

is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' (Rom. viii. 34).

ORDER OF SALVATION (INDIVIDUAL)

'Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) He hath constantly decreed, by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God be called according to God's purpose by His Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity. . . . We must receive God's promises in such wise, as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture; and, in our doings, that Will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God' (Art. xvii.). 'Æterna electio seu prædestinatio Dei ad salutem non simul ad bonos et ad malos pertinet sed tantum ad filios Dei, qui ad æternam vitam consequendam electi et ordinati sunt, priusquam mundi fundamenta jacerentur' (Sol. Decl. xi. Lutheran). 'Credo Filium Dei, ab initio mundi ad finem usque, sibi ex universo genere humano cœtum ad vitam æternam electum, per spiritum suum et verbum, in vera fide consentientem, colligere, tueri, ac servare, meque vivum ejus cœtus membrum esse, et perpetuo mansurum' (Cat. Heidel. liv. Reformed). 'Constituimus duas partes pœnitentiæ, vid. contritionem et fidem. Si quis valet addere tertiam, vid. dignos fructus pœnitentiæ, hoc est, mutationem totius vitæ et morum in melius, non refragabimur' (Apol. Conf. Aug. v.). 'Per pœnitentiam intelligimus mentis in homine peccatore, respicientiam verbo evangelii et Spiritu S. excitatam fideque vera acceptam, qua homo agnatam sibi corruptionem peccataque omnia sua . . . agnoscit, ac de his ex corde dolet' (Expos. Simpl., c. xiv.). 'Quapropter loquimur in hac causa . . . de fide viva vivificanteque, quæ propter Christum quem comprehendit viva est' (*Ibid.* xv.). 'We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine' (Art. xi.). 'Albeit that good works which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith' (Art. xii.). 'Voluntary works, besides, over and above, God's commandments, which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety' (Art. xiv.). 'Not every deadly sin willingly committed after Baptism is sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after baptism' (Art. xvi.). 'Item docent quod homines non possint justificari coram Deo propriis vivibus, meritis aut operibus, sed gratis justificentur propter Christum per fidem, quum credunt se in gratiam recipi, et peccata remitti propter Christum. . . . Hanc fidem imputat Deus pro justitia coram ipso' (Conf. Nug. iv.). 'Item docent quod fides illa debeat bonos fructus parere' (*Ibid.* vi.). 'Interim proprie loquendo nequaquam intelligimus ipsam fidem esse quæ nos justificat, ut quæ sit duntaxat instrumentum, quo Christum justitiam nostram apprehendimus' (Conf. Belg. xxii.).

It was the Saviour's command, after His ascension, that the Apostles should remain at Jerusalem, refraining from the active dis-

charge of their office until the promise of the Father, to send upon them the Holy Ghost, should be fulfilled (Acts i. 4). For the accomplishment of redemption was one thing, the application of it another. The former was the work of the second Person of the Trinity—the Son Incarnate, the latter that of the third, the Holy Spirit, and this Divine Agent could not, in the appointed order of things, be vouchsafed in the fulness of His gifts, until the Redeemer, made perfect through suffering, had passed into the heavens to claim the reward of His obedience unto death, and to exercise His regal and priestly functions on behalf of His Church (John vii. 9). The prophetic office of Christ was to be perpetuated, not by Himself in person but by the Holy Spirit, His Vicar, and only Vicar, upon earth; the active Administrator of the Christian dispensation. From the Holy Spirit's inspiration were to be derived the further revelations which were needed to supply what was wanting in Christ's personal teaching (John xvi. 13); and by His gracious co-operation with the Word and Sacraments the Church was to be called into being, perpetuated, and conducted to its consummation. Christ has not left His Church in a state of orphanhood (John xiv. 18); He is still present with it, but not as the Incarnate Son, but as the third Person in the economy of redemption.¹

'The Lord,' we read, 'added to the church daily those who were being saved' (Acts ii. 47). The process thus briefly indicated may be resolved into several parts or stages, which, collectively, have received the name of the order of individual salvation. Scripture itself furnishes examples of such an arrangement, of which the most complete is that in Rom. viii. 29, 30: 'Whom He did foreknow He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son; moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified; and whom He justified them He also glorified.'² The Apostle here proceeds from the eternal counsels of God to their accomplishment in time; but it may be of advantage to adopt the reverse method, and commencing with facts which come

¹ Hence the interchange of the terms Christ and the Holy Spirit in the New Testament; *e.g.*, 'I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you for ever: I will not leave you comfortless, -I will come to you' (John xiv. 16, 18). 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith' (Ephes. iii. 17). 'Christ in you the hope of glory' (Col. i. 27). Hence, too, the difference of meaning in which the same word 'grace' is used in reference to the three Persons of the Trinity. Thus the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. viii. 9) is not the same as the grace of God which made Paul what he was (1 Cor. xv. 10); and neither is identical with the grace of the Father spoken of in Tit. ii. 11; if, indeed, we may introduce the Trinitarian relations into this last passage.

² Compare 1 Cor. vi. 11: 'Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God.' Also 1 Pet. i. 2.

under our cognizance, to ascend from them to the Divine causality which is their ultimate source. These may be summed up under the three principal heads of Calling, Justification and Regeneration, each comprising or implying several distinct operations of Divine grace. The Divine Election may claim a place, and the last place, to itself, as not being among the 'earthly things' of redemption which take place in time (John iii. 12); while as regards the final glory to which the Church is predestinated, it belongs rather to the topic of Eschatology, and leads our thoughts beyond the present life.

CALLING

§ 59. CONNECTION OF WORD AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

On the subject of the divine calling theologians have proposed various distinctions. It is either extraordinary or ordinary, mediate or immediate, external or internal. Extraordinary calling is that which takes place, not through the regular ministration of the Word, but in the way of miracle; as when the Magi were led by a star to Bethlehem, or the thief on the cross, according to Jerome's opinion, to faith in Christ by the prodigies that accompanied the Crucifixion. The term may also be applied to designation to any special office or function in the Church, as when S. Paul describes himself as called to be an Apostle (Rom. i. 1). Ordinary calling is through the appointed means—viz., the Word. Mediate is when God makes use of angelic or human instrumentality; immediate when He dispenses with such agency, as in Abraham's call and Saul's conversion. External calling consists in the public preaching or other ministry of the word; internal in the secret operation of the Holy Ghost. As to the extension of meaning which some Lutheran theologians have given to the term 'calling,' in order to establish its universality—viz., that it may include the spiritual lessons to be derived from the works of creation—it seems out of place in this connection. It is true that Scripture attributes it to a culpable blindness on the part of the heathen that they did not profit by the traces of deity in creation and providence (Acts xvii. 27-29; Rom. i. 20), and seems also to suppose an internal presence in man of the Logos, or divine Word, beyond the pale of revelation and universal (John i. 9). But what we are here concerned with is that Divine vocation which is founded on an accomplished work of redemption and is effected through appointed means, and which invites those to whom it comes to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the first question that here occurs is that indicated in the heading of the section.

The Protestant confessions, as cited above, assign distinct, though never disunited, offices to the Word and the Holy Spirit in the calling of the sinner. A professed call of the Holy Spirit which disavows connection with the written Word is always open to suspicion. Such a pretended inward illumination is commonly the offspring of enthusiasm, sometimes fanatical, sometimes even immoral. On the other hand, the Word may remain spiritually inefficacious from its not being accompanied by the influence of the Spirit who dictated it, as daily experience proves. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God alone can give the increase.

The glad tidings of salvation were committed to inspired heralds for promulgation throughout the world, as the appointed means of gathering in the Church. The Gospel was to be preached to every creature (Mark xvi. 15); Christ, either in person or through His ambassadors, came to call sinners to repentance (Mark ii. 17); His sheep hear His voice (John x. 3, 16); when the wedding-feast was ready, the King's servants were sent to invite the guests to come (Matt. xxii. 3). The Gospel was to produce its effect by appealing to man as a rational creature, with a power of choice either to receive or reject the message. This excludes the notion of a mere external disciplinary institute, such as the law of Moses, or of a magical change independent of the will and affections. Changes of moral sentiment can only be produced, as far as human agency is concerned, by a presentation to the mind of truth, real or supposed, old or new, or the old under a different garb—truth which shall supply motives to action. The Word, no doubt, was confirmed at first by signs and wonders following (Mark xvi. 20), but this was to launch it on its career under a divine attestation; and God will not, in the ordinary course of His dealings, repeat these evidences of the Holy Spirit's presence, or, where the Word remains unfruitful, supply in any other way the defect (Luke xvi. 31). Faith, according to S. Paul, is the connecting link between the soul and Christ, but faith and the Word are correlative terms. Hence we cannot conceive how a Church is to be gathered out of heathenism except through the ministry of the Word. 'How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?' (Rom. x. 14). Until this first step is taken there is no room for questions about sacraments or polity. An invitation, and an acceptance or rejection thereof, are the turning-points in the spiritual history of every individual.

It is not necessary or possible to confine the term 'Word of God' to the written Scriptures. It was by the oral teaching of the Apostles, for many years before the revelation was committed to writing, that Churches were formed and built up; and it is by oral teaching, founded on the written Word, that Christianity is now propagated among the heathen. Those who are called, whether out of heathenism or in the visible Church, may be so in a variety of ways: by catechetical instruction as well as by formal preaching, by the providential events of life, by the atmosphere of Christianity which more or less surrounds every member of a Christian Church. To those baptized in infancy the period of confirmation is a special summons to make the decisive choice. But in some way or other the call must come to each person individually. Such a type of mission as that with which the Jesuits are credited, of baptizing in the mass without previous instruction, cannot plead Scripture as an example.

It would be transcribing a large portion of the New Testament to adduce proof that the Holy Spirit must co-operate with the Word to produce a saving effect; and not merely by signs and wonders, but by inward illumination and spiritual suasion. 'No man can call Jesus Lord' to a saving result, 'but by the Holy Ghost' (1 Cor. xii. 3). If Lydia attended to the things spoken by the Apostle, so as to become a Christian, it was because the Lord opened her heart to do so (Acts xvi. 14). To the Thessalonians the Gospel came not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost, and its reception was an evidence of their election of God (1 Thess. i. 4, 5). 'The things which God has prepared for them that love Him' need to be 'spiritually discerned' as well as recorded in the volume of inspiration (1 Cor. ii. 10, 14). St. Paul begs the prayers of the Thessalonians that the word of God might have free course and be glorified—prayers which he anticipated would be the means of securing the assistance of the Holy Spirit (2 Thess. iii. 1).

Thus far Protestants and Romanists are in substantial agreement, though the different degree of prominence which they respectively assign to the Word and the sacraments in the process of salvation betrays itself even here. With Protestants the Word is the primary instrument of regeneration, with Romanists the sacrament of baptism. But, as regards the connection of the Word with the Holy Spirit, a difference of view exists in the Protestant formularies, or principal theologians, themselves, at least after a certain date.

The Confession of Augsburg declares, in general terms, that through the Word and sacraments, as instruments, the Holy Spirit is conferred; who produces faith, when and where it seems good to

him, in those who hear the Gospel. The Formula Concordiæ (Lutheran) seems, at first sight, to confine itself within the same limits—'the preaching of the Word and the hearing thereof are instruments of the Holy Spirit, with which and through which it pleases Him to work efficaciously on men'; but, on closer inspection, the notion appears in it which was adopted by the Lutheran theologians of the next century, viz., that a certain Divine power is immanent in the Word itself, an inherent efficacy resides in the very letter. It will be observed that the Formula Concordiæ declares not only that the Holy Spirit works *through* the Word but *with* it; and in this addition consists the advance of doctrine on the Lutheran side. For to work with the Word, as distinguished from through it, can only mean that, independently of the Holy Spirit's influence, the written (or preached) Word is instinct with life, and may, by its own light, shine into the soul. This seems to be the meaning of Quenstedt: 'The instrumental cause (*causa organica*) of conversion is the external preaching of the Word, appointed thereto by God, and always, as far as His serious intention is concerned, efficacious. For the preached Word of God possesses an intrinsic Divine and sufficient power to effect regeneration, conversion, illumination, etc.; whence it is called "the power of God unto salvation."' And still more clearly of Hollaz: 'The power of the Divine Word is intrinsic to it; not accidental but essential, by Divine appointment; and, therefore, not separable, but the reverse; and inherent, irrespectively of the hearer (*extra usum*).' The aim of these writers appears to have been twofold: first, to oppose the false spiritualist tendencies which, as in all religious revivals, appeared here and there in the early years of the Reformation, divorcing the inward light from the written Word, Christ in the heart from Christ in the Scriptures. And, in the next place, to strengthen their position against the Calvinistic doctrine of absolute decrees. It is, in fact, evident that in proportion as the Word is supposed to possess an inherent efficacy, whenever and to whomsoever it is preached, the doctrine of a special Divine influence, working where and when it wills, is, if not ignored, thrown into the background. Since the Word addresses itself to all indifferently, if the Holy Spirit is so united with it as to be inseparable, then the Holy Spirit, likewise, in the Word approaches all; and the distinction between calling and effectual calling may be overlooked. It will depend on the receptivity of the hearer whether the result is beneficial or not. The analogy between this theory and the Lutheran doctrine of the Eucharist cannot fail to suggest itself. Just as the Body and Blood of Christ are united with the elements, independently of the reception (*extra usum*), so here the Holy Spirit is, by

a kind of consubstantiation, supposed to be inherent in the Word written or preached (*extra usum*). And the result is to reduce the agency of the Holy Ghost to the original act of inspiration, under which the Scriptures were written. What notion can we form of a spiritual presence supposed to be immanent in a book, or an oral discourse? The Divine calling is spoken of in Scripture as a personal act, but incorporated in a book, even though that book be the Bible, it loses its personality; it becomes a quiescent force, which is a contradiction in terms. Moreover, though nothing could be further from the intention of its framers, the theory seems to approach the confines of Pelagianism. For a book, or a discourse, produces its effect by presenting motives to the mind, which operate thereon in the way of natural suasion. The Bible, no doubt, from its quality of inspiration, possesses, as no other book does, a power to awaken the conscience and move the affections; it is, even as a book, the Word of God in a sense in which no other book is; still its mode of operation, as a book, must be supposed analogous to that of uninspired compositions. In short, it is assumed that the instrument, though of Divine origin, operates of itself and by moral impression; and this, if efficacious to salvation, presupposes in the natural man a power to respond to the appeal, and thus to pass, unaided from above, from a state of nature to a state of grace. That the primary act of inspiration dispenses with further Divine assistance is indeed nowhere maintained by these writers; it could hardly be so except by those who reject the doctrine of spiritual influence. On the contrary, they speak of a Divine power accompanying the Word, analogous to the *Concursus Dei generalis* in nature, or that presence of God which is not withdrawn even where it seems to operate under the form of impressed laws. But in other hands the theory has been worked out to results not in harmony with Scripture. The point in which it is deficient is in not assigning due prominence to the agency of the Holy Spirit as a Person, working with His own instrument, indeed but independently thereof. The Word was inspired by Him; the Word is the mean which He uses (*ἄργανον*); He speaks to us in and by the Word; but the calling of God implies more than this, and the necessities of the case demand more. The mind of fallen man is darkened, and his affections carnal; no book, not even the volume of inspiration, can of itself or by virtue of an immanence of the Holy Spirit therein remove these impediments: what is needed is an immediate work of the Holy Spirit on the spirit of man, that of a Person on a person, operating with the direct and subtle influence which only a person can exercise. We cannot think too highly of the Scriptures as the one inspired record of the mind of the Spirit; but

we must not embody the Spirit in His own appointed channel of grace ; we must allow Him to remain outside and over it. Calvin, rather than his Lutheran brethren, speaks in accordance with Scripture. ' When St. Paul tells the Ephesians that they were " sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise," he intimates that an internal Teacher is necessary, by whose assistance the offer of salvation is brought home to the mind ; which offer otherwise would beat the air, or only strike our ears. In vain would the light present itself to the darkened eyes of our mind unless the Spirit should open them ; in vain would preachers cry in the wilderness unless Christ Himself, by the internal teaching of His Spirit, should draw those who are given Him by the Father.' ¹ The general teaching of the Reformed Churches, our own included, is in accordance with these statements. And, curious to say, they receive unexpected confirmation from the great Tridentine theologian, Bellarmine : ' If it be said that efficacious grace seems not to belong to the category of inspiration ' (in the general sense of the word) ' or calling, for that these latter are concerned with the letter not with the spirit ; if it be asked, what difference is there between internal suasion and external preaching, and we know that external preaching is letter, not spirit ?—we reply that there is a great difference. For external preaching addresses itself to the bodily ears, internal to the inner man ; the one proposes the object, the other communicates an inward light, and affects the will.' ²

§ 60. EFFECTUAL CALLING

Why is it that when the same Word is addressed to an assembly of hearers (or readers), some give heed to it and some do not, or not to the same extent ? Of the fact there can be no doubt. Experience amply proves it. It is matter of common complaint that whether in missions or in Christian countries the effect of the Word preached is apparently but limited. And the statements of Scripture lead to the same conclusion. In the parable of the sower, only one kind of soil bore fruit ; in two the seed sprang up, but failed to come to perfection ; and one remained entirely without impression. Yet all received the same seed, and from the same sower. Christ Himself complains in prophecy that He had stretched out His hands to a disobedient people (Isa. lxxv. 2), and His personal ministry was of the same character. It was comparatively but a few, in each sphere of labour, to whom the preaching of the Apostles appealed with salutary effect. A twofold answer may be given to the question ; it

¹ Instit., L. iii., c. 1 ; comp. L. ii., c. 5.

² De Grat. et Lib. Arb., i., c. 13.

may be said, either that the difference is to be sought in the subjects themselves to whom the Word comes ; or that the intensity of spiritual operation, the degree of grace, accompanying the Word, is not the same in all cases, with the result of failure in some and success in others. The Lutheran theologians above mentioned (§ 59), who held that the Holy Spirit is, in some sense, immanent in the Word, were compelled, from their theory, to adopt the former alternative ; for if the spiritual agency necessary to conversion is supposed to be imbedded in a book, it is difficult to conceive of its being otherwise than one and the same, in all instances. That is, they denied the distinction between ordinary, or, as it is sometimes called, sufficient, and effectual grace ; grace is always sufficient if it meets with a favourable soil. The Reformed type of Protestantism, and also the Romish theologians who belong to the school of Augustine, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas, naturally lean to the other hypothesis. That is, they supposed a distinction in the nature of the grace itself, antecedently to the result : in some cases it is effectual, in others not. To which side our church inclines is sufficiently plain from Art. xvii. : ‘ They which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God ’ (predestination unto life) ‘ are called, according to God’s purpose, by His Spirit working in due season ; they, through grace, obey the calling,’ etc.

That some calling must be what is called effectual follows from the doctrine of original sin, as commonly held in the Church. According to it mankind, as a whole and antecedently to differences between individuals, is involved in spiritual ruin ; in regard to which all men are upon a level. In the lower sphere of natural virtue (*civilis justitia*) great differences of character appear ; some are respectable and amiable, others not so ; some, such as Christ Himself, as the Son of Man, could love (Mark x. 21), others in His sight hypocrites and a generation of vipers (Matt. xxiii. 33). But into the superior sphere of the new life in Christ none can enter by the powers of unaided nature ; the natural man ‘ cannot turn and prepare himself by his own strength, or good works, to faith and calling upon God ’ (Art. x.). Out of this corrupted mass it is the purpose of God, as our 17th Article declares, to bring a certain portion by Christ to everlasting salvation ; not merely to the possibility of attaining it, but to the thing itself. In the case of these persons it is obvious that a grace of calling so effectual as not to fail of its intended object must be presumed : that is, it must be a grace not dependent on free-will for its efficacy, for of free-will as implying a power to originate, or maintain, a decision for what is spiritually good mankind is by nature destitute ; it must be of such a character as not to be liable

to be finally overcome by human resistance. For the very reason why the remainder of mankind does not attain to eternal life is that whatever common, or ordinary, grace may accompany the act of calling, or of incorporation in the visible Church, it is not adequate to secure the proposed end, as experience proves. According to the doctrine of the Church, every descendant of Adam comes into the world with the will enslaved in a wrong direction ; when, it may be asked, is it even so far emancipated as to have the power of choosing the right ? Every infant, it is sometimes replied, born in a Christian Church and baptized, recovers this power, to a greater or less extent ; the will is restored to a state of equilibrium ; it cannot, of course, actually operate, owing to the immaturity of the subject, but the faculty is present, to be exercised in due time. But, in the first place, it is difficult to understand how the mere fact of Christian birth, or the administration of baptism to an unconscious subject, can replace a power which was lost by the fall ; at best, it is a mere hypothesis and never can be proved. We can form no real conception of the state of Adam before the fall, since it transcends all our experience ; as possessing the gift of independent personality he must have been endowed with that of free-will, coupled with the possibility of falling, as the event proved, but also with the possibility of resisting temptation ; created in a state of moral perfection, and needing no superadded gift of grace, as the Romish Church teaches, to curb the propensities inseparable from a material nature. We have no right, indeed, to introduce the Biblical term ' grace ' into the dispensation of Paradise, where it could have no place.¹ Adam's will was free, but not in a state of indifference. This is all that we can surmise respecting a condition so far removed from what we actually find in and around us. The state of man after the Fall is that, though he possesses will as a mere faculty of human nature, his will is inclined to evil, under bondage to sin ; and whether Christian birth or baptism can break the fetter is not told us. But, in the next place, to restore to the will the mere power of choosing between good and evil, to leave it in a state of indifference, would be entirely inadequate to ensure the salvation of any individual, and, under these circumstances, Christ might be left without a Church to share with Him the glory which is the recompense of His cross and passion. Assisting grace, it is said, is offered and will be given to those who use the partially emancipated will aright, to those who endeavour to wish in accordance with the will of God ; but against this merely assisting grace are arrayed the remaining ' infection of nature,' which Art. ix. pronounces not to be removed, even in the

¹ See § 30.

regenerate, still less so, surely, in the merely called ; the prevalence of evil example ; and the temptations of Satan. Is it any wonder if, to say the least, in the majority of instances, it succumbs ?

