to do right, it is plain that what he desires,  
he does not, and what he desires not, he  
does :”—the well-known lines of Ovid—  
  
“One thing my lust, my mind another  
prompts :  
I see the better, and approve it; but  
The worse my practice follows.”  
  
**16.**] **But if** (‘*now seeing that*:’  
takes up the foregoing, and draws an  
inference from it) **I do that which I desire  
not, I consent unto** (bear witness to) **the  
law that it is good** (viz. ‘in that the *law*  
prohibits what *I also* dislike,—the law  
and I are as one in proscribing the thing,—the *law*; and *my wish*, tend the same way’).

**17.**] **So now** (the **now**  
is not said of *time*, but is used logically,  
“seeing that things are so”) **it is no  
longer** (again, not a chronological, but a  
logical sequence, ‘*it can no more be said,  
that*’) **I that perform** (see above, on ver.  
15) **it, but sin that dwelleth in me**.—  
Here the “*I*” is *not the complex responsible self*, by which the evil deed is wrought,  
and which incurs the guilt of working it:  
but the *self of the* WILL *in its higher  
sense*, the “*inner man*” of ver. 22. The  
not bearing this in mind has led to error  
in interpretation and doctrine: for example, when it is supposed that the Christian is not responsible for his sins committed against his spiritual will and higher  
judgment : whereas we are all responsible  
for the works of the sin that dwelleth in  
us, and it is in this very subjection to and  
entanglement with the law of sin in our

members, that the misery consists, which  
leads to the cry in ver. 24.

**18.**] *An explanation of the* words **sin  
that dwelleth in me**, *of the last verse*.—**For I know** (by experience, detailed in the  
next ver.) **that there dwelleth not in me,  
that is, in my flesh, any good** (thing). I  
said, *sin that dwelleth in me*, because | feel  
sure, from experience, that in me (meaning  
by ‘me’ not that higher spiritual self in  
which the Spirit of God dwells, but the  
lower carnal self: see on this important.  
limitation the remarks at the beginning of  
the section) *dwells no good thing*. And  
what is my proof of this? How has experience led me to this knowledge ?—**For**  
(the proof from experience) **to desire** (to  
do good) **is present with me; but to  
perform that which is good, is not** (present with me). “*I find*” (A. V.) is omitted by our four oldest MSS.

**19.**] And this *non-presence* of the doing  
good is shewn *by my acts*, in that I *do  
not* the good that I desire (to do), but  
the evil which I do not desire, that *I do*.

**20.**] The inference of ver. 17  
restated, with the premiss of ver. 16 in  
the place of “*so now*:”—but its meaning is  
now clearer and deeper than then; we know  
now that the “*I*” which does not the evil  
thing, is *the better self* of the *inner man*,  
—whereas the “*me*” in which sin dwells  
and rules, though included in the complex  
self, is *the lower self, my flesh*. And so  
the way is now prepared for at once setting forth the *conflict* within us *between  
these two*.

**21.**] **I find therefore** (i.e. as appears from what has been