

- assertion of which at the outset of his teaching St. Paul by anticipation declared his agreement with St. James. Both these
- 1 Cor. iv. 15. *Instructors in Christ* show that justifying faith in a consummate religion *ἐτελειώθη*, is MADE PERFECT in its effects; and both with reference to the law, as against Antinomian renunciation of it. St. Paul uses another term which again shows his full agreement with St. James, *πληρωθῇ*: the juxtaposition of these two terms is perhaps their best reconciliation. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit*: here righteousness fulfilled is not the claim of justice satisfied in punishment but its requirements satisfied in love. If, in any sense whatever, RIGHTEOUSNESS IS FULFILLED IN US, that must be by our being MADE RIGHTEOUS while reckoned such. But always, whether at the outset when works are excluded, or in the Christian life when they are required, whether in earth or in heaven, justification will still and ever be the IMPUTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS TO FAITH. The works which follow and give evidence will only declare that the faith in Christ was genuine and living faith. This alone can secure eternal life to those who, though as holy as their Lord Himself and as blessed as His joy can make them, will be apart from Him and in the record of the past sinners still. *Of whom I am chief!* was St. Paul's word when
- Rom. viii. 4. *ready to be offered*; and he and all true believers will then look as they are now *looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*. The profound consideration of this truth in all its bearings, it may be said in conclusion, will furnish the secret of the defence of the Evangelical doctrine of justification against all the perversions which will hereafter be reviewed.
- Eternal Imputation of Righteousness.
- 1 Tim. i. 15.  
2 Tim. iv. 6.  
Jude 21.

## History

## HISTORICAL.

The doctrine of the Divine Righteousness for man and in man, as the Apostle Paul first systematically taught it, was not clearly and soundly unfolded in the dogma of the Church until the Reformation. But the Scriptural doctrine was never absent. Though the distinction between the righteousness imputed to the believer and the righteousness wrought out in him was too much lost sight of, the great Evangelical provision for setting man right with the law through the Atonement has never been without its witnesses.

## THE PATRISTIC AGE.

The early Fathers never make the distinction which more modern discussions have rendered necessary.

1. Clemens Romanus, the first of them, fairly represents the general strain in such language as this: "They all [the Fathers of the Old Covenant] received honour and glory not for their own sake, nor through their own works, nor through their own righteous acts, but through the will of God. So also we, who are called in Jesus Christ by His will, are not justified through ourselves (*οὐ δι' ἑαυτῶν δικαιούμεθα*), nor through our own wisdom or knowledge or devotion, nor through the works which we have wrought in holiness of heart, but through faith; by which the Almighty hath justified all from the beginning." And again: "Let us rightly prize the blood of Christ and see how precious His blood is to God, as that which, poured out for our salvation, hath obtained the grace of repentance for all (*μετανοίας χάριν*)." But in the same first document we read: "Love binds us to God; in love hath the Lord accepted us; in love have all the elect been perfected; without love nothing is wellpleasing to Heaven." "Happy are we, if we obey the Lord's commandments in the purpose of love, that through love our sins might be forgiven to us (*εἰς τὸ ἀφεθῆναι ὑμῖν δι' ἀγάπης τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν*):" διὰ τῆς πίστεως is followed by δι' ἀγάπης, a striking variation from the exact words of the Apostle: not by *faith which worketh by love* but by *love*. It is obvious that these expressions are equally consistent with a justification by faith and a justification by works: supposing the distinction between reckoning and constituting righteous not to be dwelt on. This earliest Father evidently makes no difference between faith as the principle and love as its impression. He further says: "How do we attain the blessings of salvation? When our mind is firmly directed to God in faith, when we labour after that which is wellpleasing to Him, putting away from us all unrighteousness." The same combination of faith and love is found in Ignatius: "If ye in perfect measure have faith and love towards Jesus Christ, which are the beginning and end of life: the beginning (*ἀρχή*) is faith, the end (*τέλος*) is love; these, united

Early  
Fathers.  
Apostolical.  
Ad Cor.  
c. 32.

c. 7.

c. 49.

c. 50.

Gal. v. 6.

c. 35.

Eph. xiv.

- Dial. c.** in one, are of God." Irenæus says: "If ye avow this in peni-  
**96.** tence for your sins, in acknowledgment of Jesus, as the Christ, and in observance of His commandments, ye shall have forgiveness of sins." And again and again he blends faith and obedience in our justification. So also does Clemens Alexandrinus. Origen's doctrine tends the same way; though on this, as on many other points, it is hard to reconcile him with himself, as will appear from the following passages. "I find not in Scripture that faith is reckoned to him who believes for righteousness, but only that full faith which includes the departure from sin . . . The root of righteousness is not of works, but from the root of righteousness the fruit of works grows . . . This faith the Apostle speaks of as a gift of the Spirit, and therefore of free mercy." But how anxious he was to make justifying faith dependent on the works which make it perfect appears from many parts of his writings:
- Comm. in Rom. iv. 1.** **iv. 7.** "For it is not possible that righteousness can be imputed to him who has in himself any unrighteousness, even though he may believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead." It is obvious that the ante-Nicene Fathers based their doctrine of the righteousness of faith upon what we now call a reconciliation of St. Paul and St. James. They knew nothing of a direct imputation of the Saviour's merits; they knew nothing of a righteousness imputed to the good works which faith produces; but they held fast a justification of the believer through that faith alone which approves itself in holy life.
- East and West.** 2. It is remarkable that the East was, on the whole, more faithful than the West to Pauline phraseology. Origen, Theodoret, and Chrysostom, among the Orientals, explain *δικαιοῦν* as *δικαίον ἀποφαίνειν*, with much emphasis on its being the forgiveness of sins. But Augustine makes justification equivalent to JUSTUM FACERE. It is vain to seek in his writings a clear expression of St. Paul's doctrine. There is invariably a reference more or less direct to the works wrought in the believer: "Justificamur in Christi sanguine, dum per remissionem peccatorum eruimur a diaboli potestate." "Gratia Dei justificamur, i. e. justi efficimur." "Justificat impium Deus non solum dimittendo quæ mala fecit, sed etiam donando caritatem, ut declinet a malo et faciat bonum per Spiritum Sanctum." Here it is plain that the terminology of
- De Trin.** xiii. 18.  
**De Spir. et Lit.** c. 26.  
**Cont. Jul.** ii. 168.

St. Paul is tampered with. No passage in his writings identifies righteousness with the indwelling gift of charity. There is however a remarkable homage paid to the Apostle's doctrine in a memorable sentence of Augustine: "Sequuntur opera JUSTIFICATUM, non præcedunt JUSTIFICANDUM."

De Fide  
et Opp.  
c. 14.  
Germ of  
Error.

3. It may be said that all this was no more than the establishment of the strict union and due proportion between the external and the internal righteousness that belong to salvation. But there was in such language the germ of great errors, which may be traced in various directions. Though the works of a living faith were demanded, the maintenance of the Catholic objective creed of the one church was in the second century and afterwards made suspiciously prominent. With this may be paralleled the Alexandrian distinction between the *ψαλὴ πίστις* and the *γνώσις*, springing out of it, which made it living. Good works were very early, even by the earliest Fathers, incautiously represented as co-ordinate with faith in the matter of justification. Satisfaction—including penance, good works, almsdeeds and intercession of martyrs—was inculcated as necessary in order to the forgiveness of sins committed after the baptismal forgiveness had been lost. Augustine himself uses such language as this: "Non sufficit *mores in melius mutare et a factis malis recedere, nisi etiam de his, quæ facta sunt, SATISFIAT Deo per pœnitentiæ dolorem per humilitatis gemitum, per contriti cordis sacrificium, CO-OPERANTIBUS eleemosynis.*" This REMISSIO SECUNDA introduced a fatal change into the Scriptural doctrine. Lastly, the ascetic distinction between simple acceptance in doing the COMMANDMENTS and the higher worthiness of following the COUNSELS of the Gospel, perverted the true doctrine for ages. The first note of this permanent error is found in Origen: "Donec quis hoc facit tantum quod debet, i.e., quæ præcepta sunt, inutilis servus est. Si autem addas aliquid præceptis, tunc dicetur ad te, Euge, serve bone et fidelis!" But the fundamental error was the misapprehension of the idea of justification; making it not the declaration of a man's righteousness—to which all must come at last however perfect the internal righteousness—but the making him righteous.

