

me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death." (Journal, Vol. I., page 103.)

It was necessarily after this event that he addressed himself to solve the question we are now discussing.

That he did not succeed during the first years of his converted life is known to be a fact, on his own testimony. Some six months after his conversion he wrote as follows:

"Thirdly, his desires are new; and indeed the whole train of his passions and inclinations. . . .

"I dare not say I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often arise in my heart; but they do not reign. I put them all under my feet, 'through Christ which strengtheneth me.' Therefore I believe He is creating me anew in this also; and that He has begun, though not finished, His work. . . .

"But St. Paul tells us elsewhere that 'the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance.'

"Now, although by the grace of God in Christ, I find a measure of some of them in myself, namely: of peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance; yet others I find not. I cannot find in myself the love of God or of Christ. Hence my deadness and wanderings in public prayer. Hence it is, that even in the holy communion I have frequently no more than a cold attention.

"Again, I have not that joy in the Holy Spirit; no settled, lasting joy, nor have I such a peace as excludes the possibility of either fear or doubt. When holy men have told me I had no faith, I have often doubted whether I had or no; and these doubts have made me very uneasy, till I was relieved by prayer and the Holy Scriptures.

"Yet, upon the whole, although I have not yet that joy in the Holy Ghost, nor the full assurance of faith, much less am I in the full sense of the words, 'in Christ a new creature.' I nevertheless trust that I have a measure of faith and am 'accepted in the beloved.' I trust 'the handwriting that was against me is blotted out,' and that I am 'reconciled to God through His Son.'" (Journal, Vol. I., page 162.)

Again three months later, he writes:

"Therefore my eye is not yet single; at least not always so.

"Are my desires new? Not all. Some are new, some old. My desires are like my designs. My great desire is to have 'Christ formed in my heart by faith.' But little desires are daily stealing into my soul, and so my great hopes and fears have respect to God, but a thousand little ones creep in between them." (Journal, Vol. I., page 170.)

Again, six months later, he writes:

"We met at Fetter Lane, to humble ourselves before God, and own He had justly withdrawn His Spirit from us, for our manifold unfaithfulness." (Journal, Vol. I., page 204.)

Still again, same two decades after, in a letter addressed to his brother Charles, concerning the results of a conference between himself and Thomas Walsh and other preachers, about the then burning question of administering the ordinances, occur these words: "When I reflected on their answers, I admired their spirit, and was ashamed of my own." (Vol. XII., page 117.)

Thus it is seen by his own writings, that whilst John Wesley is clear and definite in the relation of his personal experience concerning conversion, he is equally explicit in showing that he had not learned, as a personal experience, how to keep converted.

But he taught that it was possible. This his teaching is found in his published views concerning Christian perfection, especially in his "Plain Account." But that he himself claimed to have learned it as a personal experience, there is not the slightest evidence, and by *slightest evidence* we mean evidence which can in any way be put side by side with the account of his conversion, and the after account of his inability to keep converted, as given above.

It is not for a moment to be supposed that John Wesley would have failed to give a minute account of such an experience if it ever came into his life. His careful, accurate description of all his Christian experiences forbids us to think such an omission possible.

Nor is there any second-hand evidence concerning this thing. No writer, for