

the first time, we become fully conscious of the cognizance of some great truth. Every student can look back to such times in mathematical, metaphysical or scientific studies—times when, for the first time, he distinctly formulated to himself some axiom or some great natural law, yet it may be that for years before he had a semi-conscious inkling of such truth, and had even acted upon the basis of it. Now, however, it first becomes consciously his. The same is true in the region of human affection. The love is there, but there have not come the circumstances that call it out into distinct consciousness. But, in the meantime, it may be growing, preparing, until some seeming accident helps it into new birth and fully conscious being. Now, such is the law of our religious life and of that supreme apprehension or intuition of God, which constitutes its essence. It comes to us as a fear at first—a longing, a hope, a deeper sense of separation from God, a despair of ourselves; yet in all this, to the experienced eye, there are the promise and potency of the new life.

But the revealing of God's love to me, as an individual, has its culminations as well as its preparations; never, perhaps, more clearly described than by John Wesley in that memorable passage of his journal which describes the experience of the meeting at Aldersgate Street, May 24th, 1738: "About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ—Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." Not that in every case the act of conscious apprehension is so distinctly marked as here. But in every instance there must be in the nature of the case a moment when it first becomes fully conscious. Now, of such cases we have in the New Testament so many examples, that we must conclude this to have been the normal experience of the time. Three thousand on the day of Pentecost, thousands more a few days later; Saul of Tarsus, the Ethiopian eunuch, the Philippian jailer; even Lydia—all are examples of this culmination, in some cases with great violence of emotion, in others, with more even move-