Serm. 151.

Ad Rom.  
iii.

4. But, after every deduction for the signs of coming error, it is indisputable that the best of the Fathers, whether of

Consensus  
of Witnesses



East or of West, furnish a consensus of faithful testimony to the Scriptural doctrine of the sinner's acceptance with God on the sole ground of the Redeemer's finished work. It may be granted that they do not use modern language: such terms as Imputed Righteousness and Forensic Justification are unknown to them. Also that they apply the term Merit in a sense from which we now decline: meaning, not so much legal or moral desert, as the gracious estimate attached by God to His own good in man. Also that the term Justification itself was used in its largest meaning, as the constituting and making men righteous through the efficacy of the Atonement applied to the whole nature and life of the sinner. The Fathers regarded faith as the principle which not only apprehends Christ's merit for forgiveness but unites the soul with Him for constant interior renewal. And Augustine, who is generally appealed to, and not without justice, as sanctioning a moral justification and even a justification conditioned by works of satisfaction, is faithful to the supremacy of Christ's merits relied on by the penitent believer. This is his catena of grace: "Faith is the first link of the gracious chain which leads to salvation. By the law comes the knowledge of sin, by faith the attainment of grace against sin, by grace the healing of the soul from the stain of sin, by the healing of the soul full freedom of the will, by the freed will love to righteousness, and by love to righteousness the fulfilling of the law." But it is in the deep expressions of his experience, when he is not controversial, that we discover the essential soundness of his doctrine. "Our righteousness is true, on account of the truly good which is before it, but in this life it is so slight and impoverished that it rather consists only in the forgiveness of sins: potius peccatorum remissione, quam perfectione virtutum. The prayer which every member of the pilgrim church utters, Forgive us our trespasses, bears witness to this. This prayer is not efficacious for those whose faith without works is dead; but for those whose faith worketh by love." "My sole hope rests on the death of My Saviour. His death is my merit, my refuge, my salvation, my life, my resurrection: my merit is the mercy of the Lord. He who doubts of the pardon of sins denies that God is merciful." This is the spirit of the testimony of all the Fathers. The more

De Spir.  
et Lit.  
c. 33.

De Civ.  
xix 27.

Man. 22,  
23.

carefully their language is considered, the more evident will it appear that they regarded righteousness as springing entirely from faith in the Saviour; and excluded good works from any meritorious share in its attainment. The attacks made upon their teaching in modern times may generally be traced to some peculiar error in the assailants themselves. They do not find their own view of justification in the early writers; and do not scruple to assert that the full exhibition of grace was lost for a long number of ages. The exhibition of truth that has been set forth above has nothing to fear from an examination of the best Christian writers of antiquity: due allowance being made for difference of phraseology and the influence of current errors upon their modes of statement.

#### MEDIÆVAL TENDENCIES.

The Mediæval doctors took two directions, the majority tending towards the later theology of Rome or preparing its elements. The Church steadily relapsed into a position of slavery to ceremony and works. Christendom became a great legal economy, strictly and in an unevangelical sense a NEW LAW; the Church itself became the Mediator instead of Christ; and justification as taught by St. Paul bade fair to vanish from her teaching. But, on the other hand, the darkest period furnished bright and clear testimony that the true Gospel was only obscured.

The  
Middle  
Ages.

I. The doctrine of the subjective application of the Atonement, like that of the Atonement objective, was perverted.

Justifica-  
tion  
obscured  
Merit.

1. The dogma of Merit, as already seen, had its pernicious effect, both in regard to the preparations for justifying grace, and the grace of justification itself. The MERITUM DE CONGRUO, resulting from right behaviour towards prevenient grace, almost demanded from God's equity the indwelling grace of justification by virtue of which MERITUM DE CONDIGNO, desert of salvation in strict right, is acquired. This could not fail to mar the freeness and pure grace of the Divine act. However congruous it may be with the Divine fidelity to justify the penitent who brings the fit preparation for that blessing, merit can have no place; for the preliminary fitness is itself of pure grace. And the only merit concerned with justification itself is that of Christ.

- Faith Informis and Formata.** 2. Justifying Faith was made—as it has continued in the dogma of Rome—an *actus intellectus*, receiving its meritorious virtue through love. The Schoolmen distinguished two kinds of faith: *FIDES INFORMIS*, which simply believes the articles of the creed, touching God and Divine things, by an explicit faith where these articles are known, and by an implicit faith where they are not clearly apprehended; and *FIDES FORMATA CHARITATE*, which then, as shown in love, is *VIRTUE*. This righteousness is imputed to the faith itself, as having in it the germ of all excellence, not to the believer as such.
- Forensic Denied.** 3. Hence justification was dispossessed of all that was forensic, and became "*actio Dei physica*:" righteousness infused, making a man just instead of unjust. Therefore it could never be regarded as a settled and fixed act of God, and never as matter of certain assurance to its possessor. Justification in this system, confirmed at Trent, is the process of a transmutation from a state of sin to a state of righteousness, in virtue of which the justified can accomplish works entitling to eternal life: *opera meritoria proportionata vitæ æternæ*. It is remarkable that Thomas Aquinas, the highest authority among the Schoolmen before Trent, lays great stress upon the instantaneousness of this act, confounding justification not so much with sanctification as with the infusion of the regenerate life. The following are some of his sentences
- P. ii. Q. 113.** "In justificatione requiritur actus fidei quantum ad hoc, quod homo credat Deum esse justificatorem per mysterium Christi."
- Q. 23.** "Homo per virtutes justificatur; per fidem justificatur." "Charitas facit effectum infinitum, dum conjungit animam Deo justificando impium." "Tota justificatio impii originaliter consistit in gratiæ infusione. Per eam enim et liberum arbitrium meretur et culpa remittitur: gratiæ autem infusio fit in instanti." This last sentence will be seen to be in strange contrast with the later doctrine of Rome, which asserts that believers through good works *MAGIS JUSTIFICANTUR*. But all the Schoolmen had lost the Scriptural distinction between the sinner's renewal unto holiness and the sentence of justification which declares his acceptance.
- Development of Error.** 4. The tendency of Mediæval doctrine was towards the same errors by which the early Fathers were ensnared. What we saw

in the germ has become more developed. The present and eternal acceptance of the sinner for the sake of Christ alone, never rejected absolutely, was denied by implication: the absolute supremacy of the Saviour's merit was reserved for the original fault of the race; for sin committed after its first imputed benefit, human expiation was demanded. Secondly, the peculiarity of the Apostolical term justification, as referring to a sinner's relation to law, was all but entirely abolished. Justification was said to make the sinner a saint and meet for heaven; and thus the word did duty for the renewal and entire sanctification of the soul. It was forgotten that, because the LAW will for ever have its charge against him—as apart from Christ,—he must for ever be JUSTIFIED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH. Thirdly, the fatal dogma of Supererogation, based upon the figment of a possible superfluous merit acquired by observance of the Counsels of Perfection, laid the broad and deep foundation of the practice of Indulgence. This profoundly affected the doctrine of Justification, whether viewed as Pardon or as Righteousness. Fourthly, and this was the climax of mediæval error, the one eternal and finished sacrifice of Christ was taken from the direct administration of the Holy Ghost, and changed into a sacrifice offered by the Church through her priests, with special application according to the intention of the human administrator. The combination of all these influences gradually introduced another gospel, preached no longer to a faith that brings neither money nor price.

Truth.

II. But there was also throughout the Mediæval period a sound practical confession, silently protesting against the theories of the schools; and showing that the whole head was not sick, the whole heart was not faint. The sickness of the Church's teaching was not unto death: the light of the Reformation was already arising in the midst of the darkness.

Maintained always.

