

and exclude the last, doubtless it is inclined to all evil, and averse to all good. Man shut in to himself would be abandoned to all depravity. There is hereditary corruption that sways him from behind, and then his natural powers and affections have lost that equipoise which they had in primitive man, and are deflected towards the service of the selfish nature. Appetite, natural affection, and the natural reason would all go over to the service of the evil powers, and toil in the bondage of sin. On their swift and downward course they would rush into the most frightful outbreaks of wickedness. But if by human nature we mean the sum total of all its capacities, and therefore its receptivity of the Divine force itself, — its capacities that open inward towards immensity and immortality, and of choosing the guidance of that power that shall bear it sun-ward like the eagle, — then we ought to abandon the word “total” in describing its depravity, as leading to confusion of thought and unnecessary misunderstandings. Even that theory of conversion which makes it instantaneous would logically presuppose an inborn capacity to be converted. We take it, that it does not quite mean to confound man with brutes and fiends, and that there is some reason in the nature of things why sovereign grace should select human beings for its objects rather than wolves and tigers. Even, then, if the Holy Spirit were not, as we contend, the divine fire that warms in our heart of hearts, and from the dawn of existence seeks to kindle within us all holy affections, — even if the orbit of our being lay through spaces of total blackness until some sudden light came blazing through it like a comet, — still we must be so organized as to be receptive of the light when it comes and be acted upon beneficently by