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The Westminster confession
of faith examined on the

THE
WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH
EXAMINED
ON
THE BASIS OF THE
OTHER PROTESTANT CONFSSIONS.

BY
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“The fool putteth to more force ; the wise man considereth which way.”

SOLOMON, *as quoted by* BACON.

IN MEMORIAM

JOHANNI GOODSIR,

CULTORI DEI OPERUMQUE DEI INTERPRETI,

OPUS HOC,

INSTAURATUM CONSILIO EJUS SEMPER PROMPTO ATQUE

EJUS BENEFICENTIA PERENNI EXACTUM,

AUCTOR.

MERORE ICTUS FRATERNI SPE ATTAMEN CHRISTIANA SANATUS,

DICAVIT.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

THE body of this work contains, besides the explanation and proof of the propositions prefixed to it, the explanation and proof at large of certain statements made in a treatise published by the author in 1866, under the title 'The Biblical and Patristic doctrine of Salvation.'

The propositions prefixed to this work were first sketched in 1855, to be laid before the Session of St. Giles's Church, Edinburgh. The author deemed himself fully justified in resolving to take this step, by certain circumstances stated in detail in the first Appendix,* which rendered it still more necessary for the vindication of Christian truth, than of his own rights as a Christian and citizen; though he deemed the latter to have been grossly outraged. For the author had been flatly refused by the Courts of the Established Church any explanation as to how they continued to maintain as Scriptural, and therefore authoritative, Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession of Faith, in the face of ample testimony that it is flatly contradicted by the teaching of the Greek New Testa-

* See Appendix I.

ment. All satisfaction on this subject was refused him after years spent in most laborious and painful efforts to procure it, as the Petition printed in the Appendix already referred to truly shows. Though thus cruelly balked of his right, he never faltered, but rather resolved at once to take a course the exact converse of that previously pursued by him. He had previously been induced by a feeling of modesty to refrain from saying in express terms, on the strength of the conclusions already reached by him, that the Westminster Confession of Faith is grossly erroneous and heretical; and from giving at the same time his reasons for saying this. Indeed, the real and complete character of the Confession in this respect was only disclosed gradually to his own mind. A deep-seated and most earnest longing also influenced him from the time he first challenged the Standards, and through all his weary petitioning of the Ecclesiastical Courts, down to the time of the summary rejection of his last Petition by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in 1855, that an accommodation which he could honorably accept might be effected. But at this time the last shred of hope was torn from him by the style in which his petition was rejected. Nevertheless, he was still nerved with the firm conviction that he had God's eternal truth on his side, that he was

contending for it against gross and pernicious error, and that at least one other course lay open for him to try before he should despair of seeing a space cleared on the platform of a purified and catholic Established Church, for the untrammelled promulgation of the Truth as taught in the "originally inspired Scriptures." This was to express articulately and fully the nature and extent of the error in the Standards, and to lay this statement before the Courts of the Church.

Many things experienced and observed by the author induced him to adopt this course, the exact converse of that hitherto followed by him. Thus he felt convinced that the full enormity of the system of doctrine to which they were bound was not seen nor felt even by those who, he knew, held by as small a part of it as they conveniently could. He felt convinced that the freedom which such parties deemed themselves put into lawful possession of, especially by the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722, to preach exactly such a pure and Catholic doctrine as was taught for example by Whichcote, Bull, and Butler, was utterly illusory, because utterly precluded by the Westminster Standards themselves: for the Westminster formularies were expressly framed to exclude such doctrine as much as that formulised in the Tridentine Decrees, and to enforce their

own Lutherano-Calvinistic dogmas. But not until he had advanced a considerable way in this work did the thorough correctness of these views appear. This fact was disclosed to him fully when the real meaning of the Thirty-nine Articles was explained to him by the commentary on them contained in the Confession of Knox. This Confession he had never had the opportunity of studying carefully till this time ; and in his ignorance he had always deemed it merely the first edition of the Westminster Confession, instead of the Catholic Creed it really is (always excepting its dogma as to the baptism of unconscious babes*). But now, through it and the Thirty-nine Articles, he was enabled to see the real type of doctrine intended to be authorised by the rulers of the country at the time of the Reformation. Hence also he began to comprehend how monstrous a perversion of the Truth had been introduced into the country at the time of the so-called "second Reformation," under the pretence of its being what Knox or Cranmer and Ridley had contended for ; while it was in reality quite contrary to that.

The doctrine of this "second Reformation," so far from being that of Knox, was not even the germinal Lutheranism of the Augsburg Con-

* See 'The Biblical and Patristic Doctrine of Salvation,' vol. i, Book II, ch. 1 and 3.

fession, but a fully developed Lutherano-Calvinism. Step by step the progress of this erroneous form of doctrine from its germ in the Augsburg Confession to its full development in the Westminster Formularies was traced by him, till he saw in the light of clearest demonstration that clergy and country had come to be bound down by a perfectly articulate and finished system of heresy respecting the central practical doctrines of Christianity. But what cost him most trouble was the solution of the question: In what consists the ultimate Antinomian principle of this perfected Lutherano-Calvinism? The answer to this question was at last reached by seeing that this erroneous principle consists in adding the false element of mere externality to the true element of gratuitousness in the Justification or Salvation of sinners. Heretofore, those convinced that error of some kind exists in the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Salvation, have been fain to think that it lies in insisting on the element of absolute gratuitousness. But to maintain that this was wrong was to advance to inevitable defeat; since Justification or Salvation is undeniably gratuitous according to the Scriptures. But the true way to discover and overcome the error is to advance on the side which declares the mere externality and imputativeness of Justification or Salvation. But it

was long before the author saw this as a matter of principle, and systematically. And the thing would in all likelihood have still remained hidden from him had he not been prepared by the exegetical knowledge previously acquired to give the idea a right reception when it presented itself. For when he once saw clearly that mere imputation or externality + absolute gratuitousness = Antinomianism; then, knowing on exegetical grounds that mere imputation or externality is false, or a half-truth, he had just to state the matter thus: The internal elements + the external or imputative elements of Redemption = Justification or Salvation = the Law magnified and made honorable, man saved, and God glorified.

This work, then, contains the complete history of the rise, development, and completion of the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation, of which only a summary statement, depending on this work for its verification, was made in "The Biblical and Patristic Doctrine of Salvation."* But it also contains (as has been already hinted at) the analysis of the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine, and a refutation of that doctrine. The argument on which this refutation is based, viewed independently, is conclusive and

* 'The Biblical and Patristic Doctrine of Salvation,' vol. i, p. 148, § 8.

sufficient. Relatively, however, it is, and professes to be, only presumptive and provisional. It was always intended to be such. Its object was to lay conclusive proof before the Courts of the Church to the effect that the authorised doctrine of Salvation is *egregiously* erroneous; and to explain at once the nature of its errors, and the cause whence they spring. This accomplished, then there should follow the work of bringing the Standards to the test of the Original Scriptures, and of thence proving how error had originated, how it could be corrected, and how, as the result of such correction, a convincing because harmonious and symmetrical form of doctrine comes into view. But this has now been done in the work already referred to. And not only is this result reached by means of an investigation of the actual teaching of the Original Scriptures; but also by reference to the sense deduced from Holy Scripture by such writers as Chrysostom, who were explaining their native tongue when commenting on the Greek New Testament.

It now only remains to state the reasons that have prevented the author from carrying out his first intention respecting the use of the propositions prefixed to this work, and respecting the work itself.

A feeling of insecurity as to the validness and

safety of the most common Protestant ground he had taken upon the subject of Baptism, on resigning his office as a Clergyman of the Established Church of Scotland in terms of a Statement laid before a Committee of the Presbytery of St. Andrew's, had troubled him more or less from the time he took that step. But that feeling became intensified a thousand-fold as he advanced in the composition of this work. For he then began to see clearly and to estimate correctly the indescribable importance of the consequences indissolubly linked with the view of Baptism taken along with the catholic doctrine of Justification or Salvation. For to maintain as valid the most commonly received Protestant view that the unconscious babes of Christians must be baptised, and to exchange at the same time the Lutherano-Calvinistic view of Justification or Salvation as being erroneous and heretical, for the Scriptural and Catholic doctrine (not Catholic because Roman, but because generally maintained in ante-Papal times, and afterwards in the Eastern as well as in the Western or Latin Church on the authority of Scripture) must entail disastrous consequences on Protestantism. He saw, and felt thoroughly convinced that, in this case, all that is really good in Protestantism might be damaged, by the whole being deprived of what had been

esteemed its doctrinal safeguard against the attacks both of embryotic Romanists and of fully-developed Popery. Hence the weakness and failure of movements made in the past for the correction of Protestant errors by Grotius and others.

There thus came to be involved in the course pursued by the author while at first engaged in this work, as important consequences touching the constitution and government of the Church, as any of those consequences touching Christian doctrine and morality which are shown in this work to flow from an initial error in the doctrine of Salvation in the Augsburg Confession. He saw that if, in the course he followed, one most mischievous error should be corrected, he might nevertheless be plunging himself and enticing others to plunge into as great errors of another kind. And while the perception of all this was becoming daily, or rather by sudden accesses, more vivid and unavoidable, so was a series of Providential occurrences and spiritual experiences, of which he began to become deeply conscious soon after entering on an independent course, enveloping him gradually in an atmosphere of darkness and leading him into regions of danger. He fought for long against the conviction of this, first in the spirit of Positivism which by

its false understanding of Law denies the interference of God; and next in the spirit of pure pride and obstinacy. But he was at last overcome and thoroughly prostrated by an unexpected combination of difficulties and dangers in the autumn of 1856, after he had written the first two parts of the work, and printed it as far as the fifteenth sheet. An utterly unforeseen set of dangers encountered unexpectedly threw him, while exhausted in mind and body by work and anxiety, into an illness which almost cut short his days. But he confidently believes the mere human hostility he encountered at this time could never have produced what he suffered, had God not been making him feel unmistakably that He was fighting against him also, for reasons that were becoming more and more manifest. Still, notwithstanding all that had occurred, he resumed work on his recovery, so that towards the middle of 1858 the work was printed as far as the twenty-second sheet, and was all written except the closing Section, that touching the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722. While thus employed, he was again struck down exactly as before.

He now at last felt completely arrested in his course. He accordingly determined to withhold all action in his previous course; and to give himself entirely to a reverent study of the whole

subject of the so-called Sacraments—that is, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, both in their connection with Justification or Salvation, that centre of all practical doctrine, and in their connection with Ecclesiastical Polity. The Divine goodness supplied time, security and peace while he gave himself to these inquiries. In a manner too that often surprised him, and which fills him still with thankfulness, books were supplied from quite unexpected quarters which materially facilitated his labours, or rather opened up to him new regions of thought, and new vistas into the past as well as the future. A thick darkness—even a horrible spiritual gloom—in which he had been plunged began to pass away, and sun-lighted paths leading to safe and pleasant regions were disclosed to his view. For having at last ascertained, as he firmly believes, from Scripture and history the true state of the question as to Baptism, he began to see that in this very institution, observed in accordance with Christ's appointment, exists the true security against the corruptions and superstitions in the Eastern, but especially in the Western Church, which had heretofore been sought erroneously in the mistaken Lutherano-Calvinistic tenets as to Justification or Salvation. The conclusions thus reached are set forth summarily in the work already referred to, 'The Biblical and

Patristic Doctrine of Salvation.' It may here also be again stated, that in the earlier work is given that mode of interpreting the original Scriptures, so frequently alluded to in this work, as leading to a symmetrical form of doctrine which differs widely from the contradictory Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine.

The author hopes he will be permitted to say here, in a word, that he states the somewhat personal details contained in this Introduction both because convinced they are to a certain extent needed to justify the form this work has assumed; and because he believes that, having acted the part of a traveller and pioneer in certain regions of the spiritual world, his record of what he has seen and experienced may be useful to others.

It only remains to be added that, having dropped the intention of carrying his impugnement of the Standards before the Courts of the Church, when he determined to pause in his original course of procedure, he now feels justified by very sufficient reasons in not renewing, at least at present, that line of action. Apart from other considerations, he feels warranted in this by keeping in view the fact that the position of the members of these Courts renders it absurd to appeal to them with the voice of argument. Like the hunters of the story, they are all completely

caged along with the lion of heresy in the Formularies framed to shut the lion out; and as well address a convincing or moving appeal to the imprisoned hunters as to them. In fact they must be helped themselves, they can neither help themselves nor others. Their cage must be taken down: this will destroy the power of the lion, set the prisoners free, and give the country some chance of learning the Truth. Woe betide the country committed spiritually to a set of tongue-tied men, if the country will not help either them or itself. But I have more faith in my fellow-countrymen than will allow me to despair. I believe the real state of things only needs to be known intimately enough, and widely enough, that the resolve to apply the remedy may be formed and acted on. To help in this work, I now appeal from the tongue-tied tribunals of the Church to the tribunal of public opinion in my native land. May the "God of hope" open a way for my appeal into the hearts of my free fellow-countrymen and fellow-subjects.

IMPUGNMENT

OF THE

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH.

I APPLIED, in circumstances imperatively commanding and fully justifying the step, to the Courts of the Church to “teach me how Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession of Faith, entitled Of Justification, is deducible from, and therefore reconcileable with, the teaching of the Greek New Testament,” but was formally refused satisfaction by the last General Assembly* as set forth in my present petition to you, the Court of the Church which is my constitutional overseer and guide.† In these circumstances, the next legitimate step is to state formally the grounds on which I feel utterly unable to acknowledge the aforesaid Chapter as Scriptural and Catholic in its statement of doctrine, but am obliged to impugn it as opposed to Scriptural and Catholic theology, in order that these grounds may be examined and

* See page V.

† See Appendix I.

corrected, or even condemned, if found to be erroneous ; but taken account of, and given force to, if found to be Scriptural, Catholic, and therefore imperatively binding.

First : I impugn Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession of Faith because it makes Justification or Salvation consist in purely external or extrinsic benefits, to the express and absolutely perfect exclusion of everything internal equally as an element and condition, contrary to the teaching of Scripture and Catholic theology, however consonant to extreme but erroneous religious opinions current in the seventeenth century when it was drawn up.

Secondly : I impugn it because it dislocates the arrangement and destroys the harmony of Divine truth, in order to make a place for itself and to defend that place ; and because it thereby causes revealed truth to wear an utterly confused and paradoxical character which no reasoning can clear up, instead of that luminous and convincing aspect which the truth of God invariably presents in every other department bearing on the religious and practical interests of mankind.

Thirdly : I impugn it because it embodies a system of theoretic Antinomianism developed to the last point of completeness, and secured by absolutely every available application of positive

affirmation and negationary assertion: a theoretical Antinomianism which neither the provisions of the Formularies themselves, nor (what is much more) the provisions of Scripture can remedy; for, independently of the provisions of the Formularies being mere stopgaps in the horrible schisms of truth, made by the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine, the perfected Antinomianism of that doctrine overrides and nullifies logically every injunction to Holiness, whether uttered by the Standards or by God's Word.

Fourthly: I impugn it because it not only misrepresents Scripture in its positive statements, and makes that misrepresentation paramount in authority, but because in addition it renders any legitimate and thorough cure of the evil impossible by its negative statements, which defend the positive ones by fixing down their supposed proofs to an erroneous sense, and by forbidding the deduction from them, or from the rest of Scripture of any conclusions, however correct in an absolute sense, which would militate against the integrity of the authorised doctrine.

Fifthly: I impugn, by way of corollary, the Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, passed in reference to the Formularies in the years 1720 and 1722, because while professing to explain the Formularies, if interpreted in

one way suggested by their language, they flatly contradict the Standards, and if interpreted another way, they both increase the confusion already introduced into the account of Christianity by the Standards, and also contradict the Standards themselves; and because they are a snare to consciences by making the doctrine of the Standards appear different from what it really is, and by pretending to afford liberty under a system of intellectual and moral bondage which they leave quite intact.

I ground the foregoing objections on the teaching of Scripture; and feel confidence in their soundness because, while originally led to entertain them by my own independent exertions, they have been corroborated by the writings of the most eminent Fathers of the Eastern and Western Churches, and by many of the most eminent theological writers in the Reformed Churches.

But as the proper time to urge these things is not yet arrived, I meantime embody in the appended explanatory and apologetic Note certain weighty and authoritative considerations drawn from Reformed formularies and from the history, involved in them, or illustrated by them, of this doctrine, and fitted to prove presumptively the correctness of my objections as well as the imperative

obligation binding on the Church to examine her Standards by “the Law and the Testimony,” and to act in accordance with the results of that examination.

(Signed) JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

S. COTTAGE, WARDIE, NEAR EDINBURGH ;

September 27th, 1867.

NOTE.