1. A long and affecting series of testimonies might be gathered from the Schoolmen of all shades, in proof that the hearts of the penitent saints always turned for justification solely to the merits of Christ. Thus Anselm, who did so much to establish the foundations of the Atonement as a doctrine, could hardly fail to be sound as to its application. Among many evidences of this may be quoted his counsel to a dying sinner: "Huic morti te totum com-

Evidence.

mitte, hac morte te totum contege eique te totum involve. Et, si Dominus te voluerit judicare, dic: Domine, mortem Domini nostri Jesu Christi objicio inter me et judicium tuum; aliter tecum non contendo. Si dixerit, quod merueris damnationem, dic: mortem domini nostri Jesu Christi objicio inter me et mala merita mea, ipsiusque dignissimæ passionis meritum affero pro merito, quod habere debuisssem et heu non habeo. Dicat iterum: mortem Domini nostri Jesu Christi pono inter me et iram tuam. Deinde dicat ter: In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum. Et conventus sui adstantes respondeant: In manus tuas, Domine, commendamus spiritum ejus. Et securus morietur nec videbit mortem in æternum." In his Meditations also we hear Anselm thus speaking to his soul: "When I look at the offences which I have committed, if Thou shouldst judge me as I have deserved, I am certainly lost; but when I look at Thy death, which Thou didst suffer for the world's redemption, I cannot despair of Thy compassion." And the comparative absence of confidence noticeable here is elsewhere relieved: "O how should we hope in a perfect healing; and in this hope joyfully labour for our purification!" Thus Bernard also abounds with sayings which breathe the purest aspirations after a righteousness assured to faith working by love, without any human merit. It was he who said: "sufficit ad meritum scire quod non sufficiant merita." In one of his sermons there are sentences of which Luther made great use: "It is necessary first of all to believe that thou canst not have the remission of sins save through the indulgence of God; then that thou canst have no good works unless He give thee this; and, lastly, that eternal life cannot be merited by any good deeds, unless these be themselves freely given. The merits of men are not such that for their sake eternal life is by right due to them, or that God would be unrighteous in withholding it. For, not to say that all merits are God's gifts, man being God's debtor and not God man's debtor, what are all merits in comparison with such glory?" In his Discourses on the Canticles also Bernard utters some sentences that are perfectly free from the error of the times: "Truly blessed is only the man to whom God imputeth not sin. For there is none without sin. Yet who can condemn the elect of God? Enough is it to me for the possession of righteousness that I have

Serm. de  
Annunc.  
Mar.

Ser. xxiii.

Him against Whom alone I have sinned as a reconciled God. All that He has decreed not to reckon to me is as if it had never been. Not to sin is God's righteousness, man's righteousness is the forgiveness of God." "I am not poor in merit so long as He is not poor in mercy. If His compassion is rich I am rich in merit, and shall eternally praise the Lord of eternal mercy. Is it my righteousness that I think of? No, Lord, only of Thine; for even it is MINE. Thou art made of God righteousness to me: have I aught to fear that the one is not enough? It is broad enough for us both." Preaching on the text "Savour of the Good Ointments," he delivers these testimonies, which are fragments of a sermon profoundly interesting in itself as a contribution to the doctrine of justification: "The Church could not run after Him if He, with the Father from the beginning, had not been made unto her Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; wisdom through teaching; righteousness, through absolution from guilt; sanctification, through the communion with sinners into which He has entered; redemption, through the passion He endured for sinners. This is the savour of Him Whom the Father hath anointed with oil of gladness above His fellows. . . . By righteousness through faith He hath loosed thy bonds of sin, justifying the sinner in free grace (*gratis* justificans); further, He lived holy among sinners, and so opened up and showed the only way of life for them; and, finally, to make the measure of His love full, He gave His life to death, and shed out of His side the price of satisfaction, the blood of atonement." The following sentences must be pondered as he wrote them: "Non est quod gratia intret, ubi jam meritum occupavit. Deest gratiæ quicquid meritis deputas. Nolo meritum, quod gratiam excludat. Horreo quicquid de meo est, ut sim meus, nisi quod illud magis forsitan meum est, quod me meum facit. Gratia reddit me mihi justificatum gratis et sic liberatum a servitute peccati." It is not a sound doctrine that takes exception to these last words: Christian righteousness is an internal as well as an external deliverance. And these are but specimens of many that might be adduced to show that in the age which prepared for the Council of Trent the sole ground and meritorious cause of justification before God was acknowledged by many to be the righte-

Ser. lxi.

Ser. xxii

ousness of Christ, and the good works of man whether before or after justification to be of no value in themselves.

**Mysticism.**

2. During the latter part of the Middle Ages Mysticism gave its distinct colouring to this as well as to all the doctrines which connect the sinner with his Saviour. It is not easy to define precisely who in this relation may be termed the Mystics. In a certain sense such were all the noblest spirits of the Schoolmen, from Anselm and Bernard down to Gerson and the immediate precursors of the Reformation. The passages quoted above, however, separate these authors as to the present question from the Mystics proper, though they generally belonged to the same class. The characteristic principle of Mysticism was the absorbing desire after union with God. This was, and ever is, its ruling idea. Applied to the doctrine of righteousness through Christ it had these two effects, or this one effect under two aspects: first, it gave supreme ascendancy to the love of the faith that embraces Christ; and, secondly, it made Christ's internal union with the soul the secret of its righteousness. It did not entirely neglect, but it made entirely subordinate, the virtue of the Atonement as reckoned to the soul for present and eternal acceptance. This phase of doctrine must be considered elsewhere more generally: now we have to do with its mediation between the legalised and enslaved mediæval Church and the freed teaching of the Reformation. It is enough to say that in the long series of the purest and most saintly mystical writers the love which seemed to displace faith as the condition of acceptance was in reality no other than faith itself in its self-renouncing and Christ-embracing character; and, secondly, that the internal Christ Whose indwelling was regarded as the formal cause or principle of justification was such as utterly extinguishing self. Their language was incorrect, and their idea of righteousness confused; but their theology was in its deep foundation opposed to the legal spirit of the system to which they belonged.

**Dawn of Reformation.**

**Staupitz.**

3. As we approach the Reformation witnesses abound with their testimony that both scholastic definitions and mystical meditations were steadily tending in one direction. Among many we may bring forward Staupitz: "No man can be relieved of his sin but through faith in Christ alone. Apart from Him



there is no confession, no repentance, no work of man : we must believe in Christ, or die in our sins. Therefore it is far more needful to exercise ourselves in faith than in a book of penitential discipline. Faith in Christ never faileth, it obtains mercy from God, and renews the whole man. Come and buy without money ; ye have nothing to pay for it ; but shall be justified only through grace and the redemption which is in Christ, Whom God hath set forth as our only Saviour, only through faith in His blood-shedding, for the manifestation of His righteousness. By faith we are saved without the works of the law." But in another chapter the mystical element comes in : "Faith in Christ lets no man abide in himself ; it fails not till it unites us wholly with God. And this is the true faith, which is Christ dwelling within us." These passages combined indicate the junction between the two tendencies to which reference has been made. They express the hidden thoughts that were working in multitudes of minds, however confused in their utterance.

Von  
Christl.  
Glauben.  
c. 6.

#### THE TRIDENTINE DOCTRINE.

Trent.

There can be no doubt that the Sixteen Decrees and Thirty-three Canons of the Council of Trent, which denounced in its sixth session, 1547, the errors of Protestantism, contain the authoritative decisions of the Church of Rome on the subject of Justification. But these must be examined in the light both of a previous history and of a subsequent development.

I. The Council of Trent was assembled as the protest of Rome against Protestantism : the question of Justification was only one, though one of the chief, which it aimed to settle. During the interval between the Diet of Augsburg, with its Confession, and the Diet of Ratisbon, a little more than ten years, many attempts were made by the old Church to compromise. The Interim Article, holding fast the essential Mediæval idea that justification is the making righteous, endeavoured to graft an imputation upon that : "Sinners are justified by a living and effectual faith—per fidem vivam et efficacem—which is a motion of the Holy Spirit, whereby, repenting of their lives past, they are raised to God, and made real partakers of the mercy which Jesus Christ hath promised." It admitted that sinners "cannot be reconciled to

Diet of  
Ratisbon.

God, or redeemed from the bondage of sin, but by Jesus Christ, our only Mediator;" that "faith justifies not, but as it leads us to mercy and righteousness, which is imputed to us through Jesus Christ and His merits, and not by any perfection of righteousness which is inherent in us, as communicated to us by Jesus Christ;" and that "we are not just, or accepted by God, on account of our own works or righteousness, but we are reputed just on account of the merits of Jesus Christ." Whatever ambiguity may remain in the sentence concerning the faith working by love that justifies, and that we are made real partakers of mercy, there can be no doubt that the substantial truth was once more within the reach of the Church of Rome and was rejected.