This grace, supposed to be vouchsafed to all the members of a visible Church, is sometimes called ' sufficient,' an unhappily-chosen term. It cannot be sufficient if its success is dependent on the proper use of a will which is in a state of indifference, and which, under the circumstances of the case, is far more likely than not to go in the wrong direction. What is needed is a grace which shall determine the will to action, take it out of its equilibrium, and incline it to obey the voice of the Divine invitation in preference to other charmers, charm they never so wisely. It is of little avail to strike off some of the chains of a prisoner and bid him come forth, while others confine him beyond his strength to free himself from. Does the sufficient grace become efficacious from the co-operation of men, or from some further special assistance of God ? That is the question. The Pelagian would adopt the former alternative, the orthodox Christian the latter. And this Christian would be supported by the general language of the Scripture, which ascribes effectual calling to a work of God analogous to that of creation, or the resurrection of a dead body (Ephes. ii. 1, 10), and by the spiritual instincts of the believer himself. He would be the first to repudiate the notion that his conversion is partly owing to his own efforts, and partly to Divine grace. Afterwards, no doubt, he may be exhorted to work out his salvation with fear and trembling, on the very ground that it is God that works in him both to will and to do (Phil. ii. 12, 13). In short, sufficient grace, as understood by those who use the term, must become controlling, or, as it is sometimes called, sovereign grace, to issue in a saving result. The premisses of original sin and predestination being granted, there seems no escape from this conclusion. The two doctrines, taken as the Church understands them, and according to the apparent meaning of the Scripture, necessitate a series of middle terms, of which the first is of effectual calling. The chain cannot be broken except by either extenuating the effects of the fall, or reducing the notion of election to that of a national one, or that of admission to privileges which may or may not be improved. Bellarmine justly remarks : ' That there is such a thing as efficacious grace follows from the simple fact that, if we deny it, we overturn the doctrine of the Divine predestination ; for predestination, as Augustine says, is preparatory to grace, but grace itself is the actual gift. Predestination is the foreknowledge and prearrangement of that Divine mercy by which whosoever are freed ' (from sin and death) ' are most certainly so freed. God knows that there are certain

spiritual gifts by which spiritual freedom is infallibly effected, and in the case of the elect bestows them ; but what is this but effectual grace ? ' The substance of which is, that a more powerful agent is needed for the purpose in view than the grace which the same writer calls sufficient, but which is thereby proved to be not sufficient. The term ' irresistible ' grace is equally ill-chosen ; all grace is resistible ; what is meant by it is that some grace, though it may be resisted, eventually prevails, comes out victorious from the conflict. The Arminian, represented by Tomline, Mant, Lawrence, and others of their school, makes this contingent on such freedom of will as fallen man either possesses by nature or recovers in baptism ; the Augustinian replies that this is not enough, that the case demands a more powerful remedy ; such a grace as shall fix the will in its moral freedom, or render it morally impossible that it should not choose the good ; a freedom of will such as we must suppose the elect angels to possess. And this more powerful remedy is what Augustine and Calvin understand by the efficacious grace which is bestowed on the elect.

The conclusion seems unanswerable ; and yet it is encountered by a body of Scripture-language to which we must assign its due weight. Can God seriously wish the salvation of those to whom, as the event proves, this efficacious grace is not given ? Scripture abounds with general invitations : ' Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden ' ; ' him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out ' ; ' whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely ' ; they seem inconsistent with any other supposition than that salvation is intended for all to whom the external calling is addressed. And if so, must not some sufficient accompanying grace be also vouchsafed ? But, in fact, such a mode of address presents no difficulties. As long as the ministry of man is employed in the work of calling, no other mode can be adopted. For since the human ambassador cannot know who are to be the subjects of efficacious grace, or whether the whole assembly to whom he speaks may not be of the number, he has no alternative but to propound the offer in general terms ; there is no method of calling in the elect except by a promiscuous invitation. But it is otherwise with *expostulations* addressed to those who refuse to accept it. Their refusal assumes in Scripture the character of culpability. ' Why will ye die, O house of Israel ? I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth ' ; ' Wherefore when I looked that My vineyard should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes ? ' ' How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not ? ' ' Ye will not come to me that ye may have life.' In these, and similar passages,

blame is attached to the recusants, and why should it be so if they had no power, without special grace, to comply with the call? If we discard the misleading term 'sufficient,' there seems no inconsistency in supposing that influences of the Holy Spirit may accompany the word which fall short of effectual grace. In the case of those born in a Christian Church and brought under religious instruction, such initial strivings of the Spirit may well be anticipated as probable; and that they are not peculiar to the Gospel dispensation but were common under the law may be inferred from Stephen's reproof of his hearers: 'Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye' (Acts vii. 51). Some Calvinistic theologians, though not Calvin himself, are prone to make effectual grace the only grace applied; and some Lutheran, too, deny any distinction of grace; possibly both may be in error.

The Synergistic controversy, which, soon after Luther's death, arose among Protestants, was chiefly concerned with these preliminary stages of spiritual influence. Those who held the necessity of co-operation on man's part argued, not without reason, that if the Holy Spirit could be resisted, He might also be admitted; but they failed to explain to what it is due if the resistance is overcome. Their contention, in fact, only amounted to what all must acknowledge, that God, in this matter, does not exercise a blind force, a *natura naturans*, but deals with the being whom He has endowed with the privilege of independent personality, after the manner of a free agent—by moral appeal and tentative solicitation (inward as well as external)—and in this way overcomes the impediment. The controversy, in substance, repeats itself in every age of the Church. There must, it is argued, be even in fallen man a faculty receptive of grace; else how would he differ from the fallen angels? Something to which grace can attach itself, whether we call it natural conscience, or the image of God, defaced indeed, but not wholly obliterated. Scripture speaks of an 'obedience of faith' to the Gospel-call (Rom. i. 5; 1 Thess. i. 8), and of relative differences in the natural man when it describes some as 'of the truth' (John xviii. 37), and others as hardening themselves against it. Shall we ascribe these differences wholly to natural temperament, and not also in part to a pædagogical and preparatory¹ work of the Spirit? The ministry of the Word is represented in Scripture as never without some spiritual effect, though it may be for the worse: it is a 'savour

¹ This term is more appropriate than 'preventing'; for, as will be seen from Art. x., preventing grace, as understood by the compilers, is the first step towards effectual.

of death unto death as well as of life unto life ' (2 Cor. ii. 16) ; it may be the innocent occasion of arousing the enmity of the natural heart, which had previously lain dormant, and transforming indifference into hostility. As regards the parable of the sower, we may ask whether the different results sprang wholly from natural differences in the hearers ? Those who for a time received the Word with joy, and those who suffered it to be choked with worldly cares, brought no fruit to perfection ; but how came they to be impressed with it at all ? The strong man, after being expelled from his abode, returns to it (Luke xi. 24) ; but mere nature could not have effected even a temporary expulsion. The well-known passages, Heb. vi. 4-6, x. 26, admit of more than one interpretation, and one is that the grace therein described did not amount to effectual. If some branches in the true vine are fruitless, still as branches, and not merely connected by an external ligature, they must, it would seem, in some sense and to some extent, have derived life from it (John xv. 2). The same truth seems to follow from the history of religious revivals. Waves of religious impression, as in the Baptist's ministry, from time to time pass over the Church, and yet leave little permanent result behind. We dare not ascribe them to any source but that whence all good comes, but they are of a different quality from an effectual Divine vocation ; grace may have ruffled the surface of the soul without penetrating to the centre of the moral being. Such initial grace Bellarmine not inaptly describes as conferring a *power* to wish to repent, but not the actual wish. The will is so far emancipated from the thralldom of sin as to be able to feel its misery and seek for deliverance, but at present no further : it is, as observed above, *arbitrium liberatum* but not *arbitrium liberum*. Such may be supposed to have been the state of Saul of Tarsus before his conversion, who, according to one interpretation of Acts ix. 5, had found it hard to resist the goads of conscience even before Christ was revealed to him.

The difficulty, of course, remains, why the Holy Spirit, after apparently proceeding to a certain extent in the communication of grace, should not complete His work by transforming preparatory into efficacious grace ? Why should He retire before the end is attained ? We cannot assent to Turretin's mode of removing the difficulty : ' Although God does not intend the salvation of the reprobate by calling them, yet no hypocrisy is to be imputed to Him. Seriously and truly He exhibits to them the way of salvation, seriously exhorts them to follow it, and most sincerely promises salvation to all who repent or believe.'¹ It is not the general

¹ Inst. Theol., L. xiv., Q. 2.

invitation that causes perplexity (see above) ; if the elect are to be gathered in, the net, as cast by man, must include the reprobate ; but the fact that some grace, which does not issue in salvation, appears to be vouchsafed wherever the Word is preached. Still less can we accept, indeed, we must reject with abhorrence, Calvin's suggestion that such insufficient grace is given to render the disobedient the more culpable.¹ The Conference of Dort attempts to solve the problem by a distinction between the bare announcement of the plan of salvation (*voluntas signi*), and the application thereof (*voluntas beneplaciti*) ; and Turretin, in the above-cited passages adopts its statements literally. But, even if the distinction may be allowed, we have no concern directly with the *voluntas beneplaciti*, it is beyond our sphere of knowledge. 'That will of God is to be followed which we have expressly declared unto us' (*voluntas signi*) 'in the word of God' (Art. xvii.) ; and we gather from it that God does really wish the salvation of all men. We stand, in fact, in presence of one of those antinomies which we not unfrequently meet with in Scripture, and which appear insoluble to human reason. Pushed to its logical conclusion, the necessity, from the condition of fallen man, of a grace superior to common, or preparatory, grace, leads, in conjunction with the doctrine of predestination, to reprobation, at least, in its milder form of 'preterition' ; pushed to its logical conclusion, the Arminian doctrine, which acknowledges no grace, but what is common, leads to Pelagianism. We await a fuller measure of revelation for an adjustment of the two lines of thought. Our wisdom, at present, is to fall back on the Apostle's treatment of the subject : 'Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will ? Nay, but, O man, who art thou, that repliest against God ? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus ? . . . How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor ?' (Rom. ix. 19, 20 ; xi. 33, 34).

Efficacious or creative grace, as the only sufficient one, excludes the notions of merit implied in the scholastic terms 'grace of congruity' and 'grace of condignity.' The former means that works done before the inspiration of Christ's Spirit may be so pleasing to

¹ Nihil absurdi est quod cœlestium donorum gustus ab Apostolo, et temporalis fides a Christo illis (reprobis) ascribitur ; non quod vim spiritualis gratiæ solide percipiant, ac certum fidei lumen ; sed quia Dominus, *ut magis convictos et inexcusabiles reddat*, se insinuat in eorum mentes, quatenus sine adoptionis spiritu gustari potest ejus bonitas. Inst., iii., c. 2, II. A warning example of the danger of pushing theories to their logical conclusions.

God as to attract the bestowal of grace ; the latter, that by the due improvement of grace given a meritorious claim to further grace is established. Art. xiii. affirms that works done in a state of nature—*i.e.* not springing from faith in Christ—do not ‘ make men meet to receive grace ’ ; they are of a different quality from the good works of the Christian.¹ Indeed, to hold otherwise would be Pelagianism. Grave discussion prevailed at the Council of Trent on this subject,² and the Council prudently forbore the use of the term ‘ *de congruo* ’ in its decrees. Indeed, there is little to find fault with in its statements on the Divine calling. ‘ If any one shall assert that without the prevenient inspiration of the Holy Spirit and His assistance man can believe and repent as he ought in order to obtain the grace of justification, let him be anathema.’³ Waiving the characteristic clause ‘ to obtain the grace of justification,’ which points to the doctrine of inherent justifying righteousness, the Synod takes its stand on the teaching of Scripture and of the whole Church. It is in no man’s power to fix the time of his own awakening ; his hour must strike, and experience proves that no mere moral virtue is the condition of its striking. The last are often the first, and the first last. The mild and sensible Gamaliel never, as far as we read, was effectually called ; while Zacchæus, under unexpected circumstances, received the decisive impulse (Acts v. 34 ; Luke xix.). And hence we learn to despair of no man, for the operations of Divine grace follow no ascertained law, and often take us by surprise.

§ 61. CONVERSION

Calling (*vocatio externa*) is the preliminary step to conversion, and issues therein where efficacious grace accompanies the Word. What is meant by the term ‘ conversion ’ is, as appears above, variously expressed in the Protestant Confessions. In the Apology for the Confession of Augsburg it bears the traditional name of *pœnitentia*, but with the fundamental distinction that whereas the Church of

¹ It is characteristic of a certain school of theology to evacuate the distinction between works done before grace, and works done by grace. ‘ God, the Holy Ghost, visits every soul which God has created, and each soul will be judged as it responded or did not respond to the degree of light which He bestowed on it.’ . . . ‘ God, when He created all His rational creatures, created them also with grace, so that they had the full power to choose aright, and could not choose amiss except by resisting the drawing of God.’ Pusey, ‘ What is Faith as to Everlasting Punishment ? ’ pp. 22, 23. It is to be presumed that in the latter extract the author speaks of Adam as created, not of man as fallen. But it is going beyond Scripture to maintain, as he seems to do, that the Holy Ghost visits every soul of man, investing the dictates of natural conscience with the quality of grace.

² Sarpi, L. ii. 76.

³ Sess. vi., Can. 3.

Rome makes this to consist of three parts—contrition, confession, and satisfaction—the Apology mentions only two—contrition and faith. The Form. Concord. seems to identify conversion with regeneration. The Helvetic Confession describes ‘true repentance’ as a ‘sincere conversion to God, and an equally sincere aversion from all evil.’ In fact, the terminology of the early writers on this subject is far from fixed. The word ‘repentance’ is sufficient as an equivalent for conversion; for sin may be repented of without being abandoned; and there may be a repentance, as in the case of Judas Iscariot, which has no element of grace in it—‘the sorrow of the world which worketh death’ (2 Cor. vii. 10). Conversion may be described as a change of mind (*μετάνοια*, Matt. iii. 11; *ἐπιστροφή* Acts xv. 3), the result of effectual calling; which change consists in sorrow for past sin, with a determination to renounce it in all its forms, faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, and a surrender of the heart to God to be sanctified by His grace. In its negative aspect it is a death unto sin; in its positive, a resurrection to righteousness. And all scriptural accounts of it ultimately may be reduced to this twofold division. The Romish Church, by associating one inward act (contrition) with two outward (confession and satisfaction) in conversion, confounds the inward work of the Holy Spirit with matters of ecclesiastical discipline, and produces a theory resembling Daniel’s image, which was composed of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay (Dan. ii. 32, 33).

The state of the unconverted is described in Scripture under various aspects, which, though separable in thought, are in fact always combined. ‘Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead’ (Ephes. v. 14). Here the unconverted are represented as sunk in spiritual slumber, from which they have need to be aroused. They are insensible to the misery of their natural state, and to the spiritual blessings offered to them in the Gospel. The image of sleep is sometimes exchanged for that of death, as in chap. ii. of the same epistle, with a still stronger figurative meaning. Out of this condition the subject of efficacious grace is awakened or quickened, and this awakening or spiritual resurrection may be considered the first element of conversion. It must be distinguished from temporary impressions which come and go, which never become dominant, and not unfrequently, from repetition without endurance, terminate in a peculiar insensibility to spiritual appeals. Nor must it be insisted on as a regular stage to be passed through in the Christian life independently of others, and with special accompaniments of its own, such as a sense of God’s wrath against sin, the terrors of future judgment, and intense spiritual conflict, to be exchanged in due

course for peace and joy in believing. It has been the error of some forms of Methodism thus to attempt to mark out, with a precision which Scripture does not warrant, the successive operations of the Holy Spirit, and to demand in every instance a uniform intensity of feeling, uniformly manifested. The epoch, indeed, is a critical one in the spiritual history of the individual. It is peculiarly liable to impure admixtures, which too clearly betray their earthly origin, and not always free from immoral tendencies. The quality of a religious awakening which assumes the form of an epidemic is open to suspicion. In many persons, particularly females, the nervous system is sensitive and liable to the contagion of religious excitement, whence the strange and sometimes repulsive incidents which occasionally occur in revivalist meetings, even when held with the best intentions. The genuine work of the Spirit, however it may pierce 'to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit' (Heb. iv. 12), is individual rather than multitudinous, acts in conjunction with free moral agency and leads to moral results.

Any dangers or mistakes liable to arise at this stage may be obviated by bearing in mind another aspect of conversion, viz., spiritual illumination, which is equally a Scriptural one ('Awake, and Christ shall give thee light'), and embraces both the rational and the emotional side of human nature. The word 'darkness' is used in Scripture to signify both intellectual blindness and a depraved bias of the will; and, indeed, the former is a consequence of the latter (Rom. i. 21). Unregenerate man is represented as in darkness (Ephes. v. 8); and though Christ is the light of the world, and manifests Himself in the natural conscience (John i. 9), Christians are in a special sense children of light, and subjects of a special illumination of the Holy Spirit. In what does it consist. Those to whom the Gospel has never come are surrounded by an atmosphere of darkness which, even if they had the faculty of vision, prevents them from seeing things in their true colours and relations; and the ministration of the Word is the appointed means of placing them, so far, in a more favourable position. This, however, is little more than saying that the Holy Spirit, as a rule, makes use of external means to begin and carry on His saving work; the light of revelation removes the darkness of heathenism as a preliminary step towards individual illumination. But Scripture further represents the natural man as in darkness, in the sense of being without the faculty of spiritual vision; as in himself blind, as incapable of spiritual discernment, even if the light shone around him. 'God,' says S. Paul to the Corinthians, 'who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath' (besides this objective effect of the word) 'shined in our

hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Cor. iv. 6). If we may consider the mind (*νοῦς*) and the affections (*καρδία*) separately, both suffer from spiritual blindness; the understanding is darkened (Ephes. iv. 18), the affections no longer go forth towards their proper object; and this state continues as long as the ray from heaven cannot find an entrance. To the Jew the announcement that the crucified Jesus is the promised Messiah, and that faith in Him, without the observance of the law of Moses, avails to justification, was a stumbling-block, to the Gentile world it was 'foolishness' (1 Cor. i. 23); foolishness, because the pride of reason rebelled against a religion the first demand of which is the acceptance of mysteries which philosophy had never anticipated, and could not explain. The reception which the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, as preached by S. Paul, met with on the part of the polished Athenians is an instance in point (Acts xvii.). There is in the natural understanding no connecting point between such mysteries as the incarnation, the atonement, the necessity of the new birth, and the resurrection, as there is between it and the morality of Scripture; hence the latter gives no occasion of offence, and, indeed, is cordially accepted by many who reject the former as unworthy of belief. But so, and on the same ground, is the teaching of Confucius or Socrates admired, as far as it approximates to the standard of the Bible. As long as a sense of sin, the effect of the Holy Spirit's work in His special office of conviction (John xvi. 8), is dormant, the philosophy of the plan of salvation is not likely to be appreciated; the wisdom of the world counts it foolishness, a charge which itself anticipates and glories in. It is of little avail to remind the man of science that, whatever be the branch he cultivates, his researches pushed far enough invariably end in mystery; a fact, therefore, which may be expected to appear in the Gospel scheme also. The difference is this: Christianity not only ends but begins with the assertion of supernatural facts, builds itself upon them, transforms the duties of the moral law into Christian obedience by a constant reference to those facts, and proclaims that if they are forgotten or denied, it is robbed of its vital force and is no longer Christianity. It would be unjust, in all such cases, to ascribe this reluctance to admit the supernatural element of Christianity to the influence of a depraved will on the understanding, certain as that moral fact is; it is met with where the virtues of ordinary life are cultivated, and to an extent which some Christian believers would do well to imitate. The true cause is, as has been remarked, that the Holy Spirit's work of conviction of sin has not been experienced, or not sufficiently so; and in consequence,

Christianity is not recognized as a religion of *redemption*. But darkness, in the moral sense of the word, is also ascribed in Scripture to the natural man. In this sense it means that his affections, and through them the will, are diverted from their proper object and enslaved to sin. 'The carnal mind' (*φρόνημα τῆς σαρκος*) 'is enmity against God; it is 'not only 'not subject to the law of God, but neither, indeed, can be' (Rom. viii. 7). It labours under a moral impotency in respect of the spiritual life. The actings of such a life, conflict with sin, faith, love, prayer, etc., are foreign to its experience, and to its inclinations; in short it gravitates to earthly things. Whether the object that engrosses the affections is of a more refined or a grosser character, the aversion from a life hid with Christ in God is substantially the same in every case in which spiritual illumination has not displaced the love of the world by the love of God. Moreover, this innate disposition to spiritual things is aggravated by the terms on which alone the Gospel promises its blessings. The demand is for the whole heart; it is felt that if indeed the Son of God became incarnate and died for sin no less is due; but against such a surrender the carnal mind rebels; compromises which aim at uniting the service of two masters are devised and full submission only takes place when 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' supplants the old affection by a new one. And this is the second feature of real conversion.

There remains yet a third: this vital change always terminates in an appropriation of Christ as Redeemer, or in other words, in justifying faith; which, therefore, the Protestant Confessions couple with repentance and a change of mind as completing the conception. Negatively, conversion is the renunciation of a past sinful life; positively, the restoration of fellowship with God. But for the sinner there is no possibility of the latter except through the mediation of Christ, and an appropriation of the promises which centre in Him. Mere convictions of sin, however profound, which stop short of this decisive step, issue either in despair, or in a return to spiritual insensibility; the strong man armed has been driven out, but because the habitation has been left empty he finds means to return. The Church of Rome likewise speaks of faith in this connection, but the faith which it means is of a different nature from what Protestants understand by the term, and occupies a different place in the process of conversion. It is not an element of conversion itself, but an act antecedent,¹ and consists in a mere accept-

¹ In eo quem pœnitet, fides pœnitentiam antecedat necesse est; ex quo fit ut nullo modo pœnitentiæ pars recte dici possit. Cat. Rom. De Pœnit., viii.

ance of the declarations of Scripture as true ; in fact, it is that historical faith which may be predicated even of those fallen beings who ' believe and tremble ' (James ii. 19).¹ Whereas faith, in the other sense, embraces, under a sense of sin, the gratuitous offer of mercy which the Gospel proposes, and is the last step in conversion, the point of transition at which the latter passes into habitual sanctification. Both in the Old and the New Testaments the application of the Divine law to the conscience, producing conviction of sin, is always accompanied with promises of mercy to the penitent. The ceremonial law spoke of atonement through shedding of blood : prophecy is full of encouragement to the repentant sinner ; and the chief Expounder of the requirements of the law in its full spiritual meaning (Matt. v.-vii.) was no other than He who announced Himself as sent to seek and to save the lost. The ministration of the Word, therefore, simultaneously charges sin upon the conscience, and points out the mode of relief ; and the Holy Ghost, in the process of conversion, not only awakens and enlightens the sinner, but completes the work by leading him to Christ.

