

aesthetic excellence, and no corresponding feeling of delight in its contemplation. So it is with the unrenewed man. He may have an intellectual knowledge of the facts and doctrines of the Bible, but no spiritual discernment of their excellence, and no delight in them. The same Christ as portrayed in the Scripture is to one man without form or comeliness that we should desire Him; to another He is the chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely; God manifest in the flesh whom it is impossible not to adore, love, and obey.

This new life therefore manifests itself in new views of God, of Christ, of sin, of holiness, of the world, of the Gospel, and of the life to come; in short of all those truths which God has revealed as necessary to salvation. This spiritual illumination is so important and so necessary and such an immediate effect of Regeneration, that spiritual knowledge is not only represented in the Bible as the end of regeneration (Col. iii. 10; I Tim ii. 4.), but the whole of conversion which is the effect of regeneration is summed up in knowledge."

Now if these things are so, when would our common sense and our ideas of God's mercy, goodness and justice suggest that the burden of sin should be removed and the marvellous change comprehended in regeneration be wrought in the soul? At our starting out in life, or at some indefinite point of time along the track of existence? Surely it does seem somewhat inconsistent to exhort an individual to lead a holy life and yet not be able to comfort him with the assurance that he can do so, because at some particular time of his life he has been regenerated and renewed in the faculties of his soul.

He might reply and say, it is not a question of will with me, but simply a question of power, and I have not the power unless you can certify me of my regeneration in the past. Hence Calvin, (Instit. iv. xvi. 17) at first maintained against the Anabaptists that infants were fit recipients of the sacrament of Baptism because they could not be saved without being made regenerate.

"It is clear" says Calvin, "that infants who are saved must first be regenerate. For if they bear a corrupt nature from their mother's womb they must be purged of it before entering God's kingdom where nothing entereth polluted or defiled." It is true he afterwards departed somewhat from this doctrine maintaining that elect infants dying before the age of reason whether baptised or not, were certainly regenerate, but that baptism if administered was given not to make them sons of God but to receive them into the Church. In any case we might again ask, why may not that be done in and through the sacrament which is admitted to be done without it? For Luther, though he denies or sometimes seems to deny, that Baptism takes away sin, yet maintains that in the case of infants, there is no need of faith, and it is with infants we are specially concerned here.

The Catholic Church therefore has always taught that infants are fit subjects for regeneration, but in the case of adults she has ever required the exercise of repentance and faith, or cooperation with God's actual and preventing graces, before the Holy Spirit destroys sin in the soul, imparts the principle of a new life, and infuses His sanctifying grace. In their case she does require conscious