Tridentine doctrine.

II. The specific doctrine of Trent may be viewed as to the preparations, the bestowment and the results of justification. On each of which a few remarks may be made from our own position in passing, and without direct reference to the controversy of the times.

Preparation.

1. The Preparation for the estate of justification is a very important element in the doctrine. It is regarded as the result of prevenient grace, with which man may co-operate and which he may reject: *Ita ut tangente Deo cor hominis per Spiritus Sancti illuminationem, neque homo ipse nihil omnino agat, inspirationem illam recipiens, quippe qui illam et abjicere potest, neque tamen sine gratia Dei movere se ad justitiam coram illo libera sua voluntate possit.* This is sound; but the successive steps of preparation, passing through belief of the truth into acceptance of baptism, are supposed to constitute a certain merit of congruity which notes the beginning of error. This, however, was obviated, in word at least: *GRATIS justificari dicimur, quia nihil eorum, quæ justificationem præcedunt, sive fides sive opera, ipsam justificationis gratiam promeretur.* Si enim gratia est, jam non ex operibus. Bellarmine quotes the language of the Council:

Conc. Trid. vi. 6.

Justif. i. 12.

*Septem actus enumerat, quibus impii ad justitiam disponuntur, videl. fidei, timoris, spei, dilectionis, pœnitentiæ, propositi suscipiendi sacramenti et propositi novæ vitæ atque observationis mandatorum Dei; and adds, per fidem nos placere Deo et impetrare atque aliquo modo merere justificationem.* But the distinction between merit *Æ CONGRUO* and merit *Æ CONDIGNO* is perilous. It has been shown what is the relation of

faith to this justification as one of its preliminaries and the most important of them. It is the assent to the doctrine of God as taught in the Catholic Church: quod a Deo traditum esse sanctissimæ matris ecclesiæ autoritas comprobavit. In its form it is assent; in its matter it is EXPLICIT assent to the main doctrines, and the IMPLICIT assent of goodwill to whatever the Church commends to faith. Generally, this faith is humanæ salutis initium, fundamentum et radix omnis justificationis. At a later stage comes the fides formata, or faith filled with the germs of all good; and this faith, instinct with holiness, is justifying because God beholds the hidden man who is under the process of renewal.

Cone.  
Trid.  
vi. 8.

2. On the accomplishment of the preparation justification follows: quæ non est sola peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio et renovatio interioris hominis per voluntariam susceptionem gratiæ et donorum unde homo ex injusto fit justus, ex inimico amicus, ut sit hæres secundum spem vitæ eternæ. Non modo reputamur, sed vere justî nominamur et sumus, justitiam in nobis recipientes justitia Dei, qua nos justos facit, qua videlicet ab eo donati renovamur spiritu mentis nostræ et non secundum propriam cujusque dispositionem et co-operationem. Quanquam nemo possit esse justus, nisi cui merita passionis Jesu Christi communicantur, id tamen in hac impii justificatione fit, quum ejusdem sanctæ passionis merito per Spiritum Sanctum caritas Dei diffunditur in cordibus eorum qui justificantur, atque ipsis inhæret, unde in ipsa justificatione cum remissione peccatorum hæc omnia simul infusa accipit homo per Jesum Christum, cui inseritur, fidem, spem et caritatem. Hence the Tridentine idea of justification is that of making righteous; while it is of grace through Christ, there is in it no imputation of righteousness; though a non-imputation of sin is admitted, justification and regeneration and renewal are confounded and made one. Some sentences seem to contain a condemnation of the doctrine of the acceptance of the sinner through grace: Si quis dixerit homines justificari vel sola imputatione justitiæ Christi, vel sola peccatorum remissione, exclusa gratia et charitate, aut etiam gratiam qua justificamur esse tantum favorem Dei, anathema sit. This expressly opposes the Scriptural doctrine of justification as forgiveness and the imputation of righteousness to faith; but if the term justification is

Justifica-  
tion  
Cone.  
Trid.  
vi. 7.

Cone.  
Trid.  
Can. i  
(cf. 9,  
12, 14).

enlarged, so as to include the whole process of the renewal of the soul, the words are correct. **They are wrong inasmuch as they deny that there is a distinction between the acceptance for Christ's sake and the acceptance of the inward work of holiness wrought by His Spirit.** The Scriptures teach, what common sense confirms, that the present, constant, and final acceptance of a sinner must be a sentence of righteousness pronounced for Christ's sake independent of the merit of works.

- Results.** 3. It is in the results of justification that the confusion of Roman theology is most apparent. The New Testament undoubtedly teaches that there must be in the believer a process of gradual righteousness; yet carefully distinguishes that from **the one sentence of justification which is ever and continuously pronouncing the believer righteous.** But the Council made no such distinction. In its doctrine justification admits, in all its meaning, of increase. Sic ergo justificati et amici Dei ac domestici facti euntes de virtute in virtutem, renovantur de die in diem, hoc est, mortificando membra carnis suæ et exhibendo ea arma justitiæ in sanctificationem . . . per observationem mandatorum Dei et ecclesiæ in ipsa justitia per Christi gratiam accepta, co-operante fide bonis operibus, crescunt atque magis justificantur. Again, human satisfaction is superadded as a requirement for the continual impartation of forgiveness in the sacrament of penance: Si quis negaverit, ad integram et perfectam peccatorum remissionem requiri tres actus in pœnitente, quasi materiam sacramenti pœnitentiæ, videlicet contritionem, confessionem et satisfactionem, quæ tres pœnitentiæ partes dicuntur; aut dixerit, duas tantum esse pœnitentiæ partes, terrores scilicet incussos conscientiæ agnito peccato, et fidem conceptam ex evangelio vel absolutione, qua credit quis sibi per Christum remissa peccata: anathema sit. This canon omits faith, and places the satisfaction of human works in its stead: the same term being applied to the good deeds of penitent obedience that is applied to the One Meritorious Oblation of Christ which indeed is admitted to lie at the basis of all. Moreover, in the anxiety to defend faith from being made a merely blind confidence in the Atonement, on the one hand, and a personal assurance of salvation on the other, it is reduced as the instrument of salvation to mere assent; but that assent itself

Conc.  
Trid. vi.  
10.

Conc.  
Trid.  
Can. 4.

is among the preparations of prevenient grace. The faith quickened and informed with charity is no other than the life of regeneration, and, in making this the faith that justifies, the renewal of the soul is really made the reason of acceptance for the sake of Christ. Not faith in the Redeemer, but the work of that faith, becomes the formal cause of justification. The danger of Antinomianism is obviated only by a fatal opposite extreme: the denial in theory that the SOLE ground of justification is the virtue of Christ, and the practical traffic in good works flowing from that denial. The truth of an advancement in holiness is maintained, with its consequent, the increase of the Divine complacency: but this justificationis incrementum is, however true as an increase of righteousness, utterly unscriptural as disjoined from a settled and permanent justification of pardon. Rome, once more, rightly taught the necessity of good works in order to the continuance and perfection of a state of salvation; but condemnation was pronounced upon the doctrine that these good works are only the fructus et signa justificationis; and moreover these good works were made meritorious, enhancing the justification and the rewards of the justified in virtue of a merit that vainly sheltered itself under the sanction of the Scriptural reward of grace.

III. The subsequent development of the doctrine of Rome on this doctrine is deeply interesting; but chiefly in relation to some of the other topics that will come under discussion. From Bellarmine, the first controversial defender of the Council, down to Moehler its latest, the history of variation may be profitably studied.

Later Romanism.

1. Bellarmine himself introduced several important modifications; and his bolder statements tend to bring into relief a certain moderate tone that was adopted in the Council. As to faith he says: "In three things Catholics differ from heretics. First, in the Object of justifying faith, which heretics restrict to the promise of special mercy, while we would extend it as widely as the whole Word of God. Secondly, in the faculty of mind which is its seat. They place it in the will, defining it to be trust and confounding it with hope, as fiducial trust is only confirmed hope. Catholics teach that it is in the intellect. Finally, in the act of the understanding involved. They define faith by know-

Bellarmino.