It is not, of course, to be supposed that these various operations of the Holy Spirit are confined to the primary act of conversion. On the contrary they are necessary accompaniments of the Christian life from first to last. Conviction of sin, like the roots of a tree, grows downwards in proportion as the fruits of the Spirit grow upwards ; spiritual illumination is a progressive work, and the Christian must always be endeavouring to understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephes v. 17) ; and as to faith in Christ, it is as necessary to the maintaining as to the entering upon a justified state. But a true conversion remains, notwithstanding, the *first* occasion on which these spiritual habits are implanted in the soul.

Some subordinate points remain to be noticed. Quenstedt's definition applies, as he observes, only to adults ; and, indeed, it is obvious that infants, before the dawn of reason, cannot be supposed to have a sense of sin, or to understand the Gospel message, or to exercise faith in it. In other words, infants, whether within the Church or outside of it, are incapable of conversion, in the strict sense of the word. This will be admitted ; but it may be argued that those infants who have been born of Christian parents, and have received the sacrament of baptism, do not need conversion : they have only, as reason begins to act, to improve the grace given them in baptism, and they will grow up unconsciously into a state

¹ Disponuntur ad ipsam justitiam dum excitati divina gratia et adjuti fidem ex auditu concipientes, libere moventur in Deum, credentes vera esse quæ divinitus revelata et promissa sunt. Con. Trid., Sess. vi., c. 6.

of confirmed religion, neither needing nor remembering any such spiritual change as that denoted by the word conversion. And hence the question arises—'Is conversion in all cases necessary, or not so?' We must draw a distinction between those infants who depart this life before the dawn of reason and those who become, in whatever degree, conscious moral agents. The former are incapable of conversion; and we may presume that they do not need it in order to be saved. In truth, we know little or nothing respecting their spiritual condition, and Scripture does not come to our assistance. If, born of Christian parents and in the bosom of a Christian Church, they receive baptism as a 'charitable work,' pleasing to Christ, we trust He hears our prayers on their behalf and takes them into His gracious keeping; we have no doubt that, if removed before a corrupt nature can act, they are safe in the bosom of their Father and their God. But beyond this it is not safe to advance. We know not what kind or amount of grace is given to them in baptism, or whether the terms regeneration or justification, according to the meaning they bear in Scripture, are applicable to this exceptional case. We may suppose that something *analogous* to what these terms express takes place in every child of Adam before he is admitted to the kingdom of heaven; but positive statements on the subject are out of place. And this because it *is* an exceptional case; the subject labours under a natural incapacity to fulfil the conditions which Scripture demands in the normal case of adult baptism, a circumstance which by no means compels us to question the propriety of infant baptism, but which does seem to recommend the language of faith and charity, in preference to that of dogmatic assertion, respecting its effects. But if the infant arrives at an age when he can be brought, to whatever extent, under religious instruction; when the conscience can be appealed to, and a choice between right and wrong can be made—we must hold that conversion, or something equivalent to it, is necessary even in those who have been dedicated to Christ in baptism. The privileges which such an infant enjoys correspond to the external calling of the Word in the case of an adult. And the need of a distinct act of obedience to the summons is plain enough in the sinful passions, the frivolity and indifference to religion, which, as a rule, mark our earliest years. To argue that apart from these appeals, baptismal grace will of itself become active, will, in fact, improve itself; or that it can be improved in any other way than by the presentation to the infant mind, as it is capable thereof, of the truths of the Gospel; would be to ascribe a magical effect to the ordinance to which Scripture gives no countenance. Whatever notion we may form of baptismal grace

—if it be a seed it requires watering, if it be a germ of faith (as Calvin and others have held) it must have the objects of faith in due time presented to it—the grace, apart from other means of grace, will not of itself grow up into even the most elementary apprehension of the Gospel, or of Him to whom the Gospel bears witness. ‘It is your parts and duties to see that this infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise and profession he hath here made by you. And that he may know these things the better, ye shall call upon him to hear sermons, etc. (Bapt. Serv.). That is, he must be approached as an adult candidate for baptism would be, in the way of moral suasion, only adapted to the immaturity of the subject. The meaning of baptism must be explained to him, and this cannot be done without at the same time instructing him in the fundamental truths of the Gospel, and especially those connected with the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Somehow or other he must be called upon to repent and believe on Christ, if his baptism, or the grace conveyed in it, is to be beneficial. But here we pass from the region of sacramental grace into that of the ministration of the Word, with which conversion is specially connected; the religious instruction, on the presumption of which the infant was baptized, taking the place of the preaching of the Word to adults, whether in missions or at home. The only difference is that in the case of an adult candidate for baptism, his conversion precedes the Sacrament, while in the case of the baptized infant it follows it. Such infant conversion may differ much in circumstantialia from that of an adult; it may be marked by no great sense of sin; the notions entertained of religion may be as infantile as the subject who entertains them; the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit may be so faint as to be hardly perceptible to the inner man. But these do not affect the essence of conversion, which consists in an individual summons and an individual response. And if the analysis be carried far enough, it will be found, even in the most immature forms of religious life, that some transaction must have taken place between the soul and God, and that where the response has been favourable it is owing to efficacious as distinguished from preparatory grace. The conclusion is that, extraordinary cases being set aside, conversion, in its substance, is universally necessary. In the case we have been considering it may be regarded as the inward aspect or side of confirmation; it supplies the condition which was wanting to make the baptism a complete one. Confirmation is a public assurance to the Church that the imperfection of infant baptism is made good, and that no hindrance now exists to full admission to Christian privileges.

Another remark of Quenstedt's is, that the 'ultimate act' in conversion is instantaneous (*in instanti, quoad ultimum actum*). And, indeed, we cannot think of it otherwise. To regard it as a gradual process would be to confound it either with sanctification or with the preparatory work of grace which leads up to it. The turning from sin and the turning to God may be distinguished in thought, but, in fact, there can be no middle, neutral ground between a state of grace and its opposite; light and darkness cannot co-exist.¹ This will appear more plainly if we remember that conversion is regeneration itself, in its inward or essential aspect; regeneration in the sight of God, though not as yet visibly sealed by admission to the Church.² But regeneration does not admit either of degrees or of successive acts. The analogy of natural birth is to the point. Previously to the birth, for a considerable time, a hidden life goes on in the womb; but the birth itself is momentary or comparatively so. And such must be the new birth by the Holy Spirit. A distinction, however, may be drawn between the fact and the consciousness of it. From the former's being instantaneous it does not follow that the subject of the change may be able to fix the precise moment of the passing of preparatory into creative grace; indeed, the natural analogy is against such an assumption. For no one is conscious, at the time of his birth, of the fact, or can afterwards remember anything about it. In due season he knows that he must have been born; but he knows it only by the activity of the vital functions, and the circumstances with which he is surrounded. When Charles Wesley, therefore, tells us that his conversion took place in Aldersgate Street, on a certain day, at a quarter before nine o'clock in the month of May, 1739,³ it would, indeed, be unphilosophical to assert that such an alleged fact is impossible, and improper to make it a subject of ridicule; but we may certainly ask whether it is likely that any one, under such a profound agitation of mind as that here pre-supposed, could have noted the moment so exactly. According to the old distinction, which in the main is correct, grace is 'preveniens, operans, et co-operans'; prevenient grace, comprising the external means which the Holy Spirit employs, such as the Word and other means of grace; operative, the internal agency (awakening, enlightening, etc.)

¹ Probe distinguenda præparatio ab ipsa ex statu iræ in statum gratiæ translatione. Præparatio habet suos gradus, et fit successive; ipsa vero ex statu iræ in statum gratiæ translatio fit in instanti et in momento, cum impossibile sit ut subjectum aliquod vel per momentum sit simul in statu iræ et in statu gratiæ, simul sub vita et sub morte. Quenstedt, P. ii. c. 7, § 1, Thes. 22.

² Regeneratio conversionis synonymum est, quatenus illa est adulterum, et per verbum fit. *Ibid.*, Thes. 9.

³ Southey, 'Life of Wesley.'

which issues in conversion ; co-operative, that which accompanies the Christian to the end, and assists him in the work of sanctification. An attempt to analyse too minutely the complex state of mind which belongs to the second head is likely to fail, and to lead either to unnecessary distress of mind or to delusions more dangerous. Scripture contains instances of sudden conversion, such as that of Saul, and of the gaoler of Philippi ; and the time and circumstances must have been indelibly impressed on the memory of these converts. The subject of such a change must, in the language of Paley, ' both be sensible of it at the time, and remember it all his life afterwards. It is too momentous an event ever to be forgot. A man might as easily forget his escape from a shipwreck.' But in such cases as that of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened to attend to the preaching of S. Paul, or Timothy, who from a child had known the Holy Scriptures, it would have been more difficult to fix the hour of their conversion ; and the investigation could lead to no beneficial results. All were conspicuous examples of Divine grace ; all bore fruit worthy of repentance. Even in the two former instances it is impossible to say that a prevenient work of grace had not occurred. The very bitterness of Saul's hostility to the Church seems evidence that his conscience was ill at ease as he journeyed to Damascus ; and the gaoler had probably become acquainted with the missionary labours of Paul and Silas at Philippi. To determine empirically the moment of conversion, or to distinguish accurately between the several stages which lead to it, is beyond our power ; so great is the variety of circumstances in each case, such as age, previous history, and particularly the greater or less duration of the preliminary work of the Holy Spirit. Some surrender to His gracious influences at once, others after a lengthened period of hesitation, or even resistance. ' The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit ' (John iii. 8). The present is what we have to deal with, and the true test is progressive sanctification. There can be no true sanctification without an assurance of a changed relation towards God, whereby we cry, ' Abba, Father ' (Gal. iv. 6) ; and sanctification is the putting on of the mind of Christ, in its various particulars. Those who can entertain a reasonable hope that such is their present spiritual state may also conclude—however different their experience may have been from that of others—that they have been brought out of darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (Acts xxxvi. 18).

JUSTIFICATION

Fallen man, in order to his spiritual restoration, needs not only a liberation of will from the thralldom of sin and a change of heart, but also a change of relation towards God as a righteous Lawgiver. The first symptom of an awakened conscience is a sense of guilt ; but, as we have seen, conversion involves or terminates in acceptance, through faith, of the promises of mercy, founded on the work of Christ, and offered in the ministration of the Word ; and this acceptance issues in a justified state, a state in which the guilt of sin, past and present, is remitted. ' Whom He called, them He also justified ' (Rom. viii. 30) ; a connection simultaneous in fact, but separable in thought. Here, then, arises a class of questions of a distinctive character. What is the meaning of justification ? What office does faith discharge in connection with it ? Of what nature is justifying faith ? Questions which formed a prominent topic of controversy in the Apostolic age, then for centuries passed into comparative oblivion, and at the Reformation once more asserted their paramount importance, and lay at the root of the separation of the Protestant churches from the communion of Rome.

Our Article on the subject (xi.) contains no definition of justification, merely declaring that ' we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith ' ; a statement which, if the clause ' by faith ' were allowed to be variously understood, might be accepted by all Christian Churches. Nor is the Augsburg Confession—after which our own formulary was, on this point, evidently framed—much more explicit : ' We teach that men are justified before God, not by their own works or deservings, but for Christ's sake through faith ; which faith God imputes to them for righteousness ' (Art. iv.). The Protestant theologians of the next century, especially the Lutheran, enter more into detail. Quenstedt's definition is : ' Justification is an act of the Holy Trinity *ad extra* ' (*i. e.*, common to all three Persons) ; ' forensic in nature ; of mere grace ; by which, on account of Christ's merits, the sinner is gratuitously pardoned and counted righteous ; to the praise of the Divine mercy, and the salvation of those who are justified.'¹ The causes of justification these theologians describe as follows : the efficient cause, the Triune God ; the impelling (internal), the gratuitous mercy of God ; the impelling (external), the meritorious active

¹ De Justif., § 1, Thes. 22. So Hollaz, P. iii. § 1, c. 8 ; except that he adds the condition : Peccatori converso et renato. Comp. Baier, De Justif., § 15. And Calvin : Nos justificationem simpliciter interpretamur acceptionem, quâ nos Deus in gratiam receptos pro justis habet. Eamque in remissione peccatorum ac justitiæ Christi imputatione positam esse dicimus. Inst., iii. c. 11 :

and passive obedience of Christ ; the secondary impelling (*minus principalis*) faith in Christ ; the formal cause, remission of sin, which involves the imputation of Christ's righteousness.¹ Sometimes the formal cause is described as faith, by which is to be understood a faith apprehensive of the merits of Christ. It will be seen hereafter that remission of sin, or the imputation of Christ's merits, and an operative faith, are really two aspects, or sides, of the one formal cause, so far as the category of formal causes is applicable to justification. By many writers—*e.g.*, J. Gerhard (Loc. xvii., § 64)—faith is termed the 'instrumental' cause, or the instrument of justification, the *means* by which the gift passes to the receiver ; and such, indeed, is the common mode of speaking on the subject.

The Council of Trent, to some extent, covers the same field with the Protestant Confessions and theologians. The final cause of justification it declares to be the glory of God and life eternal ; the efficient, the gratuitous mercy of God ; the meritorious, our Lord Jesus Christ. At this point, however, the divergence between it and the Protestant formularies appears. The instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism ; and 'the only formal cause is the righteousness of God, not that by which He is righteous, but that by which He makes us righteous, that, namely, by which we are renewed in the spirit of our minds, the love of God being' (in the act of justification) 'shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost' (Rom. v. 5.²

§ 62. ETYMOLOGY

It is admitted, on all sides, that justification, in its active signification, is a gift of God ; but whether the gift is of a declaratory or a creative nature is matter of debate. The Protestant Confessions adopt the former view, the Romish the latter ; at least, that is the tendency of each. The testimony of Scripture leaves little doubt on the subject. Nothing adduced on the other side has invalidated the etymological argument in favour of the forensic meaning of the word, as set forth in the works of Chemnitz, J. Gerhard, and their successors. The Hebrew verb קָדַשׁ signifies in Kal either to be righteous or to be declared so (Gen. xxxviii. 26 ; Job ix. 2) ; in Pihel, to make righteous (in ecclesiastical Latin, *justificare*, Ezek. xvi. 51), and occasionally to declare righteous (Job xxxiii. 32) ; and in Hiphil, almost always to acquit forensically (Exod. xxiii. 7).³ The LXX. Version renders the

¹ J. Gerh., L. xvii., § 199. Baier, P. iii. c. 5, § 11.

² Sess. vi., c. 7. To the same effect, justification is described as 'non solum peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio, et renovatio interioris hominis.' *Ibid.*

³ See Gesenius, s. v.

verb in Hiphil, with few exceptions, by the Greek verb *δικαιῶω* ; with the meaning of which we are at present chiefly concerned. In classical Greek this verb bears two principal senses : to pronounce a thing, or a course of action proper,¹ and to visit judicially.² It does not appear that any instance occurs in classical writers of its signifying to make righteous, in the sense of infusing a quality, as heat is communicated to iron by the agency of fire. But, as Chemnitz remarks,³ the question is, not in what secondary senses the word may occasionally be employed, but how the sacred writers use it when they expressly discuss the topic of justification. The nearest approach to a formal treatment of the subject is to be found in the Epistles of S. Paul to the Romans and Galatians, to which we may confine ourselves. All men, according to the Apostle, are—on account of their connection with Adam and their actual transgressions—subject to the condemnation of the law, its judicial sentence against sin (Rom. v. 18) ; but, through faith in Christ, they are justified, *i.e.*, the curse is removed (*Ibid.*, iii. 24) ; in the sense in which ‘ the many were made sinners ’ by one man’s disobedience, in the same ‘ by the obedience of one shall the many be made righteous ’ (v. 19). Apart from the context, this latter passage might refer either to the imputation of guilt, or to the propagation of a corrupt nature through Adam’s fall, or to both together, the one as the consequence of the other ; whence, as Bellarmine argues, the righteousness due to the obedience of Christ might be understood as comprising both imputed and inherent. But the context determines the sense of it. If death is the wages of sin, the prevalence of death ‘ over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression ’ (v. 14), either by disobedience to a positive command, or (as in the case of infants) by any personal sin at all, proves, the Apostle argues, that the whole of mankind was, in some mysterious manner, involved in the *guilt* of Adam’s sin ; in consequence of which ‘ judgment came upon all men to *condemnation* ’ (v. 18), not to the corruption of human nature, of which the Apostle is not speaking. In like manner, by the obedience of One, those who had been adjudged guilty sinners may, if they receive the free gift, be absolved from all their offences. Condemnation on God’s part is a different thing from the transmission of an hereditary taint in our nature ; and so the ‘ righteousness of God,’ or God’s method of justification, is a different thing from the infusion of inherent righteousness. The examples which S. Paul cites from the Old Testament lead to the same conclusion. Abra-

¹ ὅποι ποτὲ θεὸς δικαιῶ. Soph., Phil., 780.

² ὑμᾶς δὲ αὐτοῦς μᾶλλον δικαιώσασθε. Thuc., iii. 40.

³ Exam., Art. ii. § 6.

ham believed God, and his faith was set to his account (*ἐλογίσθη*) for righteousness ; he was accounted, not made, righteous (iv. 5). And, as if to leave no doubt respecting his meaning, he refers to Psa. xxxii. : ' Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sin is covered ; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.' The justified man, then, is one whose sins are forgiven or covered from the eye of God ; to whom righteousness is imputed, not who is made righteous or sanctified. He is one whose *accusers* are silenced. ' Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect ? Who is he that condemneth ? ' Not God, who justifies them, pronounces judgment in their favour ; and if He be for them, who can be against them ? (Rom. viii. 33, 34). Precisely in the same sense is the word used in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican : ' This man went down to his house justified or forgiven (*δεδικαιωμένος*) rather than the other ' (Luke xviii. 14). Even S. James, who, in the opinion of some, intended to modify or explain his brother-Apostle's statements, adheres strictly to the *meaning of the word* as it is used by the latter. Abraham's faith ' wrought with his works ' proved itself to be a justifying faith by its fruits ; but his justification, according to S. James himself, consisted not in the infusion of a quality, but in an imputation ; for the very same passage is cited by him which S. Paul employs : ' Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness ' (Jas. ii. 23). It has been well observed that, as regards past sins at any rate, justification is incapable of any other sense than a judicial acquittal. For what is done cannot be undone ; the sin is past, but the guilt remains. The only relief which the case admits of is that it should not be imputed to the offender. But if this is the necessary character which justification bears in reference to past sin, why should it assume a different one in reference to present sin ?¹ To which we may add that the distinction between past and present does not apply to God. ' He must be almost blind,' says Bishop Bull, ' who does not perceive that this (the forensic) sense of the term is the predominant one in Scripture, and especially in the New Testament ; ' ² whose judgment seems entirely consistent with fact.

But, it is alleged, admitting that justification as the act of God is a declaration, we must bear in mind the potency which Scripture ascribes to the Word of God as such. If it begins as a word, it ends as a fact. ' The voice of the Lord is powerful ; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.' He said, ' Let there be light, and there was light ' ;

¹ See Newman, *Justif.*, Lect. iii.

² *Harm. Apost.*, c. i.

