

THE GENERAL TEACHINGS OF METHODISM CONCERNING THIS MATTER.

It is not by an appeal to defined doctrine that the real teachings of any denomination are discovered. The creed, and definitions of the different parts of the creed, may say one thing, and the practice of the denomination bear a very different interpretation. Let us apply this test to Methodism.

Now, what would be the result if a person should keep converted for a year or succession of years? Plainly, the experience of the first moments or hours of conversion would be a continued, uninterrupted experience: (1) Being forgiven, he would stay forgiven; (2) Being regenerated, he would remain in this gracious state without one moment's intermission; (3) He could not sin in thought, word or deed, by omission or commission. For if he sinned any one moment, then it could not be true that at that moment he was forgiven, regenerated or consciously had the witness of the Spirit to these facts. Hence is seen on what solid reasoning the utterance of St. John is based: "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God; (4) Being prepared at the moment of conversion for the coming of Christ, he is so prepared every successive moment whilst retaining converting grace.

Hence it follows, with a clearness of inference that cannot be gainsayed, that, whilst thus kept converted, confession of sin would be a solemn farce, seeing there would be no sin to confess and reconsecrations and renewing of covenants would be meaningless formalities.

Methodism, as perfected by John Wesley, has no place in all its services for such a kind of Christian. As John Wesley did, so all his successor preachers call upon all Methodists to bow with them, at least four times a year, in humble confession of sins of omission and commission, and at each yearly watch-night-service, all Methodists, without exception, are called on, and expected to renew their covenant with God, on the understanding that in no case has it been fully kept throughout the previous

year. That is, no Methodist is expected to keep converted during an entire year.

Need we multiply these proofs further? Are they not sufficient to draw attention to the facts as they exist? And need there be any hesitancy in accepting the facts thus brought out? It cannot possibly lessen the grandeur of the Methodist revival to show exactly in what this revival consists. A hazy, nebulous claim to something else over and above what legitimately belongs to it cannot possibly enhance its value.

WHAT ABOUT THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT?

This we proceed to examine carefully and exhaustively, but simply and only to arrive at facts. Does the holiness movement teach or illustrate continuous conversion? After careful and prolonged examination we decidedly say, no.

Take the teaching and lives of the leading writers of this movement, and on close examination our contention will be found to be correct.

But recently we found the following short article in the columns of the *Christian Witness*. The *Witness* is the organ of the leading holiness association, in the United States, and is, therefore, the most authoritative exponent of this movement, its editor being the President of *The National Holiness Camp-meeting Association*.

The article was originally published in the *India Watchman*, which is regarded by all holiness periodicals as one of themselves, and its articles copied right and left approvingly.

ARE WE MISTAKEN?

Some years ago one of the editors of the *India Watchman*, in writing to the other, mentioned that he enjoyed the blessing of a clean heart, but that he could not claim that he had the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The brother editor confessed to about the same experience. We have more recently been searching deeply as to why it is that there is such a general testimony to the work of holiness, yet so few claim the real "baptism of fire." Of course it is easy to sing:—

" 'Tis the very same power
They had at Pentecost."

But do one-tenth or even one-hun-