De Just. i. 4.

ledge, we by assent. For we assent to God, even when He proposes things to be believed which we do not understand." To this faith of so general a nature he ascribes a sort of merit: "That it is the cause and has the power of justifying, and in some sense merits it." He distinguished more precisely than the Council between the first and the second justification: "We say that St. Paul speaks of the first justification, in which the unrighteous are made righteous; while St. James speaks of the second, in which the just is made more just. Thus the former rightly says that man is justified without works, and the latter that he is justified by works." He denies what has been abundantly proved, that both writers speak only of a declaratory justification. Bellarmine rejected altogether the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which the Council rejected only as being the sole ground of acceptance. "Our adversaries have never found a passage in which it is stated that Christ's righteousness is imputed to us for righteousness, or that we are righteous through the imputation of His righteousness." The Arminians said the same thing in almost the same words; but both forgot that, as to the essential matter involved, there is scarcely a shade of difference between the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the imputation of its virtue in pardon. Finally, this controversialist laid the foundation of a more thorough exposition of the Works of Supererogation and the Counsels of Perfection, which the Council left as they were commonly understood and perverted. These points we dwell on elsewhere. Meanwhile, it is instructive to find that the great champion of the merit of works, who said that "good works are necessary to salvation, not only in regard to their presence, but also in regard to their efficacy"—a profound and far-reaching error—was, like many other devotees of Roman doctrine, more faithful to the Atonement as a penitent Christian than he was as a polemical writer. He did not end his description of justification without a strong recommendation to simple trust in the pure mercy of God: Propter incertitudinem propriæ justitiæ, et periculum inanis gloriæ, tutissimum est fiduciam totam in sola misericordia Dei et benignitate reponere. Hoc solum dicimus, tutius esse meritorum jam partorum quodammodo oblivisci, et in solam misericordiam Dei respicere; tum quia nemo absque revela-

De Justif.  
v. 7.

tione certo scire potest se habere vera merita, aut in eis in finem usque perseveraturum: tum quia nihil est facilius, in hoc loco tentationis, quam superbiam ex consideratione bonorum operum gigni.

2. Within the Roman Church there have been many controversies upon what are called the Doctrines of Grace. The most important was its contest with Jansenism, or Augustinian Predestinarianism, or what we call Calvinism. As Calvinism had its Arminian Five Points to oppose, so Jesuit Romanism had its Five Points of Jansenism to oppose. The Papal Constitutions or Bulls issued to suppress these doctrines merely confirmed, and in a negative way, the Decrees and Canons of Trent, which are the only authoritative formulas. The exposition, however, of these formulas has been various, and belongs to a more minute History of Doctrine. The student who would thoroughly understand the position of modern Romanism must study *the controversy which Moehler's Symbolism excited in the earlier part of this century*. In the long and exhaustive discussion of Moehler every point is touched. To many of his arguments against the exaggerated doctrine of Imputation we must concede their force. But the fundamental question of the relation of faith to justification, though stated with much subtilty, is not relieved of its anti-Scriptural character as above exhibited. A few sentences will show this. "To the abstract idea of God, as a Being infinitely just, corresponds the sentiment of fear. If, on the other hand, God be conceived of as the all-loving, merciful, and forgiving Father, this is most assuredly possible only by a kindred sentiment in our souls, corresponding to the Divine love, that is to say, by a love germinating within us. It is awakening *love* only that can embrace the loving, pardoning, compassionate God, and surrender itself up entirely to Him, as also the Redeemer saith: *He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him*. Thus it would not be faith (confidence) that would be first in the order of time, and love in the next place, but faith would be an effect of love, which, after she had engendered faith as confidence, supported by this her own self-begotten helpmate, would come forward more vigorously and efficaciously. This, at least, Holy Writ teaches very clearly:

Jansen-  
ism.

Moehler  
Symb.  
i. 192.



compare Rom. v. 5 with viii. 15, 16. The second mode whereby what we have said may be made evident is as follows. Confidence in the Redeemer (for this, we repeat, the Reformers denominate faith) necessarily presupposes a secret, hidden desire,—a longing after Him. For our whole being, having received the impulse from God, forces and urges us to apply to ourselves what is offered through the mediation of Christ; and our deepest necessities, whereof we have attained the consciousness through His Spirit, are satisfied only in Him. But what is now this longing, this desire, other than love? Assuredly, this aspiring of our whole being towards Christ, this effort to repose in Him, to be united with Him, to find in Him only our salvation, is nought else than love. It follows, then, that love, even according to this view of things, constitutes the foundation and external condition of confidence,—nay, its very essence; for, in every external consequence, the essence is still manifested." In answer to all this, it may be noted that there is something in faith which corresponds to the terror of the law as well as to the attraction of the Gospel: the former must come before the latter, for love casteth out fear. Faith, as the self-renouncing, self-despairing trust in Christ, does not love Him yet with the love of which He speaks in the misapplied words of His promise, *I will manifest Myself to him*. To quote Moehler himself: "God is represented as loving men *before* they love Him, that is to say, as loving them *without* their love; whereas the Catholic Church teaches that he only who loves God is beloved of God. Hereby the free unmerited grace of God in Christ seems totally rejected, as if only through our love the love of God deserved to be acquired. What is to be said in reply to this? We must connect with the passage John iv. 10 others which appear to contradict it: wherein it is expressly said that God loves only those that love Him." But there is surely a difference between the love bestowed on those in whom Divine love is already shed abroad and the love which sheds forgiveness in response to a faith which desires Christ but cannot yet love Him. One most suggestive extract shall close this allusion to modern Roman doctrine. It must be carefully studied by those who would understand the difference between St. Paul's doctrine and that of Romanists and very many who in this respect Romanise.

"The Redeemer undoubtedly announces Himself to us from without (JUSTITIA NOSTRA EXTRA NOS) as He for the sake of Whose merits the forgiveness of sins is offered with the view of restoring us to communion with God. But when we have once clearly apprehended and reconquered this righteousness, which is without, then first awakes within us **the feeling kindred to Divinity**; we feel ourselves attracted towards Him (this is the first germ of love); we find, even in our sins, no further obstacle; we pass them by, and move consoled onward towards God in Christ (this is confidence in the Latter); and, by the progressive development of such feelings, we at last disengage ourselves from the world, and live entirely in God (JUSTITIA INTRA NOS, INHÆRENS, INFUSA)." Change some of the terms, and we have here the Lutheran and our own doctrine. The "apprehension" of an external righteousness is the faith which believes in the "forgiveness of sins offered to us;" it "passes by" the "obstacle" of former guilt. When Luther used such language he was condemned. Here is the same doctrine, but with **the vital omission of a conscious appropriation of the vicarious sacrifice which propitiated the Divine displeasure and propitiated the Divine love**. The Atonement is robbed of one of its eternal elements: it is made **only the removal of a barrier to the flow of love**; in forgetfulness that it is also set forth as a propitiation in the blood of Christ to declare the Divine righteousness. The clear conception of this truth will defend the doctrine of Justification against an error which is, of all its errors, the least peculiar to Romanism.

Moehler  
Symb.

3. It may be added that the connection between the sacrament of Baptism and Justification was clearly laid down at Trent; but that also has received sundry important modifications. It was established that the only instrumental cause was the sacrament; but the very virtue of the rite as an objective assurance, corresponding with faith as assurance subjective, was taken away by the denial of the certitude of Justification: "As no pious man ought to doubt of the mercy of God, the merit of Christ, the virtue and efficacy of the sacraments, so every one, looking at himself and his own infirmity and indisposedness, may fear concerning his own grace, *since no one may know with the certitude of faith*, which error may not be mixed with, that he has received the grace of God."

Baptism

Conc.  
Trid. vi. 9.

Hooker,  
Works,  
ii. 606.