‘ He spake, and it was done ; He commanded, and it stood fast.’ What man does by an effort and with difficulty, and by the use of means, God does by the simple fiat of His Word. When, therefore, He declares a person righteous, He makes him so ; so that justification and renewal are not merely inseparable in fact, but the effect of the same Divine operation ; the Word declaring is the Word making. Justification, therefore, may properly be considered and called renewal.¹ The reasoning, however, is not valid. The Word or voice of the Lord no doubt effects what it intends to effect in each particular utterance of it ; but there may be a variety of occasions, each with its specific object, on which it exercises its power, and it does not follow that because the instrument is the same, the object is so also. When by the word of creative power He called the world out of chaos, the effect followed—viz., the appearance of the world out of chaos, because this was the specific object in view ; but that same Word of God did not produce light. To remove the darkness which brooded over the earth a second Word was employed. God spake again and said, ‘ Let there be light,’ and a specific effect followed—‘ there was light.’ And so throughout the whole of creation separate acts of the Word produced distinct effects, and yet the instrument was the same in all. To apply this to justification. As an act of God it is a pronouncing the sinner righteous, a declaration that his sin, past and present, is remitted or forgiven. That is the specific object of this particular utterance of the Word of God, and it never fails to pass into deed ; the sinner is forgiven, or counted righteous, or justified. How he is assured of the fact is another question (see next §). But the Divine act, consisting of declaration and deed, terminates, as far as justification is concerned, with itself, and produces, as the voice of God, no further spiritual effect. God may, and does intend also to sanctify the believer, to make him as well as count him righteous, but not in the special act of justifying him. To count righteous and to make righteous are clearly distinct ideas—as distinct as calling the world out of chaos and creating light ; and we can no more argue that the declaration and the renewal take place *simultaneously* and by virtue of the *same* Divine Word than we can say that the creation of the world and the creation of light were simultaneous, and proceeded from the *same* coming forth of the voice of God ; that is, we cannot say it merely because the Word is represented in Scripture as creative. Of course, the whole of this mode of speaking is anthropomorphic. We cannot attribute succession to the acts of God ; we know nothing really of the relation between His Word and the act following ; but when an argument is founded on

¹ Newman, Lect. iii.

the anthropomorphism of Scripture, it is properly met by a similar appeal thereto ; and the analysis of Scripture language concerning the Divine Being, if it is not to mislead, must take in the whole, and not a part only, of the language. Scripture treats the matter of justification according to the analogy of human tribunals, and every one can understand that the judicial acquittal of an accused person is neither identical with making him virtuous, nor necessarily issues in that result. So the active justification of God does not necessarily go further than itself—not necessarily as far as arguments can be drawn from the usage of terms. It may be that, in fact, there is an inseparable connection between justification and renewal, that no one can be justified without being sanctified ; but the connection may not be founded on what Scripture says respecting the Word of God. The fallacy lies in the ambiguous sense attached to the expression, ‘ calling a person righteous,’ making it to mean either judicially declaring him righteous, or calling him righteous with the intent of making him so, and combining the two senses in the matter of justification without warrant or necessity. The Word of God may be operative to one purpose, and yet not be intended to operate to another of a different character ; and no argument can be founded on the mere fact that in either case it is the Word of God to which the effect is assigned, since separate acts of the Divine will are represented in Scripture as necessary to produce distinct results. The fallacy is akin to that into which Möhler, and Bossuet before him, fall in attempting to evade the etymological argument. ‘ Nothing,’ the former says, ‘ has contributed more to erroneous views of the nature of justification than want of acquaintance with the forms of thought and expression of the ancient world. Ancient writers are wont to employ the outward figure for the inward reality, because thus only can the latter clothe itself in an intelligible form. When, therefore, under the old covenant ’ (and surely he might have added, ‘ in the New Testament ’), ‘ justification is described by terms derived from a human judicial process—that is, as a mere forensic acquittal—it is the greatest mistake, and a proof of ignorance of ancient modes of thinking, to suppose this does not connote an inward deliverance from the power of sin.’ And then referring to Gerhard’s remark (Loc. xxii., § 6), that justification is described in Scripture under a variety of terms borrowed from the processes of judicature, he adds : ‘ The very multiplicity of such expressions should have raised a surmise that they, in part at least, must be understood figuratively.’¹ That both in the Old and the New Testament the

¹ Symbolik, § 13. So Bossuet : ‘ Comme l’Ecriture nous explique la remission des péchés, tantôt en disant que Dieu les couvre, et tantôt en disant

Divine act of justification is described by analogical terms borrowed from the proceedings of human tribunals is true, and, so far as analogy partakes of a figurative element, the description is figurative. But the reality intended must correspond to the figure employed, not to a different one. Now, a judicial process is a different thing from the infusion of a quality. By analogy the base of a mountain is described as its foot. Let the figure be removed, and it is still the base, or lowest part of the mountain that is meant, not the top, or the middle, or the interior of it. Under the analogical description of justification in Scripture there must be a special thing intended, and that thing must be the reality which the analogy describes figuratively; that is, what must be signified is the *divine* act, which corresponds to the human—viz., the divine act of absolution. But Möhler, like the Council of Trent, makes one figure represent two different, however inseparable, things—pardon and renewal, deliverance from the power of sin, as well as from its guilt; which is the same as maintaining that the foot of a mountain may signify both its lowest part and its middle. Justification, the Council declares, consists *both* of remission of sin and internal renovation. And such is the definition of the Schoolmen, founded not on the Greek original, but on the word ‘justificare,’ as used by the Latin Fathers, who render it ‘making just,’ as ‘calefacere’ means making hot. ‘Justification,’ says Thomas Aquinas, ‘is a movement towards righteousness, as heating is a movement towards heat’; that is, it is inherent righteousness (as heat is inherent in the metal) as well as remission of sin; and this it is which constitutes the fundamental distinction between the Romish and the Protestant doctrine on the subject.

§ 63. WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

Justification, we have seen, is a declaratory act on the part of God; but how does He make known His judgment of acquittal? It is not enough to say, in reply, that in the Gospel the promise of forgiveness is made generally to all who believe in Christ, and therefore (by implication) to each individual believer; for this holds good in respect to those who are mere hearers of the word, and never advance beyond the privilege of external vocation; who, therefore, are not really justified at all. Nor can the sanctification of those who are justified, whether it be inward or outward, decide the point, for it is at best imperfect, and not adequate to the demands of the Divine law (see § 64). Justification is a making over to the individual a share

qu’il les ôte, et qu’il les efface par la grace du Saint-Esprit, qui nous fait des nouvelles creatures; nous croyons qu’il faut joindre ensemble ces expressions pour former l’idée parfaite de la justification du pécheur’ (Exp., c. vi.).

in the general atonement which Christ has made for the sin of the world ; and how is the individual to be assured that such appropriation has taken place ? An application for baptism is an assurance to the church that, so far as profession is a test, justification in the sight of God has already taken place ; but baptism cannot convey to the candidate himself any satisfaction on the point, unless, indeed, we suppose the sacrament to be accompanied with a sensible inward effect, leaving no room for doubt. It may, perhaps, be argued, as, in fact, the Romish schools do, that such an assurance is not intended ; that the normal state of the Christian is to be in doubt whether he has passed from a state of condemnation to one of acceptance ; that it would not be beneficial to him to emerge out of this uncertainty ; that, especially after baptism, he can expect no formal acquittal until that of the day of judgment. Unquestionably, any such inward assurance tends to independence of the visible Church and its ordinances, as the appointed channels of salvation ; though it would be unjust to insinuate that a suspicion of this kind is at the root of the Romish teaching on this subject. Suffice it to say, that the uncertainty finds no countenance in Scripture. No doubt ever seems to cross S. Paul's mind whether he is a child of God and an heir of salvation. He inculcates upon himself and others the duties of prayer and watchfulness, of working out their salvation with fear and trembling ; but never of harbouring doubt respecting their new relation towards God : ' Know ye not your own selves how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates ? ' (2 Cor. xiii. 5). The question, then, recurs, how is the declaration of justification on God's part conveyed to the repentant and believing sinner ?

It must be admitted that the Protestant doctrine, as often stated, is incomplete as regards this point. It insists so strongly on the forensic aspect of justification, or, rather, so exclusively, as to lose sight of the fact that this gift of God passes on to become subjective, or a matter of consciousness. Möhler charges it on Protestants that their conception of justification is too external, while their conception of the Church is too inward¹ ; the righteousness of Christ is only imputed, and never becomes imparted ; He casts His shadow over the believer, but leaves him unrighteous ; while to define the Church as, in its idea, ' the blessed company of all faithful people, and so far invisible, is too inward a view of it. With respect to the former topic, it is sufficient to observe that the appropriation of the Gospel-promise by faith—a faith which springs from conviction of sin and apprehends Christ as Redeemer—imparts, to say the least, as inward a character

¹ Symbolik, § 13.

to justification as an appropriation of Christ by baptism does, which sacrament, according to the Council of Trent, is the instrument of justification. But this is not the real reply to the objection. The real reply is that God, in justifying the sinner, not only anticipates the final judgment by some act in the Divine mind of a forensic character, but conveys inwardly a pledge thereof by the Spirit of adoption which He communicates ; whereby the consciousness of guilt is removed, a filial spirit takes its place, and the believer is enabled to cry, ' Abba, Father ' (Rom. viii. 15, 16 ; Gal. iv. 6).

The offices of the Holy Spirit in the Church, especially the one just named, have never occupied a place in Protestant theology corresponding to that which is assigned to them in Scripture. The reason is not far to seek. The great controversies of the Reformation turned on two main topics—the offices of Christ as Redeemer, and the sacraments ; and although that of the Holy Spirit and His work was never quite overlooked, as indeed it could not be in any system of Christian doctrine, it cannot be said to have received the attention which it deserves. Previously to Owen's great work, it would be difficult to name one which takes a comprehensive view of the subject. In our own Church particularly, the type of theology which prevailed in the last century and the early part of this was adverse to the doctrine of spiritual influence ; which, moreover, owing to the reaction from the Puritanism of the seventeenth century, and the extravagances sometimes exhibited by the followers of John Wesley, came to be regarded with suspicion by persons of whose piety there can be no doubt. When the witness of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's heart, as S. Paul describes it, became associated with bodily convulsions, outcries, or bitter sectarian spirit, it is no wonder that the subject was considered a dangerous one to meddle with, and that expositors who came across it in their labours did their best to explain away the plain meaning of Scripture. This meaning is indeed plain. It is the great privilege of the Gospel dispensation, the fruit of Christ's atonement and His ascension, that the Third Person of the Holy Trinity takes the very place, but in a more efficacious manner, which Christ would occupy if He were upon the earth ; He is not only the teacher, but the Comforter of the Church. And if Christ were upon earth, and any sinner approached Him in faith—the same faith in essence, though with clearer promises to rely upon, which prompted the applicants in the Gospel to come to Him for relief under the bodily ailments of themselves or their friends—would He not at once have calmed the fears of the suppliant with the assurance, ' Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee ' (Matt. ix. 2) ? This assurance the Holy Ghost, His Divine

Vicar, conveys in the act of justification. 'He bears witness with our spirit,' making use of it as the medium of His communications, 'that we are the children of God' (Rom. viii. 16); He sends forth 'the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father,' the Holy Spirit, as it were, identifying Himself with the Christian's own spirit in this new relation (Gal. iv. 6); 'in whom,' says S. Paul to the Ephesians, 'ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance,' and he warns them not to 'grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby' they were 'sealed unto the day of redemption' (Ephes. i. 13; iv. 30); 'the love of God,' he declares, 'is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us' (Rom. v. 5). This last passage is particularly deserving of attention, for from Augustine downwards through the Middle Ages to our own times it has been interpreted of the love which the believer has towards God, and made to support the scholastic theory of an inherent justifying righteousness. Whereas the context proves that not the Christian's love towards God, but God's love towards him—God's adopting love—is what is intended by the Apostle¹; 'God's acceptance of us, for Christ's sake, is made known to us by the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit.' And this explains Rom. iv. 25: 'Who was delivered up' (to death) 'for our sins, but was raised for our justification.' By the death of Christ general forgiveness of sin (*secundum potentiam*) was effected; but by His resurrection (the step to His ascension) the gift of the Holy Ghost was bestowed, whose office it is to convey to the individual believer the assurance of justification. Compare Rom. viii. 34: 'It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, Who also maketh intercession for us'; one subject of that intercession being that the Holy Ghost may bear witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Now it is to be observed that this is not directly renewal or sanctification, but the root and foundation thereof. The same Holy Spirit, indeed, who thus seals the faith of the Christian by His witness, renews at the same time the heart; but in the order of nature the latter follows the former. For there can be no love to God—that is, no true sanctification—without an assurance that on account of Christ's work and a reliance on that work God is reconciled to us; and that assurance is the gift of the Holy Ghost, antecedent, in the order of ideas, and necessarily so, to the fruits of faith and holy dispositions and a holy life.

¹ 'According to the Pelagian-rationalistic interpretation, which is adverse to spiritual influence, the love of man to God is here meant; according to the mind of the Apostle, God's love to man' (Olshausen, *in loc.*). 'That this love is not the love of man to God, but the love of God to the redeemed is proved by verse 8' (Tholuck, *in loc.*). 'Amor eis *h*u^mas erga nos' (Bengel, *in loc.*). Comp. De Wette, Kgf. Handbuch, *in loc.*

Something must be first in the order of ideas, and this inward testimony is the first thing—the foundation on which all subsequent sanctification proceeds.

This is the point to which so many Protestant writers, even Luther himself, even the Confessions, do not give sufficient prominence, thereby laying themselves open to the charge that their doctrine of justification makes it an imputation without a reality, a shell without a kernel, a declaration without a corresponding effect, an external covering leaving the nature beneath unsanctified. The multiplicity of Scripture expressions describing justification as a judicial process they rightly insist upon a proof that it cannot and does not mean in itself renewal ; but they fail to see that the analogy does not hold good in all respects. It is the duty of a human judge to condemn or acquit an accused person irrespectively of any private sentiment either of esteem or aversion towards the person ; whether the latter be a friend or an enemy, a relative or a stranger, are questions with which the judge, as such, has nothing to do ; he has merely to investigate whether the law has or has not been broken, and to decide accordingly. But God, in the salvation of a sinner, does not stand towards him merely in the relation of a judge. His aim is to recover the sinner from his state of death in trespasses and sins, to make peace between Himself and the offender, to establish a filial relation instead of one of enmity. Such a change cannot be effected without the preliminary operation of the Holy Spirit in producing conviction of sin and a sense of guilt, and this if not removed would be an impassable barrier against perfect reconciliation. Judicially, therefore, God in His Word announces that He can be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth, and this on the ground that an atonement for sin has been made by One who could make it ; but He does more than this : He reveals Himself inwardly to the penitent sinner as the merciful Father, as the Redeemer, as the Sanctifier ; He sheds abroad His redeeming love in the heart. He acquits, indeed, but not to leave the person absolved in a state of indifference towards his Judge, but to fill him with joy and peace in believing ; justification becomes inward as well as outward ; the declaration of forgiveness is not a mere movement of the Divine mind ending there, and intransitive ; external to us and remaining so ; it is conveyed to the spirit of man by the witness of the Holy Spirit. ‘ Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. . . . Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found.’

§ 64. FORMAL CAUSE

Both in philosophy and in theology the doctrine of formal causes has given rise to controversy. The formal cause of a thing is usually understood to be that which makes it what it is, that which immediately gives occasion to a definition or description of it. Thus a rational soul is said to give *form* to a man, because it is that which makes him a human being, as compared with the brute creation, so that we can define him as a rational animal; rationality, therefore, is here the formal cause. So in animals, the animal soul is the form of any given animal, that which distinguishes it from a stone or vegetable, and completes the idea of it. In such instances the formal cause bears an analogy to the 'specific difference' of logic; with this distinction, however, that in the logical definition 'man is a rational animal,' the term man is an abstraction and has no reality corresponding to it, whereas a formal cause presupposes an actual subject in which it inheres. The term may also be used of the accidents of a thing. Thus, of a whitened wall whiteness, which is but an accident, is the formal cause, and heat of a piece of hot iron. Moreover, when what is predicated assumes the passive form, it may either denote or not an inherent quality. Thus in a whitened wall whiteness inheres; but a man may be said to be loved, honoured, condemned, or acquitted, without any intrinsic quality in him deserving love, honour, condemnation, or absolution. It is sufficient if he is so regarded by another. There must be some reason why he should be so, but the reason may not be in himself. In such a case, the term formal cause, if employed, has an extended application; it belongs to a relation not to a thing, and resides in an extrinsic source. It is a quasi-formal cause, taking the place of a real one, equivalent in office, but not strictly answering to the definition. In point of fact, indeed, the sentiments felt towards another rarely exist without something in that other to call them forth; but the possibility of its being otherwise is conceivable. The question before us is, What is the formal cause of justification—the cause to which it is immediately attached—with nothing intervening either in fact or idea? If the form of justification is, as it is, a declaration on God's part, what is the immediate moving cause which leads Him to pronounce, in the case of an individual, a sentence of remission of sin and restoration to favour? Or, as it is sometimes expressed, What does God behold, whether outside or in the individual, in consideration of which justification takes place? In answering these questions Romanists and Protestants take opposite sides. According to the former, in baptism (which presupposes a certain kind of

faith, but not what Protestants mean by the term) grace is infused—no doubt in the last resort through the merits of Christ, but still infused—whereby sin is not only covered, but obliterated, the remaining concupiscence not being of the nature of sin; and the person thus justified—that is, made just—is enabled so to fulfil the Divine law, so to work out a righteousness of his own, that on account of it God can and does justify him, without a direct reference to the work of Christ, though not without a presupposition of it, so far as no inherent justifying righteousness can come into being except under and by the covenant of grace (to teach otherwise, indeed, would be simple Pelagianism). So runs the decree of the Council of Trent: ‘Finally, the *only* formal cause of justification is the righteousness of God; not His own righteousness, but that whereby He makes us righteous, in that we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not merely considered, but are righteous.’¹ Here justification and sanctification are openly identified. Yet the infused justifying grace, though *relatively* independent, is to be ultimately referred to the merits of Christ: ‘Although no one can be righteous, unless the merits of the Passion of Christ are communicated to him’ (by the sacrament of baptism) ‘yet this communication takes place when, through the Holy Spirit, the love of God is shed abroad in the heart’ (according to the erroneous interpretation of Rom. v. 5), ‘and inheres in it; so that in the act of justification along with remission of sin, faith, hope, and charity are infused.’² The part that Christ discharges in the process is more clearly explained in Can. x.: ‘If any one shall say that we are justified without the righteousness of Christ, through which *He acquired (meruit) the gift for us*, or that His righteousness is the formal cause of justification, let him be anathema.’ Christ, by His obedience and Passion, *earned* for the Church the power of conveying through baptism infused justifying grace; but the idea of direct imputation through faith must not be entertained. Subsequent writers of the Romish communion have found some difficulty in commenting on the decisions of the Council. Christ and His work cannot be quite put out of view; the Council itself does not venture to do that. But how and where are they to be introduced? Imputation of some kind, and at some point, must be assumed, if the Pelagian heresy is to be avoided; but how to bring it in is the problem. Is it conveyed once for all at the first infusion, transforming the subsequent righteousness from a process of nature into a gift of grace, as Adam’s sin changed the nature of man for the worse antecedently to actual sin; or does it go along with the inherent

¹ Sess. vi. c. 7.

² *Ibid.*

righteousness either in the way of tacit reference or of secret virtue communicated from time to time? *Sub judice lis est.* It is not enough to say that the Holy Spirit, dwelling in the Christian's heart and sanctifying it, is, in fact, Christ, with His merits, dwelling there; for Scripture teaches that the gift itself of the Spirit is the fruit of Christ's atoning work, so that we come at last to the idea of a meritorious cause external to us, that is, to the idea of imputation. Such is the doctrine of Rome. The Protestant Confessions, however they may differ on subordinate points, agree in this—that no righteousness inherent in us, however introduced, can abide the strict scrutiny of God's judgment, or enter into the process of justification; not even with a latent or avowed reference to the work of Christ to supply its deficiencies. Indeed, if Christ's merits are to be called in to make up for the defects of our own, this is proof positive that the latter are not sufficient. The formal cause of justification, therefore, is not inherent, but imputed; or, in other words, that which God has regard to in justifying the sinner is the obedience of Christ, active and passive, laid to the account of the believer because of his faith, as our sin was laid to the account of Christ in the Atonement (2 Cor. v. 21). We are 'made the righteousness of God' exactly in the same sense as Christ, who knew no actual sin, 'was made sin for us.' As regards the justified person himself, or the state of justification, it is held that what God has regard to is his faith. This is what distinguishes the justified person from others who are not so; whence, although the expression 'Christ's righteousness imputed,' does not occur in Scripture, it is said of Abraham, and, by implication, of Abraham's spiritual children, that faith is imputed to them for righteousness (Rom. iv. 20-25). Now, if by faith we are to understand, as Bishop Bull and others have done, imperfect obedience, since there is no question of faith's being an intrinsic quality, we seem to approximate to the Romish theory; only, instead of the infusion of faith, hope, and charity, we have here the infusion of faith alone, as an epitome of all other graces, or the root whence they spring. And thus it would seem that some Protestant writers assign a double formal cause of justification—one connected with the imputed righteousness of Christ without us and the other with the faith within us; so that, after all, inherent righteousness, in some sense, seems to claim a place in justification. In fact, many writers of the Romish communion hold this view, of whom Pighius¹ particularly deserves mention; and it has been

¹ Albert Pighius, died 1542. His work, 'Controv. Præcip. Explicat.,' 1541, contains his views on justification.¶ He insists strongly on the insufficiency of any righteousness of ours to meet the demands of the law, and hence the

ascribed to Bucer among Protestants, though J. Gerhard affirms that this Reformer cannot be so understood.¹ But, we may surely ask, If one formal cause is enough, why should we seek for another? The truth is that when Protestants speak of faith as the instrument, or means, or condition, of justification, they mean merely that it is the act of appropriation whereby the merits of Christ, otherwise a common benefit to mankind, become an individual possession; which therefore derives all its justifying efficacy, not from any virtue in itself, but from the object which it apprehends. Faith is not actually righteousness to the believer, but it is imputed to him as such; which is equivalent to saying that its intrinsic merit is not such as to justify, for there is no need of imputation where the reality exists. Imputation in this case is a merciful acceptance of something in the sinner which is allowed to take the place of perfect obedience; but not because it contains the seed of all obedience, but because it leads the soul directly up to Him who has wrought out a perfect righteousness for us; because it appropriates the offered gift, and makes the righteousness of Christ *our* justifying righteousness. This does not imply that faith is not in itself pleasing to God; it must be so, since it is appointed the condition to which the promise is attached; but it is its object, not its contents, which renders it the means of justifying. So that it is not at all adapted to furnish a secondary formal cause of justification, even an improper one; it does not occupy an independent position; it is part of the system of imputation which reposes ultimately on the meritorious work of Christ. It is no reproach, therefore, to Protestants, or to some of our own divines—as Jackson and Hooker—if they eventually arrive at the conclusion that, strictly speaking, there is no formal cause of justification. In fact, the work of Christ which is imputed is rather a meritorious cause; so that the formal must here be also the meritorious, which circumstance takes it out of the category of proper formal causes, these implying physical inherence; while faith, which really is a quality of the mind, is incapacitated from discharging the office of a formal cause by its deriving its virtue entirely from the object which it apprehends. Such is the state of controversy between us and Rome. Faith being, as it were, put out of court, nothing remains to establish the Romish theory but the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, which the Council pronounces the *sole* formal cause of justification, and

necessity of an imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ; yet assigns some justifying power to the work of grace wrought in us. See J. Gerhard, *Loc. xvii. c. 4, § 215.*

¹ *Loc. xvii. c. 4, § 197.*

many Romish writers a conjoint formal cause. To this question, therefore, we proceed.

