

everything but Divine Truth. Let us think for ourselves. Let us reason there with the Lord—and how reasonable He is. He won't require anything that is impossible or inconsistent. He bids us "Go wash yourselves, make yourselves clean." "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Dear people, shall we accept these beautiful emblems, shall we worship such a loving Father, shall we put into practice these glorious thoughts, and realize experimentally these blessed attainments? He will instil into our characters His own Divine virtues, so that men may say now, as formerly, surely this is God in the form of man. God designed that man should reflect his own goodness and holiness.

Let us go back in our own experience. Have we felt a loving Father, that, perchance, we do not now; if so, let us see how it was with that boy in the far country. He was willing to feed upon the husks that the swine did eat, but still longing for something better, until he made the choice and resolution to arise and go home. Dear friends, is there a soul here to-day in this far country; if so, I can take that soul by the hand and help to lift it up, encourage it to make that wise and well-grounded resolution of the Prodigal. And more, for that resolution to arise did not bring salvation until it was carried out, and then the loving father ran to meet it. So he comes out to meet us by the sense of approval, felt in our own hearts when we have begun to think right and to live up to it.

The sacrifice that is to avail for us is that made by subjecting our wills to the Divine Will until it becomes a pleasure to do the Will of our Heavenly Father, rather than our own. In this way we are to wash our robes and make them white, and our Heavenly Father will furnish us other robes from His Heavenly wardrobe, and His robes are the

Christian graces, peace, love, justice, humility, &c.

There is no tree in the garden, no passion in the human heart, but was planted there for a good purpose. Let us train them up to that end. Let us pray to our Heavenly Father to help us keep them in their proper places, and, when the final hour comes, there will be no wonderful change, only loving invitations to come up higher. Oh, my friends, the higher we go in this life, the greater will be our appreciation of the heaven beyond. Then, let it be the song of our hearts from day to day, "Nearer, my God, to thee."

GROWTH VERSUS INSTANTANEOUS CONVERSION.

EXTRACTS FROM A DIALOGUE WITH A BAPTIST STUDENT.

You were speaking of a change of heart: It is the trial by fire that brings out the heart's finest qualities, yet I hold that it is, nevertheless, a gradual growth, the elements of which are implanted in our being from the first. With different persons it manifests itself at different ages, and under different circumstances, and with some it never manifests itself at all, and if it sometimes seems to be a sudden change, yet it is really a gradual growth that brings the mind into that condition in which it can commune with the spirit of Infinite Goodness, and drink in His Truth, and Love, and Joy, as the little flower drinks in light, and joy, and beauty from the glorious sun, whose life-giving rays pervade the material atmosphere. All things in nature are governed by the laws of growth and development. Infinite Wisdom, when the plant was the tiniest germ, implanted in its being the elements which, under proper circumstances, would produce the beautiful flower, and, all other things in nature moving in harmony with His Divine Will, the germ, being placed in the proper surroundings, drawing life