The error common to Rome and many other communions is to confound the certitude of faith in a present justification with the assurance of an eternal salvation. The Lutherans often betray here the influence of their early Predestinarianism; the Romanists betray simply the fundamental error that reduces faith to mere intellectual assent made living by love. The Calvinists are more consistent; for they disconnect justification from the external sacrament, and make the specific assurance of it the high privilege of the Electi electorum. The following words of Hooker are remarkable, as showing how a high sacramentarian maintained the common privilege of the assurance of faith. They may well close our slight references to the Roman Catholic view of the subject generally. "Doubtless, says the Apostle (Phil. iii. 8), I have counted all things loss, and I do judge them to be dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith. Whether they [the Romish divines] speak of the first or second justification, they make the essence of it a Divine quality inherent,—they make it righteousness which is in us. If it be in us, then it is ours, as our souls are ours, though we have them from God, and can hold them no longer than pleaseth Him. But the righteousness wherein we must be found, if we will be justified, is not our own; therefore we cannot be justified by any inherent quality. Christ hath merited righteousness for as many as are found in Him. In Him God findeth us, if we be faithful; for by faith, we are incorporated into Him. Then, although in ourselves we be altogether sinful and unrighteous, yet even the man which in himself is impious, full of iniquity, full of sin, him, being found in Christ through faith, and having his sin in hatred through repentance, him God beholdeth with a gracious eye, putteth away his sin by not imputing it, taketh quite away the punishment due thereunto, by pardoning it; and accepteth him in Jesus Christ, as perfectly righteous, as if he had fulfilled all that is commanded him in the law. Shall I say more perfectly righteous than if himself had fulfilled the whole law? I must take heed what I say; but the Apostle saith, God made Him which knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him! Such

we are in the sight of God the Father, as is the very Son of God Himself. **Let it be counted folly, or phrensy, or fury, or whatsoever.** It is our wisdom, and our comfort; we care for no knowledge in the world but this,—that man hath sinned, and God hath suffered; that God hath made Himself the sin of men, and that men are made the Righteousness of God."

PROTESTANT DOCTRINE.

The teaching of the Reformation on this subject underwent many changes and passed through many phases. It is not possible, nor is it necessary, to trace the process here. It will be enough to give the result, as shown: first, in the common protest against ancient error; secondly, in the difference gradually established between the Lutherans and the Reformed; this leading finally to the Remonstrant or Arminian mediation between them.

Protest-  
antism

1. The first Reformers regarded justification **by faith** as the central question in their gigantic assault upon corrupt Christendom: induced proximately by the abuse of Indulgences, and ultimately by the fervent study of St. Paul's doctrine of Righteousness. They made this the starting point of all controversy, and relied upon its settlement for the removal of every abuse. Si in unum conferantur omnia scandala, tamen unus articulus de remissione peccatorum, quod propter Christum gratis consequamur remissionem peccatorum per fidem, tantum affert boni ut omnia incommoda obruat. Hence in the Smalkald Articles all the individual errors of Romanism are measured and estimated in their relation to this; and its restoration is regarded as the pledge of universal amendment. The great points which were gradually cleared in Luther's mind, and formulated by Melancthon, were these: that the righteousness of Christ is the sole ground of our acceptance, and not any past, present, or future works of our own, emphasis being laid on the future; that justification is the forgiveness of sins, which must precede love to God, being therefore forensic and not physical, an act of God for man and not an act of God in man; that faith does not itself justify, having no virtue of its own, but that it is the instrument of appropriating the merit of Christ. The following clauses from the Formula Con-

Re-  
formers.

Apol. 28,  
23.

FORG.  
CONE. iii.

cordiæ (1581) express the common doctrine of the Reformers; and at the same time condemn certain errors that had crept in among themselves: such as that of Osiander, who taught that Christ in His Divine nature is our Righteousness, He dwelling in us and His indwelling Divine righteousness being imputed to us as our own; and that of Stancarus, who regarded Christ as mediator only in His human nature, the righteousness of which is imputed to us; and that of others who began to dwell too much on the distinct imputation of Christ's active obedience. "(1.) Our righteousness is the whole Christ according to both natures in His sole obedience, which He as God and man offered to the Father even to the most absolute death; and by it merited for us the remission of sins and eternal life. (2.) This is before God our righteousness that He remits our sins of mere grace, without any respect to past, present, or future works. He imputes to us the righteousness of the obedience of Christ; on account of that righteousness we are received by God into favour and reputed just. (3.) Faith alone is that medium and instrument by which we apprehend Christ. (4.) The word Justification in this Article signifies the same as being absolved from sins. (5.) Although antecedent contrition and subsequent new obedience do not belong to the article of Justification before God, justifying faith must not be imagined to be capable of consisting with any evil purpose, such as that of continuing in sin and acting in opposition to conscience."

Luther-  
anism and  
Reformed.  
Calvin.

2. By degrees the difference between the Lutheran divines and the Reformed began to appear and take definite form.

(1.) The Predestinarianism of Calvin and his followers affected at many points their doctrine of Justification as only the expression in time of an eternal decree. The distinction between Righteousness and Regeneration was maintained; but both were made to spring together from the one act of the Holy Spirit in the bestowment of the gift of faith. Hence Justification became an eternal and unchangeable act, the investiture of the regenerate, in virtue of their union with Christ, with His righteousness active and passive: passive, for the removal of the sentence of death; active, for their reinstatement in the privileges of righteousness. Justification was at once an external act (*actus forensis*) and the

imputation of Another's righteousness (*imputatio justitiæ Christi*). Calvin's own teaching may be summed up in two sentences: *Sicut non potest discerpi Christus in partes, ita inseparabiles esse hæc duo, quæ simul et conjunctim in Ipso percipimus, justitiam et sanctificationem.* But before this we read: *Justificationem in peccatorum remissione ac justitiæ Christi imputatione positam esse dicimus.*

*Instit. iii.  
11. 5, 2.*

(2.) The Lutheran divines at first tended the same way. Hollaz, for instance, betrays a certain indistinctness which long affected the dogmatic divines who took up Luther's work: *Justificatio distinguitur in primam et continuatam. Illa est actus gratiæ, quæ Deus, judex justissimus et misericordissimus, homini peccatori, culpæ et pœnæ reo sed converso et renato, ex mera misericordia propter satisfactionem et meritum Christi, vera fide apprehensum, peccata remittit et justitiam Christi imputat, ut, in filium Dei adoptatus, hæres sit vitæ æternæ.* Here there is the same priority of regeneration, and the sinner is supposed to have the new life in Christ before the mercy of the Atonement is applied in the forgiveness of sins. By degrees the two correlative sides of the one justification were adopted instead: negative, in the non-imputation of guilt, corresponding with the passive obedience of Christ as having paid the penalty; positive, in the imputation of righteousness, corresponding with His active obedience as belonging to the believer in the mutual transfer of relations between the Lord and man. But these were distinguished "*non secundum rem sed secundum rationem*:" not as distinct in fact, but distinct only in the order of thought. Others made justification the remission of sins on the ground of a previous imputation of Christ's righteousness, which preserves one consistency at the expense of another. But, rejecting the doctrine of election, and holding a higher theory of sacramental efficacy, Lutheranism gradually departed further from Calvinism. It admitted that justification might be lost, and found again, and finally lost; that it is a state, as well as an act; and a state out of which a man may fall. It gave a more important function to good works. Denying, against the Romanists, that there can be any opera supererogationis, or merits acquired by obeying the counsels of perfection, it also denied, against the Calvinists, or rather the Antinomians, that good works have abso-

VOL. II.—29

lutely nothing to do and are not regarded in the sinner's present and final acceptance. There is a way of holding the imputation of Christ's righteousness, active and passive, which makes it very hard to give a good account of the relation of good works to salvation. There was originally and there has always been much fluctuation and much embarrassment on this subject. Antinomianism was an outgrowth of Lutheranism, and the Form. Conc. condemned Agricola's doctrine by establishing a triple use of the law; *pædagogicus*, for conversion; *politicus*, for society; *didacticus*, for the believer. And it laid down that good works are necessary, not in the sense of being enforced, but as testimonies of the presence of the Spirit.

#### ARMINIAN OR REMONSTRANT DOCTRINE.

**Arminian.** Arminianism was in its doctrine of the Atonement a mediation between Socinianism and the Anselmic teaching as revived at the Reformation; and in that of righteousness a mediation between the later Lutherans and the Reformed. Its firm maintenance of universal redemption affected its theory of justification at all points. Generally faithful to the truth, it held some peculiarities which lead to error. But it must be remembered that Arminianism gradually declined from its first integrity; and that it does not now represent any fixed standard of confession.

**Justification in its Causes.** I. The Remonstrants held that Christ's obedience is the sole ground of justification, the only meritorious cause; that faith is the sole instrumental cause; that good works can never have any kind of merit: all this in common with the other Reformers.

