

ing upon them in His Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections." It only remains to add the equally emphatic statement of the Larger Catechism (Question 149), "No man is able, either of himself, or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God"; and that the Shorter Catechism (Question 82), "No mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God"; both statements being followed by the strong and unqualified assertion of every man's daily breach of God's commandments in thought, word and deed.

It is needful to insist that there is not a single statement to be found anywhere in our Subordinate Standards that any person of ordinary intelligence can regard as inconsistent with the statements above quoted? The chapter of the Confession (xx.) on "Christian Liberty" has, indeed, been referred to as favoring the opposite doctrine. But it seems to us almost incredible that any one who is even moderately acquainted with the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, should fail to distinguish between the dominion of sin in the soul and its inhabitation as a living and actively rebellious resident, or should fail, in the light of that distinction, to see that the chapter referred to teaches no more than the common faith of all Christians; namely, that the believer is delivered, in this life, not only from the guilt of sin, but also from its dominion or ruling power, so that "he yields to God the obedience not of slavish fear, but of a child-like love and of a willing mind." And it is, to say the least, very surprising to find persons who would be thought to have made the very highest attainments in the Christian life, unable to distinguish between the unbeliever's life of subjection to the rule of sin and the believer's life of conflict with the sin that God permits yet to dwell in him. If, because God has not yet extinguished the deadly virus of sin, but permits it yet to abide "in every part," a man will say, as some do, that God has done nothing for us, and that we are no better than unbelievers, is there not reason to fear that that man has yet to learn the first principles of the life of faith according to the oracles of God?—*Presbyterian Review*.

REPLY.

In the first part of this second article we have a more succinct statement of his

undertaken task, for it all but states his design to be to prove that no Christian can live without constantly committing sin.

"No one can doubt the divine power in the matter."

Alas for us, we have to plead guilty of very decided doubts in the matter. We doubt it just as we doubt the ability of divine power to cause a thing to be and not to be at the same moment. Just so we doubt with great emphasis the ability of God to make *man*, so that from the moment of his becoming a believer, he *should* never sin, no matter how long kept in this world.

We have the evidence before us constantly that He can make *animals* after this pattern, but that He can make men of this stamp is a reasonable matter for doubt, and the opinion is entertainable that the moment a man became the subject of *enforced* sinlessness, he would be degraded from his high estate and be at once ranked with the lower animals.

Moreover, we make the assertion that if the Doctor looks at the subject with sufficient care, he will find to his increasing astonishment that he himself *can* doubt concerning this thing; and as he increases his researches, we should not wonder if genuine doubt would finally take possession of his soul.

All the descriptions of the saints of God present them before us as loving and serving God from choice, as needing not to be walled about by divine decrees and immutable fate to ensure their permanent loyalty to their Sovereign elect.

Now, into this glorious company of loving, loyal *volunteers* let the iron law of absolute necessity come and see how the picture will be marred. You have at once a company of consciously pressed men who find no opportunity to serve God from choice, or to be lovingly loyal in their ascriptions of praise. Hence, to us it is not even conceivable that compelling force and loving loyalty can co-exist in the service rendered by man to his Creator.

In the second paragraph, the Doctor quotes Scripture to establish the fact that at conversion the believer becomes a child of God, and then demands the acceptance of his platform, viz., that this