

that is, the disease of sin eradicated, and man's own nature healthfully developed. Let a man be converted, regenerated ; what then ? Is the work done ? Nay, only begun. The instruments of salvation have as it were been put into his hands, and he made willing to use them : now he must proceed to 'work out His own salvation.' I am now confining your attention, of course, to man's side of the work. The old evil nature, the flesh, is still there, and is to be destroyed ; the new divine nature is there, and is to be developed. But how ? By the man himself (St. Paul tells us, not in one place but in an hundred) 'working out his own salvation.'

This is the law of our nature. We are what we train and educate ourselves to be. We form in ourselves, gradually, 'by patient continuance in well-doing'—patience in weeding out evil principles and habits, in resisting and overcoming our fatal tendency to give in to wrong principles and wrong habits ; and patience in cultivating right principles and forming in ourselves godly and manly habits,—it is thus that we form in ourselves the permanent character of goodness. Or in other words, the way and the only possible way to undo the evil taint of our nature is by acts of the contrary ; the murderous tendency, by acts of kindness and love ; the thievish tendency, by working and saving for the purpose of relieving distress ; the adulterous taint by acts of voluntary denying our innocent bodily appetites. It is thus and thus only that there is formed in the christian who is faithful unto death 'the new man,' which at length becomes 'the perfect man,' and attains to 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.'

The solution of our difficulty seems to me to be in