**Works, ii. 116.** 1. Arminius himself gives this definition: "Justification is a just and gracious act of God by which, from the throne of His grace and mercy, He absolves from his sins man, who is a sinner but who is a believer, on account of Christ, and His obedience and righteousness, and considers him righteous to the salvation of the justified person, and to the glory of Divine righteousness and grace." "The meritorious cause of justification is Christ through His obedience and righteousness. . . . He is the material cause of our justification, so far as God bestows Christ on us for righteousness, and imputes His righteousness and obedience to us. In regard to this twofold cause, the meritorious and the material, we



are said to be constituted righteous through the obedience of Christ." But both Arminius and his followers declined to admit any distinction between the active and the passive obedience. In fact, they gradually denied altogether the direct imputation of Christ's righteousness. While denying that works, whether legal or evangelical, merit salvation, they asserted that the faith which justifies is regarded by God as a *fides obsequiosa* or *assensus fiducialis*, a faith which includes obedience. The Remonstrant Confession says: *In ipsum Christum ad salutem a Deo nobis ex pura gratia datum toti recumbimus. Itaque ad fidem veram et salvificam non sufficit sola notitia, neque assensus, sed requiritur omnino firmus et solidus voluntatisque deliberatæ imperio roboratus, denique fiducialis et obsequiosus assensus, qui et fiducia dicitur.* No exception can be taken to this statement, which seems to unite the best of the Lutheran and Calvinistic points. But the following words of Limborch reveal the secret of weakness in the later Arminian doctrine: *Sed fides est conditio in nobis et a nobis requisita, ut justificationem consequamur. Est itaque talis actus, qui licet in se spectatus perfectus nequaquam sit, sed in multis deficiens, tamen a Deo gratiosa et liberrima voluntate pro pleno et perfecto acceptatur et propter quem Deus homini gratiose remissionem peccatorum et vitæ æternæ præmium conferre vult.* All this is only partially true. God requires faith, but it is also His gift. He does, for Christ's sake, pardon the imperfection of the good work wrought by faith, which is faith itself; but he does not repute it as perfect so far as concerns our justification. This is the imputation of righteousness to the believer himself: not to the work of faith. The faith of the ungodly is reckoned for righteousness even before it can produce its first act.

2. It would not be difficult to show that there is a strong resemblance here to the Romanist error: the faith is informed and clothed with the works of love which, though imperfect, are accepted and rewarded under the provisions of a new and reduced law of righteousness. That God does accept the righteousness which He works in us as perfect for Christ's sake is undoubtedly true, but it is not on account of this inwrought righteousness that He accepts the sanctified believer. The faith that looks at the

Conf.  
Rem.,  
xi. 1.

Theol.  
Chr. vi.  
4, 22.

Armini-  
anism and  
Roman-  
ism.

- finished work of Christ cannot rely on the finished work itself accomplished within. "An act of faith ON ACCOUNT OF WHICH, PROPTER QUEM, God graciously confers the remission of sins and the reward of eternal life" cannot be true: it is at least very inexact and dangerous language. Other extracts may be translated to make this still plainer: "It is to be remembered that, when we say we are justified by faith, we do not exclude works which faith requires and as a fruitful mother produces, but include them." "Justification is the gracious estimation or rather acceptance of our imperfect righteousness (which, if God were rigid, could not stand in His judgment) on account of Jesus Christ." All that is here said, and much more to the same effect might be added, is true of the interior righteousness which God makes and accepts, as perfect; but it has nothing to do with that supreme justification, or imputation of righteousness to the believer trusting in Christ, which precedes, which accompanies and enfolds and surrounds, and which will finally seal and accept that interior righteousness.
- Theol. Chr. vi. 4, 32.** **vi. 4, 18.** II. The Arminian type of theology has been sometimes termed NEONOMIANISM, because of its supposed introduction of a new law, the law of grace, according to which the legal righteousness for ever impossible to man is substituted by an Evangelical Righteousness accepted of God, though imperfect, for Christ's sake. There is a method of stating this that renders it harmless. But no student of Antinomianism can fail to see how perilous is the notion that Christ has lowered the demands of the law. We are taught by St. Paul that THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW is to be FULFILLED IN US. The English Arminians who are charged with this corruption of the doctrine of justification are unjustly charged. If they assert that God accepts the imperfect obedience which believers can render in lieu of the perfect obedience required of Adam, they do not intend thereby to assert that that obedience is the ground of their acceptance in any sense, certainly not as apart from the finished active and passive righteousness of Christ to which they look for the one justification unto life. But all such charges carry us into another doctrine: that of the Entire Sanctification or Christian Perfection which is maintained by some of them, especially the Methodists.
- Neonomianism.** **Rom. viii. 3.**

Neonomianism, as rightly understood, is only Antinomianism in disguise.

III. This leads to some brief consideration of the specific views of METHODISM, as generally classed with Arminians, in their relation to this subject. Its doctrine of justification is dependent on its doctrine of the Atonement, which it regards as an oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.

Methodism.

1. Generally, the Methodist teaching is that of the Anglican Article on Justification: "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," as that is followed by the Article on Good Works: "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; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit."

Anglican Article.

2. Although Methodism lays most stress, after the example of the Apostles, on the forgiveness of sins, or the remission of their penalty, or their non-imputation, it does not, however, forget that Justification is strictly speaking more than mere forgiveness. One of its earliest statements was: "To be justified is to be pardoned and received into God's favour; into such a state that, if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved." Its Catechism thus defines: "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the sake of Christ." And Mr. Wesley also lays the stress on Pardon: "the plain, scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins. It is that act of God the Father whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of His Son, He sheweth forth His righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of sins that are past." But later writings of Mr. Wesley show that he was afterwards disposed to lay more stress on the positive side of justification. And some of its latest and best definitions do full justice to both. Dr. Bunting is a remarkable evidence of this: "To justify a sinner is to account and consider him relatively righteous, and to deal

Pardon and Justification.

Min. Conf. 1744.

Conf. Cat.

Serm. v.

Serm. on Justif.

with him as such, notwithstanding his past actual unrighteousness; by clearing, absolving, discharging, and releasing him from various penal evils, and especially from the wrath of God, and the liability to eternal death, which, by that past unrighteousness, he had deserved, and by accepting him as just, and admitting him to the state, the privileges and the rewards of righteousness."

Theol.  
Lect. Just.

Dr. Hannah is still more explicit, if we mark the word EMBRACE: "Justification is that act of God, viewed as our righteous and yet merciful Judge, by which, for the sake of the satisfaction and merits of Christ, embraced and applied to the heart by faith, He discharges the criminal at the bar, and treats him as a just person, in full accordance with the untarnished holiness of His own nature, and the inviolable rectitude of His administrations." He further says that, for the reason assigned in the last words, Justification may be considered as a stronger term than pardon or forgiveness. The merits of Christ are embraced, and the satisfaction of Christ applied, in this sound definition: explicitly connecting the merit of Christ with the faith of the penitent.

Imputa-  
tion of  
Right-  
eousness.

3. Between this, however, and the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness, especially His active righteousness, to the believer as his own, there is a great interval. **Methodism has always maintained a firm protest against the distinct imputation of the active obedience of the Substitute of man; but has been reluctant to give up altogether the thought of an imputation of Christ's righteousness generally.** The following words of Mr. Wesley, confirmed by hymns which the Methodists delight to sing, will carry back this instinctive vacillation to an early period: "As the active and passive righteousness of Christ were never in fact separated from each other, so we never need separate them at all. It is with regard to these conjointly that Jesus is called 'the Lord our Righteousness.' But when is this righteousness imputed? When they believe; in that very hour the righteousness of Christ is theirs; it is imputed to everyone that believes, as soon as he believes. But in what sense is this righteousness imputed to believers? In this; all believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of anything in them, or of anything that ever was, that is, or ever can be done by them, but wholly for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for them. But perhaps some

will affirm that faith is imputed to us for righteousness. St. Paul affirms this, therefore I affirm it too. Faith is imputed for righteousness to every believer, namely, faith in the righteousness of Christ; but this is exactly the same thing which has been said before; for by that expression I mean neither more nor less than that we are justified by faith, not by works; or that every believer is forgiven and accepted merely for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered."