INTRODUCTION.

I. GRAVE objections to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms are definitively expressed in the propositions prefixed to this Note. *I. The object of this Note.*

The Westminster formularies prescribe the form of religious belief in Scotland. All office-bearers of the Scottish National Church are required, previous to their admission as teachers and rulers, to declare their belief in them, and to promise adherence to them, as well as the maintenance of them. Clergymen are bound by special promises and subscription, in terms of an exact formula, to avoid all opinions contrary to the Westminster formularies, and to maintain all their tenets. These Standards have, besides, always been the primary and ultimate arbiters, when office-bearers of the Church were to be tried in reference to matters of faith; and when cases of alleged heresy were to be judged.

The prefixed propositions express conclusions arrived at by comparing the Westminster formularies with Holy Writ. I am as firmly convinced of their

validity as of the soundness of the demonstration of the first proposition of Euclid. But I am quite aware that to insist on my own conviction would neither be consistent with correct argumentation nor coincident with the spirit and rules of form. It would be alike unsuitable to insist on the opinions of unbiassed and competent parties in reference to the exegetical basis of the propositions, when it was presented to them in an abstracted form, or without an application to the Westminster formularies. But, in truth, I do not desire assistance from anything informal, or from any other than the most legitimate sources. And I earnestly declare that, where the question lies between truth and error, my inclination is to give the latter all the advantage of form and precedent, even to the extent of my appearing as a person who had never adduced a single theological argument worthy of regard. For that will necessitate my more entire reliance on that Divine energy inherent in truth, which enables her always to vindicate her claims on attention by unfailling resources of proof and illustration. My experience vouches that this sentiment is real; and that to act on it is never futile. My conscience continues to tell me that it is not ignoble.

With reverence and gratitude I here acknowledge my unflinching trust in the Blessed Name which was more honoured by me than that of the Westminster Divines, when I freed myself six years ago from the clerical obligations to their Symbols. I have since been enabled by hope in that Name to stand by the

substance of my propositions ; and to hold that questions of faith are not logomachies, and that to affirm and deny of fundamental religious matters are not equivalent. With continued hope, I now purpose to demonstrate that the prefixed propositions demand the earnest attention of the Courts of the Church. And my sole prayer to the Author and Finisher of the Faith is : May He defend the Faith, and prosper the side which maintains it with most purity.

The nature of my petition to the Courts of the Church has suggested the propriety of employing other than the strictly Scriptural evidence in support of my objections to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. My prayer to the Courts of the Church is : To be permitted to support before them, on the ground of the Scriptures, my objections to the formularies. This prayer evidently renders it premature to adduce in this Note the proof directly drawn from the Bible. It necessitates, therefore, the resorting to other evidence of an appropriate character. An apparent disadvantage undoubtedly accompanies the necessity of thus falling back on other than the direct scriptural proof of my propositions. For any other proof, viewed in a strictly theoretical light, must be only presumptive as to the existence of the alleged errors in the Standards. The proof deduced from the Scriptures is alone direct and conclusive in all matters of Christian doctrine.

However, the disadvantage referred to is only apparent. A real advantage has been secured by my being compelled to turn aside for a time from the

direct and only infallible authority. The result has been, that I have procured remarkable and forcible evidence as to the existence in the Westminster formularies of the very errors, which my propositions express as they were learned by me from the Scriptures, and declared substantially six years ago. That evidence is fitted to indicate and illustrate the primary source of these errors; and to exhibit the mode of their gradual advance and widening influence, until they were fully developed by the Westminster Divines.

The basis of this proof exists in the Symbols and formularies of other Reformed and Protestant Churches. It can be constructed, too, purely from the materials supplied by them.

But before this can be explained, the Symbols referred to must be named; and some necessary remarks must be made in regard to them.

II. The Symbols from which proof of the prefixed propositions is to be drawn.

II. For reasons which shall be stated immediately, these formularies are arranged in the following four classes :

First: We have the earlier form of the Augsburg Confession framed in 1531, and its final form framed in 1540; and the Belgic Confession framed in 1561, and finally revised (but revised only, not altered) by the Synod of Dort in 1619. The former of these is the more important. It is, indeed, the most instructive and interesting Protestant Symbol of the Continent. Luther and Melancthon continue to utter in it their most studied and guarded convictions. The Belgic Con-

fession, on the other hand, is mentioned because it exemplifies in a technical form the Lutheran doctrine of Justification. Secondly: We have the Saxon Confession, written in 1561; the Helvetic, written in 1566; and the Gallic, which was submitted to Charles the Ninth in 1561, and published in 1566. Each of these supplies important data as to the progress and meaning of the doctrine to be examined. Thirdly: One formula only can be named; it is the Confession approved by the Assembly which was held at Aberdeen in 1616. Certain parts of this formulary bear very closely on the Westminster Confession of Faith. Fourthly: We have the Decrees of the Synod of Dort, as to Predestination and Grace, which were promulgated in 1619. Between these and the Westminster formularies, which were framed in 1646-7-8, a near relationship subsists. They belong to the same controversial epoch; but they are also congeners in the theological point of view. For, while neither the Belgic, nor any other Protestant Confession was affected by the Decrees, the latter certainly influenced in a powerful manner the work of the Westminster Divines. They supplied an authoritative basis of a fully formed doctrine as to Predestination and Grace after the Calvinistic model, and kept in countenance the doctrine of justification or salvation which was authorised at Westminster.

More Symbols agreeing exactly with the Augsburg Confession in respect of the tenets to be examined in this Note might have been named under the first of the above classes. However, it appeared needless to

mention documents some of which could not possibly be quoted and examined.

The order of succession of the above classes corresponds with considerable exactness to the order in time in which the Symbols composing them were framed. Indeed, there is only one marked exception to this, namely, the classing of the Belgic with the Augsburg Confession. But that is done, because these Symbols resemble each other in respect of the doctrine to be mainly considered in this Note. The only difference between them as to that point is, that the doctrine exists in a state of solution, so to speak, in the Augsburg Confession, while it is crystallized in the Belgic. It may be remarked, in addition, that the order of succession, while agreeing so closely with the order in time, is that also in which the Symbols must be employed to form the basis and supply the materials of the proposed proof.

In the above classification, the Articles of the Church of England and the Confession of John Knox have been omitted, though they will be much insisted on in the course of my remarks. The reason of this omission may be explained generally at present. Neither of these formularies was intended to embody those peculiarities in the doctrine of Justification or Salvation which are contained in the foregoing classes of Symbols. Ridley and Cranmer, with Knox, were, providentially, on their guard against committing their respective Churches to those peculiarities. The Symbols framed by them were both strictly reformed. Both authorised sufficient and certain correctives of

Papal errors. But both were, at the same time, stamped with genuine British moderation and wisdom. Their character in this respect appears more remarkable, when it is considered that they were drawn up and authorised in the middle period of the universal controversy induced by the reforming movement of the sixteenth century. The Articles of the Church of England were drawn up and first authorised in 1553, and they were re-authorised in 1563; and the Confession of John Knox having been nominally framed in 1560, was successively authorised in 1566 and 1581. Yet they presented no foothold on which Lutherans or Calvinists could stand in a commanding position, and constrain other parties to bend to their dictates. This quality of the primitive British formularies is exhibited clearly in the Confession of Knox; for being a Confession, it speaks fully of the principal doctrinal point of contention among Protestants.

My perfect conviction as to the Confession of Knox, grounded on proof to be hereafter adduced, is, that it differs in kind from all the Protestant Confessions of the continent; and infinitely transcends in value the entire body of them. It is of paramount worth and beauty in its texture, tenour, and scope. Rough it may sometimes be in its composition; but it is much oftener sublime. It is a noble spiritual hymn or psalm, poured out in the full fervency of that great man's soul. He had lived to put it in form and hear it read with the full approbation of the Parliament of his native land. Approved it could not but be; for it

is composed throughout only of the genuine, unblemished, and symmetrical truth which is taught by the Holy Spirit, "who is Unity, and in nothing contrarious to Himself." But it is a too sad historical truth, that the very excellence of this noble Symbol caused its ultimate rejection by parties who, being incompetent, as their deeds proved, to know its worth, preferred the dictates of Continental Calvinisers, in the most dreary and troubled age of Protestantism, to its truly British and peculiarly Scottish utterances. But the Creed of John Knox remains to speak for itself, in accents that pierce direct to the mind and heart.

It appears proper, at this point, to notice the formularies drawn up in the reign of Henry the Eighth. They deserve to be mentioned for various reasons. They are unique, so far as I know, among the formulistic records of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. England alone can exhibit, by a comparison of these formularies with the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Prayer Book, a graduated and constitutional transition from the Roman Catholic to the Catholic or Evangelical status. A very interesting analogy is also suggested by the formularies of Henry the Eighth. They illustrate that shaking and breaking up of the old state of things, which led gradually to a pure form of faith embodied in the existing formularies of England, just as some of the Continental Protestant formularies may be seen advancing from the comparatively simple principles embodied in the Augsburg Confession, until a full development of these principles was at last made by the Westminster Divines. But undoubtedly

the most important service rendered by the formularies of Henry the Eighth, is the evidence borne by them as to the wisdom and caution with which the Reformation was conducted, step by step, in England, and as to its thoroughness when it was completed in the reign of Elizabeth.

III. It deserves to be mentioned, in connection with the Reformed and Protestant formularies, that no systematic Symbol had been drawn up prior to the epoch of the Reformation. The three catholic Creeds, namely, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian, were alone considered to be strictly symbolical. Councils, however, had pronounced decrees on Grace; that is, on the character and extent of the Divine operation in man for his salvation. Moreover, the writings of the Greek and Latin Fathers contained ample discussions of the important truths which Christianity had promulgated to instruct and save such as received them. More powerful minds, or more elevated and pure characters than some of these Fathers exhibited, never adorned the Church. And, in noticing symbolical or other works of earlier date than the sixteenth century, the writings of the great Schoolmen ought not to be omitted. They sprang, originally, from the groundwork laid by the Latin Fathers; and presented, in many cases, laborious, methodical, and copious expositions of Christian doctrine. Out of all these sources, an immense body of methodised opinion had been formed in the course

III. Remarks touching the origin of comprehensive formularies.

of ages ; and held, in fact, the place of a systematic Creed at the breaking out of the Reformation. But a systematic Creed, properly so called, did not exist.

In these circumstances there sprang into being on the Continent, within a comparatively limited period, a great number of comprehensive Protestant formularies. Moreover, their numbers continued to be increased down to the meeting of the Synod of Dort. While reflecting on this, one feels inclined to regret that no Patristic or medieval Symbol equalling in compass the Augsburg or Helvetic Confession had been formed, so as to allow a comparison between it and the Protestant Creeds. But, in reality, to regret the want of such a Symbol is as little warrantable as to object to the number of the Protestant formularies.

Had a comprehensive Symbol existed at the outbreak of the Reformation to define the doctrine of Justification or Salvation, just as the Nicene or Athanasian declares the doctrine of the Trinity, it is obvious that the difficulties of the Reformers must have been much greater than they were, if not insuperable. Had it existed, they could not have acted on a footing of equality with the Church of Rome in respect to the article of faith which was chiefly controverted at the Reformation. In fact, that Church was placed in a position of much difficulty by the want of a fuller Symbol than any of the catholic Creeds. The Apostles' Creed, for example, left the ground quite open to the primitive Reformers ; they could as much appeal as their mother Church to it ; and they could back their appeal by quotations

from Latin Fathers, which either appeared to speak their sentiments, or to harmonise with them. Thus the mere existence of a systematic Creed at the epoch of the Reformation afforded an opening and cleared a path for the Reformers.

Again, the number of the Protestant Confessions is advantageous. For the earlier ones especially supply important information as to the precise questions at issue between the Protestants and the Church of Rome. They also disclose, with clearness and a peculiar guarantee of fidelity, the circumstances that led to the decision of these questions in one way rather than another. The later Confessions also, though obviously framed by hands that copied most things mechanically from the pre-existing authorities, contribute their own share of information. They exhibit the additions gradually made to the original sketch; and enable us to trace the development of their peculiar doctrines from a germinal onwards to a completed condition. They also present, as it were, landmarks, which appear opportunely in the otherwise unnavigable ocean of controversy, whose cross currents and broken waves were all set in motion from Wittenberg and Geneva.

It is certainly, however, a noteworthy circumstance, that comprehensive Symbols should never have been formed until the earlier half of the sixteenth century. It also deserves consideration, that all the Continental Churches should ever since have been ruled ostensibly, and to a great extent actually, by the precise form into which Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin

were instrumental in symbolising all the doctrines of Christianity. In such circumstances, it becomes an imperative duty to reflect on the relations in which these Christian legislators were placed towards the entire body of revealed truth, when engaged in framing Symbols or in defending characteristic tenets afterwards symbolised.

Now, their circumstances did not leave them at liberty to represent all the truths of Christianity exactly as they might appear in themselves. They were engaged in a contest with the ecclesiastical power of Rome; with the adherents of the scholastic theology in the Universities and elsewhere; and with the superincumbent weight of systematised and indurated belief already mentioned. These circumstances compelled them to secure the religious truths really at stake in the controversy, by fighting behind one or two exegetical points which proved unassailable positions, owing to the state of learning in those times. Their success entirely depended on their being able to resist all assaults on these points. The testimony of the Augsburg Confession renders unnecessary the historical proof, that Melancthon and Luther did employ the points referred to in the manner described. But the consequence of their having done this under necessity and in that comparatively guarded manner, which is exhibited in their Confession, was, to introduce a mode of representing all the saving and practical truths of Christianity liable to lead to most extravagant and deleterious consequences. And it did, in fact, lead to such results, when adopted and completely followed out

by men whose circumstances were totally different, and whose gifts natural or acquired, were much inferior.

The circumstances in which the Reformation was carried through in Great Britain were much more favorable than those of Continental kingdoms. It was a great advantage, so far as matters of faith were concerned, that the British Reformers could copy or avoid what was done on the Continent instead of being at once irretrievably committed to certain positions by inevitable exigencies. The insular position of Britain was also of advantage at the time of the Reformation as in all other periods of her history. And as England and Scotland, though then distinct kingdoms, were reformed at the same time, each was thus saved from having a conterminous state which still adhered to the Church of Rome. They had also every reason to anticipate, under the good Providence of God, that liberty from foreign religious control, which England fully, and Scotland in a partial sense, have actually enjoyed. Now, it is not to be supposed that all these obvious advantages were overlooked by the parties who conducted the Reformation in either kingdom. That they were not overlooked in England, is proved generally by the graduated and finally well-balanced reformation of its Church already referred to. And it will appear hereafter that Knox, so far from overlooking them, acted on them to the fullest extent in the formation of the Scottish Confession, by avoiding even those germs of error which were introduced by Luther and Melancthon, and were not only approved but materially advanced in their development by Calvin.

IV. The proposed method of proof explained; and shown to be correct, necessary, and conclusive.

IV. It is my intention to employ the formularies named and classified above, to prove the propositions prefixed to this Note. They are adduced and will be employed in the character of witnesses as to the meaning of each part and the whole of an important doctrine, which has been contested at successive periods in respect to all its points, and decided in the case of each point in one or more formularies. This process of successive decisions shows the importance of having an adequate number and variety of such witnesses. For one or more of them may be found to vouch what others either hesitate about or are ignorant of; and thus full as well as trustworthy information can be gained. But another advantage is derivable from a series of witnesses which had common sources of information as to all the grounds of a doctrine, when some of them are silent on certain points in that doctrine, but others of them again both affirm these points and assign the reasons of their affirmation. In such circumstances silence is as significant as the most decided speech, and especially when the speech can be met by strong objections. Now all the framers of these formularies had a common source of information, namely, the Scriptures. And not only do some of them differ from the others in their account of a principal doctrine; but these others differ among themselves, inasmuch as some are silent on points successively affirmed by the remainder.

These remarks indicate generally the kind of evi-

dence supplied by the formularies on which my proof shall be based. But something more explicit must be added to show that the proposed method of proof is correct in its principle, necessary to ascertain the exact meaning of tenets, and quite conclusive as to the character of the formulary to which it shall be applied.

Its principle is the just one of only comparing things alike in their nature and uses. Thus, one set of formularies is to be compared with other formularies. Moreover, the set to be compared and those with which it is to be compared are of the same class. The principal point of comparison, moreover, was the ostensible cause of their all coming into existence: the history of Protestantism undeniably affirms that point. Besides, the Westminster formularies are to be compared principally as to that point, only with the symbols of other Reformed and Protestant Churches. Surely it must be quite legitimate to compare the former with the valuable document written by Philip Melancthon with the advice of Martin Luther. Neither can the Helvetic or Gallic Confession be objected to on any reasonable grounds. For John Calvin, whose purest disciples the Westminster Divines professed to be, certainly influenced these Symbols more than even his disciple Beza. And the faith of Scotland must have been remarkably altered since the days of John Knox, if his Confession should be considered an unfair standard by which to try her present formularies. The circumstance of the Articles of the Church of England occupying the same position now as they did when the Confession of Knox was written, appears to be a tolerable

guarantee of their fitness to be employed in the manner proposed.

