Given unto men in heaven and in earth, O ye children of the resurrection, for a standing possession of a kingdom of grace. Not of the world, not of the world's dominion. The kommunity of wealth; the society of the One Source, the only Source of the lowest degree. "All things are possible to him that believeth." John vii. 14. (Search the Scriptures; truly, the Scriptures are only limited by the understanding of them.) Therefore are added to the word of God. Acts i. 4. (Then shall the third day be fulfilled. Hoc done for him of my Father. (Misere x. 25.) The eternal purpose, that they may be called an inheritance, a redemption purchased with the price of blood: He who has never seen the Blood can never see the Glory. He is (2) lifeless: except a man be begotten." Begetting is the imparting of life; and life is imparted to the dead, not to the living. Who ever saw a man who was not born? no more has anyone even seen a Christian who was not born again. Man enters no world except by birth: and we must be born into heaven if we are ever to enter it. He is (3) fatherless: "ye must be born again." A second birth implies another fatherhood: "begotten of the Spirit," it is the second birth which produces sonship of God. Even Nicodemus—sincere, moral, upright, needing no reformation—is a sightless, lifeless, fatherless soul, who can be saved only by being remade.

"Ye must be born afresh": "if any man is in
minister (ψήφισμα τοῦ ἀνέπαφον ἀνθρώπου, 5) for conversions (ἐπιστολή τῆς ἁγίας ἑορτῆς, 5); for theGu (διδάσκαλος, 5); for the Church (εἰς τὸ βαπτίσματος, 5); for the redeemed (Ἔφεσσας, 5). The phrase "for all the saints (ἐπιστολή τῶν ἁγίων, 5)" is not expanded in the text; this is a short note.

The phrase "for all the saints (ἐπιστολή τῶν ἁγίων, 5)" is not expanded in the text; this is a short note.

6—The Ofren ofmen. Thales is a short note.

Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new (2 Cor. v. 17). Many a sinner, bitter and broken, cries:

"Oh, that I could begin life afresh! That is exactly what Christ offers: "ye must be born again." "Ye must"—therefore ye may: ye may—therefore ye must." Regeneration is not so much an organic change, creating or extinguishing human powers, as a functional change, whereby our old powers take a new direction, move by a totally new life, and expand to the fulness of their created capacities. Man redeemed fulfills all, and more, than God planned in man created. But Nicodemus interposes.

"How can this be? Jesus now introduces baptism the more fully to unfold His meaning. "Except a man be born out of water"—not a second time of his mother—he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The new begetting is regeneration: the new birth is baptism. Secret, viewless, mysterious is the begetting of the soul: open, visible, natural is the birth out of water which manifests life already begun. As an infant is alive before it is born, so within the water is a living soul, and out of the water issues a new birth. It is a new man that issues out of the water: not made new by the water, but by the Spirit before the birth. Therefore only the regenerate may be baptised. Regeneration is a renewal (Tit. iii. 5); a translation (Col. i. 13): a quickening (Col. ii. 13); a creation (Eph. iv. 24); a cure (1 Pet. ii. 24); an emancipation (Gal. v. 1); a resurrection (Eph. ii. 6).

Our Lord now probes deeper: "that which is born of the flesh is flesh": i.e., a second fleshly birth would be useless. A thousand re-births from the flesh would be flesh: a new start indeed, but the millennium would be a start as polluted as the first. "It is not the children of the flesh that are children of God" (Rom. ix. 8). Our Lord rarely states total depravity: He always assumes it. Matt. vii. 11; Luke xviii. 19; Mark vii. 23. Total depravity is not that every man is as bad as he can be, but that the flesh, i.e., every faculty of the natural man—has an unchanging bias to evil. The flesh may be braced with laws, and educated with culture, and moulded with religion, and chastised with the hair-shirt of the monk; but it remains that incurable thing which begets sin to endless generations. A re-introduction to the cradle, and the baby-face, and the mother’s arms, would be a second birth into a life of deeper guilt. "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be" (Rom. viii. 7).

But the crowning marvel of regeneration remains. It is a re-birth: but with whose life? "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Animal paternity gives animal life; human paternity gives human life; divine paternity gives divine life: it is possible to start life afresh with the life of God. As the flesh is the seed-bed of all vices,
so the new creation is a seed-bed of all the virtues of Him who begat it: we are indeed put back into the cradle, but out of that cradle spring the mighty limbs, and the soaring soul, of a son of God. Children are sometimes born crippled, or with limbs missing: there are no cripples from the second birth. The divine power has entered in a divine birth to produce on earth a divine life: it is a birth from above: and Heaven's gates swing back to the born again, because their life, their nature, their creation belong to Heaven. O Nicodemus, have you learnt the lesson yet? But mark: how shall the wind blow our way? We can no more control that Wind than we can handle the hurricanes. Listen to the Gospel which our Lord immediately adds. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whatsoever believeth may in Him have eternal life." The price of the new life is the old: the renunciation of sin is the birth-travail: but the moment of faith is the moment of regeneration. Accept Christ's work for you, and instantly begins the Spirit's work in you. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God" (1 John v. 1).

D. M. PANTON.