

glory which, as the flame encompasses the burning wick, encompassed the persons of our illustrious progenitors.—Man lost his mental excellence and beauty as he lost his corporeal. The moral image of God vanished; and the complacent favour of God departed with it. Such were the immediate consequences of his fall. But besides the guilt of sin, there is something called the power of it. It has a polluting influence. Remorse is not the only feeling of which we are conscious when we transgress. There is shame as well as remorse, and this arises from the pollution or defilement of sin.

One transgression necessarily leads to another, and the power of sin increases in an exact ratio with the overt acts. Let us look at some species of transgression. Take theft for example. The confirmed thief began by pilfering or purloining, perhaps, some trifle. He is much disturbed by this first act. In his own estimation, he has fallen. He is conscious of the wrong he has done, and feels the guilt. But half the temptation which induced the first act will be sufficient to impel to a second; and half of the temptation which induced the second will induce to a third, and so on till he become a habitual thief. Now the power of sin increases in the same ratio as the need of temptation diminishes. The reason why half the temptation will induce to a second act is because the power of the first sin renders the second as much more easy to be committed, as the temptation is less than before. This dominion of sin is a most fearful thing. For such is the awful extent to which it triumphs, that persons who could hardly be tempted to the first sin of a certain species, such as theft, drunkenness, lying, uncleanness, can at last sin, not only without any temptation, but even run into all excess with greediness.

A word or two on the *punishment* of sin, and we have the case fairly before us. For there is not only the guilt and the power of sin, but there is the *punishment* also. Remorse and shame are intimately allied to mental pain. Indeed, a sense of God's disapprobation necessarily incurs that fear which torments the guilty. But all the mental pain which sinners feel in this mortal state, though it is sometimes intolerably great, is, in scripture, made but a figure, or a resemblance of that punishment which is inseparably annexed to it hereafter. But it is necessary here to observe that pain, *mental*, or, if you please, *moral*, just as necessarily follows the transgression of moral law, as corporeal pain follows the infraction of the laws of nature. If I thrust my finger into the fire, or swallow a mineral or a vegetable poison, pain as necessarily ensues as a stone gravitates to the centre. It is so in the spiritual system. When men violate any moral restraint which God has imposed on them, pain must be the consequence by an unavoidable law of the moral system. Men, indeed, may be morally besotted, conscience may be seared as flesh with a hot iron, until the unhappy transgressor become past feeling.—But God can, and he has said that he will, make him feel hereafter. These hints on the guilt, power, and punishment of sin, are, we deem, necessary to scriptural views of the divine economy towards man after his fall.

Had man actually lost the susceptibility of being renewed in the