

most as the seed grows up to its appointed beauty. Yet I believe that, even in such cases, if we could understand the full working of the soul, we should find here, as elsewhere, what is called the new birth, which is the passing from the earthly or natural state to the spiritual or heavenly. It may take place very early and very gradually, but I think that it is not the less real. The life of the spirit is not that to which we are first born, but the life of the flesh. The second man, and not the first, is the Lord from heaven. When Christ is formed in the soul, it is the redemption of the soul from the natural earthly influence. If it is effected before that influence has brought degradation, the thanksgiving to God may be greater, but it is not less a redemption.

Upon this subject, however, I would not dispute. Such instances are as rare as they are blessed. With by far the greater part of the human family, the experience is very different and far more painful. We find ourselves laden with sins, we scarcely know how. We are walking in a wrong direction, almost before we have thought whither the path leads. Our first serious thoughts of heaven are awakened, by our seeing that our faces are not turned heavenward. It is the restlessness of the soul under the bondage of sin, that arouses us to assert its true dignity. Through some human agency, or through the working of our own mind, God speaks to us, and if we hearken, the conflict begins, the result of which is properly called a deliverance and a victory.

The proof of Regeneration is in the life. "Let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." It is not in professions, nor in ecstasies, nor in flaming zeal, much less in the self-right-