is born of God, ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, is he that is begotten of God, ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ*; he sinneth not but keepeth himself: *the whole world* around him lieth in the *Wicked One*; but he, or rather we, are in Him that is true, even IN HIS SON JESUS CHRIST. Thus the Bible closes with all the elements of the doc-

VOL. III.—2

1 Cor. ii.
14.

Jude 19.

1 Cor. ii.
15.

2 Peter i.
4.

Ezek.
xxxvi.
26.

Central
Blessing.

John xiv.
6.

1 John i.
1.

1 John v.
18—20

trine of Regeneration. It is the Divine begetting of the filial life of Christ in us : thus it is once for all. It is the progressive life which regarded in its perfected ideal cannot sin : thus it is the renewal into a finished birth. And it is that very eternal life which, begun on earth, will be consummated in heaven.

The
Means.

III. Regeneration is described with reference to the means employed in the economy of grace. The Divine act is always represented in connection with instrumentality. God begets by the word of truth ; our Lord gives His life, and not only sustains it, in the eating and drinking of Himself ; the Holy Spirit instrumentally regenerates through the ordinance or sacrament of baptism. These points we need only now indicate briefly : they will be more fully discussed when we reach the Means of Grace and the Sacraments.

The Word.
As the
Truth.

1. The Word of God is the instrument and power of regeneration. (1.) Not as the absolute authoritative voice which calls into new life, but as the truth which is applied to the understanding and to the feelings, and through them to the will. It is the word of conviction or reproof in the preliminary process : the reproof in the understanding which enforces on the sinner the Lord's word *Ye must be born again*, which excites in the heart a profound sense of need and desire for the true life of the soul, and thus prepares the spirit, unregenerate as yet, but animated by the preliminary life of repentance, for the full power of regeneration. This influence of the truth is sometimes regarded as a fruit of the new birth : it is really a preparation for it.

John iii.7.

As Pre-
sented
Christ.

(2.) It is the instrument, further, as it is the vehicle of the presentation of the Saviour Himself, the Truth, the supreme Object of trust. Embraced by the faith which is at once the last act of the unregenerate and the first act of the regenerate soul, He becomes the Life as well as the Truth. Of the word which offers and conveys the quickening Lord it is said by St. Peter that it is the *incorruptible seed* ; though St. John means more by a *seed* of God that *remaineth* in the human spirit. In St. James it is the *engrafted word* : where we have a remarkable variation on the ordinary language of Scripture. Not we are engrafted into the Vine ; but the Vine is engrafted into us : rather the Divine word with its doctrine is inserted into the nature for regeneration.

1 Pet. i.
23.

1 John iii.
9.
James i.
21.

(3.) But, more generally still, it is the Word of God which is the instrument of every Divine operation in the human heart: *man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* The word is His sovereign and gracious will. As it is not the bread which sustains the life, but the Divine virtue of the bread, so it is not the preaching or the sacrament but the Divine virtue in both which imparts the life. Every energy of God from heaven at last goes back to His word.

Matt. iv.

2. Baptism, also, as the sacrament of the new birth, or rather of the soul's entrance into Christ, gives regeneration both a special name and a special character. The baptism *with the Holy Ghost* is one of its definitions. The rite is *the washing of regeneration*, *λουτρόν*, the bath. It is the symbol of the putting away of sin, and in this is like its precursor, circumcision. This latter symbolised by the cutting off a portion of the natural body the destruction of *the body of sin*. Baptism, a gentler rite, symbolises the entrance into Christ, in His death and life: not the washing away of sin only, which refers to its relation to justification or forgiveness. It is the pledge of the gift of regeneration, abiding in the church: the symbolical laver which for ever assures of the invisible flowing of the *Fountain opened . . . for sin and for uncleanness*. So long as the evangelical *λουτρόν* is in the Christian sanctuary, so long is there regeneration for all its members. It also seals it to the believer, whether as a gift already imparted, as given in conjunction with the rite, or to be fully given hereafter. Its close connection with the blessing of which it is the sacramental symbol is exhibited throughout the New Testament: from our Lord's words, *except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, which must not be emptied of their meaning, through the teaching and practice of the Acts of the Apostles, down to St. Paul's last words to Titus already quoted. The water in the doctrine of Christ becomes the laver in the Apostle's teaching.

Baptism.

Matt. iii.

11.

Titus iii.

6.

Rom. vi.

6.

Zech. xiii.

1.

John iii. 5.

ADOPTION.

Adoption

Adoption is the term occasionally used to signify the Divine declaratory act by which those who are accepted in