

# Practical Papers.

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## QUESTIONS CONCERNING PERFECT LOVE.

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No. III.

IS THE CONSECRATION MADE WHEN SEEKING PERFECT LOVE THE SAME AS THAT WHICH IS MADE WHEN SEEKING PARDON ?

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LIKE the former questions which we have discussed in the pages of this magazine, this is one that is by no means fanciful, but presses upon some minds at least, asking for a satisfactory answer. Our first reply shall be somewhat of an affirmative character.

All religious consecrations, when sincerely made, partake of the same generic character, in that they are renunciations of sin, and movements toward God. Does any responsible being act or refrain from action singly and solely because God requires it at his hands ? Then *that* is a consecration in that case, and such acts following each other in continuous succession, are those that constitute and illustrate a true religious life. And such acts, as has been said, have a blessed sameness in their motive and their aim. They diminish the power of sin in the soul in all the stages of experience that precede entire consecration ; and in the subsequent experience they confirm the principle of loyalty to Christ, and become the fruits of holiness. But while in this original and general characteristic such actions are one ; yet there are important differences which, in order to the possession of clear views on the subject, have need to be noted and understood. Coming back to the two decisive religious experiences which are brought together in our question, we observe :—

1. *That the moral state of the person making the consecration is not the same in each case.* The seeker of pardon is a rebel and a criminal in his relations to God's law and government. His proper and predominating feeling is one of guilt and fear, and his intense desire is for reconciliation, forgiveness, peace with God. There may be, and no doubt sometimes there is, in the feelings of such seekers a sense of general impurity ; for the work of the Holy Spirit in giving the sense of sin, carries with it such a sight of