The point at issue must be clearly understood. It is no reply to Protestant objections that the inherent justifying righteousness infused at baptism is, after all, the gift of God, and cannot be conceived of as independent of His grace; it may be from God, yet once called into being it is as independent a gift as reason is in a man, which ultimately, however, is the gift of God. Nor does the Protestant deny that inherent sanctification is the inseparable accompaniment of justification. No more pernicious distinction can be made in fact, however it may be admitted in idea, than between Christ who justifies, and Christ who sanctifies. The same Holy Spirit who convinces of sin, and calls forth faith, implants, and contemporaneously, a principle of renewal. Nor is it to the point to argue that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as distinct from its *effect*—viz., a renewal of the heart—supplies the proper formal cause we are in search of; for it is the effect, not the agent, that we are here considering. This is, in fact, a revival of Oslander's theory that the essential righteousness of God implanted in us the true form of justification; a theory which for a time attracted attention, and passed away as a meteor. Nor is it quite fair to substitute the word 'saved' for 'justified' in these discussions; for they are concerned with justification in its technical theological sense, and we only beat about the bush when we employ a more general term. We are saved by being born again, by being justified, by being sanctified, by obedience to the law, by being kept from final declension, by the resurrection of the dead. But the inquiry relates to justification as, in idea, distinct from other gifts of grace. Again, Protestants affirm, no less strongly than their opponents, that the fruits of the indwelling of the Spirit are in themselves really good, are pleasing to God, and will be rewarded by Him. There is no difference on this point. For the true doctrine of Rome we must go back to the Council of Trent: 'The one formal cause of justification is renewal in the spirit of our mind'; 'If any shall affirm that, under the covenant of grace, it is not possible to keep the law' (as the context proves, so as to be justified thereby), 'let them be anathema' (Sess. vi., c. 7; Can. xviii.). We hold, on the contrary, that inasmuch as a justifying righteousness must be a perfect one, and no one—not even the regenerate—can render this perfect obedience, nothing intrinsic in us can either justify, or form a part of justification. We observe, in the first place, that the Romish doctrine confounds the offices of the Second and Third Persons of the Holy Trinity. For though it is true that, *opera ad extra*, such as creation, are, in one sense, to be ascribed to all three Persons in common; yet

in the economy of redemption a special one belongs to each ; redemption to the Son, sanctification to the Holy Ghost. Now justification, in its proper Biblical sense of remission of sin or imputation of righteousness, is evidently connected with the atoning work of Christ, the Son, who became incarnate that He might reverse the consequences of the fall ; not with the work of the Holy Ghost, to whom this part of redemption is never ascribed. He ' sanctifies the elect people of God,' but did not redeem them ; His office is to apply the atonement, to quicken the dead soul, to form the new man within, and to carry on the work of sanctifying grace to perfection. But He is never said to have paid the price, provided a ransom, blotted out the handwriting of ordinances, which was a record of our debt ; all which figurative expressions describe the means of our justification, not of our sanctification. Justification, then, by an inward presence, or an inward work of the Third Person, ' confounds the Persons,' not in their internal relations to each other, but in the functions which each discharges in the dispensation of grace. But further, the Council can only maintain its ground in connection with another dogma ; viz., the effect of baptism as regards original sin. ' If any one,' are its words, ' shall assert that in baptism the whole of that which properly has the nature of sin is not extirpated, let him be anathema ' ¹ ; that is, not merely the guilt, but all trace of original sin is obliterated. The *fomes*, or material, of concupiscence, it is declared, ' the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin, in that it has in the regenerate the nature of sin.' ² If this be so— if the grace infused at baptism so transfigures the '*phronema sarkos*, which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh' (Art. ix.), as that God no longer sees any sin in it, then, no doubt, justification by inherent righteousness may be tenable. The Protestant Churches, our own included, decide otherwise, holding that ' this infection of nature remains even in the regenerate,' and that the lust and concupiscence to which it gives rise has ' of itself the nature of sin' (*Ibid.*). As it is not denied on either side that concupiscence, in the Christian's present condition, is active, the above statement of our article amounts to saying that no Christian of the Church militant is without sin ; whence it follows that he is not justified by the measure of sanctification which he attains in this life.

Either side appeals to Scripture. To Scripture, then, let us turn. We note that in the prayer which our Lord gave to His disciples—intended to be the model of all prayers, and used by the Church

¹ Sess. v., 5.

² *Ibid.*

throughout the world—it is taken for granted that sin still cleaves to the regenerate, for such only can approach God as their Father ; sin which, however venial it may be, needs to be forgiven through continual application of the blood of Christ. Psalmists, prophets, apostles, know nothing of an inherent righteousness which can abide the judgment of God. David extols the blessedness of the man, not who is without sin, but whose sin is forgiven and covered (Ps. xxxii. 1); and beseeches God not to enter into judgment with His servant, who could not, any more than other men, expect acquittal on that ground (Ps. cxliii. 2). Isaiah confesses that he is ‘ a man of unclean lips,’ and unfit for the vision of God (vi. 5), and numbers himself amongst those who ‘ are as an unclean thing,’ and their ‘ righteousness as filthy rags ’ (lxiv. 6). Daniel’s prayer (ix.) is chiefly taken up with confession of the sin of his people, but lest we should suppose that he does not include himself, he takes care to add, ‘ While I was confessing *my* sin, and the sin of my people Israel ’ (verse 20). It may be replied that these holy men lived under the old covenant, and did not enjoy the gift of grace vouchsafed to us ; we pass on then to the recorded experience of Christians and our fathers in the faith. S. John declares that ‘ if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ’ (i. 1, 8). S. Paul, writing to those whom he supposed regenerate, reminds them of a struggle going on between ‘ the flesh,’ or their carnal nature, and the Spirit ; the one lusting against the other and striving for the mastery, so that they could not do the things that they would (Gal. v. 17). The Spirit, indeed, in true Christians is the dominant principle, and keeps ‘ the flesh ’ under, but not without an effort and a conflict ; so that the perfection attained is not even that of Adam before the fall, in whom no such strife can be conceived (see § 30). It matters not whether we interpret the clause ‘ So that ye cannot do the things that ye would,’ as meaning ‘ So that ye are hindered from doing what ye would,’ or ‘ In order that ye may not do the things that ye would ’ ; you cannot attain the holiness which you desire, or you are enabled to overcome the evil tendencies within you ; either way a corrupt bias is supposed to be in existence, and to struggle against its Divine antagonist. This ‘ flesh,’ or ‘ old man,’ as the same Apostle terms it, is indeed crucified with Christ, but it is not as yet slain ; it is destined to extinction, but the time is not yet come (Rom. vi. 6). Accordingly he avows that, in the matter of sanctification, he had ‘ not attained, or was already made perfect,’ but only ‘ followed after,’ that he might eventually reach the prize of his high calling (Phil. iii. 12–14). Most graphically is the conflict and its result described in Rom. vii. It may seem hardly allowable to refer to this passage, inasmuch as from

the earliest times it has been a subject of controversy ; the Greek Fathers generally adopting the view that S. Paul does not refer to a regenerate state, Augustine and most of his illustrious followers of the Western Church contending that he does. Among the Reformers, foreign and British, no doubt was entertained that the Apostle is describing his own experience, and of the Roman Catholic theologians the great names of Bellarmine and Cornelius à Lapide may be cited on the same side. There seems, indeed, no reason to suppose that, at any rate from verse 14 of the chapter, he is not speaking of himself, and as a Christian. The idea of a double soul in the same individual, inclining the will in opposite directions, is a familiar one in classical literature ;¹ and our Lord Himself seems to use similar language when He speaks of one soul that must die in order that another may live (Mark viii. 35-38). Literally, no man can have two souls ; but the single I, the central personality, may be drawn one way or the other, or both ways at once, by the conflicting principles of good and evil. Our Lord did not mean merely that he who submits to martyrdom for his Master's sake shall live eternally, true as this is ; but that, as S. Paul expresses the thought, ' the old man ' must be crucified with Christ in order that the ' new man ' may occupy the throne of the heart and gradually proceed to reign alone. ' In me,' says the Apostle, ' that is in my flesh,' in my carnal nature considered in itself, the old Adam which still lives and moves in me, ' dwelleth no good thing.' It cannot be improved by the discipline of the law or any human means into the new creation in Christ ; it must die as Christ did, in order that as Christ rose from the dead there may be a spiritual resurrection to a new life. Thus, in one sense, ' I am sold under sin,' but in another, ' I delight in the law of God after the inward man.' Thus, ' to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good ' (according to the full requirements of the moral law) ' I find not.' I find ' a law in my members warring against the law of my mind,' and tending to bring me into captivity to the law of sin ' which is in my members.' Unaided from above, I might well despair of victory ; but I thank God that I am not under the law but under grace, and through Christ our Lord, I, the man of whom I have been speaking, ' with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.'²

¹ Δύο γὰρ σαφῶς ἔχω ψυχάς· οὐ γὰρ δὴ μία γε οὖσα ἅμα ἀγαθὴ τὲ ἔστι καὶ κακὴ οὐδ' ἅμα καλῶν τε καὶ αἰσχυρῶν ἐργῶν ἐρᾶ, καὶ ταῦτα ἅμα βούλεται τε καὶ οὐ βούλεται (Xenoph., Cyr., vi. 1). ' Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor ' (Ovid).

² Tholuck, in his commentary, gives an interesting history of the interpretation of this passage. No one, neither the Jewish people (Reiche), nor any individual, has ever, since the fall, been ' under the law ' as a covenant of works ; but it is the office of the Holy Spirit to awaken in the sinner a feeling

It is to be observed that in the passages cited, particularly those from S. Paul's Epistles, it is not so much actual sins which the writers have in view as the 'infection of nature' inherited from Adam, in process indeed of being healed but still operative. The effect of this imperfect recovery is not merely to produce shortcomings in practice, but to debilitate the habit of righteousness, to hang like a weight on its actings, to mar its complete conformity to the Divine ideal. The patient is convalescent but not restored to health. Concupiscence, even when successfully resisted, has of 'itself the nature of sin'; it is a symptom, to say the least, of spiritual languor. S. Paul found in himself 'a law,' a tendency, antecedently to any outbreaks of sin, causing him when he would do good to fall short of perfection. This the Council of Trent declares not to partake of the nature of sin, but it elicited from a higher authority to cry, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' The Council draws a distinction between venial and mortal sin, admitting that the former is found even in the greatest saints; but whence does even venial sin arise? Why should pardonable sins of infirmity sully his bright robe in whom baptism has completely stanch'd the original taint? Actions spring from habits, and as the actions are in quality so are the habits. A perfect habit of sanctification, such as the Church expects hereafter, must and will produce the disappearance even of venial sin; if we cannot predicate this of any Christian in this life, we infer that the implanted habit itself has not arrived at its full development. It may be a genuine work of grace, it may contain the germ of future perfection, but at present it does not constitute a perfect righteousness in the sight of God. And such a perfect righteousness, either inherent or imputed, is what is needed in the matter of justification. It is possible, the Council says, so to observe the Divine law as to be justified thereby; it is not possible, the Protestant replies, except on the supposition that original sin is extirpated in itself as well as in its guilt.¹ There is only one method of escaping from the difficulty, viz., by lowering the standard of the Divine law to meet the necessities of the case.

Our attention, however, is directed to passages of Scripture which

of what such a state would be. And none but a regenerate man can thank God for a deliverer from it. There is much truth in Olshausen's remark, that the understanding of the passage depends very much on the reader's spiritual experience.

¹ The question is not whether, as the Council puts it, it is abstractedly possible for the Christian to attain perfection in this life: no limit can be placed to the Divine power: what God will do hereafter He may, by a special act of grace, do now: but whether it is possible, on the supposition that regeneration does not annihilate the power of original sin.

seem to favour the Romish doctrine. For example, to our Lord's reply to His questioner, Matt. xix. 17, 'If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments'; to S. Paul's statement that God's object in sending His Son was that 'the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us' (Rom. viii. 4); to Christ's command, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect' (Matt. v. 48); to the examples of Abel, Noah, Daniel, Zacharias, Simeon, Cornelius and others, to whom the epithet 'righteous' is applied; to our Lord's warning that unless our righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. v. 20); to S. Paul's profession, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me' (Phil. iv. 13). The explanation of such passages has been long ago given by Augustine in the Pelagian controversy. He observes that they are 'pædagogical,' that is, intended to convince the sinner of his helplessness, and by exhibiting the Divine requirements to suggest what he ought to pray for; just as S. Paul describes the law of Moses as 'a schoolmaster' to lead men to Christ. 'Then Pelagians think that there is some weight in their objection, God would not command what He knows it is not in our power to accomplish; but let them consider that these precepts, though we cannot fulfil them, teach us what we ought to seek from Him.'¹ 'The Apostle, writing to the Thessalonians, enjoins charity; blames them for the want of it; prays that they may abound in it. Learn, O man, by the command what thou oughtest to have; by the reproof that thou hast it not; by the prayer, whence thou mayest receive it.'² To the Pelagian misuse of the instances of Zacharias, etc., he replies: 'Celestius does not understand that a man may be called righteous who approaches the standard nearly, which we do not deny has been the case with many even in this life. But it is one thing to be without sin, which in this life could not be said of any but Christ, and another to be without blame, which has been the privilege of many just persons. There is a certain common standard of righteousness against which no charge can be laid; yet by the very prayer which such a righteous man puts up, "Forgive us our trespasses," he confesses that' (in the sight of God) 'he is not without sin.'³ That an inchoate righteousness is found in every justified man; that the same Holy Spirit who leads Him to Christ for the blotting out of his guilt dwells in him as the Author and Giver of sanctifying grace; that corresponding fruits of holiness will be produced; that such fruits are acceptable to God; all this is admitted; what is not admitted is that this inchoate

¹ De Grat. et Lib. Arb., xvi.

² De Correp., iii.

³ De Perfect. Just., xi.

righteousness of sanctification can ever, in this life, become so perfect as to satisfy the demands of the law, and absolve from its condemning sentence.¹ As to the Arminian doctrine, prevalent at one time in our Church, that we are justified by an obedience the deficiencies of which are made up by the atoning sacrifice of Christ imputed, it may be dismissed to the lumber-room of the *via media* theology. It is Daniel's image partly of gold and partly of clay, in an aggravated form, and is as little able as its prototype (Dan. ii. 34) to withstand the shock of the adversary, to silence the accuser of the brethren, to still the alarms of conscience, and to impart confidence in the prospect of death and the future judgment.

To sum up: as long as we hold concupiscence, even before the assent of the will, to have a taint of sin; as long as a struggle between the flesh and the spirit, however with a favourable issue, exists, indicating that the work of sanctification is not complete; it is impossible to assign the formal cause of justification to an inherent righteousness, unless, indeed, we lower the requirements of the Divine command to love God with all the heart and soul, and our neighbour as ourselves, so as to fall in with the hypothesis. And it is the consciousness of the difficulty which has prompted the various modes of overcoming it, proposed by Romish theologians or those who substantially agree with them; such as the distinction between venial and mortal sin, the supposition of a supernatural Presence, or Shekinah, infused at baptism, which, though *not necessarily of a moral tendency*, invests our imperfect obedience with a Divine glory, and imparts to it a justifying power²; or a plain denial that concupiscence is of the nature of sin, which involves the doctrine that Adam unfallen was capable of being thus solicited in a wrong direction, and needed a superadded gift of grace to keep him from danger.³ Against all such theories Art. xi. is directed: 'We are

¹ Quisquis dicit post acceptam remissionem peccatorum ita quenquam hominem juste vixisse in hac carne, vel vivere, ut nullum habeat omnino peccatum, contradicit Apostolo Johanni (1 John i. 8). Non ait Apostolus, 'Habui-mus' sed 'Habemus.' Quod si quisquam asserit de illo peccato esse dictum quod habitat in carne secundum vitium quod peccantis primi hominis voluntate contractum est; non autem peccare, qui eidem peccato, quamvis in carne habitanti, ad nullum opus malum consentit, quamvis ipsa concupiscencia moveatur quæ alio modo peccati nomen accepit, quod ei consentire peccare sit, nobisque moveatur invitis; subtiliter quidem ista decernit, sed videat quid agatur de dominica oratione ubi dicimus, Dimitte nobis debita nostra: quod, nisi fallor, non opus esset dicere si nunquam, vel in lapsu linguæ, vel oblectanda cogitatione, ejusdem peccati desiderio aliquantulum consentire-mus. Aug., De Perf. Just., xxi.

² 'We may well believe that it is an inward, yet not a moral gift, but a supernatural power or Divine virtue' (Newman, Just., L. vii., 4).

³ Newman, Lect. xii., 2. So Bull, State of Man Before the Fall. Tum originalis justitiæ admirabile donum addidit (viz., to Adam as he came from the hands of his Creator), Cat. Conc. Trid., A, i., c. 2, 22.

accounted righteous before God only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ.' For these last words must not be understood as affirming merely that Christ earned a power to communicate in baptism, that is, through the Church, a righteousness which, weighed in the Divine balances, shall be found adequate to justify; that He is the ultimate cause why the proximate causes are efficient. They mean that there is nothing in ourselves which, if we take up a position on legal ground, can justify us; as, indeed, the word 'accounted' sufficiently implies. To be accounted and to be made righteous are essentially different ideas, and the hinge of the controversy turns on the difference. There is no need of 'accounting,' that is of imputation, if any inherent habit or quality, either in itself or by reason of Christ's presence encircling it, is so perfect as that God can see no sin in it, and therefore, as a matter of justice, must absolve. Let the expression, 'Christ's righteousness is imputed to us,' be avoided, as not literally found in Scripture; [what does the opponent thereby gain, if he accepts our Article, 'We are *accounted* righteous before God *only* for the merits of Christ'? Is there any real difference between the two statements? The old high church view that our obedience justifies, but completed or sprinkled by the atoning Blood, is excluded by the word 'only'; the merits of Christ refuse a mere partnership in the matter. If, indeed, by the expression were meant that the obedience of Christ was imputed to us for *sanctification*, that His righteousness dispenses with our aiming to be pure as He is pure, it would be objectionable as tending to Antinomianism; but justification, not sanctification, is the matter to which it refers. God remits our guilt, from a view of Christ's merits, not of anything in ourselves; this is its simple meaning, as it is that of the Apostle Paul.¹ 'All,' says Davenant, 'depends on the meaning of Scripture, not on the particular form of words or niceties of language.'² The internal means, or instrument, or condition, that which God has in view when He justifies the individual, is faith, and 'faith only.' Not, however, a general acceptance of revealed truth, or an epitome of all Christian graces, but a special apprehension of the promise of mercy under a conviction of sin. (This point will be considered more at length in the next section.) Through this faith Christ's righteousness is made the believer's own, or becomes inward as a possession; and is no mere shadow or external covering. Yet faith does not justify as a grace, but as the connecting link between us and Christ. Justification is not merely declarative, but transitive, on God's part, conveying the spirit of adoption; it is more, therefore

¹ The words *δωρεάν, χάριτι* (Rom. iii. 24) of themselves convey this meaning.

² De Just. Hab., C. xxiv.

than remission of sin, or atonement, such as S. Paul declares may consist with our being personally 'enemies' (Rom. v. 10); it is an assurance to the individual of his being interested in the atonement, and presupposes not merely the death, but the resurrection of Christ. In this point of view it is the truth (and all forms of religious extravagance take their rise from some truth overlooked or forgotten) which, in the early years of Wesley's revival, asserted itself under aspects which too often raised a prejudice against the movement, and, what was of greater moment, against the scriptural doctrine itself of the Holy Spirit's work.

§ 65. JUSTIFYING FAITH

One of the historians of the Council of Trent, of great repute, tells us that the assembled fathers were much exercised in attempting to explain the Apostle's statement, 'We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law' (Rom. iii. 28). We cannot wonder at their perplexity when we remember the scholastic training which they had received, particularly as regards the theory of an infused justifying righteousness. In what sense were they to understand the faith which S. Paul apparently makes the instrument, or condition, of justification? How reconcile his words with the prevalent teaching of the Church? It is obvious that faith, for some reason and in some sense, occupies a very prominent position in his reasoning or justification; it cannot be overlooked; it must be explained, or explained away. The difficulty was obvious, and was met as best it might. 'With few exceptions,' says Pallavicini, 'they all agreed that when a man is said to be justified by faith, faith must be taken, not as the whole and the immediate cause of justification, but as the first preparation, and the first necessary root, to the actions whereby the gift is obtained; or if we may, in some sense, assign it the function of an immediate cause, yet it must not then be thought of as alone, but in conjunction with penitence and baptism.' This description of justifying faith was adopted by the Council, and appears in its decree. 'Whereas,' it says, 'the Apostle declares that we are justified by faith, and gratuitously, he must be understood in the sense which the Catholic Church has always assigned to His words, viz., that faith is the commencement, the root, and the foundation, of all justification, since without it it is impossible to please God. And as to the gratuitous nature of justification, it means that none of those things which precede justification, whether faith or works, deserve the grace of the justification itself.' Faith is thus classed with the preparatory antecedents to justification, such as conviction of sin, alarms of conscience, and a general hope of God's mercy. In itself

it is assent to the truths of revelation, especially as interpreted by the Church ; as such it places the sinner on the road to justification ; but it is not the direct instrument, still less the only one, of receiving that gift, or of retaining it when received. This amounts merely to saying that a man must be a professed believer in Christianity before we can enter into the question of his justification ; which, however true, does not throw much light upon the matter. The only office of faith, then, is to lead up to the sacrament of baptism, in which the special grace of justification is infused, and which faith itself is transformed from acquiescence in the truth of revelation into a faith informed by love (*fides formata*). In this state it may be allowed to take its place as a means of justification among other graces ; and so S. Paul is to be understood. The Council, however, does not explain why, of all graces, faith should be singled out so remarkably by the Apostle for the office of justifying.