Again, the proposed method of proof is necessary in order to ascertain the exact meaning of doctrines, and of the elements composing them. This statement is correct. First: Because, in fact, it is impossible to learn exactly the meaning of any doctrine from the unauthorised controversial writings which led to its embodiment in a formulary. These contain many statements which were considered unsuitable, or too uncertain, to be made authoritative. There is, indeed, as great difference between controversial writings and their purified and cautiously framed authoritative results; as obtains between the particoloured debate on a momentous and large subject, and the motion in which it closed; or between the varied discussion on a weighty and complicated matter of business, and the compact or bond agreed on by the interested parties. Again, Secondly: There is, also in fact, just as great difficulty in learning the precise doctrines of any Church, though regulated by a formulary, from the writings produced by her. That is just what one ought to expect, and to be pleased with contemplating in the case of a Church having a catholic creed and tolerant of diversity in modes of thought. But exactly the same thing has occurred in Churches whose formularies were expressly framed on the principle of excluding all that was allowed in the former case. Not that exactly the same quality of work was produced under the rigid formulary; for that could not be. Not either that the rigid formulary was

ever in a single instance contradicted in express terms ; for that could as little be : no sane man would attempt that. But all possible variations between ultra-orthodoxy on the side of the formulary and contradiction to it in express terms (which the supposition of course excludes) may be seen to prevail in a Church possessing comprehensive and minutely exclusive standards. It is plain, therefore, that the man who should endeavour to learn the doctrines of that Church from the writings produced in it must fail, unless he possess more than mortal sagacity. Apart from such transcendent sagacity, the utter silence generally obtaining as to any rule but the Bible would outwit him. But, Thirdly : When there is a series of formularies sprung from one great controversy, which all contain its original decision on one side, but also present, as they succeed each other, new elements added to the original decision in consequence of fresh controversies, that series must be consulted successively in order to form a correct conception of each addition and of the entire doctrine. This follows from what has been said as to unauthorised controversial works ; as to works composed under formularies ; and as to formularies themselves. But, Fourthly : Several circumstances not yet mentioned show how peculiar the character of formularies is, and that they necessarily become most trustworthy witnesses in matters of doctrine. Thus, some of them were drawn up in very critical circumstances on which the success or failure of a mighty cause depended. This was the case with the Augsburg Confession. Consequently, one has the firmest gua-

rantee of its containing the ablest, most favorable, and valid representation of their tenets which Luther and Melancthon could give. Other formularies again, for example the Westminster ones, were framed with the avowed object of correcting supposed religious errors, and decreeing what was deemed religious truth, by men placed under oath to include in their legislative work only what they believed in their consciences to be the truths of God. They are accordingly distinguished from all contemporary religious compositions as much by their declared object as by the solemn obligation which lay on their framers. One cannot but recognise in the solemnity of the oath taken by the Westminster Divines a firm guarantee of their deep conviction as to the truth and importance of all which they embodied in their work. And the reflection forces itself at the same time on the mind, that it was absolutely necessary that persons engaged in such a work should act under the deepest sense of obligation. For, its right fulfilment could only be effected by clearing mind and heart from every improper bias, even more than by exerting the intellect and applying skill. Without the former, the latter might lead further astray. And the execution in a sound and just manner of a work of legislation bearing on religious faith, must as far transcend in importance all ordinary legislative acts, as the concerns of religion and of the world to come transcend in importance even the highest temporal interests.

But again, it is possible by the proposed method to decide as to the character of a formulary in respect,

first, of the extent and legitimacy of its control over the interpretation of the Scriptures ; and secondly, of the scriptural and catholic nature of its doctrines. Keeping in view then the former point, let all the early and most venerable formularies be Confessions properly so called, which contain the principles of Christianity and present an antagonism only to the Church of Rome, like that of Knox ; or which contain those principles mixed with peculiarities incidental to the original contest with Rome, like the Augsburg Confession. Or let them be unsectarian Articles, like those of the Church of England. And let the later formularies adhere on the whole to the primitive model, though evidently advancing in a process of encroachment on the liberty of interpreting the Bible. If, in these circumstances, the formulary on trial exhibit a departure from the example of the earlier members of its class, and even an assumption of authority unexampled in the entire class, it must evidently have transgressed the limits originally assigned as correct. And the legitimacy of this transgression cannot be justified on any special historical grounds in the face of general historic example, and of the acknowledged importance of Revelation. What reason, indeed, will justify the locking up of any of the “wells of salvation?” Let now the catholicity in doctrine of the formulary on trial be the question. If it agree, then, with the others as to any doctrine, for example the first great catholic doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, then must its correctness in respect of that truth have the highest presumptive

evidence in its favour. But on the other hand, let there be a doctrine distinguishing by some of its characteristics the special class of formularies from other classes. This is descriptive of the second great catholic doctrine, namely, that of Justification or Salvation as set forth in all reformed and protestant Symbols in antagonism to the unreformed Confessions of the Latin and Greek Churches. Now, if the formulary on trial be found to have far exceeded the limits assigned to that doctrine in Symbols which were framed at first solely on account of the great controversy touching that doctrine, and to have also introduced by that excess extraordinary confusion in the otherwise symmetrical arrangement of revealed truth, as well as a great tendency to dangerous errors in the central department of Christianity, little doubt can remain as to its want of catholicity in that portion of Divine truth. Moreover, all ground of doubt must be cut away when this is proved to have happened by pushing to the last point principles, which were carefully avoided in certain Symbols of unquestionable character, and expressed most guardedly where they were first authorised; and which were thus pushed to the extreme point in opposition, not to their original antagonists, but to parties who contested each step of the development within the confines of the Reformed and Protestant Churches. And if no other instance can be adduced from past or present times of the authorisation of this fully developed doctrine, the presumptive proof against its correctness must be complete. For why was it not made obligatory on the

faith of Christians elsewhere, if it be incontestably scriptural and catholic? All within the confines of Protestantism must be equally interested in the possession of such a doctrine, if it be true. For, if true, it must be the pearl of great price.

I repeat, that the proof, whose basis has now been pointed out and method of construction described, can be considered in strictness as only presumptive, or enabling one to infer the existence of error in the Westminster formularies. In strictness, I say, because the scriptural evidence only can be considered as in the full sense direct and conclusive in matters of doctrine. But I know that the scriptural proof is throughout coincident with every principle as to Justification or Salvation which will be maintained as correct in the course of my remarks. And if the proposed proof be viewed absolutely, it may be seen to be capable of an indefinite amount of force. That must be proportioned to the guarantee afforded by the framers of the formularies to be cited, of their acquaintance with the scriptures, theology, ecclesiastical law, and the best mode of at once supplying the religious wants and regulating the religious affairs of a Church. Now the majority of the Symbols to be cited had men of world-wide fame as their framers; and they have been maintained ever since their composition as sufficient by the most learned and eminent Churches. They afford evidence, too, as public as it is unimpeachable; for they constitute, in fact, part of the religious law of the reformed countries of Europe.

*V. The order
in which sub-
jects must be
treated.*

V. I object, according to the Prefix, primarily and principally, to the doctrine of Justification or Salvation contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. But my objections cannot be adequately explained without a somewhat extended survey, particularly of the Confession. For its general theological character has a direct influence on that department of it which is to be compared with the parallel departments of other Symbols. And that department powerfully affects, in its turn, the general character of the Confession. This must be, since it treats of the second great catholic doctrine. That circumstance, even apart from any peculiarities of the doctrine in question, must render it generally influential on the Confession. But, in fact, its peculiarities are so remarkable as to influence the formulary in an unparalleled degree. In these circumstances, therefore, it is necessary to take a general survey of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

But besides, interests of paramount importance demand that my special subject be considered in all its relations and influences. The interests of revealed truth, in particular, demand that this be done. Thus, if the authorised doctrine of Justification or Salvation be erroneous, as I maintain it is, the question arises: Must all that the Bible says as to Salvation continue to be impressed with that erroneous sense? That must be the result if the doctrine in question continue to be authoritative though erroneous. It is this that causes the imperative necessity of either

proving the authorised doctrine of Salvation correct in answer to legitimate, and legitimately adduced, objections of undeniable weight, or of correcting it when these objections have been considered and found valid. Indeed, apart from its controlling power over the Bible, any question as to its intrinsic character could claim no more regard than what is usually paid to any of the innumerable tenets current in the Church at large in past or present times. But it cannot be viewed in such a light. The principles expressed in Chapter XI of the Confession, for example; its "positions negative" (as James the Sixth loved to style certain theological safeguards); its central and controlling place in the formulary; and its supremely authoritative character have enabled it, and the Confession through it, to impress their own sense on the Scriptures with overmastering force; and have rendered it impossible to examine and explain the will of God in a full and legitimate manner, ever since the era of their installation in power.

But this extraordinary influence over the Bible is not peculiar to the eleventh chapter of the Confession. It characterises the entire formulary. This influence is owing to its peculiar structure, which was planned with the direct intention of investing the Symbol with an authority never assumed till that Symbol came into being. The history of the origin of the Westminster Confession explains with much clearness the reasons of the peculiar structure, which gives its contents such a mighty control over the contents of the Bible. That history presents an incontestable proof of the

Confession having been originally planned to act as a formulary, or exact law of faith according to the tenets of its framers ; and of its being much more a specimen of dogmatic legislation than a Creed. To see it in its real historic light, seems at first almost to supersede the necessity of searching for further proof of its extreme character, both as to authority over the Bible and doctrinal principles. And although no such view of it can supersede the necessity of a critical examination of its most important contents, it is a very useful preliminary step towards such an examination.

Though the Westminster Confession is undoubtedly the most important ; still the other formularies, and particularly the Larger Catechism, are important in their own spheres. The Larger Catechism is in some respects more valuable as a witness of several points of doctrine than even the Confession itself. Its announcements of several characteristic elements of the authorised doctrine are frequently much fuller and more explicit than those of its more dignified companion. One reason of this must have been its intended use, namely, the full instruction of adults in the peculiarities of the ‘Economy of the Covenants.’ But, leaving such points for consideration at the proper point, it must suffice, in the mean time, to have expressed my sense of the importance of this formulary. It will frequently be cited, in proof and explanation of what the Confession really authorised.

In accordance with the foregoing remarks, I shall first make a general survey of the Westminster formu-

laries, and of the Confession in particular. The intention with which they were framed, their consequent structure, their theological characteristics, and the sources of their control over the Scriptures, will be the points I shall principally examine. In the next place, the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation will be compared and contrasted with the same doctrine as it is laid down in the formularies classified or named at the commencement of the Note. In this part, the gradual development of that doctrine, from its germ in the Augsburg Confession, till at last completed by the Westminster Divines, shall be passed under review. There will thus be seen an unique example of a fully developed error in the interpretation and exposition of revealed truth. At the same time must be noted, as well the sagacity as the theological and scriptural knowledge which, providentially, enabled John Knox in Scotland, and Ridley and Cranmer in England, to refrain from making even the germ of Protestant error paramount. I shall then deduce methodically from this historical examination of the subject, the propositions prefixed to this Note. In conclusion, an apology will be offered for my conduct in thus subjecting to a searching trial, the formularies under which, of all existing Symbols, the most numerous and largely proportioned sects have been formed.

PART FIRST.

THE

GENERAL CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE

OF THE

WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH.

I. The ends proposed to be gained by the Westminster Confession of Faith disclosed in the history of its formation.

I. THE Westminster Confession of Faith was framed by an Assembly of Divines summoned by the Long Parliament in 1643. The English members of the Assembly might be classed, in respect of their ecclesiastical opinions, under several heads ; but my special subject is not so much affected by their ecclesiastical as by their theological tenets. Viewed in connection with the latter, they may be designated by their historical name of “Doctrinal Puritans.” What that name really denotes will appear clearly from the proposed comparison of their principal work with other Symbols ; accordingly, any mere historical remarks on it are not required. It may be mentioned, however, that several English members of the Assembly had come from the Continent to take part in its proceedings. These members, at

least, were familiar with the most recent theological opinions broached on the Continent; which were then, in the same manner as at present, held in much esteem by numbers. Five commissioners were appointed by the Scottish Parliament to co-operate with the Puritans in the great work of Christian legislation about to be accomplished at Westminster. The names only of the clerical commissioners need be mentioned. They are Henderson, Baillie, and Gillespie; and they well deserve to be noted for this reason were there no other, that they ventured to reject the Confession of John Knox, and to share in framing a formulary which they, of course, deemed better.

The following passages of the parliamentary ordinance appointing the Assembly, explain the nature of the work set for its performance. The ordinance stated that the Assembly was convened "for the purpose of settling the government and liturgy of the Church of England, and for vindicating the doctrine of the said Church from false aspersions and interpretations." A "nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other reformed Churches abroad," was also pointed out as an object to be gained by the work of the Assembly. Whatever else the last passage might mean, it certainly empowered the Westminster Divines to consider all the tenets of the Protestant Churches on the Continent; and to borrow from thence what England and Scotland were supposed to want in the matter of Protestant theological dogmas. It did not preclude the Assembly, if it thought necessary, from perfecting the authorised Protestant theology of the

Continent, and thus bringing it up to the last possible point of so called Protestant orthodoxy.

The fact of the "Doctrinal Puritans" having framed the Westminster Confession proves, that their object was not merely to clear the doctrine of the Church of England "from false aspersions and interpretations." And the existence of that formulary as the standard of religious belief in Scotland at this day, shows that Henderson, Baillie, and Gillespie, at least, esteemed the Confession of John Knox to be insufficient and improper. The grounds of the dissatisfaction felt by the Puritans and Covenanters, respectively, to the settlement of doctrinal matters, made in England and Scotland at the Reformation, will appear fully from the proposed comparison of their formularies with other Symbols. But some explanation of them may be given at present, without anticipating anything that must find a more appropriate place in the sequel.

Founding, then, on the fact that the Doctrinal Puritans and Scottish Covenanters framed the Westminster formularies, I observe that the Puritans were dissatisfied with the Thirty-nine Articles because they allowed a freedom distasteful to the advocates of extreme Calvinistical and Lutheranic tenets. Or I shall put the matter in another form, namely, that all the Puritans sought was protection for their own opinions beneath their own formulary. Were that their object, however, then they would be taking away from others exactly what they were securing to themselves. For the Articles, though framed, in the opinion of the Puritans, according to the model of Calvinism only,

and though certainly drawn up to allow interpretation in some respects after the real mind of Calvin himself, still would not allow the opinions of Calvinisers, as expressed in the Westminster formularies, to be paramount. For they had undeniably been composed on purpose to agree with the Prayer Book, and thus to permit all who preferred it, to maintain a type of doctrine which existed long before Calvin breathed, indeed, even before Augustine had come on the field to combat Pelagius. And the Covenanters, on the other hand, were dissatisfied with the Confession of Knox for reasons substantially the same as those that actuated the Puritans. The Covenanters, however, had no good reason to maintain the exclusively Calvinistic character of Knox's Symbol; for, as we shall see, it is that Reformer's own work, or if he swore by the words of any Master, he chose Augustine, and not Luther, Melancthon, or Calvin. But maintaining the primitive, national Symbol to be Calvinistic, they certainly disliked the freedom as to doctrine enjoyed under it. Or here again I shall suppose the alternative, that the Covenanters only sought shelter for their own tenets; but I must confess, at the same time, my inability of seeing how the opinions of other men could find shelter beneath their formulary. It appears to be a necessary truth that a formulary framed on purpose to protect only one set of rigid and extreme opinions must put an end to the liberty, or seriously injure the interests, of all who cannot assent to these opinions.

Since the above alternatives, then, lead back to the

exact points where they were taken up, we may plainly affirm that the doctrinal Puritans and Scottish Covenanters combined to put an end, equally in England and Scotland, to the just, wise, and charitable arrangements in respect of authorised doctrines made in both these countries at the epoch of the Reformation. Their formularies were intended to render paramount the extreme form of doctrine reached by systematising on rigorous principles of predestination; and by developing to its full extent the peculiar Protestant doctrine of Justification or Salvation. Thus was it sought to shut up all the sources and inlets of error supposed to exist, as well in the Thirty-nine Articles, as in the Confession of Knox; and to supply all their deficiencies in respect of the most popular doctrines of the day.

