

maturity. The essential idea of purity is negative, being the entire absence of the sinful or impure element; the essential idea of maturity is positive—of something that has increased, grown, ripened, or developed. We make bold to assert—

1. That sudden sanctification as an experience is made probable by what has transpired in other lines of psychological life. In the biography of Dr. Adam Clarke by his son, it is related how, when a boy, he had been very dull and inapt in his studies—a veritable “dunce,” indeed—until, under the stimulus of emulation, he on one occasion, “felt as if something broke within” him; and from that time onward it was no trouble to him to learn anything to which he directed his mind. There are instances on record of persons who, by some accidental impression on the mind, or by some physical shock to the brain, have been transformed from semi-idiocy to intense rationality, and full powers of intelligence. There are numerous cases in society everywhere, of persons in whom the habits of half a lifetime have been given up suddenly and permanently—by whom a new moral stand-point has been suddenly taken, the soul’s attitude towards a large class of facts and influences has been suddenly and remarkably changed, so that subsequent life has been in these relationships entirely new. A sudden fright, a sudden elevation of fortune, a single scene which has powerfully affected the passional and imaginative susceptibilities of the soul has frequently produced such a change, as that the person so affected has become practically another character. Now, if such crisis experiences occur in other departments of the many-sided life of man, why should it be thought incredible, that through the religious susceptibilities of the soul, the will and conscience of a man might be suddenly brought into such a changed attitude towards God on the one hand, and towards all forms of moral evil on the other, that “abhorring that which is evil and cleaving to that which is good,” should ever after be the permanent temper of the soul?

2. The probability rises immensely when we remember that dependence is not placed upon peculiar circumstances, or remarkable phenomena to produce *this* change, but upon the action of God, the Spirit upon a human spirit. If we endeavour to realize the conception of the Infinitely Holy and Omnipotent Spirit entering, possessing, and filling a human soul, all thought of the impossibility of sudden purification must wither and die. And have we not such