It is only by inference and comparison that we arrive at last at the true meaning of the decisions of Trent, for it is by no means easy to gather from them what connection the fathers wished to establish between faith and justification. Faith is necessary as a *radix*, or *fundamentum* ; but that this is what Protestants call a dead, historical faith (*notitia historica*), appears not only being defined from it as a passive reception of revealed truth, but from the statement, more than once repeated, that whereas the grace of justification is lost by mortal sin, faith is not affected thereby. It appears, too, from the process of recovery from mortal sin, as described by the Council, in which faith holds no place at all. Now, a faith which is consistent with a state of mortal sin can have no direct connection with justification, particularly if the latter term, as explained by the Council, includes sanctification. It certainly cannot be the faith of which S. Paul speaks in Rom. iii.-viii., for the faith of Abraham, to which he compares it, was no otiose belief in the existence of God, but confidence in a promise (Rom. iv. 21) ; and this confidence can hardly be supposed existing in one living in mortal sin. Moreover, the whole scope of the Apostle's argument is to show that the renewal of heart which the law is unable to effect is the direct fruit of the justifying faith which he has in his mind—that this faith is incompatible with a state of habitual sin (Rom. vi.). 'Received ye the Spirit,' he asks of the Galatians, 'by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?' 'Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.' 'They which are of faith' (and by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body) 'are blessed with faithful Abraham' (Gal. iii. 2, 6, 9). The faith of St. Paul, then, is a sanctifying faith ; of an entirely different quality from the Tridentine

radix of justification, which can consort amicably with mortal sin. The truth is that such a faith would not have been considered faith at all by the Apostle in connection with the subject of which he was treating: all through his epistles saving faith is supposed to be an active principle, operative in the way of love (Gal. v. 6), not animated by love. We read of 'a work of faith' which is connected with a 'labour of love' (1 Thess. i. 3). In the Epistle to the Hebrews, written under the influence of S. Paul's teaching, if not actually by the Apostle, faith prompts to great sacrifices and mighty deeds (chap. xi.). It was only when Antinomian tendencies began to appear in the Church that S. James was moved to make distinctions between Christian faith and the faith of devils, and between a dead and a living Christian faith. Such distinctions do not appear in S. Paul's writings, not even when he alludes to faith which may be destitute of charity (1 Cor. xiii. 2); for it is evident from the context that he is speaking in the passage alluded to not of saving, that is, justifying, faith, but of an extraordinary spiritual gift, not necessarily of moral quality, similar in nature to the gift of tongues or of prophecy. The mere preparatory faith, therefore, which the Council describes as 'the foundation' of justification, and which can hardly be distinguished from indifference, is adequate to explain the office, and virtue, and position, which S. Paul assigns to faith in the matter of justification. And the Tridentine fathers show their sense of this by admitting that faith as the mere radix, which is compatible with mortal sin, must be vivified, receive a soul, become instinct with energy, before it can be directly connected with justification. When the preliminary 'dispositions' are complete, then the act of justification takes place, which consists in 'infusing into the soul, along with remission of sin, faith, hope, love'; 'for faith' (it must be presumed the faith which is a mere negative condition), 'unless it receives an addition of hope and love, does not unite us perfectly with Christ, nor make us living members of His body; whence it is most truly said that faith without works is dead and otiose.' The infused qualities are probably taken from 1 Cor. xiii. 13, but there is some ambiguity in the mode of expression. Faith as the radix 'disposes' to justification; but it appears again as infused, and love comprehends hope. The meaning, however, is clear. What the Council intends is that the otiose substructure of faith must be transformed into the *fides formata* of the Schoolmen before it justifies. This latter term is derived from the Aristotelian philosophy. Matter and form were supposed to constitute a thing as we actually find it; matter supplying the material, from the distinctive feature or principle; here faith, as a condition *sine quâ non*, supplies the material, but in this state it is

informis, has no justifying power—impregnated with love, it receives its form, or animating principle. At what moment or by what means does the *fides informis* advance to *fides formata*? The Council is not very distinct on this point, but the answer is incidentally supplied. The instrumental cause of justification is the Sacrament of Baptism; before the sacrament catechumens do not possess *fides formata*, but seek it *from the Church*; the Church, through the sacrament which it administers, effects the desired change, and the candidate emerges from the baptismal font with love infused into his previously imperfect faith. But now arises a difficulty. Faith informed by love is in danger of being no longer faith. When a passive acceptance of the creed and the energetic principle of love are fused together, the weaker constituent must give way to the stronger; the combination will derive its nature from the predominant element; the *name* of faith may be retained, but the result will practically be love, and to love, that is, to inherent righteousness, justification is after all inscribed. The *fides formata* of the Schoolmen and of Rome ends by referring us to ourselves, and not to Christ for justifying righteousness. No wonder that the fathers at Trent were perplexed how to interpret S. Paul. Neither faith as a mere radix or indispensable condition, nor faith informed by love as the true and immediate means, of justification could be made to fit in with his statement: 'A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.'

A man cannot be said to be justified by faith who is really justified by love under the guise of faith (*fides formata*); but the difficulty was increased when the latter clause, 'without the deeds of the law,' came under consideration. For 'love is the fulfilling of the law' (Rom. xiii. 10), that is, the moral law, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself'; and it is with the moral law that we are here concerned. Love to God must manifest itself in obedience to God's commands, and love to our neighbour in works of charity. If, then, justifying faith is in fact love, an inherent quality, from its very nature the fulfilling of the law, how can justification be 'without the deeds of the law'? To clear up the question, it must be observed that S. Paul does not mean that justification can exist without obedience, or without issuing therein—obedience is a necessary accompaniment of a justified state—what he means is, that justifying faith in its essence, as it must be conceived of, is not obedience either inward or outward; the preposition in fact, is *χωρίς*, apart from, not *ἀνευ*; 'apart from the works of the law, which necessarily follow it, but do not enter into its conception, the faith of which I am speaking justifies.' But the Council had already

defined justifying faith as in effect love, and the Apostle's exclusion of works from it caused some embarrassment. Various methods of explanation were suggested ; such as that S. Paul meant only the ceremonial law of Moses, or works done before the infusion of grace, and did not mean to exclude works done after justification. In fact, Bishop Bull was anticipated by several of the members of the Council. Precisely the same position is taken up by this writer in his *Harm. Apost.*, the second dissertation. He was too acute to argue that the Apostle had only the ceremonial law in his mind ; an interpretation which is supposed to have originated with Jerome, but which has been abandoned by all commentators of note, the Romish included. ' It is plain that S. Paul referred both to the ceremonial and the moral precepts of the law ' (*Diss. Post.*, c. vii.). How could it be otherwise, when he declares that ' by the law is the knowledge of sin ' ? (*Rom.* iii. 20) ; and adds, as an illustration, that ' he had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet,' which is part of the decalogue. Bull's efforts, therefore, are directed to prove that by ' works of the law ' are meant works done under the law, and with only the aids which it could supply ; works which, since the law neither revealed a sufficient atonement nor gave a promise of grace, were, in fact, works done in a state of nature, and could not be supposed to justify. It does not follow that works done by ' the grace of Christ and the inspiration of His Spirit ' (*Art.* xiii.) may not have this power. So runs the argument ; but it is built upon the sand. It is certain that by *ἔργα νόμου* we must understand not works done under the law, but works which the law commands. The contrast is never drawn between *ἔργα πίστεως* and *ἔργα νόμου*, but between faith and works of the law ; between the mode of justification by faith, and the mode of justification by fulfilling the requirements of the law. The only question, then, is whether S. Paul's statement refers solely to the first act of justification and not to its continuance, or whether it applies to the whole course of the subsequent Christian life. To explain : According to the doctrine of Rome, the Sacrament of Baptism infuses justifying grace—this is a single act not to be repeated—thenceforward the justified person, on the basis of *fides formata*, or love infused, co-operates towards his justification by good works, even to the extent of meriting, on the principle of condignity, an increase of justification. Now, supposing that S. Paul's discussion in *Romans*, in which faith plays so prominent a part, is only to be understood of the entrance into a justified state, we should expect that his language would be very different when he comes to speak of those—for instance, himself—who had passed that primary stage. This, however, is not the case.

On the memorable occasion, fourteen years after his conversion, when he 'withstood Peter to the face' at Antioch, he expresses himself exactly as in Romans: 'Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified; the life which I *now* live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me' (Gal. ii. 16, 20). The whole scope of the Epistle to the Galatians is to warn them that, 'having begun in the spirit,' having through faith received complete remission of sin, they should not attempt to supplement that justification either with moral, inherent graces, or with what he calls 'the weak and beggarly elements' of the ceremonial law; still less with the authorized additions which the Jews made to that law, or the ascetic exercises and 'satisfactions' which a false gnosticism had begun to introduce into the Church (Col. ii. ; 1 Tim. iv. 3). Their justification was not capable of, nor did it need, any improvement or increase by such means. And in a later epistle he professes not merely that at first, but when he wrote near the end of his course, his desire was that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but 'that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God' (God's gift), 'by faith' (Phil. iii. 9). The justifying faith of S. Paul, then, is neither a mere assent to Gospel truth, nor a faith vivified by love and practically swallowed up in the inherent gift to which it leads. Nor is it a faith which, after having led to baptism, disappears thenceforward as the maintaining principle of an accepted state. However we may define it, it is with him the first connecting-link with Christ, and the mainspring of the Christian life to the end; and this apart from, though not without, works, evangelical or other.

Bishop Bull's exegetical mistakes arose from his attempting to establish an identity between the faith of S. Paul and the faith of S. James; with a view to the leading principle of his work, that not faith alone, but faith conjoined with evangelical obedience, is the intrinsic ground of our acceptance with God. S. James declares that 'by works a man is justified, and not by faith only'; the words, taken as they sound, and without comparing Scripture with Scripture, favour the Bishop's theory, and he had to prove, if possible, that S. Paul does not contradict his brother Apostle. The task was a difficult one, and must always end in failure if it be assumed that the word 'faith' is used in the same sense by these Apostles. As regards Bull's theory itself, with the exception of the dogma of grace of condignity, it is the same as the doctrine of Rome. Faith is not the

ὄργανον ληπτικόν, the means of appropriating a promise, but the complex of all Christian graces : ' The faith which is so extolled in the New Testament is by no means to be taken for a single grace. For it comprehends in its embrace all the works of Christian piety.' Had he meant that ' good works do necessarily spring out of a lively faith,' as the fruit from a good tree ; and possibly, when he calls faith ' the root,' or ' mother,' of such works, some such idea may have been present to him ; he would have been in accordance with Scripture. But his aim is different. It is to make out that faith justifies, not on account of the object which it embraces—Christ and His merits—but from its own inherent acceptableness, as comprehending all evangelical obedience. And if it be asked why should faith, rather than love or humility or any other Christian grace, be connected with justification, the reply is, that it more than any other expresses the fact that the whole scheme of salvation is of grace, a free gift of God. It is thus deprived of its apprehensive character, and becomes, in the language of the Council of Trent, either a mere radix, or foundation, of a justified state, or the *fides formata* of the Schoolmen. That to make faith the *instrument* of justification incurs his severest censure may be anticipated. And, indeed, if by the expression it were intended that faith is either the meritorious, or the physical, cause of justification—by a physical cause being understood one which *produces* its effect—his criticism would not be misplaced. But by the word ' instrument ' as used in the Protestant Confessions is meant merely that faith is the receptive faculty of the offered gift—a moral instrument, as some term it ; and this is what Bull really objects to. ' If in this sense faith is called an instrument, we deny that it is the only one ; repentance ' (in its eleven manifestations), ' as we have abundantly proved, being as much a condition or means of justification as faith itself ' (Diss. P., ii. 7, 9). He cites the Protestant Confessions as stating that ' faith alone, without works, justifies ' ; but one of them, with which he must have been familiar, and which explains the saying, he passes over in silence, the ' Homily on Justification ' (the only one which is of symbolical authority, Art. xi.) : ' Faith does not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified ; but it *shutteth them out from the office of justifying.*' As regards S. James, when he reminds those to whom he writes that ' faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone, and that as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also,' can he be supposed to mean that the addition of works to a faith presumed to be a dead one can vivify it, or co-operate with it to justification ? Life is not thus communicated *ab extra*, but springs up from within.

It would be a mechanical admixture and nothing better. We may be sure that no such idea was present to the Apostle. He describes not justifying faith, but a faith which does not justify because it is dead. But, to turn from an author who, from the vivacity of his style will always be read with interest, but who is no safe guide in doctrine, let the matter be considered in its real bearings.

What is the true distinction between the Romish and the Protestant doctrine of justification? On both sides it is admitted that Christ came into the world to be a saviour; on both sides that justification and sanctification are always found together; and that salvation, begun here and completed hereafter, comprehends both these gifts. That the objective salvation wrought out by Christ must be applied, and become appropriated, individually, and that means are provided for this purpose, viz., the Word and the sacraments, is not a matter of debate. The distinction is this: The Romanist teaches forgiveness of sin through sanctification, the Protestant sanctification through forgiveness of sin. All other points of difference run up eventually into this one. And the question is, Which is in the right? Christ, like His forerunner, preached repentance as a necessary preliminary to entering the Kingdom of God, and in the Sermon on the Mount exhibited what the law requires, if it was to be relied on as a means of justification, and what the standard is at which His followers should aim; but as the time approached when He should be received up unto the Father, forgiveness of sin came more and more into prominence as the great object of His mission. 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee' (Matt. ix. 2); this was the special blessing which the Son of Man was empowered to bestow, and how it was to be procured is gradually disclosed. He was to 'give His life a ransom for many' (Mark x. 45); 'to be lifted up from the earth' that He might draw all men unto Him (John xii. 32); to give His flesh for the life of the world (*Ibid.*, vi. 51). And in the sacrament which He appointed for a perpetual remembrance of Himself and His work, the bread and the wine were to be the symbols of His body broken and blood shed for the remission of sin. To proclaim that the ransom was paid, the atonement between God and man effected, was the last charge which He gave to His Apostles. 'Go, preach this Gospel to every creature' (Mark xvi. 15). They went forth as they were commanded, and 'ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ' (Acts v. 42); not as a law-giver but as a redeemer, 'to whom all the prophets give witness that through His name whosoever believeth on Him shall receive remission of sin' (*Ibid.*, x. 43). They announced themselves ambassadors for Christ, beseeching men to

be reconciled to God on the ground that God had reconciled Himself to man through the atonement (2 Cor. v. 20, 21). The acceptance of their message issued in forgiveness of sin, and this was ever the first step towards all that was to follow in the way of redemption. The word translated 'redemption' in Ephes. i. 7 (*ἀπολύτρωσις*) signifies all that is comprised in that term, even the resurrection of the body (Rom. viii. 23), but especially 'the forgiveness of sins.'¹ And how was the message to be received, to the actual salvation of individuals? How could any word of promise be received, except by faith? 'He that believeth and' (as a consequence) 'is baptized, shall be saved'; 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' Not by an infused gift, conveyed in baptism, but by the faculty, whatever name it may bear, by which *promises* are received and appropriated, is this promise made our own; an offered gift is not received by a gift. It is by and through the Word that God deals with man in the first instance; and the first step on man's part in the order of salvation is to believe what that Word declares; and not merely its general contents, but the specific promise of forgiveness of sin through Christ, to be apprehended by faith. For this is what the conscience burdened with a sense of guilt craves to be assured of; how man, unable to meet the accusations of the law or renew his own heart, can be just with God. Until this vital point is settled, there can be no question of loving God or walking in His ways. Sin, past and present, raises a barrier between the God of infinite holiness and the fallen creature; a barrier which never can be removed either by the obedience of works or by Church ordinances considered in themselves. Hence the circle in which the Romanist is perpetually driven, without finding rest: he is justified only by a faith vivified by love (*fides formata*), that is, in effect by the grace of love; but he cannot love God until he is reconciled to God, and he can neither attain nor be conscious of reconciliation except by simple reliance on the promise; and this simple reliance, according to the Council of Trent, is not sufficient for the purpose. But faith, it is replied, is itself a condition or means; true, but not faith as the complex of Christian graces, or as a mere assent to articles of faith, but faith as the recognition and confession on the part of the sinner that there is no good thing in him, and a thankful acceptance of gratuitous mercy offered through Christ. Not the love which the believer has, but the love which he desires to have, but feels that he has not; and under this feeling of deficiency reliance on the Redeemer, and Him alone, justifies; that is, in other words,

¹ Comp. Col. i. 14: *ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν,*

apprehensive faith. For the very essence of faith is renunciation both of itself as meritorious and of any inherent righteousness attainable in this life, as availing for justification. And this leads us to remark that Protestantism has its *fides formata* as well as Romanism, only the form is not love but conviction of sin. Conviction of sin is what transforms otiose assent to revealed truth into active living faith; faith that fastens on the promise directly, and is followed, in various measure according to its strength, by the witness of the Spirit testifying to the inner man the Divine absolution. Where there is no conviction of sin, there is not, there cannot be, justifying faith, and where there is no justifying faith there cannot be evangelical love to God. The woman who washed Christ's feet with her tears (Luke vii.) testified her love to Him because her sins had been already forgiven, not that they might be so; her love was the proof, not the meritorious cause, of forgiveness.¹ Conviction of sin had led her to the Saviour—when and where we are not told—and from His lips she had received the assurance of forgiveness; thence sprang her devotion to Him, as the fruit from the tree; 'Woman, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace' (ver. 50). It is thus, too, that justifying faith comes to be called the gift of God; a special gift of grace. The faculty of assent to a statement is born with us, but we do not act upon the statement until the will is influenced by some constraining motive, such as in the affairs of this life the prospect of gain or of deliverance from temporal damage. In spiritual things the motive power is wanting, interest in the promise is not aroused, until, by the special operation of the Holy Ghost, the misery of our natural state becomes felt. Then languid acquiescence gives place to the passionate inquiry, 'What must I do to be saved?' (Acts xvi. 30), and faith, quickened into life, grasps the promise unto salvation; 'with the heart man believeth unto righteousness' (Rom. x. 10). And thus it is that sanctification builds itself on forgiveness of sin, not the latter upon the former.

Such is justifying faith in its nature, its office, and its effect; similar in essence, though not in object, to the faith which our Lord demanded, and so much commended, in those who applied to Him for the cure of their bodily diseases, and to the instances enumerated in Heb. xi. In the former cases there was, strictly speaking, no promise on which the sufferers could depend, but there was what was equivalent to such a promise. There was the fact before their eyes that the Saviour had never refused to afford relief on previous similar occasions, and that relief had always followed His interference. His

¹ Remissio peccatorum, Simoni non cogitata, probatur a fructu. Bengel, *in loc.*

power and His willingness to heal had been sufficiently demonstrated ; the applicants believed that He had power to assist them, ' Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean,' and they trusted that He would exercise that power on their behalf, a trust which was never disappointed—' I will, be thou clean.' Here saving faith exhibited itself in its essential elements. There could be no question of assent to revealed truth, for no full revelation thereof had as yet been given, at least in connection with the person and work of Christ ; and no such assent was required by the Saviour as a condition of His miraculous cures. ' If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest ' be baptized (Acts viii. 37) ; and the Eunuch's profession, ' I believe that Jesus is the Son of God,' was deemed by Philip sufficient ; not a belief that Jesus, as the only-begotten Son, was consubstantial with the Father, however implicitly truths of this kind may have been involved in the confession, but that the crucified and risen Jesus was He of whom the prophet Isaiah spake, when he foretold that a Redeemer should appear upon whom the Lord would ' lay the iniquity of us all ' (Isa. liii.). It was the special fact that forgiveness of sin was to be obtained through Jesus of Nazareth, which the Eunuch believed, and which opened his way directly to the baptismal font. As regards Heb. xi., Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Rahab, and Moses, acted on a special promise of temporal advantage or deliverance ; the other instances resemble those of the Gospel narrative, they believed generally that ' God is, and is a rewarder of them that seek Him ' (Heb. xi. 6). Psychologically their faith resembled Christian faith, but the object was different, and the object, to some extent, conditionates both the nature and the intensity of the exercise of faith. Reduced to its primary element, faith is a realizing of the existence of unseen things (Heb. xi. 1), but clothed with flesh and blood it assumes, in each case, a character of its own. Hence it is an inadequate description of *justifying* faith, that it is an acceptance of the articles of the creed, even though it is added that this assent must influence the will and affections.¹ It approaches too nearly the language of the Council of Trent, that men are ' disposed ' to justification by being moved by Divine grace to believe as true what has been revealed, especially that the sinner is justified through the redemption that is in Christ ; and by being brought, under conviction of sin, to entertain hopes that God in His mercy will be propitious to them ; whence they begin to love God, etc.² The Council does not maintain that a mere assent of the understanding is sufficient to prepare for the infusion of grace ; it anticipates that the truths of revelation steadily contemplated will

¹ Heurtley, B. L., Sermon, v.

² Sess. vi., c. 6.

have an effect on the will and affections, and produce love to God of some kind and to some extent. What it does systematically keep out of view is that faith, to become justifying, must lay hold upon a special promise, the promise of forgiveness of sin, and appropriate it. It never intensifies faith up to this point ; its faith remains a mere radix, or preparation towards real justifying grace. Faith admits of various degrees ; the preparatory stages of conversion or regeneration all involve faith ; but it is of a lower order and inferior intensity as compared with the decisive internal act which conveys the spirit of adoption, and completes the acceptance of the penitent. Much nearer the truth is the view which identifies justifying faith with trust,¹ although it may be thought to err in defect. Belief is the correlative of a promise, trust is concerned with the person who makes it. Can we depend on his truthfulness, his good-will, his power to fulfil the promise ? If there is doubt on these points hesitation may arise, no matter how attractive the announcement may be ; but let the promise be exactly such as is needed, and trust in the Author of it complete, and the combination will furnish as accurate a conception of justifying faith as the subject admits of. This is the *fiducia* of the Reformers as distinguished from the assent of Romanism ; and so essential an element is trust of it that they do not hesitate to describe trust as the soul, or, in scholastic language, the form, of justifying faith.² Whether trust or conviction of sin be selected as thus vivifying a mere assent is immaterial ; either way the true nature of justifying faith is indicated, and distinguished from the mere preparatory faith of Romanism.