II. A perfect contrast exists between the Thirty-nine Articles and the Confession of Knox on the one hand and the Westminster formularies on the other in respect of their contents as much as their structure.

II. The peculiar theology of the Westminster Confession, and the mode of its expression.

This statement can be sufficiently established for the present purpose by a bare enumeration of the most prominent theological peculiarities of the latter, and by the statement of some facts which are in perfect harmony with the account already given of the origin and intention of the formularies in question.

The theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith and of its popular expositions, the Catechisms, is a peculiar form of Calvinism, and also of Lutheranism in so far as Calvinism borrowed, and added to, a

Lutheran tenet. Its peculiarities are these—First: It makes the mystery of Predestination and Election, as dogmatically settled by the Synod of Dort, one of the leading principles from which its scheme of salvation is deduced. Secondly: Its representation of Salvation is formed according to a peculiar theory, known as the “Economy of the Covenants.” This theory sets forth, that before the Fall, a “covenant of works” was entered into by God with Adam, as the federal head of mankind, and it gives a corresponding account of the Covenant of Grace made by God with Christ, the second Adam, as the federal head of the Elect. Thirdly: Its doctrine as to the condition of mankind after the Fall, is that commonly known by the title of “the total corruption of human nature.” Fourthly: It contains a doctrine of absolutely external or extrinsic Justification or Salvation. This doctrine presents the solitary authorised example of the extreme and final development of Lutheranic and Calvinistic peculiarities in the treatment of its subject, effected in opposition to innumerable protests. I except the Lutheran tenet of “assurance of faith” from the peculiarities referred to; but my description is strictly correct in all other respects. This extreme doctrine stands closely related to the predestinarian tenets of the formularies; and the correlate doctrines as to the fallen condition of human nature and grace. It was put forth, too, as being supported not less by the account given of the two Covenants, than by its own more direct proofs as alleged to exist in the very heart of the New Testament Scriptures.

Now the form of these doctrines was moulded, and several factitious elements in them were introduced in the course of long-continued and bitter controversies within the Protestant Churches. The great primitive Reformers could by no possibility have formed any conception of the distinctions and principles by whose means the Westminster doctrine of the Covenants, and the corresponding one of Justification or Salvation came into being. Not even Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, or Beza, could have done that; unless by a very extraordinary illapse of prophetic power. A contrast, therefore, must obtain between the Thirty-nine Articles and the Confession of Knox on the one hand, and the Westminster formularies on the other. But that contrast extends to other Symbols. For example, the Belgic Confession was not affected by the decrees of the Synod of Dort. And though much the ablest advocates of the "Federalist Theology" were Continental, and especially Dutch writers, their opinions were never made authoritative in their respective countries. Many of these writers, with Cocceius as the earliest, and Witsius as a later representative of the school, were very able and learned men.

The Westminster Confession does not present its theology in an abstracted form, or without reference to antagonistic and modified systems. On the contrary, that formulary is fortified by statements excluding definitively all antagonistic and modified systems, as much as it is secured by the definition and inclusion of its own system of tenets. Its language proves it to have been expressly framed to exclude all which its

framers disallowed, and to include exactly what they allowed. The twofold process of exclusion and inclusion is carried out in it with extreme controversial skill and efficacy. One can learn from itself, apart from a comparison of it with any other formularies, that it is not only pre-eminently dogmatic and systematic, but minutely precise and guarded, in its positive statements and "positions negative."

These peculiarities, however, are rendered very striking by a comparison of it with other formularies. And as the Articles of the Church of England and the Confession of John Knox are peculiarly appropriate to the purpose, they may be employed as standards of comparison in respect of this matter. Let such a comparison be instituted; and first with the Articles. Let one take, for example, Article XVII, of "Predestination and Election," in order to consider its contents, place, and influence in relation to the others; and let us compare it, when thus examined, with the contents, place, and influence of the third chapter, "Of God's Decrees," in the Westminster Confession. The one will be seen only enunciating an awful mystery, while the other will be seen dogmatising on it and employing it systematically. How different, too, in respect of the treatment of their subjects are the Articles XI and XII, from Chapters VII, XI, XII, and XVI of the Westminster Confession. But let the Confession of Knox be now taken as the standard of comparison; and let the particular doctrines compared as to their mode of treatment be those above referred to. The eighth chapter of Knox's Confession is headed, "Of Election;" but

only the commencing sentences refer to that subject ; and they, as holds also throughout the Symbol, speak of that mystery in language of pure and most obvious scriptural equivalence. But the contrast is still more striking in the case of the expression given by Knox to the doctrine of Justification or Salvation. He gave no dogmatic statement whatever of that subject. The full and convincing representation of it is made in the successive chapters of "The Passion and Burial," "The Resurrection," and "Ascension," of the Saviour, as compared with those of "Faith in the Holy Ghost," "The cause of Good works," "The perfection of the Law and the imperfection of Man," and "The gifts freely given to the Church."

III. The peculiar contents of the Westminster Confession, and the manner in which they are disposed and defended, give it an unexampled power over the Scriptures. And that power has been rendered absolute, in consequence of proof passages from the Bible having been appended to it and always published along with it. It has thus not only enjoined in the stringent decrees of its text what must be followed as orthodox and avoided as heterodox ; but the passages of the Bible appended as proofs to almost every clause of each paragraph in its thirty-three chapters have been thus fixed down in fact to bear the sense stamped on them by the text. By this arrangement the Scriptures are made entirely subject in practice not less than in theory to the

III. Sources of the influence exerted by the Westminster Confession over the Scriptures.

formularies. For these proofs must of course be understood to teach that, and only that, taught in the clauses, paragraphs, or chapters to which they are appended as *the* proofs.

But moreover, these proofs are generally the Loci Classici of the Bible, or its most prominent and pregnant statements regarding the several heads of revealed truth. They are not what may be styled neutral passages, such as John Knox with true sagacity set forth as the proofs in his Confession, or such as are often selected as texts to avoid doctrinal difficulties in preaching. They are rather what once formed a most extensive and important debateable territory. That ground was not at all so much contested between Protestants and Romanists, as between Protestant and Protestant. Too often during these debates an alarm of Popery was raised to carry a point, through popular excitement, against men who were opposed to the formative principles of Popery more strongly, because more rationally, than their opponents. The debateable land of Scripture appropriated and fixed down by the Westminster decrees, was composed of what the doctrinal Puritans and men like Jeremy Taylor or Bishop Bull, and even Richard Baxter, in his old age, differed on in England; or what Covenanters, like Henderson, Gillespie, and Baillie, and men like the two Forbeses and Scougal differed on in Scotland. Having it in their power to do so, the Covenanters, joined in league with the Puritans, succeeded in completely putting down all that could gainsay their side of the question so far as Scotland

is concerned. Their arrangements, indeed, formed a conclusive and silencing commentary on all the deepest points of Theology.

This last remark is only descriptive of a fact. For the circumstance of pregnant examples of the *Loci Classici* of the Scriptures being selected as the proof passages demonstrates that all free investigation, or even free use of the Bible in the pulpit, was absolutely foreclosed by the Standards. To see this, we must bear in mind the peculiar mode of teaching by parallel statements, which so widely pervades and strikingly characterises Holy Writ. These inspired statements or formulas are of extreme importance. They are, indeed, brief but pregnant creeds framed by the Holy Ghost. There are numerous classes of them. Each class teaches in a variety of forms some important department, or presents some instructive aspect of revealed truth; and by a comparison, or successive explanation, of the members of each class, the particular truth or aspect of truth set forth in it may be learned. But it inevitably happens, in consequence of this peculiarity, that, when a certain sense has been affixed authoritatively to even one member of a class, the entire class must henceforth bear a similar sense. Every rule has, of course, its exceptions; but the rule of teaching by such classes of formulas obtains to a remarkable extent in the Bible; and its existence has caused in reality many controversies which resulted in the affixing by the victorious party of its own sense to the passages in dispute. The prize sought to be gained in the con-

tests which resulted in the Synod of Dort and the Westminster Assembly was in great measure the power of preventing so much of Scripture as is contained in certain of these formulas from being explained otherwise than appeared correct to the members of these councils. And as the system of fixing down the sense of Holy Writ to meet their own opinions was carried out systematically by the framers of the Westminster formularies, both by positive and negative clauses, and by appending pregnant proofs, these standards have consequently impressed their own sense on the Bible to a marvellous extent. The light of revealed truth has not been allowed to illuminate the land with direct rays; or, which is tantamount to that, through the medium of Articles or a Confession framed in a truly scriptural and catholic spirit. On the contrary, the Bible has been constrained to speak according to that dark and confused, and sometimes utterly erroneous and disjointed sense, which was decreed to be the truth of God by doctrinal Puritans and Scottish Covenanters under the leading of Continental Calvinisers. Doubtless, these divines were thoroughly conscientious; but it is equally doubtless, that they were thoroughly sectarian, as judged by the standard of reformed Europe.

They composed their work under the solemn obligation of an oath to embody in it only what they believed to be taught by the spirit of God in the Scriptures. But however conscientious they might be, the task undertaken to be performed by them could scarcely, without a miracle, have been satisfactorily

executed. Their object was to frame a fitting creed and formulary for three kingdoms ; and yet what were their qualifications and circumstances ? They all held extreme, so called, Protestant tenets. That is proved by their work. Besides, there were few of them whose minds and hearts had not been affected during longer or shorter periods by those most powerful of all stimulants, religious, ecclesiastical, and political controversies. And we get a curious insight into the controversial zeal that worked at least in some of them, through Baillie's burst of satisfaction at his own and his companions' success in carrying the point of Election and Predestination.

IV. It has been alleged to me, however, that the proofs adduced (say in the late re-issue of the Italicised edition of the Confession of 1668) are not authoritative. This means, it is apprehended, that one is neither bound to consider those proofs as appended

IV. The Confession of Faith necessitates the style of interpretation approved by its framers.

by the sanction of the constituted authorities of this land, nor as imperatively enjoined to be understood in exact accordance with the clauses and paragraphs of the formularies to which they are appended. It implies, consequently, that one is free to interpret them otherwise than is done in the edition of the Confession just referred to ; and it also implies, as a matter of course, that abundant proofs remain behind to support all the tenets of the formularies, and especially the all-important practical ones as to Justification or Salvation.

Now, in reference to this allegation I observe,—
 Firstly : Supposing the adduced proofs not authoritative (I leave their actual character in that respect a moot point), still, when interpreted otherwise than was done by the framers of the Confession, they must nevertheless be explained and understood in the ultimate result in exact conformity and equivalence to its precise and comprehensive decrees. Otherwise, the power must be assumed to put forth deductions from the Scriptures at variance with, or even subversive of, the peculiar authorised doctrines. But the decrees set forth in the text of the formularies, and especially in the Confession, are definitely inclusive and exclusive foregone conclusions which can be stably based only on one precise sense of the passages of Holy Writ appended as their proofs, or of similar passages. It would, consequently, be a very anomalous circumstance (one only to be met with in Theology) if any man could always reconcile with such foregone conclusions, those varying and even antagonistic conclusions which must inevitably flow (inevitably at least in every other department of thought,) from varying and even antagonistic interpretations of the identical proofs which are employed to support the foregone conclusion. One would naturally and reasonably conceive that to be an impossibility in theology exactly as in all other departments of truth. Certainly, the framers and original advocates of the theology embodied in the Westminster formularies judged it impossible. For, while they made the foregone conclusion most definite, they contended earnestly and

uncompromisingly for that one definite sense of its alleged reasons or grounds in the Scriptures, which could alone form for it a foundation at once square and without flaw.

And Secondly: There was clearly apparent to them an absolute necessity to act in that way. For the proofs in question are the *Loci Classici* of the New Testament, or pregnant examples of them. They and their parallels form the body and spirit of Divine teaching on the subject of Salvation. Only by understanding them all in one definite sense, to the exclusion of modified and still more of antagonistic senses, could the doctrine of the Confession be reached and placed on a firm basis. A special proof of this last statement, sufficient in the meantime, is supplied in the italicised edition of the Confession. Another proof may be exhibited in the fact that, while writers like William Forbes in the seventeenth century pointed out the great liberality of the early reformers in matters of interpretation, other writers like Herrmann Witsius found fault with that very proceeding in the more enlightened primitive reformers, and contended for the precise and uniform mode of interpretation needed to form the basis of the Federal Theology, as exemplified in the Westminster formularies. And to do as Witsius did, was as plainly a matter of necessity to the framers of the formularies, as it was a matter of common sense to insist on the *Loci Classici* as *the* proofs. Because, it was as necessary to maintain, that these proofs really taught that, and only that, which was set forth in the text of the formularies as their exclusive meaning, as it was reasonable to

select them as the supports of the formularies, and not passages which are to this day unknown. Thus the integrity of the entire scheme, which was considered by the Westminster Divines to be the truth of God, was seen and felt by them to depend on the correctness of their own understanding of the *Loci Classici*; and on the erroneousness, as affirmed by them, of all modified and antagonistic interpretations of these passages.

Hence, too, the rigorous means employed to secure the continued understanding of them in the sense which was deemed to be obligatory because true; and which was also deemed necessary to the stability of the standards. To have permitted the understanding of them in any other sense, would have been plainly to grant license from beforehand to entertain the supposed errors which were sought to be excluded by the control of the formularies over the Scriptures; and to allow from beforehand the inevitable modification or even subversion of the Creed. And these principles are as valid now as two hundred years ago. No lapse of time can impair the force of the laws of logic, or perturb their fountain, viz., the truth which common sense apprehends, and whence the principles of common sense flow. Thanks be to God, all remains eternally calm, clear, and steadfast in that region. Were it not so, scepticism might hope to reign triumphant over the desecrated fields even of Theology.

But, Thirdly: Can the *Loci Classici* of the New Testament be understood otherwise than they were by the Westminster Divines? And can that be done by

the present supporters of the Westminster formularies on philological, grammatical, and biblical grounds sufficiently valid to authorise them to put aside the original proofs, and to substitute for them other alleged Scriptural proofs, more particularly in reference to their central doctrine of Justification or Salvation? If the matter really stand thus, as the allegation in question implies; then we are entitled to ask urgently: What and where are those ultimate and finally conclusive proofs? For my part, they remain utterly unknown to me after a long and assiduous search after them. In fact, no formulary or theological work exists to supply them. And it would be very remarkable, indeed quite an anomaly, to find, that there remained sufficient and valid proof in the Scriptures of the characteristic Westminster tenets as to Salvation after the chief part of its teaching on that subject had been proved insufficient. At the same time, to reason as if there were such unknown and yet valid proof, is quite of a piece with the reasoning that pervades the entire allegation that has been remarked on. The fact of its having been made to myself, is a sufficient warrant for the examination it has received. It appeared, indeed, to be a bounden duty to probe it to the bottom; because it seemed to me even *prima facie* to be erroneous in principle and injurious in tendency equally as respects the standards and the scriptures. For, if the Standards be correctly based on revealed truth they ought to be upheld in all their functions, and especially in their power to bind all to that interpretation of the Scrip-

tures which they authorise. On the other hand, if proved to be erroneous in a presumptive manner only, fealty to the Head of the Church and loyalty to the interests of the nation demand that the erroneous matter be searched out; for so long as they continue in force as long must the erroneous impress be given by them to the records of revealed truth.

V. The power of the Westminster formularies over Scripture distinguishes them from all earlier ones and makes them peculiar among the later ones.

V. The power wielded by the formularies in virtue of their structure and office, distinguishes them completely from the Thirty-nine Articles and the Confession of Knox. They were certainly so constructed as to put an end to that freedom of interpretation permitted both by the Articles of the Church of England and the original reformed Creed of Scotland. And, at all events, they were so constructed and applied to the Scriptures, as to leave absolutely nothing to be done by scholarship, and as little to be done by the force and persuasiveness of unshackled revealed truth. They were intended from the first to cut off once and for ever all which was decreed by their framers to be erroneous, and to secure once and for ever all which was decreed by them to be true. And they sought to reach these ends by enactments more specific, and a power over the Bible more comprehensive and complete than any that ever appeared. None of the earlier continental Confessions were at all framed for such ends; and the latest and most dogmatic amongst them came short by many

accurately definable stages of securing them, as compared with the Westminster formularies. Special proofs of this will hereafter be given.