4. This is only the echo of the words of Goodwin: "If we take the phrase of imputing Christ's righteousness improperly, namely, for the bestowing, as it were, the righteousness of Christ, including His obedience as well passive as active in the return of it, that is, in the privileges, blessings, and benefits purchased by it, so a believer may be said to be justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed. But then the meaning can be no more than this: God justifies a believer for the sake of Christ's righteousness, and not for any righteousness of his own. Such an imputation of the righteousness of Christ as this is no way denied or questioned." Here Mr. Watson remarks: "With Calvin the notion seems to be, that the righteousness of Christ, that is, His entire obedience to the will of His Father, both in doing and suffering, is, upon our believing, imputed, or accounted to us, or accepted for us, 'as though it were our own.' From which we may conclude that he admitted some kind of transfer of the righteousness of Christ to our account; and that believers are considered so to be in Christ, as that He should answer for them in law, and plead His righteousness in default of theirs. All this, we grant, is capable of being interpreted in a good and scriptural sense; but it is also capable of a contrary one." **It is the antinomian abuse that has made the doctrine suspicious.** But we must be on our guard against surrendering precious truths, merely because they have been perverted. So long as we hear the Apostle's trust as to the past, *I am crucified with Christ*, and his present experience and hope for the future of being FOUND IN CHRIST, NOT HAVING MINE OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, **we must be cautious how we recoil from the imputation of the Righteousness of Christ.** To this it must in some sense come at last; for, even when our own conformity to the law is raised to the highest

On Justification.

Inst. xi. 191.

Gal. ii. 20.  
Phil. iii. 9.

perfection Heaven can demand, we must in respect to the demand of righteousness upon our whole history and character be FOUND IN CHRIST, or be lost. But the language of Scripture should be adhered to in every statement on such a subject. **The inspired writers use almost every possible variation of phrase, save that the righteousness of Christ is reckoned to believers,** or, in the words of the Westminster Confession, "imputing the righteousness and satisfaction of Christ unto them." **However nearly the assimilation, or union, or identification with Christ, may be approached, there is a shade of interval which forbids the use of such language as is so freely used by many.** This question, however, and others closely connected with it, will recur in the next sections of Administered Redemption.

Modern  
Errors.

MODERN ERRORS.

There is scarcely an error concerning the sinner's acceptance with God that has not its modern representative; nor is there a modern error the germs of which have not already been noted as traceable in antiquity.

Socinian-  
ism.

I. The older Socinianism, rejecting the Divinity and vicarious atonement of the Redeemer, regarded the Deity as a Being acting above and independently of law, and as remitting the penalties of sin on condition of faith, which is viewed as obedience. Socinus made free use of the terminology of the New Testament in his definitions, one of which well deserves study. "Faith therefore in Christ by which we are justified, although it embraces and signifies the obedience which in hope of eternal life we pay, and therefore shows itself in work, yet is opposed to works inasmuch as it does not in itself contain a perpetual and most absolute observance of Divine precepts, nor justifies by its own virtue, but on account of the clemency of God, who regards those that perform this work of faith, as Christ Himself calls it, as righteous, and in His own incomparable benignity condescends to impute to those before unjust the righteousness which He requires." Modern Unitarianism, which may be called Rationalism, holds the same general idea of the Divine toleration of man's infirmity, and of the energy of an earnest faith in the possibility of amendment.

De Ch.  
Serv. iv  
11.

We may see the issue in the following words of Wegscheider, a high authority: "Not by any individual good acts done, nor by any merit whatever, but only by true faith, that is, by a mind ordered after the pattern of Christ and His precepts; and thus turned to God, piously referring all its thoughts and deeds to Him and His most holy will, are men approved to God. And trusting to the Divine benevolence, which Christ in His suffering of death has wonderfully confirmed, they are filled with the hope of future blessedness to be accorded to them according to their own moral dignity." Or as another high authority, Stæudlin, says: "All true amendment and every right act must spring from faith, when we understand by it the conviction that anything is right, the assurance of certain great moral and religious principles." Some of the noblest testimonies ever given to the virtue and energy and potentiality of strong faith in the good are to be found among Deists who reject that revelation of God in Christ which is to man the eternal warrant and energy of belief. But the faith to which Scripture ascribes such wonders is faith in God, with all His attributes of justice and mercy, as they have their highest manifestation in the work of Jesus.

Dogma  
417.

II. Within almost all the more orthodox communities of Christendom there is observable a strong partiality towards a view of justification that regards it as the expression of the Divine complacency resting on the soul in which the Incarnate Son is formed. It may indeed be said that almost every error on the subject is more or less a variation upon this.

Christ  
Within.

1. It is in reality the error of a certain type of teaching in Romanism and the Greek Church: so far, that is, as concerns the simple doctrine of Justification itself, apart from its relations with the Sacrament of Penance. The *FIDES FORMATA* brings Jesus into the soul, and the growing holiness which His presence insures in the progressive justification of the believer. There are treatises in which devout Romanists have discussed the doctrine—sometimes under the very title "*De Gratia Sanctificante*"—in a manner almost unexceptionable, if the subject were *Regeneration and Renewal, or the Inward Life of Holiness*.

Roman-  
ism.

2. It is virtually the view of all those diversified Latitudinarians,—within and without the Anglican Establishment, on both

Latitudi-  
narians.



sides of the Atlantic, and over the Continent of Europe, save among the consistent Calvinistic or Reformed Communions,—who reject the doctrine of God reconciled to man through a propitiation. The presence of Christ in humanity is the reconciliation of the race to God according to this modern Gospel; and the ministry of reconciliation is only the announcement of a fact which all men are already interested in, or of a privilege that all men already possess. This particular error will find its more appropriate place when we look at the history of the doctrine of regeneration. Meanwhile, it is enough to mention that such a revolt against the doctrine of CHRIST FOR US, as combined with CHRIST IN US, is spreading rapidly and must be earnestly repelled. Schleiermacher's influence has given it much currency in Germany, where many otherwise orthodox theologians accept his notion that "believers are taken up into a life-fellowship with Christ, Who has introduced a new relation of man to God," omitting all reference to the new relation of God to man. But there is discernible a strong reaction in favour of the old doctrine of the Reformation, as was shown by the general condemnation with which Hengstenberg's theory of a progressive justification based upon the indwelling of love was encountered. Martensen, in his popular Dogmatics, seems to regard Justifying faith as an ethical principle: "In His merciful view God sees in the seedcorn the future fruit of salvation, in the pure will the realized idea of freedom."

Mysti-  
cism.

3. Mysticism of every type, including those which are most Evangelical in devotion to Christ and the fruits of holiness, has been governed by this error, though in its most attractive form. The Apology of Barclay exhibits its influence on the theology of the Society of Friends; but it is wrong to class the Quakers among those who utterly reject the benefit of an external atonement. This will appear from the following quotation, which shows the good and the evil of their views: "Although we place remission of sins in the Righteousness and Obedience of Christ, performed by Him in the flesh, as to what pertains to the remote procuring cause, and that we hold ourselves formally justified by Jesus Christ formed and brought forth in us, yet can we not, as some Protestants have unwarily done, exclude works from justification."

Barclay  
Apol.  
vii. 3.

For, though properly we be not justified *for* them, yet we are justified *in* them; and they are necessary, even as *causa sine qua non*. . . . Though they be not meritorious, and draw no debt upon God, yet He cannot but accept and reward them. For it is contrary to His nature to deny His own; since they may be perfect in their kind, as proceeding from a pure, holy birth and root." The infection of the thought that the INDWELLING CHRIST is the formal cause of our justification pervades a large portion of the ascetic and devotional theology of all ages of the Christian Church. It cannot be doubted that the mystical union with the Saviour does in much of this literature virtually include dependence on His work as an external atonement. Of that the reader must often feel quite assured. And it is only Christian charity to think that the Lord is in some cases not strict to mark the offence of narrowing unduly the Imputation and benefit of His Righteousness as an objective provision for deliverance from guilt. There are very many who in words reject the double formula of CHRIST FOR US and CHRIST IN US, but nevertheless embrace it in fact with all their hearts. But, whether accepted or rejected, it is the final truth on the whole subject of CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Christ is  
Us, and  
for Us.