§ 66. ASSURANCE

The Council of Trent, in its decrees on justification, deems it necessary to caution Christians against entertaining too strong a conviction of their acceptance with God. ' We must not assert that they who are truly justified ought, without doubt, to conclude with themselves that they are justified ; and that none are so save those who with certainty believe it ; and that by this faith alone justification is effected. For as no pious person ought to be in doubt concerning God's mercy, Christ's merits, and the virtue of the sacraments, so

¹ Ten Sermons on the Nature and Effects of Faith, by Bishop O'Brien. Not, certainly, such a trust as may be common to good and bad. ' I do not say that there is no such thing as trusting in Christ's mercy for salvation, and a comfort resulting from it. *Bad and good feel it.*' Newman, *Justif.*, L. xi.

² Ex fide historica sive ex notitia promissionum per efficaciam S.S. nascitur fiducia (trust), quæ est fidei justificantis velut anima, quæ promissiones divinas nobis applicamus, ac certa animi πληροφορία illis innititur. Gerh., *De F. J.*, c. iii., § 1. Fiducia est forma fidei justificantis quatenus certa animi persuasionem gratiæ amplectimur. *Ibid.*

there is no one who feels his own shortcomings but may hesitate to say he has grace ; at least, with such a certainty of faith as to exclude the chance of mistake.' ¹ The corresponding canon (viii.) somewhat modifies these statements. It contents itself with anathematizing those who hold ' that it is essential to remission of sin that no hesitation arising from a consciousness of infirmity should be felt on the point.' But there is no doubt as to the general meaning, and as little doubt as to the object aimed at. It is contrary to the spirit of Romanism that the Christian should be too independent of the Church, that is the priesthood, and of the power of the keys ; and of this there might be a danger if he were encouraged on account of his faith alone to expect a sense of reconciliation with God through the remission of sin.

There was little need of the caution, and the Council gave itself superfluous trouble when once it had decided that our justifying righteousness is, in whatever sense, inherent. For there is no more sure method of keeping the Christian in a state of doubt respecting his acceptance than to direct him to his own attainments as the ground either of his meriting or being persuaded of it. In fact, since in our present state (*status viatorum*) our sanctification consists very much in an increasing sense of our sinfulness and our need of gratuitous mercy, it is plain that the more we grow in grace the greater may be our difficulty in assuring ourselves that we are in a state of grace at all. Doubtless the recollection of a time when we neither felt nor lamented the struggle of the old man against the sanctifying principle may lead to the persuasion that some great change must have passed over us, and from this we may draw a favourable conclusion ; but it is doubtful whether assurance or uncertainty will on the whole prevail. The Romish definition of justification was in itself sufficient to ensure the hesitation recommended.

The Christianity of the New Testament is remarkable for the absence of that morbid nosology which occupies a prominent place in the religious literature of modern times, and of which among ancient writers the Confessions of Augustine is a specimen. It consists in fixing attention on the varying emotions of the religious life, carefully noting, perhaps registering, the falls and rises of the spiritual barometer, and analysing each successive feeling as it arises with microscopic accuracy. It is an unhealthy occupation, because it diverts the mind from the proper *objects* of faith, bright and clear in the heavens, to the impure exhalations which arise in an imperfectly sanctified heart and mingle with its best aspirations. Holy

¹ Sess. vi., c. 9.

affections do not grow by being analysed, but by contemplating the objects which draw them forth. Self-examination indeed is a duty incumbent on all Christians ; but it should relate rather to moral practice than to feelings or motives, which are of too delicate a nature to bear handling without being soiled. The result of this introspection, as regards a confident hope, is the same as that of the doctrine of Rome. In either case the discoveries are unsatisfactory, and furnish no solid ground for a sense of acceptance with God. It can point to no precedent or sanction in the inspired volume. S. Paul laments his struggle with a sinful nature crucified but not slain, confesses that he had not attained neither was he already perfect (Phil. iii. 12), exercised due discipline over the flesh lest it might encroach unawares ; but we never find him expressing a doubt whether he was a child of God and in a state of salvation.¹ No more do his brother Apostles. An unclouded confidence on these points is their prevailing sentiment. In S. Paul's case the secret of it is made known to us by himself : ' The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me ' (Gal. ii. 20).

The Scriptural doctrine of assurance must not be confounded with others with which it is by no means identical. Though intimately connected with faith in the sense of trust (*fiducia*), it is not the same thing, for there may be genuine faith where there is no uninterrupted assurance. ' Lord, I believe ; help thou mine unbelief ' (Mark ix. 24), is not unfrequently the prevailing temper of mind with many of whose eminent piety there can be no question. The ray from heaven advances straight to its mark, but is liable to be refracted in its necessary passage through a grosser element. Much depends in this matter on constitutional temperament ; much, too, on the circumstances in which the Christian may be placed. The voyage of one may be over smooth waters, of another amidst tempests and breakers, which sorely try his faith. And if the Council had intended nothing more than that saving faith is not to be tested by the possession of plenary assurance, it would have been in the right ; but its aim is further, it is to make uncertainty the law of the Christian life. Nor, again, ought it to be brought into connection with the doctrine of predestination, as Calvin seems to do in the Institutes,² which has not improbably been the occasion of the pre-

¹ A ' state of salvation,' by the very force of the words, means not merely the state of one who *may* be saved (*e.g.*, if he makes use of privileges, etc.), but of one who is actually at the time saved ; the state of the *σωζομένους* in Acts ii. 47. Whether he will continue so to the end is another question.

² L. iii. c. 24.

judice entertained in some quarters against the doctrine. Properly it has to do with the present, not with the future. Whether the Christian who enjoys present assurance does so in consequence of being inscribed in the Book of Life is a question incapable of solution, until it be determined that a final fall from such a state of grace is impossible. If it be possible, assurance supplies no infallible proof of election, for only the elect persevere to the end. Now, the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the sixth and tenth chapters, especially the sixth, describes a work of the Spirit, which it is difficult to distinguish from regeneration, and which yet, if lost, is declared to be incapable of recovery. Calvin would reply that, if there was a final declension, that this would be proof that the regeneration in question was not real. According to Augustine, it might be real and yet fail, because the special gift of perseverance had not been attached to it. But the predestination controversy should be here put out of view. The assurance of present acceptance is one thing, and the assurance of final salvation is another ; and it is with the former only that we are concerned. Now that the normal state of the Christian should be a consciousness of peace with God through Christ, a rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, an assurance, especially in tribulation, that ' neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus ' (Rom. vii. 38, 39), is plain from the teaching and examples of the Apostles. The source of it is that special gift of the Gospel dispensation, the witness of the Holy Spirit, on which enough has been said in a preceding section (§ 63). It is His gracious office to bear witness directly, yet not without the co-operation of our own spirit, that we are the children of God. Since it is the *Holy Spirit* who confers the gift, it is incompatible with continuance in sin : and even consent to a single sin will grieve this Divine Guest, and cause Him to withdraw His consolations. And this witness must be maintained by the same means through which it first visited the soul, not by multiplying religious exercises, or dissecting the spiritual emotions, but by abiding in Christ through faith. And as faith admits of various degrees, the stronger our faith the greater our assurance. To go out of ourselves, and to be content to receive all from Christ, is the secret of spiritual peace—a secret which is revealed only to those who are His.¹

¹ *Mundus et ratio non capit quam sit cognitio ardua, Christum esse justitiam nostram : ita operum opinio nobis incorporata agnataque et innaturata est. Luther.*

§ 67. DEGREES

As little need was there for the Council to decide, as it did, that justification admits of degrees. 'Those who are thus justified, advancing step by step in virtue, that is, mortifying their carnal affections and growing in holiness, through obedience to the commands of God and the Church, make progress in justification itself, and are more and more justified, according as it is written, "He who is just, let him be further justified" ' ¹ (Rev. xxii. 11). A Church which practically identifies justification with sanctification might have dispensed with this statement. It is admitted on all sides that sanctification exists in different measure, and ought to be continually progressive; and if justification is nothing but sanctification under another name, there is an end of the debate. With the Protestant doctrine the idea is incompatible. As there can be no degrees in natural friendships, as a son cannot be more or less a son of his father; no more can there be in the spiritual relationship between fallen man and God, which we term justification. Forgiveness of sin, if it takes place at all, is complete; so is spiritual adoption, and so in itself is the witness of the Spirit, which testifies of both. And the Church bears witness to this truth, in its profession that there is 'one baptism for the remission of sins.' As we do not repeat baptism, so we neither repeat nor augment the remission of sin which the sacrament symbolizes; we continue it by faith until faith is lost in sight. The doctrine of Rome is founded on its assumption of a first and second justification. The first has no element of merit in it, or, if so, it is only a *meritum de congruo*, the preliminary dispositions (including faith as a radix) rendering it *suitable* that God should bestow further grace; up to the infusion of justifying righteousness in the Sacrament of Baptism, the process is of a gratuitous character. So that once only in his life is the sinner justified purely of grace. The second justification follows, and is acquired, not, indeed, without faith (probably *fides caritate formata*), but primarily by good works, especially such as are enjoined by the Church; and since these good works may be multiplied even to the pitch of works of supererogation, it is obvious that the justification of which they are the cause is capable of increase. Not only so; but they establish a *meritum de condigno*, a claim to acceptance on the score of desert. This doctrine is but ill-concealed under the guise of an inward Divine presence, which is not in itself renewal, but the source thereof, and which, like the Shekinah of old, may manifest itself in different degrees of brightness. The Shekinah was not the Divine presence itself, but the symbol of it; and the

¹ Sess. vi. c. 10.

fruits of the Holy Spirit are not identical with the indwelling in the heart of that Divine agent. The brightness of the Shekinah might admit of increase, and the fruits and even witness of the Holy Spirit may vary in degree ; but both in the one case and in the other the Divine presence, the foundation, remained and remains unchangeable. So here,—the *results* of justification may be more or less, but the gift itself is incapable of growth or improvement. In short, the figment of a first and second justification finds no countenance in Scripture. Whether we take the word actively, as God's declaring the sinner just, or passively, as a justified state, it remains the same throughout. It commences with our being counted righteous on account of a faith which receives the promise and apprehends Christ, and in no part of our Christian course is it more or less than that. The song of the Church triumphant strikes no other chord (Apoc. v. 9). The feeblest Christian is justified equally with the strongest, as the sun shines with equal splendour on the infirm and the healthy. As regards the passage from the Apocalypse (xxii. 11), on which the Council relies, the reading is uncertain ; but this is of little moment. If we interpret it of sanctification, the meaning will be, ' He that is pure in heart, let him strive to continue so ' ; if of justification, ' He that is justified by faith, let him still be so,' for from first to last ' the just shall live by his faith ' (Hab. ii. 4).

§ 68. BAPTISMAL JUSTIFICATION

The instrument, or, to speak more accurately, the channel through which, according to the Council of Trent, justification is conveyed, is the Sacrament of Baptism. Everything up to this point is but preliminary ; even the faith required (and faith must in some sense be required, unless the Apostolic testimony is to be entirely ignored) is without a ' form,' *i.e.*, lifeless, inoperative, devoid of saving efficacy ; and first, through baptism and the accompanying infusion of love, becomes a living faith, or *fides formata*. The statement of our article is that ' we are justified by faith only,' which seems to exclude not merely ' our own works and deservings,' but every other means—at least, ' before God,' for how we are justified in the sight of man is another question. It is probable, however, that the relation of faith to the sacraments, in the matter of justification, was not the point immediately before the minds of the compilers, but rather its relation to works. Not the less, however, deserving of attention is the former question, especially if the remark of a writer, whose work in former times was a standard one in use at our universities, is correct that ' the doctrine of sacramental justification is justly to be

reckoned among the most mischievous of all those practical errors that are in the Church of Rome.'

That the reception of baptism is incumbent upon all who believe in Christ ; that in some sense it is connected with remission of sin (Acts ii. 38 ; xxii. 16) ; that it ' is a sign of regeneration, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church ' (Art. xxvii.) ; on these points no difference exists between Romanists and Protestants. But the question now before us is, What is its office *in justification* ? Is it the means in and by which justification is first made over to the sinner ? Or, to put it in another way, is the gift suspended on the receiving of the sacrament, so that before its reception the believer is not in the sight of God a justified person, or not fully justified ? We turn to Scripture for an answer, and especially to that portion of it which more than any other bears the appearance of a systematic discussion of the subject (Rom. iii.-viii.). It so happens that in the centre of the argument, as if by anticipation, moved no doubt thereto by the inspiring Spirit, the Apostle Paul deals with this very question, and to elucidate it employs the same typical instance from which he had proved the office of faith in general. ' Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness ' ; or righteousness was imputed to him on account of his faith. The promise was repeated (Gen. xvii.), and on this occasion the ordinance of circumcision was appointed, to which baptism is supposed to have succeeded. Now, to St. Paul's argument, that the Gentiles equally with the Jews are to be justified by faith, that there was to be one mode of justification for all men, it was important to determine at what time Abraham was announced righteous through faith, before or after circumcision. If before, then it would be proof that the uncircumcised Gentiles who believed might also be partakers of the blessing. The point was no collateral one, but entering into the very texture of his reasoning. ' How was it, then, reckoned ' he asks, ' when in circumcision or in uncircumcision ? ' (Rom. iv. 10). And the answer is, ' Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision ' (*Ibid.*). That is, he was justified in the sight of God (*κατέναντι τοῦ Θεοῦ*) before he received circumcision. And to place the matter beyond doubt, he explains what was the office and import of circumcision—what place it had in Abraham's justification. He received the sign of circumcision, not as a channel or means of justification, but ' as a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised ' (verse 11). If for circumcision we substitute baptism, the Apostle may be supposed to speak thus : He that believes on Christ with a living faith is justified by that faith, and justified before baptism, which sacrament no doubt

he, in obedience to Christ's command, subsequently receives. Baptism does not convey the gift, but is a 'sign and seal' of its previous bestowal; even as Abraham, in reference to an inferior promise, but by a faith similar in essence, was counted righteous before God, previously to his receiving the visible seal of the covenant. There is only one way in which the inference might have been obviated. If the Apostle in what follows had cautioned his readers not to argue from circumcision to baptism, had explained that there is an essential distinction—a distinction affecting the point in question (*some* distinction, of course, there is)—between the two ordinances, had stated that, whereas the one was only a seal, the latter is an instrument, the analogy might have been thought to fail. But, in fact, throughout the whole discussion there is no mention of baptism in connection with justification, nor allusion to any difference between it and circumcision. Baptism is first named in chap. vi., where it is said to be the means, not of justification, but of 'being buried with Christ,' whatever that may mean, on which more hereafter. Nothing but faith is spoken of as the channel through which remission of sin is obtained. The initiatory sacrament of the 'new law' (as the Council of Trent is wont to describe the Gospel) occupies, for aught that appears to the contrary in this formal exposition of the subject, the same place in reference to faith which the initiatory rite of Judaism did in the instance of Abraham—that of a sign or seal of what had taken place previously, not that of an instrument.

This, then, is the leading passage on the very important question whether baptism conveys or only seals the grace of justification; and instead of its being passed over in silence, as is often the case, or forced to surrender its plain meaning to other passages in which baptism is incidentally mentioned in connection with remission of sin, or which are figurative in character, these others ought to be interpreted so as to fit in with it. Some of them it will be proper to notice. 'Buried with Him by baptism into death' (Rom. vi. 4); the figurative nature of the language is established by the next verse, 'If we have been planted together in the *likeness* of His death, we shall be also in the *likeness* of His resurrection.' It seems hardly safe to argue from such a passage as this that because baptism is said (in some sense) to unite us to Christ, and union with Christ includes justification as the general includes the particular, therefore baptism conveys justification.¹ What do we mean by union with Christ? A physical one, such as that which existed between the Siamese twins? Repulsive as such a notion is, it seems the natural

¹ Heurtley, B. L., Serm. vii.

consequence of theories which from time to time have been put forward in connection with the Eucharist.¹ The same Apostle uses still stronger language in Ephes. v. 30, 'We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones'; but the context explains what he means. The allusion is to Gen. ii. 24, in which Adam and Eve are said to be 'one flesh,' because Eve was taken out of Adam; but as soon as this process was complete Adam and Eve were not physically united. The relation of husband and wife, to which the union of Christ with the Church is compared, is the closest earthly one, but they are not one flesh. Christians are united to Christ by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from Christ; who, as regards 'the substance,' is one with Christ; but this indwelling is, in the order of ideas, subsequent not previous to justification; and baptism is a symbol of that death unto sin and new life unto righteousness of which the Holy Spirit is the Author. But this teaches us nothing respecting the special process of *justification*; and, in fact, the context proves that not this gift but sanctification is what S. Paul is speaking of. These remarks apply in substance to such passages as: 'As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ' (Gal. iii. 27); or, 'Buried with Him in baptism' (Col. ii. 12); or, 'By one spirit we are all baptized into one body' (1 Cor. xii. 13), and, therefore (so runs the argument), into Christ, and, therefore, into a justified state. That the 'one body' here does not mean the aggregate of visible churches into which Christendom is divided is plain from the fact that these churches do not form one body under one Head; they are independent communities, connected indeed by *sameness* of faith, Sacraments, perhaps polity, but their unity is not organic, as of one commonwealth under one visible head; and this alone might suggest that the word 'baptized' may be, and is here to be, taken in a figurative sense.² But let our Lord Himself decide. 'John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence' (Acts i. 5). Here baptism with water is contrasted with baptism with the Holy Ghost; and reference is made to the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit, which event took place without any administration of water-baptism. Whence we infer that by a figure the word 'baptized' is used by Christ to signify a plentiful spiritual effusion; and if so, it may be, and without doubt is, thus used in 1 Cor. xii. 13.

¹ See Wilberforce on the Eucharist, *passim*.

² In fact, where the church is described as the 'Body of Christ under its invisible Head Christ (that is, under His Vicar the Holy Ghost), it is the invisible church of Protestantism that is meant, not visible Christendom; and water-baptism does not incorporate us into the former.

By a similar figure derived from the other Sacrament it is said, 'we have been all made to drink into one Spirit.' But even on the supposition that the Christian baptism is intended in the former part of the verse, and that the meaning is, the Holy Spirit by baptism incorporates us into the Body of Christ, and through His Body into Christ Himself, this has no direct bearing on the connection of *justification* with baptism, still less on the question whether or not faith justifies antecedently to that Sacrament. 'Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins' (Acts ii. 38); there is no ground for connecting remission of sins with the single word 'baptized,' and not rather with the whole command, 'repent and be baptized'; 'believe, and as a proof of it receive baptism,' and your sins will be forgiven. To which we may add that the same expression is used in reference to John's baptism, which is described as 'a baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins' (Mark i. 4); yet that a justifying power was attached to John's baptism is not usually held. How, indeed, could it be so attached before the Atonement and the Resurrection were accomplished facts? 'Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins' (Acts xxii. 16); this adds little to the previous passage, except a more direct allusion to baptism in the words 'wash away thy sins,' which take the place of 'for the remission of sins.' But we must compare this condensed account with the fuller one, Acts ix. 17, 18: 'Ananias went his way and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized.' The apparent order is, that Ananias laid his hands on Saul; that the latter there and then 'received the Holy Ghost,' and then, as the last step, was baptized. It is difficult to conceive that one who had been spiritually enlightened, and had received the sealing of the Holy Ghost, nevertheless was not, in the sight of God, justified by the remission of sin until he had been baptized.

Such is the state of the Scripture evidence. On the other hand we have a dogmatical statement in Rom. iv. 10, 11 on the point expressly raised, on the other we have no passage in which it is unequivocally laid down that baptism justifies. It is not to the point to urge that baptism is said to 'save' (1 Pet. iii. 21), that the Church is cleansed 'with the washing of water by the Word' (Ephes. v. 26), that baptism is the saving 'laver of regeneration' (Tit. iii. 5), that it brings us into union with Christ: the expressions,

salvation, cleansing by the Word and Sacrament, union with Christ, do not enable us to say that baptism is, in the strict and definite sense of the term, the instrument of *justification*. Indeed, we may ask, how could circumcision, and how can baptism, be supposed to *add* anything to the justification already effected by the reception of the promise and testified to by the Spirit, unless in the way of infusion of a special grace ; which latter notion transforms the Sacrament into something like a magical charm ? It will hardly be denied that justification is, to say the least, *begun* by appropriation of the promise ; faith and the promise are correlative terms ; but since it is a judicial act on God's part, if begun it must be *ipso facto* complete ; if God *declares* the sinner justified on account of His faith, He does it once for all, and the declarative act cannot be severed into two parts, one belonging to faith, and the other to a subsequent instrument. Baptism, therefore, cannot add to the virtue of the declarative act, but it may and it does visibly announce to the Church that this act is presumed to have taken place in the particular instance ; it may and it does symbolize, seal, and confirm to the recipient the same truths of remission and sanctification which the Word had previously proclaimed ; it is the visible sign of the *appropriation* of the promise which the Word could only convey in general terms. In all these respects it is, as the ancients term it, a *verbum visibile*, a *declaration* under a special form, necessary to the *confirmation* of the candidate's faith, and to the existence of a visible Church. But it is a *verbum visibile*, not as if it stood alone, but because the Word explains its meaning and use ; otherwise it would be an unmeaning ceremony. That is, it is a repetition of the promise under a new form ; a form indicating *application* of the promise instead of its general promulgation. It does not, therefore, and cannot, supplement or transfigure into something else the previous declaration of God within Himself, conveyed to the believer by the witness of the Spirit. What it adds must be of the *same character* as the act of Divine acceptance, viz., a declaration ; and it can convey nothing higher, or different in kind, as compared with the Word, although it is the symbol of appropriation, whereas the Word is only the instrument of general promise. In short, a rite is not the proper instrument of applying a declarative judgment, though it may be of conferring a gift ; the Word *is* an appropriate means, but it needs baptism to individualize it. The Romish theory of a *special* infusion of grace in baptism renders it possible to sever the Divine declarative act from this infusion, and so to make baptism the proper instrumental cause of justification, and, as a consequence, to treat the justification which is by faith as only an inchoate and

imperfect one, if any at all. And what, then, is the faith which is still allowed some place in the process? It is not the faith which directly apprehends the promises of God in Christ, but faith in the Sacrament, a 'desire' for the Sacrament, an intention to receive the Sacrament; that is, the Sacrament becomes the real source of salvation.