This characteristic, indeed, has given the formularies an extraordinary power for good if they be correct ; but as extraordinary a power for evil if they be erroneous. It may have been the cause of arresting error in some directions through dread, or stagnation of intellect, and the silence produced by it. But then it has afforded protection and given a countenance to error in other directions ; and that, when aroused from a long slumber, was urged on with uncompromising might to the rending of the Church in twain. It may have stifled or muzzled heresy in some of its forms, and kept what literature the Church has comparatively pure. But it has also placed manacles on skilful hands ; consigned powerful minds to mute inaction ; and given admirable works to an equivocal fame in the land producing them. These hands if free, these minds if on the alert, and these works if unimpeded in their operation, might have stayed in time the torrent of opinions which could only have gained head and wrought such lamentable results under such formularies. For they have gripped during at least a hundred and sixty years in Scotland the very heart, and bound, as much as they could, the very spirit of the Bible. During all that time, they have impressed on the one their own dogmatic and systematic sense ; and hemmed in the other within the limits of their own dogmas. A spiritual thralldom has been thus imposed on Scotland by English Doctrinal Puritans and Scottish

Covenanters led by Continental controversialists of almost forgotten name, which the Confession of Knox shows on every page that he, along with all the early Reformers, would have spurned as ignominious and condemned as unchristian.

And that thralldom has been indeed complete. For when the questions put at ordination and the formula were added by the General Assembly of 1694 to the formularies framed at Westminster, the stricture on the *legitimate* expression of all truth differing with the standards was made perfect. I mean by legitimate, *lawful*, because enjoined or at least not forbidden by enactments; and I repeat, that the questions and formula alluded to formed a complete stricture on all legitimate, honourable, and safe expression of even important and much needed truth which has the misfortune to be at variance with the standards. For example, a work like the "Harmonia Apostolica" of Bishop Bull would be simply an illegal and also a dishonorable work for any Clergyman to publish under the arrangements in question. Would no advantage, however, by way of check, at least, have accrued to the Church of Scotland by the publication within her of such a work? But for any Clergyman to do that, would have been openly to break one solemn promise at least, and to disprove the basis of some most prominent "positions negative" in the Confession. The Confession itself, indeed, appears to grant some liberty by its first and twentieth chapters. But what these appear to give, the questions and formula alluded to plainly take away. Thus no legitimate or safe "liberty

of prophesying” can be enjoyed even in quiet times beyond the range of thought, measured and staked off with the precision of Egyptian geometry, at Westminster, in 1643; and it would indeed be madness to indulge in it in such times as I was educated in, and amidst such powers as I saw put in force during a period terminating in 1843. These things I never forgot, and never can forget. It would only be wise in others to lay them to heart and consider attentively their causes.

VI. The Westminster Confession is a formulary in the strictest sense of the word. This means that it was framed with a purpose to rule religious faith and practice in accordance with one set of tenets in opposition to, and to the exclusion of other antagonistic or modified opinions. So intent were its framers on this end, that they omitted to employ the expression “we believe,” or “we confess,” which invariably characterises creeds from the Apostles’ downwards. Neale mentions, in his history of the Puritans, that the Continental Churches objected to it on that account. The Larger Catechism, again, was framed to serve as much as a useful auxiliary to the Confession, as a medium of instilling the principles of the more dignified formulary into the minds of the people. The Catechism can render important aid to the Confession, if certain points in the latter should be questioned; because it sets forth these very points in a conveniently confused, or com-

VI. The Westminster Confession and Catechisms are strictly formularies, constructed with much skill.

mingled, manner. But it always leads back by paths as skilfully contrived as any in the Confession (and that formulary excels in preparing the way to a conclusion,) to the very point in the Confession where it was believed that its most unassailable and important dogma lay. Moreover, in following out all such routes, one finds the most explicit declaration of the real doctrine intended to be authorised, just at the point where the two formularies coalesce on ground imagined fit to support it. They thus alternate the offices of defence by means of mystification, and of explanation where they could be safely used.

It can be unhesitatingly affirmed, that the Westminster formularies present the most remarkable examples extant of legislation in behalf of controverted theological opinions. The framers of the most exact Continental Symbols, for example the Helvetic Confession, were mere apprentices at their peculiar work compared with the Scottish Covenanters and Doctrinal Puritans. The Covenanters are rightly placed first, because the testimony of Baillie, already referred to, shows that their influence predominated in settling the question of Predestination; and a comparison of the Westminster Confession with the Aberdeen one of 1616, proves how predominant their influence also was in framing the doctrine of Justification or Salvation. In respect of the latter subject, indeed, it is mentioned by Neale, that many of the Doctrinal Puritans doubted the propriety of dividing and allotting the "one righteousness" of Christ as was nevertheless done in the Confession and Catechisms.

And Scotland may feel satisfaction, if satisfaction should flow from the thought, that her Covenanting Churchmen possessed rare controversial skill. And at all events, one who knows their work and admits their sincerity in maintaining its peculiar and unique tenets cannot be surprised at their having rejected the Confession of John Knox.

Knox framed no mere formulary, but a real Confession or Creed to which any Christian could say Amen. Not an objection was urged to it, even by the Roman Catholic Clergy who heard it read in the Scottish Parliament. It confesses only catholic truth in opposition to the errors of Rome; and is on that account different in kind from all its contemporaneous Continental Symbols. The Covenanters went grievously astray in forsaking the landmarks set up by Knox for those set up by Melancthon, Calvin, and Beza; as did also the doctrinal Puritans in forsaking the Articles of Ridley and Cranmer as interpreted by the Prayer Book. But the formularies framed by them cannot be considered as unskilfully drawn up; or as ill adapted to their real end; or as out of measure when compared with the state of opinion on one side of the reformed Churches in the middle of the seventeenth century. The contrary is proved to be the truth, by their structure and contents; by their extraordinary influence even when their Gordian knots were cut, and not untied; and by the history of so-called Protestant opinion prior to their formation and contemporaneous with it. It is that history, indeed, as it is written with unquestionable veracity in

Creeds, which teaches conclusive lessons on the subject. It proves in the clearest manner, that as the Confession of John Knox is incomparably the best reformed and protestant Confession, and the worthy compeer of the Thirty-nine Articles of Ridley and Cranmer, so are the Westminster formularies incomparably the most skilful and exact enactment of Calvinistical and Lutheran tenets, developed as fully as was possible.

The foregoing remarks show, that one who questions the correctness of the Westminster formularies must exert his powers of circumspection more, even than his powers of thought. None could be more deeply sensible of this than I am. Indeed, it is my intimate conviction that even a complete unravelling of their intricacies, detection of their one-sided extremes, and exposure of the contradictory and dangerous consequences which are deducible from them with a logical necessity as inevitable as that reigning in geometry, would be now as heretofore quite futile apart from the exegetical basis of my impugment. That evidence has never been brought to bear on them with the weight with which I can now apply it. But for it, even as known to me six years ago, my course must have been quite clear and totally different from what it has been. Common sense must have dictated the wisdom and necessity of ejecting from my mind the Westminster Divines and their work, as thousands have done in times past, and taking refuge under less exacting and purer formularies. Even as it is, selfishness has sometimes whispered that course. And seasons of

regret have been passed when the reflection crossed my mind of the sagacity, acuteness, and comprehensiveness of intellect which enabled Butler, while yet in his pupilage, to see through the real character of the Westminster Theology, and to cast aside its Symbols though hereditary to him, that he might spend the unbroken tenor of his days beneath a sound and catholic Creed in a Church that could afford to be learned, scholarly, and tolerant.

A new source of strength, however, has been opened up to me in the method of proof to be followed out in this Note. I feel my position to be no longer that of an isolated student venturing, in the strength of his laboriously acquired knowledge and of the convictions which independent thought only can beget, to question the correctness of what he deemed in his early and sincere, but derived, impressions the foremost of Protestant Symbols, in the accuracy and comprehensiveness of its systematic statements. There is one noble authority at least with whom I now feel leagued in mind, heart, and conscience, on the common ground of catholic truth. That is John Knox, who "being dead, yet speaketh" in his Confession. Through his clear and noble utterances, too, I learn with an absolute moral certainty what the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England were intended to authorise and allow. Other influences from the past are besides felt to environ my once solitary path. Thus, one can advance with the consolatory reflection that he treads on the wise and pure middle way which the most enlightened men have striven to keep through conten-

tions on the right and left, conducted by parties, some of whom were manifestly utterly wrong in their understanding of the very elements of Christian Truth.

An Apostolic injunction says: "Brethren be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." This command shows, still more from its context in the Bible than even in its un mistakeable terms, that a legitimate and necessary exercise of the understanding is enjoined on Christians in reference to spiritual things. And, acting in accordance with the above precept throughout the following remarks, the right use of the understanding in contrast to its abuse in matters of faith, shall never be absent from my thoughts. For that right use is rigorously confined to the discovering exactly what has been revealed, in order that the revealed will of God may rule supreme over spirit, soul, and body. This simple annunciation of the right principle supersedes the necessity of saying anything specific as to erroneous methods of inquiry or judgment in matters of faith. But another consideration excuses me from dwelling on this subject. The mode of argument employed in this Note almost entirely relieves me from the responsibility of uttering any merely individual opinion as to doctrine. My task in respect of its principal topic is chiefly that of collecting and digesting the authoritative statements of different Churches, so that they may be brought to bear in the way of comparison on certain tenets authorised by the Westminster Divines. It is in this way that the truth is now sought to be reached presump-

tively, and not by any private reasonings. For any such reasonings that occur shall be based on the broad and emphatic statements, or the palpable sentiments on the same subjects, disclosed to view in one or other of the formularies which are to be cited. The formularies employed in this manner shall always be distinctly specified. An effective mode shall moreover be adopted to preclude all suspicion of unfair or dishonest handling of my subject, which I would rather lose my hand than be guilty of. All the formularies employed in the course of the argument shall be made to speak for themselves by copious quotations, so that their own words shall vouch the correctness of statements made in regard to them, and warrant the conclusions that may be come to in reference to them.

VII. It is necessary, however, to make a few remarks at this point on several parts of the Confession, in order to remove certain possible suspicions, and to prepare the way for what is to follow. It certainly appears right, that one who directly affirms

VII. Portions of the Confession either fully accepted, or only questioned to a modified extent.

the existence of grave errors in one department of the formularies, should make no secret of what he holds as to the other more important departments of their teaching. The right line is the shortest, equally in morals and mathematics; and in the belief of that moral axiom, I will speak out plainly in respect of the following important subjects as treated in the Westminster formularies in comparison with other Symbols.

1. *Chapters I and XX of the Confession.* 1. I accept cordially the statements and principles contained in Chapter I of the Confession, entitled "Of the Holy Scriptures;" and in the somewhat kindred Chapter XX, entitled "Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience." Were it only for the mode in which the former speaks of the Scriptures in the original tongues, and makes them the judge "finally to appeal to" in all controversies of religion, my full assent must be given to it. Chapter XX is of equal worth as it stands by itself; because, thus viewed, it guarantees all which any man can desire, or ought to desire. And though its principles must necessarily be kept in check, if not quite counteracted, by the stringent enactments and completely systematic scope of the entire Confession; still, it is the questions put at ordination and the formula in whose terms subscription is made to the Standards which nullify its principles. These also make the first chapter a dead letter.

2. *Chapter II and VIII of the Confession.* 2. I hold the first great catholic doctrine, viz., that of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead; and accept it as set forth in Chapter II of the Confession. Along with it may be classed Chapter VIII, entitled, "Of Christ the Mediator;" and I accept it also, with the following reservation. I do not understand what it says of "justifying and sanctifying," as these things are defined in the chapters that treat of them. But, on the other hand, I accept all that it says of Christ the Me-

diator; and I hold His “one obedience,” or “one righteousness” to be the only meritorious source and ground of our Salvation, Justification, and Eternal Life. For it contained the only atonement for sin; it effected our reconciliation with God, and our redemption from the power and guilt of sin; and it procured for us the Life Eternal and the Eternal Inheritance.

3. I believe in what is commonly called “the fall;” or the altered condition into which Adam and his posterity passed in consequence of Adam’s “one offence.” That condition is characterised by the sinfulness and guilt cleaving to human nature, and the consequent liability to judgment and punishment; and, as already pointed out, the mediation of Christ, the second Adam, can alone remedy that evil condition, and avert its fearful consequences. I believe the purely scriptural and catholic doctrine as to the Fall to be set forth in Articles IX and X of the Church of England; and that it is so wisely expressed in these Articles that, while Pelagian errors and Augustinian or Calvinistic extremes are equally avoided, the Scriptures are left free to be interpreted according to their strong and emphatic, but exactly balanced and balancing, declarations. A similar remark applies to the treatment of this subject in the Confession of Knox. Being a Confession, it of course speaks of the subject in fuller and more pointed terms, and refers to it from different points of view, than could occur in a series of Articles. But, viewing the whole Confession,

3. Chapters
VI and IX
of the Con-
fession.

its treatment of this important subject is exactly equivalent to that seen in the Thirty-nine Articles. One of its strongest expressions occurs in Chapter III, entitled of "Of original sin:" "By which transgression, commonly called original sin, was the Image of God utterly defaced in man." In the Latin version this is rendered thus: "Qua transgressione, quæ vulgo dicitur originale peccatum, prorsus deformata est illa Dei in homine imago." When the Poet says,

"Weeds deformed
The hardened soil, and knots of withered grass,"

his sense of the word deformed cannot be objected to. Affixing that sense to the term defaced or deformed in the above quotation, it may at once be seen to correspond, firstly, in its English form, with these words of Article X, "whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness;" and secondly, in its Latin form, with these, "qua fit ut ab originali justitia quam longissime distet." Moreover, all said on this subject, whether in Chapter III or in Chapter XII, entitled, "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost," is manifested by the text and references to be a strong expression of belief in the scriptural statements as to the sinfulness and spiritual deadness of human nature, and no mere formulistic settlement of innumerable controversies touching human ability or inability.

I shall merely state that, of course, the exact words of Knox have been given in the above quotation. And as the point does not affect the substance of the question, I shall not make any remark on

his curious application of the expression, "original sin," to denote not the deformity caused in all men by Adam's transgression, but that transgression itself.

The treatment of this subject in the Westminster formularies is certainly different from that which has now been considered. The Westminster Divines being dissatisfied with the securities against Pelagianism contained equally in the Thirty-nine Articles and the Confession of Knox, put forth an extreme Augustinian or Calvinistic representation of man's fallen estate, which is very apt to issue in disastrous spiritual and moral results. The difference between the Articles, for example, and the Westminster formularies, on this point, may be thus described. The framers of Articles IX and X described the principle of the disease affecting human nature, made that the normal expression of the truth, and left the Scriptures untrammelled; so that, if extreme consequences were insisted on by any party as the truth revealed by God, they might be met by other parties who were free to deduce from the same or different parts of the Bible the necessary corrective. On the contrary, the framers of Chapters VI and IX of the Confession described in extreme language, especially in the former chapter, the fully developed disease as exhibited in the most corrupt times. The proofs appended to the Chapters demonstrate the correctness of this statement. And while that description was made the normal expression of the truth, it was made impossible to counteract effectually the unhappy consequences deducible from it, because the authoritative sense of the text and the

necessarily corresponding sense attached to the proofs must always shelter such consequences. The consequences referred to, flow from such a description as the following of men in the estate of nature when set forth as normal: "they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good," and "they are altogether passive," that is, without action in their "effectual calling." Now fatally dangerous opinions are made quite unassailable, or are at least fully countenanced, by these statements. These opinions either repress activity, or afford an excuse of inactivity, in the case of the careless; or they bewilder and cause deep pain and anxiety to the well disposed. But this is not all, since these opinions are fitted to strike at the foundations of moral responsibility. For, if human nature in its radical principles and actual condition as its successive generations appear on earth, be literally and exactly "made opposite to all good," then it is impossible to prove sin to be really sin, and guilt to be really guilt. The one must be the necessary result of a nature made from its source "opposite to all good," and not of a darkened mind and perverted will, which prefer criminal and earthly to spiritual and divine things; and the other must be a pure calamity impending over a creature who sins not from choice but from natural necessity. In fact it happens in the case of this moral extreme just as in others, that in advancing to it as grave evils may be encountered as those sought to be avoided. For in fleeing from Pelagianism the depths of Manicheism may be inadvertently fallen into.

While saying these things, I will maintain as determinedly as either Henderson, Baillie, or Gillespie could, that there are derangements in the nature of every man, which have the direct tendency to land him in the condition of being the enemy of all good, and which too often issue in that fearful state, as sad experience proves. As determinedly will I maintain, that the grand evil of human nature is a spiritual death, caused by and consisting in an alienation from God, the only quickener and only life of the spirit of man. But then, man does or may know, in every step he takes along that course which must end in his being at last the companion of devils, that he is sinning by yielding to what is evil, and by surrendering his will to be the slave of what his conscience and the divine law tell him to be forbidden. And as to spiritual death it is of a kind that presupposes the possibility of arising to life; since it is also called a sleep; and the spiritually dead or asleep are called on to awake, to arise, and to live, through the mercy and grace of God. I firmly believe, indeed, that equally the arising from this sleep and vivifying from this death are of God; but God has also told us that man does awake, that man does arise, that man does act, in the entering on a new life. Human intellect will never, I believe, abolish the mystery surrounding the processes by which, through Divine grace alone, sinful men are saved from their sinfulness in a manner not only compatible with, but demanding an attentive mind, a contrite heart, an obedient will, and diligent hands. And if it be equally irreligious, or contrary to the

Scriptures, and unphilosophical or contrary to pure reason, to question or deny the origin of our entire salvation in active Divine Grace, it is as much so to affirm anything in respect of human nature that can slacken the sense of responsibility, or convert the processes of regeneration, repentance, and renewal, from being spiritual and moral into mechanical ones.

