

mind; Spirit acting upon spirit; will working on the region of will. The teaching of Scripture is that the Spirit moves upon the disordered faculties of the human soul, quickening into life and beauty; that He enlightens and convinces, and draws towards God and holiness and heaven every one that cometh into the world; that He imparts, to those who seek it, the grace of repentance and faith; that He attests the pardon and seals the adoption of all believers; that He regenerates or renews their hearts in the Divine image, and unfolds their high destinies, and fits and qualifies them for the purity and blessedness of heaven. The texts of Scripture referred to in the heading of this paper, as well as many more which might be cited, are sufficiently explicit, that the Holy Spirit, by His own personal agency, operates immediately and directly upon the human heart, and not by any delegated virtue He has infused into the Word in the great work of human salvation. "The truth which He inspired," says a late writer, "is the means which He employs to accomplish this work. We do not, however, so interpose the truth, as that His influence shall act *through* it upon the mind. We hold that His influence is direct and acts upon the mind towards the truth." The plan and rule of the Divine economy of mercy is, that the Spirit condescendingly works with the truth, or by means of the truth; yet that in every case he so works that the saving action is not the action of the truth, but His own direct and personal action on the mind.

It may be objected that in the Scriptures there is assigned to the Word the rank not of a mere instrument, but of an agent operating by its own effectual power; indeed, that the same saving effects are ascribed to the Word as to the Spirit. Thus, 1 Peter i. 23,—“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.” Also, James i. 18,—“Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.” Now these passages, carefully and critically interpreted, will be found not in the least to contradict what has been advanced, but to afford striking evidence in support. In the quotation from 1st Peter, the *efficient* cause and the *instrumental* cause are clearly discriminated. The efficient cause of the new birth is declared to be the incorruptible seed; and that by this expression we are to understand the grace of God, in its renewing agency, is obvious from 1 John iii. 9,—“Whosoever is born of God,”—born not of the truth, not of the Word, but “born of God,” [a phrase expressing the immediateness of the Divine operation on the soul in its regeneration,] “doth not commit sin; for this seed” [that is the mysterious principle of Divine grace by which the new birth was produced], “remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” The incorruptible seed, then, by which we are born anew, is what St. John calls the seed of God,—His grace in its renovating operations, the Word meanwhile being a subordinate instrument. We are said to be born again by the Word of God, so we are said to be saved by grace through faith, justified by faith, and purified by faith. But grace is the efficient cause; faith is the instrumental cause. It is not faith that saves us, or justifies us, or purifies us; but the grace of God operating through faith as the conviction. So it is not “the Word”