Baptism, too, partakes of the imperfection which belongs to all ordinances entrusted to the Church to administer to individuals. When it is said that *God* conveys justification in baptism, what can this mean but that He has appointed it as a means of grace, not that He administers the sacrament Himself (were it so the sacrament would be an infallible token of regeneration); but since the Church cannot read the heart, and takes men at their profession, it may be, and often is, administered to those who are destitute of the proper qualifications. It is no certain proof, therefore, that the baptized person is accepted by God; though if he is accepted it ministers to important needs which cannot be supplied in any other way. If, indeed, the sacrament works *ex opere operato*, and there is no bar to its effects except mortal sin, this difficulty may be alleviated, but not otherwise.

To come closer to the point;—justification, in its proper sense, as the act of God's declaring the sinner pardoned, is a transaction between the soul and God, with which the visible church has nothing to do, except in the ministration of the Word. The office of the church begins with the Word preached, and it is resumed again at baptism; what lies between, viz., the faith which apprehends the promise, and the witness of the Spirit, is hidden from man, but it comprises nothing less than justification. It is important here to observe the relation of the sealing, or earnest, of the Holy Spirit to baptism: it has no established connection with this Sacrament; sometimes, as in the instance of Cornelius, the gift preceded baptism; generally it followed, and not baptism, but the laying on the Apostles' hands was the regular means of conveyance, of which we have a striking example in Acts viii., where we read that Peter and John were sent to lay hands on the baptized Samaritans that 'they might receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet He was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus' (vv. 15, 16): And so the Ephesian disciples, who had received only John's baptism, were first baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus—'and when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them' (Acts xix. 6). For our present purpose these latter passages are not to the point, for it may be said that the persons mentioned were first justified in baptism, and then received the Spirit; they do, however,

prove that the gift of the Holy Ghost might be disconnected from the Sacrament. But it is otherwise with the case of Cornelius. It is difficult to conceive that, if he and his friends were not in the sight of God justified, they should have received, antecedently to baptism, the special attestation of the Holy Ghost. Justified no doubt he was before he received baptism ; and so was Lydia, ' whose heart the Lord opened,' to attend to Paul's preaching ; and so was the gaoler of Philippi, who received the announcement in faith, ' Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' But this hidden transaction between God and the soul needs to be brought out into light, and to be professed before men ; needs it for the individual's own sake, as well as for the maintenance of a visible church in the world ' to be, like a city upon a hill, a standing memorial to the world of the duty which we owe our Maker ; to call men continually, both by example and instruction, to attend to it, and, by the form of religion ever before their eyes, to remind them of the reality ; to be the repository of the oracles of God ; to hold up the light of revelation in aid to that of nature, and propagate it throughout all generations to the end of the world.' ¹ The individual needs it for his own sake, to prove the sincerity and energy of his faith both to himself and others. It is one thing to cherish religious sentiments in private, it is another to be willing to take up the cross and suffer for Christ's sake ; and this, on the supposition that water-baptism is intended, appears to be the true meaning of John iii. 5. Nicodemus was a well-disposed man, inclined to become a disciple, but not prepared to encounter the obloquy which he knew must ensue if he publicly professed faith in Christ ; he, therefore, ' came to Jesus by night,' hoping to escape observation ; but, on the threshold of discussion, he was met by the announcement, that except a man be not only born of the Spirit (regeneration in its inward aspect), but submit to be born of water (regeneration in its outward aspect), he cannot be recognized as a disciple ; in other words : no disciple of Christ must be ashamed of the Gospel, or shrink from professing it. It is well known that among Jews or heathens, a man may be an inquirer or, as we should call him, a catechumen, without incurring the enmity of his co-religionists ; let him announce his intention to be baptized and carry out his intention, and, thenceforth, he is an excommunicated man, and has to suffer accordingly. For his own sake, too, because, if he does not join himself to the existing visible society of Christians, he will be deprived of the mutual help, sympathy, and edification which the society is intended to promote ; to say nothing of the means of grace which, with the exception of the ministration of the Word,

¹ Butler, Anal., P. ii., c. 1.

he cannot approach. The society cannot recognize anyone as a member who does not consent to pass through the act of initiation. In fact, his refusal to do so ought to lead himself, and may well lead others, to doubt the sincerity of his faith ; it is an open act of disobedience to the command of the Master whom he professes inwardly to love and serve. Submission to baptism is also necessary to the maintenance of the church, because, if professing Christians might dispense with it, there would soon exist no visible church in the world. And so the order of things must ever be that prescribed by S. Paul, 'with the heart man believeth unto righteousness' (*δικαιοσύνη*, the very term used in Romans for justification), 'and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation' (Rom. x. 10) ; the justified state in itself inward and hidden, must be 'confessed' in and by baptism. These considerations, apart from any others, sufficiently explain why baptism is spoken of in such exalted terms : as burying with Christ, as saving, as the laver of regeneration, as connected with remission of sin, etc. (though never plainly as *justifying*) ; in the eye of the Church it is all these, for it is the only evidence which the Church can have of participation in these blessings. To the Church it is the very door into communion with the body of Christ, the marriage ring, the seal attached to the deed of conveyance, the token of the covenant, or by whatever other similar figures we describe it. And thus, perhaps, are Hooker's words, so often quoted, to be understood. 'We hold it to be the door of our *actual* entrance into God's house, the first *apparent* beginning of life, a seal, perhaps, to the grace of election before received, but to our *sanctification* here a step that hath not any before it.'¹ It is not contended that its office extends no further than what is contained in the foregoing remarks. Spiritual effects may flow from it which we can but partially understand ; 'we know in part, and we prophesy in part.' Our Church contents herself with describing baptism as the means of grafting into the (visible) Church ; as visibly signing and sealing the promises of forgiveness of sin and of our adoption to be the sons of God (which, therefore, are presupposed to be already inwardly in existence) ; of confirming faith ; of increasing grace (though as regards this last effect, she, seemingly of set purpose, reminds us that it is 'by virtue of prayer to God'). All this may freely be conceded. But neither does Scripture, nor Art. xi., nor the homily to which the Article refers us, speak of it as the special instrument of *justification* in the sight of God.²

¹ Eccl. Pol. V., c. 60. 3.

² Such modifications, then, of the genuine Protestant doctrine as the following do not commend themselves : 'In adults faith is instrumental to our

Adult baptism, with its qualifications, repentance and faith, is that intended in these remarks. It is so because it is the normal case of Scripture ; the one on which alone we can found any trustworthy conclusions respecting the relation of baptism to faith, or to regeneration with its subordinate divisions of conversion and justification. To commence with infant baptism, the ecclesiastical modification of the ordinance, and to reason on it as if it were the normal case of Scripture, can only lead to unwarranted assumptions, perhaps error. This exceptional form of baptism, however justly to be retained in the Churches, is deficient in the prerequisites for a complete baptism, and the defect must make us cautious in our assertions. The Lutheran doctrine of the *fides infantum* is an instance of the straits to which learned men are driven when they attempt to put infant baptism on all-fours with adult. The truth is, we know but little, because we are told but little, of the spiritual state of infants, or of the effects of their baptism. In Scripture justification presupposes a conscious subject, capable of repentance and faith ; it presupposes not merely the remission of original sin, a matter enveloped in mystery, but of actual sins, of which infants are incapable. Whether repentance and faith may be dispensed with in the case of infants, or

incorporation into Christ, in that it leads us cordially to close with the terms of the Gospel *covenant*.' It does more ; it is the act of apprehending the special promise of forgiveness of sin through Christ. 'God does in and by baptism incorporate the baptized person, as a living member, into Christ's mystical body.' Baptism does not incorporate into Christ's mystical body, the 'invisible' Church of Protestantism, but into the visible Church. 'Faith converts the simple washing into an efficacious sacrament, and turns the water into blood.' That is, it makes us capable of receiving the sacrament ; or in other words, it is not the direct means of receiving remission of sins, but of leading to the sacrament for that purpose. 'The time of baptism is the date from which our justification reckons. No man is ordinarily justified before baptism, and whoever receives baptism rightly is in baptism admitted into a state of justification.' 'If baptism is the instrument on God's part, faith is the instrument on ours. As baptism is the sole instrument in one sense, faith is the sole instrument in the other. Nor do we at all derogate from the doctrine that we are justified by faith only when we teach that faith *attains its end for the first time in baptism*. . . . S. Paul teaches the same doctrine when he refers to the time of baptism as the date at which their' (the Corinthians. See 1 Cor. vi. 11, which does not seem to the point) 'justification commenced.'—Heurtley, B. L., Serm. vii. These last words disclose the result to which the whole tends. It is a modified form of the Romish doctrine—viz., that the office of faith is only to lead up to the sacrament in which justification is really conferred. This is faith in the sacrament, not directly in Christ. And it tends, too, to make justification not a declarative act of God assuring the soul directly of forgiveness, but an infused grace, as the schools and the Council of Trent teach. For if a *rite* justifies, how can it be otherwise than by an infusion of some sort ? Undue undervaluing of the sacraments is a danger to be avoided ; but into the sacred precincts of justification in the sight of God, either in its commencement or its continuance they must not, if the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith is to be maintained, be allowed to intrude.

how far, or whether something analogous may be supposed in them, Scripture does not decide ; they are interesting speculations, but can make no pretensions to dogmatical authority. Perhaps, then, it is better to avoid applying the term ' justification ' to infants. There is no need of our so doing. Baptized, or even unbaptized, infants dying before actual sin, we may be persuaded, are saved, through the atonement of Christ applied to them in some way unknown to us.

§ 69. PURGATORY IN RELATION TO JUSTIFICATION

The Romish doctrine of purgatory must not be confounded with the belief of spiritual progress in the intermediate state, against which latter no objection from reason or Scripture can be urged. If the soul survives its separation from the body, and if it exists, not in a state of unconscious slumber (*ψυχοπαννυχία*) as some in ancient and modern times have held, but with its moral and intellectual faculties in activity, the inference seems to be that between death and the final judgment there must be progress, either in the one direction or the other. But the doctrine of the Roman schools is of a different character. It is forensic in nature, and implies the payment of a debt not fully discharged in this life. It rests on the distinction between mortal and venial sin. Mortal sin can only be remitted through the sacrament of penance, and if not thus remitted it consigns the sinner to everlasting punishment. Venial sin does not sever connection with Christ, nor destroy the grace of charity infused at baptism ; hence it does not involve eternal consequences ; but since it is sin, satisfaction must be made for it, either in this life by self-imposed acts of penance, or, in case the account has not been fully squared, by temporary suffering in the intermediate state. This, however, may be shortened by placing to the credit of the suffering soul the superfluous merits of certain saints ; of which treasure the Pope possesses the key, and dispenses it, according as he thinks fit, under the name of indulgences.

The distinction between mortal and venial sin (with one exception, the nature of which has never clearly been made out, Matt. xii. 32), the one being different *in nature* (*genere*) from the other, finds no warranty in Scripture. All sin is in itself a transgression of the law (*ἀνομία*, 1 John iii. 4), and the law makes no distinction, in the matter of justification, between the thought of the heart and the overt act (Matt. v. 28), between so-called sins of infirmity and deliberate sin. For even the former must not be regarded as casual acts, but as the consequence of that original corruption of nature which, until the guilt of it is removed, affects the whole position of the person in the sight of God. All the actings of this corrupt nature

are sinful, though not equally so, and all need to be covered by the atoning blood of Christ. In this instance, as in others, Romanism looks more to the outward act than to the inward affection ; whereas we hold that concupiscence itself is of the nature of sin (Art. xi.). The involuntary motions of this concupiscence are, in the case of the regenerate, put away from the sight of God, not because in themselves they do not deserve condemnation, but because, in answer to the prayer which our Lord has taught us to use, they are immediately forgiven for Christ's sake. The voluntary sins of the regenerate belong to another category ; unquestionably they tend towards a severance from Christ, or at least a forfeiture of Christian privileges. As regards the unregenerate, the absence of a personal interest in the work of Christ leaves them under condemnation, even for corrupt tendencies which may not pass into open breaches of the moral law. On the whole—if venial be taken in the sense of pardonable, all sin, whether of the regenerate or of the unregenerate (save the one mentioned above) is venial ; but if in the sense of not being itself liable to condemnation, no sin is venial : in either case, the distinction is untenable. All sin, if repented of, may be pardoned ; but no sin, in its own proper nature, apart from the atoning work of Christ, can lay claim to remission.

The distinction is Pelagian in tendency, and like all forms of that heresy, it issues in fostering a low standard of Christian morality. If there are some sins which in themselves are venial, that is, which in the sight of God are not sin, the absolute requirements of the Divine law are lowered to meet the weakness of human nature ; a result which, as we have seen, also follows from the doctrine that the formal cause of justification is in ourselves, and not in Christ. The sense of sin, so invariable a feature of Christian piety, especially in its more advanced stages, gives place to acquiescence in present attainments ; the ideal of sanctity is lost ; and religious practice sinks to the level of civil morality, or even lower. Worse still, empirical classifications of sin, with a graduated scale of demerit and penalty, are framed ; as if it were in the power of man to draw lines of demarcation with certainty in matters which are in a state of continual flux. The circumstances of each action can be known only to Omniscience. The passage of Scripture which is sometimes cited as establishing a distinction between various kinds of sin (1 John v. 16) is not to the point. All sins, the Apostle says, may be made the subject of intercessory prayer ; all except one which is not clearly defined, but which seems to resemble that of Matt. xii. 32. Such classifications of sin tend to produce a corrupt casuistry in morals, and are intimately connected with the traffic in indulgences, which, more than anything

else, was the occasion of the great division of the sixteenth century.

It by no means follows that if the Romish distinctions be disallowed all sins must be held equal—an inference which has been charged on some of Luther's expressions, but appears in none of the Protestant Confessions. It is plain from such passages as Matt. x. 15, vii. 31, 32; Luke xii. 47, 48, that such a notion is untenable. Common sense dictates that the sins of David or Peter cannot be placed in the same category with the infirmities for which the just man daily seeks pardon. But it does not follow that these infirmities are not sins, but that graver transgressions, unrepented of, must expect a heavier penalty, as our Lord intimated when He declared that it would be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt. xi. 22). Yet the sins of Chorazin and Bethsaida were not in their nature venial.

And as the distinction in the Romish sense is unscriptural, so the future purgatory provided for the full expiation of venial sin is 'a fond thing vainly invented' (Art. xxii.). Both mortal and venial sin are in this life forgiven, if they are forgiven at all, on one only ground—viz., the sacrifice once offered on the cross; nor is the sinner required to complete the efficacy of this sacrifice by acts of penance, whether self-imposed or prescribed by the Church. The blood of Christ cleanses, where it cleanses at all, from all sin, and completely; not merely from the guilt of overt sin, but from that of the concupiscence whence it springs. It is not necessary, and this is not the place, to enter into the question whether sins may be forgiven in a future state. If they can be, we may be sure it will be on the same ground and to the same extent as is the case here. The theory is, that although the venial sins are repented of and the individual has never lost the grace of justification, the temporal satisfaction due to such sins as has not been exhausted. We reply that by the act of justifying faith all demands were met, and the believer passes into paradise absolved by the sentence of God Himself. No masses, no suffrages of the Church, are needed to shorten the duration of pains which in fact never were incurred, and the alleged necessity of which is founded only on inadequate views of the great atonement. To carry *penal* consequences of sin supposed to be here forgiven into a future state is to detract seriously from the sufficiency of Christ's atoning work, and rob the Christian of all peace in the prospect of dissolution.

It must be repeated that this question relates to justification, not to sanctification; or, in other words, that purgatory is considered not merely as a stage of purification, preparing the soul for the perfect bliss of heaven, but as a supplementary process, rendered necessary by the fact that the penal consequences of sin have not

been wholly removed by faith in Christ. The two aspects of the question are sometimes confounded, but they should be kept distinct. God, the argument runs, does indeed on repentance and faith remit the eternal penalty of sin, but He still exacts temporal penalties, either in this world or the next. We see, for example, that the Christian's faith does not exempt him from death, the penalty of sin; and instances occur in Scripture, such as David and others, in which God, after pardoning the sin, nevertheless inflicted retributive sufferings in this world. The ' Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child that is born to thee shall die ' (2 Sam. xii. 13, 14). And it is matter of daily experience that the temporal consequences of sin committed in an unregenerate state are not always, on a spiritual change, reversed. Now, argues Bellarmine, since it may and does happen that the whole of this life is not sufficient to exhaust such temporal punishment, there must exist a future state or place in which the deficiency is supplied. But, even if it were allowed that the great atonement does not meet all demands, who can take it upon himself to say that the chastisements of this life have not been sufficient for the purpose? What mortal can determine the more or less of a sin or the exact amount of retribution which it deserves? What we do know from Scripture is that the souls of those who depart in the Lord pass into Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 22), or paradise (*ibid.*, xxiii. 43); that they rest from their labours (Rev. xiv. 13); that it is gain to them to die (Phil. i. 21); from which surely the inference is that death, the consummation of natural evil, discharges the last fraction, if there remain such, of the debt then unpaid. But in truth, it is under a very different aspect that Scripture speaks of the temporal calamities of Christians. Not as a satisfaction for sin, but as the discipline of their heavenly Father to wean them from the world and to exercise faith and patience, is the light in which such trials are represented. The analogy, then, fails. There is nothing in the fact that in this life sin is frequently visited with chastisement to lead us to infer that so it must be with the blessed departed. There is a state, as Romanists themselves teach, in which, the *fomes* of original sin being deposited with the body, temptation has no longer any material to work upon, and the progress, if such there be, is only from a lower to a higher stage of purity and bliss.

The tenet of purgatory is a particular application of the general doctrine of Rome on the nature of repentance. In early writers the words ' confession ' and ' satisfaction ' are connected with ecclesiastical discipline, and bear a scriptural meaning. Those who had been

guilty of grave moral offences, or who in time of persecution had lapsed, were excluded from the Communion of the Church until they had been brought to repentance of their sin and desired readmission to Christian privileges. After a period of probation, if they continued of the same mind, the Church received them again within her pale, but marked the event by a public ceremony. Since they had caused open scandal it was proper that satisfaction should be made to the Church, both by a public confession of their sins and by restitution if wrong had been done. The beginning of Lent was the time usually appointed for the public reception of such penitents. But this penitential institute had reference to public discipline, and was merely an application of the rules laid down by our Lord Himself (Matt. xviii. 15-18) and His Apostles (1 Cor. v.). In lapse of time public confession before the Church became private sacramental confession to the priest, and satisfaction assumed the character of a transaction between God and the soul. The forgiveness of sin in the sight of God depended no longer on internal affections of the heart, but on priestly absolution, with its enjoined acts of satisfaction; hence the incongruous addition of confession and satisfaction to contrition to make up the idea of 'repentance. Since the present life might not be long enough to complete the tale, the future lent its aid; and purgatory, with its attendant train of pardons, indulgences, and masses for the repose of the departed, became an acknowledged doctrine of the Church.

The Romish theologians are hard put to it to establish their doctrine on Scriptural evidence. Bellarmine has recourse to 2 Macc., c. 12, a book which the Jews never admitted into their Canon. He relies, too, on Matt. xii. 32: 'It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come,' whereas in purgatory sins are supposed to be forgiven, though after a certain amount of suffering. And on 1 Cor. iii. 13: 'The fire shall try every man's work,' in which passage the Apostle is speaking not of sins, but of certain teachers, who on a good foundation had raised an edifice of questionable character. The fire, either of persecution in this life or of the final judgment, will determine which was the gold and which the dross. So scanty, indeed, is the Scripture proof, or, rather, so completely does it fail, that Möhler, the most distinguished modern controversialist on the Romish side, passes as lightly as he can over this delicate topic, contenting himself with the charge that 'Protestants presumptuously reject the well-grounded tradition of a purgatorial fire.' This able writer, as is not uncommon, confounds the two senses of future purification, which may mean either a growth in likeness to the Divine image or satisfaction for sin not completely

discharged in this life. 'With some purification is in this life complete' (are they to be supposed sinless?); 'with others it is only completed hereafter, the latter being such as, though in real fellowship with Christ, leave the world not wholly transformed into His image.'¹ The Protestant replies that, as regards the former case, no one in this life attains to sinlessness; and as regards the latter, although, in the absence of direct Scripture statement, we dare not advance beyond conjecture, the presumption is that death removes all actual sin, while progression in a holy state is not at all improbable. He may ask, too, How are the millions who die on the eve of Christ's coming to find time for their purgatorial satisfaction? and especially, What substitute shall we assign to the quick, who pass at once to perfect bliss without dying at all?

REGENERATION

§ 70. DEFINITION

Regeneration in the sight of God, that is, in its essential aspect, is the union of conversion and justification in an individual. It implies a change of relation towards God in justification, and also a change of will and affections in reference to the demands of the Divine law, or what Scripture calls a new heart; the person in whom these are combined is a regenerate person. Negatively it is the crucifixion of the flesh with its affections and lusts; positively it is the new life in Christ. It follows that if the word is to be taken in its full Scriptural sense, it means more than a mere ecclesiastical change of position; and more, too, than a mere mystical change, or one wrought, indeed, by the Spirit of God, but not necessarily involving moral renovation.

The word *παλιγγενεσία*, or regeneration, occurs but twice in the New Testament: once in connection with spiritual renewal (Tit. iii. 5), and once to denote the new state of things which the advent of Christ is to introduce (Matt. xix. 28). These passages do not throw much light on the meaning of the word; but the equivalent terms which are employed in Scripture do. The most usual synonym is the metaphorical expression—new birth. To Nicodemus it was declared that no one, unless born again, can enter the kingdom of God, or be in a state of salvation; and as to the Author of this change—it is directly referred to the Holy Spirit, being distinguished thereby from other changes which are within the powers of human nature. The distinction between 'born of the flesh' and 'born of the Spirit' is one not of degree, but of kind: the natural man, how-

¹ Symbolik, § 23.