The wisdom of the Articles of the Church of England lies in leaving the scriptural mode of treating this subject quite free from any human controlling enactments. And the Bible certainly neither raises nor solves any of the deep questions involved in this subject. It teaches the Faith: not a science either of Pneumatics or Theology. But its strong, pointed, and convincing declarations on all the sides of its subjects are invariably adapted, by the wisdom of him who made man and knows what is in man, to disclose the whole truth, to lay a man's entire nature bare for his own inspection in the most salutary mode, and then to manifest in unclouded light the path which shall assuredly lead all who will walk in it to immortal good through Divine philanthropy and grace. On consulting the Bible with the steadfast gaze which shuts out all foreign objects, one will never find himself stumbling over a hard proposition, fitted to intimate that his part is to stand still, though mighty alternatives are before him. Much less will he find the nature which God has made him participant of pictured as the necessary slave of evil and enemy of good. It rather makes man's sinfulness and guilt consist in the fact, that having a spirit whose Father is God, a soul

bestowed on him by God, and a body “fearfully and wonderfully made” by the Almighty Artificer, he yet prefers, contrary to all law, to immerse spirit, soul, and body, in darkness, transgression, and death, than to walk as a living, pure, and blessed being, in the light, life, and purifying hopes provided and offered by the Eternal. And the chief defect of the Westminster theology in connection with this subject consists much more in omitting to give due prominence to the real causes and constituents of human sinfulness, which can alone teach a man his real guilt, misery, and danger, than in over-drawing the picture of that actual sinfulness and misery which sacred and profane history declares to have existed. For, while maintaining the reality of this great evil, and firmly believing in its origin and source, as described in the Scriptures, it ought at the same time to be maintained on their authority that the essence of man’s sinfulness and the sting of his guilt are seen in the following truth. He is neither a devil nor by nature made opposite to all good, but a man and God’s most highly favoured creature; still, though called on equally to learn his inheritance of a fallen and sinful nature, and to enjoy a full deliverance from it, he will prefer evil to good, enmity with God to peace, the apples of Sodom to the fruit of the Tree of Life, and death to life.

It is the excellence of the gifts bestowed on man which makes their deformity and perversion so sinful; for “he was made only a little lower than the angels.” It is the worth of his spirit through which God “teacheth us more than the beasts of the field,” that

makes its death when alienated from the life of God so melancholy a subject of contemplation. And while it is a fact as undoubted as mysterious, that man's sinfulness and deadness in sin sprang from a fountain of transgression opened by man's primogenitor in himself; oh! in the name of all that is merciful and philanthropic let no needless obstacle continue to stand in the way of any man's return to God. The Dort Decrees as to grace and human ability have had their day; and if any of their dictates be fitted to cast a stumblingblock in the path of men, let it be obliterated. I say this in the knowledge of their extraordinary and lamentable influence over great numbers in certain districts of Scotland even at this day.

4. *Chapters
III and X of
the Confes-
sion.*

4. I hold the catholic doctrine respecting the mystery of foreknowledge, predestination, and election, that is, I believe that in some way utterly inscrutable by man, God does foreknow and predestinate men unto salvation. Indeed, my mind even tells me very plainly, that any man who chose to do it could deduce, from the admitted truth of the Divine foreknowledge, all the consequences of election and predestination with their admitted difficulties; and that he could do this with a logic so necessary and unassailable that any attempt to dislodge him from his position must prove futile. But is it wise, charitable, and warranted by the example of the best formularies, and of theologians of much authority, to place such conclusions in the front of a symbol, and to apply them rigorously throughout

its lessons, or rather enactments? As to its wisdom, that appears very questionable; because the Church at large has always employed this mystery more as an antidote to Pelagian and other errors than as suitable spiritual food for all minds, hearts, and consciences alike. And as to its charitableness, I believe that the history of Scottish sectarianism affords a warning and mournful testimony. No formulary, except the Decrees of the Synod of Dort, which did not directly affect even the Belgic Confession, countenances the mode of applying this mystery adopted by the Westminster Divines. Calvin himself treats specially of the subject only at the close of the doctrinal portion of his Institutes. And even Dr. Chalmers, (a predestinarian of the Edwards and not the pure Calvinistic school), assigned a principle or place to this mystery at the end of his Institutes.

It appears to me, when these facts are considered, that the scriptural expression of this subject in Article XVIII of the Church of England, combined as it is with a caution, is unquestionably preferable to its expression in Chapter III of the Westminster Confession. This remark is equally applicable to the Confession of Knox as compared with the Westminster one. I ground this on the circumstance that what Knox said on the subject was, as happened with all his statements, simply an appropriation of Bible statements. Thus, the primitive Scottish Confession ran parallel to the Bible on this subject; and it consequently bound the Church to the Decrees of no party or council. A precisely similar result flows

from the mode of expression employed in Article XVII, and from the position assigned to that Article in relation to the others. It thus occupies, in fact, the place assigned to its subject by Calvin, and declared by Dr. Chalmers to be the best for students of theology. But very different are the expression, place, and influence given to it in the Westminster formulary. It found therein a primary place, and an influence not only systematic, but in one instance quite novel, and as yet unexampled among formularies.

I refer to Chapter IX of the Confession, entitled "Of Effectual Calling." It exhibits a quite unwarrantable example of the application of this mystery in accordance with controversial opinions and interests. It is, as it were, the cusp formed by two convergent waves of controversy. The one was the wave of extreme assertion in respect of predestination, and the other was the wave of extreme assertion in respect of human inability. The Westminster Divines, hurried along by these waves, reasoned with equal determination as to the importance and certainty of absolute and unconditioned election and predestination, and as to man's being by nature "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good," and his being "altogether passive" in the process by which he receives regeneration, faith, and repentance. Hence their doctrine of Effectual Calling. This doctrine was, indeed, the necessary result of their principles; but it had also a controversial direction, and was intended to exclude all who held Arminian tenets, or could not assent to rigid Calvinising ones; and to show at the

same time how Antinomianism could find no shelter under their system, since only those moulded "altogether passively," and by a Divine decree, could be justified.

Now I object to this doctrine, for the following reason. It presents the all-important truths concerning regeneration, faith, and repentance, in a form not authorised by the Scriptures. I speak of these truths only, and not of election, predestination, or calling,—and I declare, that this chapter is purely factitious: it presents a conglomerate of revealed truths which had been melted down by a fiery controversial zeal; and it is found on analysis to contain portions only of these truths, arranged to harmonise with the main doctrine of Salvation. It stands, too, in the Confession in the place which repentance ought to have occupied, had the pure Calvinist model presented in the Helvetic Creed been copied. But it has displaced repentance and caused it, along with faith, to retreat to more remote and obscure parts of the formulary. As shall appear hereafter, a Lutheranism as much or more than a Calvinising tendency in the matter of Justification caused this strange metamorphosis of truths, and their reappearance in quite wrong places. The only formulistic authority for such a factitious doctrine as the Westminster one "Of Effectual Calling" is the Decrees of the Synod of Dort. But no zeal against the Arminians or other parties who contended with Calvinists much more than with Calvin, could warrant the treatment of Divine truths, and consequent disfigurement of Chris-

tianity, exhibited in this matter by the Westminster Divines.

On these grounds, I object completely to the Chapter of Effectual Calling. On the other hand, I object to the treatment of Election and Predestination in the Confession and Catechisms merely because its wisdom and charitableness are questionable, and not countenanced by the best and most venerable formularies. Moreover, I would deem it now, as heretofore, futile in a logical point of view, and presumptuous in a moral, to question decisively, or object dogmatically, even to the merely human affirmations on that subject which obviously exist in the formularies. I am thoroughly convinced, however, that it is impossible to treat this subject systematically, that is, to make a comprehensible statement of it by reasoning from first principles. For no sooner has the human mind dared to contemplate its fundamental truths than mystery meets its gaze, and warns it of the "light inaccessible" which lies beyond. At the same time these fundamental truths are apprehensible in a religious, moral, and historical form; which it is necessary and wholesome for all to apprehend. For they become, when so apprehended, the basis of our belief and confidence in the supreme moral government conducted by God over individual men, Churches, Nations, and the whole Earth. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." This statement affords to the religious mind a suitable basis of contemplation and trust in the sublime dominion of "the Eternal our God," over all the affairs of this

world; and is fitted to abase all human pride and glory. But who shall explain the principles of "light inaccessible" by which this government consists, is executed, and sustained? The Prophets even, though enjoying effluxes from it, could only divulge them as mysteries to be explained at the appointed times. And the truths revealed as to foreknowledge and predestination are to be viewed in the same manner. They teach that "the Eternal our God" is the Supreme and Irresponsible Dispenser of spiritual and religious benefits; just that human pride and confidence may be completely abased, and men may be brought to seek only from God through Christ the life and glory immortal. But even that Apostle who taught these truths most fully, and with the primary object of humbling the false pride and confidence of the Jews, and defending the religious rights of the Gentiles, even he exclaimed in reference to them: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

I will not notice at this point the subject of the Covenants as treated of in Chapter VII of the Confession, and the parallel places of the Catechisms. They present a structure reared partly on some truths already noticed; and partly on elements added to these truths for reasons that cannot be yet mentioned. The consideration of them must be reserved to the next part of this Note.

VIII. The department of the Westminster formularies primarily and principally objected to.

VIII. I impugn without qualification the doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Westminster formularies.

What they teach on this subject is not contained solely in one chapter of the Confession; or in one or two answers of the Larger Catechism. Quite the contrary of this holds. Thus, not mentioning minor statements, it is set forth in the Confession in Chapters VII, "Of God's Covenant with Man," X, "Of Effectual Calling," and XI, "Of Justification." But on comparing these with each other and with Chapters VIII, "Of Christ the Mediator," and XIV, "Of Saving Faith," very striking peculiarities are brought to light. And the impression produced by them is much deepened by examining the mode of treating the same subject adopted in the Larger Catechism. A highly artificial and skilful arrangement of materials is seen to characterise both documents; but it is fitted by its very peculiarities to place beyond doubt the exact nature of the doctrine intended to be authorised; and to exhibit it as a fully developed doctrine of external or extrinsic Justification or Salvation. By that character, the entire department of Christian truth which bears on the internal spiritual and moral condition of man is affected in an extraordinary manner. Faith, repentance, and good works are made to hold a position, best defined by saying: No man can tell what are their part and relations in the justified or saved estate.

But Chapter XI of the Confession is of paramount importance in connection with its own department,

and in its influence on the entire Westminster system of Doctrine. My objections to it are proper to itself. They are based on the very proofs alleged in its support; and these are the *Loci Classici* of Revelation in reference to Justification or Salvation. The entire fabric of Chapter XI sprung from an initiatory point of error in the interpretation of the Scriptures, authorised in the Augsburg Confession, but avoided by Knox in his Confession, and by Ridley and Cranmer in the Articles. This germ of error had expanded and impregnated with its own character all the scriptural formulas which bear on the subject of Justification or Salvation; and, by that means, it became possible to construct such an extraordinary form of doctrine as Chapter XI exhibits. The perfected results of that error are manifested as well in the intrinsic character of the Chapter in question as in its influence on the entire system of the Westminster Divines. In obedience to its requirements, the full theological and scriptural accounts of Faith and Repentance were thrust back into obscure parts of the Confession. And in their place a doctrine of "Effectual Calling" was substituted, which could be understood in the Lutheran sense of "conviction of sin," and of an "instrumental faith" as the only medium of receiving Justification or Salvation; and which also could harmonise with Calvinism by virtue of its predestinarian element. The requirements of Chapter XI also necessitated, at the hands of no unwilling servants, the formation of a purely factitious Covenant of Works, and a corresponding representation of the

Covenant of Grace, or the Gospel. These are most skilfully displayed in Chapter VII of the Confession; and as skilfully disposed of in the Larger Catechism, in company with truths kept separate from them for good reasons in the more dignified formulary. Finally, the requirements of Chapter XI, or perhaps the requirements of even mutilated truth and of moral interests, necessitated the formation of a quite new doctrine by the Westminster Divines, which is set forth in Chapter XIII, "Of Sanctification." The Covenanters had rejected Knox's method of dealing with that element as distinctly mentioned in certain *Loci Classici* of the Scriptures. In fact, they did not understand its meaning as therein set forth, any more than they understood the true nature and offices of Faith and Repentance. Besides, their Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation compelled them to thrust aside this element of holiness, just as it compelled them to thrust aside the faith and repentance which involve it. They first took as much of all three as might form a basis for their mere "instrumental faith;" and then thrust them all into the background, where no mortal man could discover on clearly intelligible grounds what their office is. But there was a special reason for introducing this new doctrine "Of Sanctification." It was fitted to fill up, in appearance, the chasm that must else have yawned between their doctrines of Salvation and of Good Works. In theory, indeed, it is simply impossible to bridge over that chasm in the system, and to show why, or for what, good works are necessary. A

dilemma, destructive either of the main doctrine or of morality, shoots out its horns the moment an attempt is made to assign such a reason. Melancthon never even attempted it in the Augsburg Confession. A popular refuge was always at hand in the famous puzzle, "justification by faith alone, but not by faith which is alone;" but let that be resorted to now, and its fate is sealed.

I maintain, then, that the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation is contrary to the teaching of Scripture and catholic theology. I maintain, too, that by its principles the harmony is broken up which would otherwise reign over the elements of Salvation. Moreover, I maintain that it renders most pernicious forms of error almost inevitable logical deductions from grounds apparently possessing the sanction of Revelation. Still further I maintain that between it and the eternal principles of spiritual and moral truth, which are either misrepresented or displaced, or turned into contradictions by it, is situate the lair of a lion which has over and over again sprung up to rend the Church, subjected to the overmastering control of Covenanting and Puritan theology. Finally, I maintain that the Bible lies helplessly bound by it, so that no man can bring out its full truth from any pulpit or any position of responsibility subjected to this formulary.

I proceed now to adduce the grounds on which the proof of these statements shall be constructed.

PART SECOND.

THE
DOCTRINE
OF
JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION
CONTAINED IN
THE WESTMINSTER FORMULARIES,
COMPARED WITH THAT OF OTHER
REFORMED AND PROTESTANT CREEDS.

THE doctrine which is now to be examined has been regularly denominated by me, the doctrine of Justification or Salvation. This has been done in accordance with a scriptural principle, or catholic axiom.

The Scriptures manifestly vouch the equivalence of Justification and Salvation. The proofs affixed to the Westminster formularies evince it; that is, those proofs which, as there employed, are understood to mean the same thing, whether the word justified, or saved, be employed in them. It is recognised in the Homilies of the Church of England; and, as will appear, it

formed an important feature of the Confession approved at Aberdeen in 1616. This is, in fact, a point which never has been, and never can be, formally questioned or denied.

A necessary preliminary step to that comparison of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation with the doctrine of other Creeds, which is now to be entered on, is, a statement of that doctrine as full and perfect as can be made at this point. Without this, we could not indicate exactly what ought to be looked for in the Symbols employed as standards of comparison, or point out in these Symbols various elements which only appeared in the Westminster formularies in consequence of continued and elaborate controversies terminated by the Symbols in question. Such a sketch will serve as a chart in the middle passage which leads to the proposed result through seas of controversy. In the course of the investigation made under such a guidance, point after point set forth in the Westminster formularies shall be identified in successive symbols, until the place be reached in which the Westminster divines and their contemporaries performed their own and original portion of the work, which terminated in their fully developed so-called Protestant doctrine of Justification or Salvation.

The Confession of John Knox shall be always referred to, and at the proper point specially employed as the standard of the true in opposition to the erroneous form of doctrine. As already intimated, I believe the doctrine confessed by Knox, and that

authorised in the Thirty-Nine Articles is identical. At the proper point, the reasons of this belief shall be stated. But I employ specially the Confession of Knox, just because it is a Confession, and therefore speaks in full and explicit terms. It is on that account quite invaluable; and had that great man never done more for his country than write that Confession at the time he did, it would have made him worthy of being held in lasting remembrance and honour.

In the preliminary sketch, the principal difficulties and most important consequences of the Westminster doctrine, as well as its prominent features, will come into view. This is a necessity of the bare attempt to sketch it, and to deduce it from the statements of the formularies. But its intrinsic character in these respects, or as compared with the true form of doctrine expressed by John Knox, and authorised in the Articles, cannot be fully set forth until the comparison has been completed; and the Westminster doctrine is seen to stand forth laden with all the infirmities and contradictions of the Augsburg Confession downwards, with the addition of those gratuitously laid on by the Divines who took in hand to frame it.

It is apprehended that the History of the Church at large contains few pages more remarkable than that which is to be very summarily examined; or written in more unmistakeable characters on more patent and authoritative documents. My own conviction is, that it illustrates with extraordinary clearness and a deeply

impressive force, the “ manifold wisdom ” with which the Head of the Church rules over all its sections ; and the solemn, the almost dread, responsibility which rests on the heads of those whom He has placed in positions of influence over the minds and consciences of their fellow-men.

SECTION I.

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION SET FORTH IN THE WESTMINSTER FORMULARIES.

IT is necessary to state at once, that much “doubt-someness” (to borrow a covenanting term) appears in the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation as set forth in the Confession. Besides, the mode of presenting it in the Larger Catechism is in appearance different from that followed in the more dignified formulary. Nevertheless, the real authorised doctrine can be ascertained from them with a certainty rendered the more complete by the very causes in which the apparent “doubtsomeness” originates.

The “doubtsomeness” of the Confession originates: First, in the omission of certain terms and epithets where they ought to have been employed; secondly, in the undefined condition of the language in a place where definition was urgently demanded; and thirdly, in the total omission of those terms and statements in another place, whose presence could alone have con-

nected statements and secured an unequivocal doctrine in the Confession. But all these sources of ambiguity in a document otherwise so unprecedentedly clear, are themselves distinctly traceable to a cause known to its framers. This cause is as obvious as it is significant, when once pointed out; and its significancy extends from the Westminster doctrine to its germ in the positive aspect of the Augsburg Confession. And it is very remarkable, that as a different mode of representing the doctrine was followed in the Larger Catechism, which removed in *appearance* the difficulties encountered in framing the Confession; so in the former there is no ambiguity such as disfigures the latter. The Catechism, too, is clear at the exact critical point where the Confession was obscure by design and needed a supplementary declaration. This mode of management, however, has made the formularies susceptible of being employed in a sense totally different from that originally designed and elaborately secured. For the mode of representation employed in the Catechism became liable to be turned against that employed in the Confession. Besides, there are involved in the formularies substantially and in fact two ways of Salvation: 1st, the way by "justifying faith;" and 2dly, the way "by saving faith." The former, however, is undoubtedly the authorised way; for the latter was intended to harmonise in the manner of "the system" with the former, and can only be said to be authorised *de facto* in the un-systematic sense, and not *de jure*.

That the way "of justifying faith," as defined in the

Larger Catechism and in Chapter XI of the Confession, is the authorised doctrine of Salvation can be made manifest by strong, indeed undeniable, evidence. This comprises: 1st, the cumulative moral evidence of the formularies themselves; 2dly, the elucidation of the circumstances that cause ambiguity, and the fact that these circumstances are not peculiar to the Westminster, but to its source in the Augsburg, doctrine; 3dly, the contents of other formularies, and especially of the Aberdeen Confession of 1616, which place the matter beyond all possibility of doubt.

I. Meantime, let the formularies themselves vouch what has been said. Chapter XI of the Confession first demands attention.

I. General statement of the Westminster Doctrine of Justification, or Salvation.

Certain "positions negative" occurring in the first paragraph of the chapter are noteworthy. They are four in number, and assert in the following manner—God justifies the "effectually called:" first, "not by infusing righteousness into them;" secondly, "not for anything wrought in them, or done by them;" thirdly, "not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience;" fourthly, "faith is the alone instrument of justification." As has been indicated at the commencement of the above sentence, the chapter opens by stating that the "effectually called" are justified; but it also mentions, at the close of the third paragraph, that "sinners" are justified. The last of the four statements enumerated above is proved to be a "position nega-

tive" by its employers not having been content with the words "faith only." In fact, these words, though susceptible of the meaning intended by the Westminster Divines, might also have allowed an interpretation by which "faith itself, the act of believing, and evangelical obedience" might be shown to be some way considered in the matter of Justification. Accordingly, these things were not merely excluded by a distinct negation, but, to make their exclusion absolutely certain, faith was declared to justify only as an instrument. As those who borrowed and authorised this term did not explain it, it appears to be most judicious to follow their example.

It is to be observed, that the first three of these "positions negative" refer to substantially the same thing. Thus an infusion or impartation of righteousness by God is simply another mode of expressing the working of God in man that he may work out his own salvation; and the bestowal on man by God of faith as the germ of all evangelical righteousness. But they are not on this account to be summarily dismissed as deserving no particular attention. On the contrary, they have each a distinct and important historical value. The two middle ones mark the mode in which objections successively urged on grounds of Scripture against the full systematising of the peculiarities of the Augsburg and similar early Protestant Creeds were met. For, as will appear, although every one of these positions negative were potentially involved from the first in the Augsburg Confession when viewed in its positive aspect, still only the first came into obvious

and unmistakeable view to the reader of that formulary. Hence a series of protests and controversies, the settlement of each of which on one side stands recorded in these "positions negative." And some of these controversies as we read them in formularies, prove incontestably that the matter in dispute was not Justification only but also Salvation, as might be expected of men who knew at least the first principles of Theology.

But Chapter XI informs us, that the Justification which is exclusive of all the things enumerated above is bestowed freely or gratuitously on the sinner. Its third paragraph runs thus: "Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them, and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them, their Justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the Justification of sinners." The term "debt" obviously stands in an unsatisfactory condition of undefinedness in this passage. But apparently, I assert nothing positively in the matter at present, the debt spoken of has something to do with the obedience rendered by Christ in the stead of the "effectually called" or of "sinners." But the passage teaches with unexampled clearness, when looked at in itself, that the Justification of sinners is free or gratuitous in the most complete sense of the term. That

is the point I at present insist on. It is this point which chiefly connects Chapter XI with the positive aspect of the Augsburg Confession. For Melancthon, as shall be shown, while insisting on this point, had not the most remote conception, indeed could not by any possibility have a conception, of most of the characteristics of this chapter. And to bring out fully the point of "freeness," as taught in the above paragraph, it ought to be viewed in connection with the preceding one of the same chapter, which speaks of faith. It says: "Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love." It is noticeable, that these words only affirm as a fact that the "instrument" faith is a living as well as an "instrumental" faith. They carefully avoid affirming that it must, by the solemn obligation of a divine command, be an operative principle. That omission is intentional. It is caused not merely by the systematic force of that principle which introduced the "positions negative," but had a reference to the following words hereafter to be more fully considered. "And constantly we affirm that faith, which bringeth not forth good works, is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation." These words would have marred in their opinion the freeness "of the justification of sinners;" hence the avoidance, by the Westminster Divines, of all but a simple declaration that "justifying faith" is also a living faith.

Justification, then, according to the Scottish Covenanters and Westminster Divines, is exclusive of every divinely implanted element; it is exclusive of every condition; and it is free or gratuitous, in the fullest sense of the term, to sinners. And the next question for consideration is, what does Justification consist of, and on account of what is it bestowed? Now we are informed in this same chapter, that God justifies the "effectually called," according to its commencement, and "sinners" according to its third paragraph, in the following manner: first, "by pardoning their sins;" secondly, "by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous for Christ's sake alone;" and thirdly, "by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ to them, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith." These three positive elements stand guarded by the "positions negative" already enumerated. It will appear that a reason is distinctly ascertainable in the series of formularies hereafter to be examined, for these three elements following each other exactly as they do. It is with an eye to that circumstance that they, like their parallel "positions negative," have been enumerated *seriatim*. It is to be observed, at the same time, that the former are frequently, indeed commonly, reduced to two. Thus the common expressions are—"Christ and his righteousness," or by inversion "the obedience and satisfaction" of Christ. This inversion, indeed, occurring, as it does, without any assigned reason, produces a very unpleasant wavering effect on the mind. But a worse effect still is produced by the

omission of any explanation of the principle on which the three statements first noticed are reduced to two. I know the reason, to my own full satisfaction, of both the inversion and the reduction referred to. But it is just such things, caused certainly by most substantial reasons, which fill with ambiguity a document much clearer on many momentous points than others of its own kind.

One thing demands special notice in the positive account given of Justification. It states, that "*the persons*" of the effectually called, or sinners, are accounted and accepted as righteous for Christ's sake alone. This idea of the personality being justified is borrowed from Melancthon's statement in the Augsburg Confession. How he was driven to introduce into his system the idea of the abstract personality being justified shall be shown in due course.

The characteristics of Justification, as defined by the Westminster Divines, are sufficiently apparent. It is declared not to be bestowed on account of anything that ought to dwell, or does dwell, by Divine Grace in the heart of the Christian; and to be something both exclusive of such internal elements and different from them in kind. It consists of two elements quite external to the man who is justified; for the first element is the forgiveness of sins; and the second is the accounting and accepting of the man's "person" as righteous on the ground of Christ's righteousness, or obedience rendered in his stead. Moreover, this justification is bestowed on the "sinner" freely or gratuitously in the fullest sense of the term. In a

word, faith acting as an “instrument” in the “effectually called” or “sinners,” and styled “a justifying faith” in reference to that particular kind of action, “receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his righteousness, held forth for pardon of sin, and for the accounting and accepting of the person as righteous in the sight of God for salvation”

II. The last quotation appears to indicate the equivalence to Salvation of the Justification described in it. Do the formularies then contain an unambiguous doctrine of Justification or Salvation? Do they speak out with the boldness of truth, and leave no room for “doubtsomeness?” They shall be allowed to answer these questions for themselves, and to unfold the causes of the character of their teaching. These causes are very peculiar. And for the sake of greater clearness, the teaching of the Confession on this subject shall be first exhibited.

II. The ambiguity of the Confession in its doctrine of Justification or Salvation.

The account given of the Covenant of Works in the Confession must lead the way. It is said in Chapter VII, entitled “Of God’s Covenant with Man:” “The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.” This covenant of works is further explained in Chapter XIX, entitled “Of the Law of God” thus: “God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which He bound him, and all his posterity, to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and

threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it." The law described in these words as a covenant of works is also declared in the same chapter to be the same as the moral law afterwards summarily declared from Sinai. Adam's breach of this covenant of works, and its consequences, are described in Chapter VI, entitled "Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the punishment thereof." "Our first parents being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit;" again, "by this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body;" and again, "every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal." The consequences of the fall are, moreover, thus described in Chapter VII, under the head of the covenants: "Man, by his fall, made himself incapable of life by the covenant of works." Besides, it is distinctly affirmed in Chapter XIX, entitled "Of the Law of God," that "true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned." This is spoken of the moral law as summarily set forth in the Decalogue.

It is observable in all these quotations, that the terms "life and death" never have an epithet like "everlasting,"

or "future," applied to them. "Miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal," are, indeed, mentioned in the quotation from the chapter "Of the Fall;" but neither in it nor in any of the others, has life or death an epithet. This is specially noticeable in the quotations descriptive of the covenant of works; and it is thus pointed out, because a similar absence of definiteness will appear in the account of the covenant of grace. But in the case of the latter, important consequences flow from the absence of explicit language.

Turning now to the account of the Covenant of Grace in Chapter VII, it is found to run thus: "Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the Covenant of Grace: whereby He freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him that they may be saved; and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life His Holy Spirit, to make them able and willing to believe." Now, an obvious parallelism exists between the above passage and the account of the covenant of works. Thus it declares that life and salvation are offered unto sinners by Jesus Christ in the Covenant of Grace; and these are the exact counterparts to man's inability to reach life by the covenant of works after the Fall, and to the salvation which he required from the consequences of sin. But it is to be observed, that both the terms "life and salvation" stand in the passage quite undefined by epithets or explanatory expressions. One cannot tell whether life means simply eternal life viewed as a

future good, or a life to be begun now in the prospect of its being immortal. But the unexplained condition of the term salvation is of particular moment. For example, does it include sanctification as a principle of holiness? Is it equivalent to a salvation from the power as well as from the guilt of sin? It is impossible to tell from the passage. It merely affirms, that by Jesus Christ "life and salvation are freely offered unto sinners;" that what is required of them is, "faith in Him that they may be saved;" and that the Holy Spirit is promised "unto all those that are ordained unto life to make them willing and able to believe." Indeed, one is inevitably led by this language to conclude, at least it is perfectly legitimate to conclude, that it ought to be connected with Chapter XI, which, as has been seen, describes so distinctly what is bestowed freely or gratuitously on the "effectually called," or "sinners," or what they receive by an instrumental faith. The propriety of this connection is confirmed by what is said in the first paragraph of Chapter X, "Of Effectual Calling." Thus, it is said: "All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased, in His appointed time, effectually to call by His Holy Spirit, out of that estate of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ." These words obviously point as much to the account given of the Covenant of Grace, as to the account of the justification of the "effectually called" or "sinners," which is declared to glorify "both the exact justice and rich grace of God." Accordingly, Chapter XI shall now be quoted

at full length, that it may show for itself whether it affirms anything as to "life and salvation." It is right, for other reasons, that this Chapter should now be cited in full.

"Those whom God effectually calleth He also freely justifieth; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone: not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

"Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.

"Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them, and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them, their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God may be glorified in the justification of sinners.

"God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification; nevertheless they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them.

"God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may by their sins fall under God's

fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of His countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.

“The justification of believers under the Old Testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.”

Plainly, nothing is said in the chapter either of Life or Salvation. This is very remarkable; and the cause of this silence is most instructive, especially when viewed in connection, on the one hand, with the evident adaptation to each other of the account of the two Covenants and of Justification; and, on the other hand, with the mode of describing Justification employed in the Larger Catechism.

III. Causes of the ambiguity of the Confession in its doctrine of Justification or Salvation.

III. Before examining the statements of the Larger Catechism, let the causes of the silence as to Salvation, in Chapter XI, be observed. These causes are fitted to prove, in my opinion, how convinced the framers of the Confession must have been of the truth of that Chapter, notwithstanding the difficulties connected with it, as known even to them; and how carefully they arranged their materials on the understanding of its being correct.

It has been pointed out, that the terms “life and salvation” are left quite undefined in the Covenant of Grace given in Chapter VII. Being thus undefined, it is quite possible to reconcile them with what is said in Chapter VIII “Of Christ the Mediator,” and in Chapter XIV “Of Saving Faith.” Thus, when it is

said of Christ the Mediator, "unto whom He did from all eternity give a people to be His seed, and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified," it is quite possible to make the salvation spoken of in the previous chapter include all these things. The same thing can be done in the case of the following description of Saving Faith. "By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the Covenant of Grace." But since the Covenant of Grace obviously, according to this passage, involves sanctification as much as justification, why did the Westminster Divines not say so in express terms in their first account of that Covenant, in Chapter VII? Plainly because, had they done so, it would not have tallied with Chapter XI; and would have made that Chapter obviously an imperfect and contradictory account of Salvation.

If Chapter XI, indeed, was intended to declare how "life and salvation" are reached by the sinner now that "man is incapable of life by the covenant of works," then will the account of the Covenant of Grace, in Chapter VII, tally with it, provided sanctification be not included under the term salvation. For

the "effectually called" in the former will answer to "those that are ordained unto life," and who receive the Holy Spirit, "to make them willing and able to believe," described in the latter. The Justification, too, described in the former as freely bestowed on the sinner will correspond with the "life and salvation" freely offered unto sinners according to the latter. But the harmony becomes quite broken up, when the salvation spoken of in Chapter VII is understood to include sanctification. For that is represented by the Westminster Divines to be a different thing from Justification. Thus it is said in the Larger Catechism: "Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification, yet they differ, in that God in Justification imputeth the righteousness of Christ, in sanctification his Spirit infuseth grace, and enableth to the exercise thereof; in the former, sin is pardoned; in the other, it is subdued: the one doth equally free all believers from the avenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation; the other is neither equal in all, nor in this life perfect in any, but growing up to perfection." I neither assent to nor dissent from the affirmation in this passage that "sanctification is inseparably joined with justification." It may stand on its own merits; because all that concerns my subject is the proof afforded by the passage that the two things are held to be distinct. The one consists of external elements, the other of internal. Accordingly, Chapter VII would not tally with Chapter XI, if salvation in the former included sanctification. Neither can a reconciliation be effected by saying, that only

the "effectually called" are justified; and that faith, "the alone instrument of justification," is yet "not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love." For, as to the first, all that is made by Divine Grace to dwell from the commencement of their regeneration onwards in Christians, is excluded by four "positions negative" from occupying any place either as an element or condition of Justification. And the last of these four "positions negative" specially excludes "faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience." And that "position" has, as was pointed out, a special historical import in connection with the question of "Justification or Salvation."

No man can come to any other conclusion, on considering these things, than that the framers of the Confession were aware of the difficulties connected with their doctrine; but yet believed it to be correct, and adjusted their materials in accordance with that belief. They framed their account of the Covenant of Grace to make it at once reconcilable to their account of Christ's mediatorial work, of saving faith, and of Justification. But they evidently kept the last chiefly in view; for it was a reconciliation with it that prompted the use of such undefined terms as "life and salvation." The silence again in Chapter XI, as to "life and salvation," was in fact a matter of necessity; because the employment of these terms must at once have provoked a comparison between that Chapter and the accounts of Christ's mediatorial work and of saving faith. In conse-

quence, indeed, of omitting to call Justification, as defined in Chapter XI, Salvation, the Westminster doctrine might have appeared utterly ambiguous when learned only from the Confession. At least, the absence of an express declaration that its framers held the equivalence of Justification, as defined by them, and Salvation must, notwithstanding the many things indicating it, have made their doctrine "doubtful" in even the most palpable sense of the term. But then the Larger Catechism is explicit just where the Confession is silent. It removes all doubt as to the fact, that the Westminster Divines as well maintained the equivalence of Justification and Salvation, as set forth their own form of that doctrine with consummate controversial skill.

IV. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation as set forth in the Larger Catechism.

IV. It has been already stated, that the Larger Catechism differs from the Confession in its mode of representing the doctrine in question. Firstly. It identifies the theology of the Westminster Divines with that of the "Fœderalist School" as existing in the seventeenth century, by its language, which bears unmistakeable testimony as to that point. Secondly. It mixes up with the account of the Covenants those elements which were treated of in separate chapters in the Confession. Thirdly. It plainly intimates, however, that the Westminster doctrine of Justification, as set forth in Chapter XI of the Confession, is also the doctrine of Salvation.

In the first place, the Covenant of Works, and the

consequences of its transgression by Adam, are thus described in the Larger Catechism : “(God entered) into a covenant of life with (Adam,) upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and (forbade) to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.” After describing the fall of “our first parents” by eating the forbidden fruit, it says : “The covenant being made with Adam as a Publick Person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.” The sinfulness of man’s fallen condition is next portrayed; and then its misery, as the following words will in part show : “The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come.” Let the counterpart account of the Covenant of Grace be next considered. It is said : “God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Works; but of his mere love and mercy delivereth his elect out of it, and bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant commonly called the Covenant of Grace.” This “Covenant of Grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in Him with all the elect as His seed.” Immediately after the above passages follows this one : “The grace of God is manifested in the second

covenant, in that He freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by Him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in Him, promiseth and giveth His Holy Spirit to all His elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which He hath appointed them to salvation."

These passages plainly identify the Westminster with the well-known Fœderalist theology. And, while referring to the Fœderalist theology, I desire to draw a deeply marked distinction between the fundamental religious truths involved in it, and the systematic form into which they were put, with sundry additions by the British and Continental theologians of the seventeenth century. But the identity of the Westminster and Fœderalist theology cannot be questioned, when we attend on the one hand to the account given of Adam as a "publick person," and of the covenant of works made with him in that capacity, and on the other to the account of Christ as the second Adam, and of the covenant made with Him as the Head of the elect. Again it is obvious, that in the above account of the Covenant of Grace, matters are introduced which were kept apart from it in the Confession. And they are introduced in a peculiar manner. Thus, the subjects treated of separately in Chapters VII and VIII of the Confession, are commingled, but only substantially, in the Catechism. I say only substantially, because it is to be observed that, while redemption,

justification, and sanctification are substantially treated of, especially in the last of the above quotations, they are not mentioned in *express terms*. Moreover, one observes a want of exact correspondence of language on comparing what is said in Chapter VII of the Confession with the last quotation from the Catechism made above. Thus, in the former, it is said: "whereby He freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved; and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe." It is "life and salvation" which are here said to be "freely" offered to sinners; and while, indeed, faith is said to be "required of them that they may be saved," still nothing has the most remote tendency to indicate in what sense it is required. Neither is a word said about "saving graces." It is otherwise in the Catechism, which says: "The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that He freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by Him, and requiring faith as the *condition* to interest them in Him; promiseth and giveth His Holy Spirit to all His elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces." Here, faith is not only said to be required, but to be required as a condition. This peculiarity of the Catechism becomes more remarkable when compared with Chapter XI of the Confession, which simply affirms of the faith receiving justification that it is a living and no dead faith. Even the word "required" is omitted in it. It is to be remarked besides,

that the Catechism affirms faith to be required as a condition to interest in the Mediator, who is thus made the foremost object of contemplation, instead of the Life and Salvation which are first mentioned in the Confession. Moreover, the Catechism makes particular mention of "all other saving graces" as well as of the faith required as a condition to interest sinners in the Mediator.

Simply the necessity, taught by experience, for looking closely into such varieties of expression, and the conviction that none of them is accidental, make me thus dwell on such apparent trifles. But, indeed, to call them apparent trifles is not correct. Nothing ought to be considered or called trifling that is indicative either of truth or error in the representation of central departments of Christian verity. It may even be affirmed as a general rule, that the man who deems anything trifling which meets his eye while investigating nature or revelation, or any system of knowledge or belief, wants the pre-requisite of all correctness of mind. And so far from considering as trifles the peculiarities pointed out in the Catechism and Confession respectively, I hold them to bear significant testimony as to the state of mind and the conduct of the Westminster Divines. For, firstly, they indicate a consciousness of the portions of their system which were insecure, and even of dangerous tendency. In spite of such consciousness, indeed, they maintained them all, and expressed them fully in the Confession, wherever they could do so without committing themselves. But in their more popular work, a conscien-

tious regard for the moral interests of the people made them represent things in a somewhat safer form. For, undeniably, different moral impressions are produced by reading the account of the Covenant of Grace in the Larger Catechism than by reading that in Chapter VII of the Confession. In the former, the internal is conjoined adroitly with the external. Secondly: These peculiarities suggest another view, which a consideration of the principles that usually regulate human conduct in such matters warrants as correct. They suggest that a controversial interest dictated that representation of the Covenant of Grace exhibited in the Catechism. For, it could be pointed to as the proof that, while maintaining the system unfolded in the Confession, its framers did, nevertheless, inculcate the necessity of faith, repentance, and evangelical obedience, as conditions of Justification or Salvation. A great controversial advantage was gained in appearing thus to occupy ground from which in fact their own principles shut them out by a law of logic as irrefragable as any in geometry. To be able to assent and deny of the same thing, as necessity requires, is controversially of infinite moment. This is testified to by the use made during a lengthened period of that root of this kind of argument in theology, namely, the puzzle, "justification by faith alone, but not by faith which is alone."

And that a controversial as well as a moral interest prompted the peculiar arrangement of materials in the Confession and Catechism respectively, becomes manifest from the following circumstance. There is no

qualification of the doctrine of Justification in the Catechism. On the contrary, it is set forth therein with bolder features than even in the Confession; and is there declared to be what prudential motives forbade the express announcement of in the more dignified formulary. Indeed, the very quotation last made from the Catechism contains no slight proof of the accuracy of this statement. Thus, after speaking of "faith with all other saving graces," as has been already pointed out, it proceeds: "and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation." This salvation must necessarily be the same as that "life and salvation by" Jesus Christ, mentioned in the previous part of the passage; and the connection described as existing between it and obedience is conclusive as to the meaning actually involved in it. For obedience is declared to be the evidence of the truth of faith, namely, of that faith which gives an interest in the Mediator by whom life and salvation come; and of thankfulness to God who freely provideth and offereth life and salvation by the Mediator. Moreover, it is described as the way which "God hath appointed them to salvation," salvation being viewed as a thing already completed for believers, and needing only to be reached. I will not insist on the proof, Ephesians, ii, 18, although certainly the parties affixing it must have held the salvation mentioned in the previous part of that chapter to mean exactly what the words of the Catechism convey. But the following passages are as remarkable as conclusive.

Thus, in describing how Justification is an act of God's free grace, it is said: "God requires of them that are justified nothing but faith, which also is his gift." Immediately after, "justifying faith" is thus described.

"Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and word of God, whereby he being convinced of his sins and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and His righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the right of God for Salvation."

What justifying faith is thus declared to "receive and rest upon" is undoubtedly for Justification. And being expressly affirmed to be for Salvation, it follows inevitably that the Westminster Divines held their doctrine of Justification to be the equivalent of Salvation.

V. At one period, my mind would have been absolutely incredulous as to the possibility of questioning the identity of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation with that held by the Fœderalist Divines of the seventeenth century. It would have appeared hopeless, too, to discover a loophole in the formularies capable of affording escape from the conclusions that, according to the Westminster and Fœderalist doctrine, the death of Christ is the only source of forgiveness and way of escape from the second death, and His obedience to the law rendered in our stead the "only title to Eternal Life;" that these ele-

V. The Westminster Doctrine of Justification equivalent to that of Salvation.

ments comprise the whole of Justification ; that this Justification, bestowed gratuitously and received instrumentally by faith, is “ a completed salvation ;” and that it is quite heterodox to hold tacitly or openly, implicitly or explicitly, the necessity of repentance, sanctification, or good works, as acts of obedience, in order to Justification or Salvation. According to this system, Justification or Salvation was completed for us in the fullest sense by Christ’s obedience and satisfaction. It is also bestowed gratuitously and received instrumentally by faith alone ; and whatever be the necessity imposing obedience on us (and some sort of necessity or obligation the framers of the doctrine were compelled to admit, sometimes even in express terms), still obedience was not necessary in order to Salvation. My early and sincere convictions remain firm and unshaken, as to these being the genuine Westminster tenets. These convictions are corroborated by the internal evidence of the formularies, and the testimony of other formularies as well as of history. But experience, and an acquired knowledge of matters almost as much forgotten as the Confession of John Knox have taught me the necessity for proving an identity self-evident to theologians ; and for searching out where ambiguities lurked in the Westminster formularies.

Now caution betrayed the Westminster Divines into so guarded an employment of language, that even the strongest affirmation of what their doctrine of Salvation really is may be evaded. It is thus with the last quotation from the Larger Catechism. It un-

doubtedly affirms the equivalence of the Westminster doctrine of Justification to Salvation. But, as I pointed out some way back, that the terms "life and salvation" were left undefined in the description given of the Covenant of Grace, in Chapter VII of the Confession, so does the term "salvation" stand without an epithet in the description of "justifying faith," given in the Catechism. It thus becomes possible to assume that there is an "eternal salvation" different from the mere "salvation" mentioned in the formularies. I say different, because under that merely verbal distinction can a doctrine diametrically opposite to the Fœderalist one be introduced. For, while the Salvation meant in the formularies is equivalent to their doctrine of Justification, and, consequently, is both unconditioned and exclusive of sanctification and good works, the "eternal salvation" substituted for it must be understood either implicitly or explicitly to be conditioned, and attainable only through sanctification and good works. It is thus possible to assume that the authorised doctrine of Salvation is not what we ought to conclude it is from Chapter XI of the Confession, viz., an absolutely gratuitous or unconditioned Salvation.

It may be alleged, indeed, that the Westminster Divines left the terms "life and salvation" undefined in Chapter VII of the Confession, in order that the latter might include Justification, Sanctification, and the fruit of the latter in good works. It may be also alleged, that the same reason induced them to leave the term Salvation undefined in the account of "justifying faith." But several things militate conclusively

against such allegations. First: The allegations might be urged with a certain show of reason, if no other cause of a very different kind could be assigned for the undefined state of the language in the former of the instances. But it has been already shown, that that originated in the design of making the account of "life and salvation," in Chapter VII, tally with the account of Justification in Chapter XI. It has also been pointed out that, while the avoidance of an otherwise palpable contradiction was the reason of nothing being said in Chapter XI of Salvation, that term is employed as the equivalent of Justification in the Catechism where means had been employed to prevent an apparent contradiction. The term is found where the two formularies inosculate; and thus indicates the exact sense in which Chapter XI ought to be understood. This arrangement shows, that the Westminster Divines acknowledged the equivalence of Justification and Salvation, and held that the former, as explained by them, must be considered "a completed salvation." But secondly: If the allegation be admitted, it must follow that the Westminster Divines framed formularies that would allow the teaching of two doctrines of Justification or Salvation, which is contrary to their known intention. But Salvation viewed as exactly equivalent to the Justification described in Chapter XI of the Confession, and in the definition of "justifying faith," in the Catechism, is evidently quite different from the view which makes Salvation inclusive of sanctification. The former view excludes what the latter includes. And thirdly: The adaptation of the minor elements

and parts as well as the scope of the formularies are completely fitted to lead every unsuspecting reader to the conclusion, that "life and salvation," or "grace and salvation," mean exactly what is taught in Chapter XI of the Confession, and in the description of "justifying faith." This characteristic of the formularies, then, must be explained, before the allegations in question can be admitted.

The adaptation of the minor elements and parts of the formularies indeed teaches that the design of their framers was to make their doctrine of Justification the equivalent of what has been commonly named, "a Complete Salvation." The adaptation referred to, will come into view when the historical sketch of the doctrine has been made. Evidence will also have been then adduced, which precludes the possibility of doubting that the Justification described in the formularies is what has been commonly called a "Complete Salvation." But in truth, the evidence as to that point already adduced from the Confession and Catechism is amply sufficient. It is firmly grounded on the parallelism which exists between the accounts of the two Covenants, and between the accounts of the Covenant of Grace and Justification, in the Confession. Moreover, it is fully corroborated by the identity which exists, in fact, between the teaching of the Confession and of the Larger Catechism, on these subjects; and by the circumstance, that the latter speaks expressly on the very point as to Salvation, which, to save appearances, was left ambiguous in the former.

VI. The evidence of erroneousness exhibited by the formulas.

VI. In the previous remarks, a manifest ambiguity in the doctrine of the Confession has been brought to light. I refer to the capability of the account of the Covenant of Grace, in Chapter VII, of being reconciled either with Chapter XI, or with Chapters VIII and XIV. But that ambiguity involves in it a positive contradiction. It is, evidently, an absolute impossibility to reconcile the former portion of the Confession with both of the latter portions. Reconcile Chapters VII and XI, then will they disagree with Chapters VIII and XIV. Conversely, reconcile Chapters VII, VIII, and XIV, then will they disagree with Chapter XI. There is no outlet from this maze of contradictions.

All this exhibits a complete contrariety to the beautifully symmetrical order which meets the eye of man in every Divine manifestation which admits of being thoroughly examined and methodically stated. The confusion and downright contradiction now in question are quite different from the apparent contradictions which meet us in certain mysterious subjects, such as, for example, the compatibility of the Divine foreknowledge and the freedom of choice essential to the creature, in order to its accountableness. In the latter case, every difficulty which is encountered by reflective minds arises, in great part at least, from the impossibility of man's grasping the ultimate grounds on which the question rests. But it is quite different with the case under consideration. Both the nature and causes of that incongruousness and contradic-

toriness exhibited in the above form of doctrine can be distinctly traced out; and the mode of removing them can be explained. In fact, there is no occasion for their existence in the subject. They can be, and in the sequel will be, exhibited in their germinal condition. Indeed, an examination of the Augsburg Confession will bring to light how Melancthon dealt with the element of sanctification exactly as the Westminster Divines did. And the most complete proof, strange to say, of the purely gratuitous and factitious nature of all the schisms in the truth of the Gospel manifested in the Westminster formularies will be found in the Confession of Knox, which his countrymen rejected in favour of the continental paradoxes which were fully developed at Westminster.

But another instance of the contradictoriness exhibited in the formularies demands notice. It comes into view by comparing the doctrine of salvation by a "Justifying Faith," with the substantial truth set forth in the chapter of "Saving Faith." One paragraph of that chapter will serve to illustrate my meaning. The paragraph referred to says—"By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and

eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of Grace." Now looking at the substance of the truth thus stated, it appears to be very plain that that alone ought substantially to be deemed salvation which involves everything here stated, the internal as much as the external. That alone ought to be esteemed in reality Salvation which "saving faith," as described above, receives internally, enjoys externally, accomplishes by its spiritual energy, and finally leads to the everlasting fruition of. But it is quite obvious that this "saving faith" has different objects and functions from that "justifying faith," which is described as a principal act of "saving faith," and as the only means of enjoying Justification or Salvation. Now this latter Salvation does not quadrate, and cannot be made by any means to quadrate, substantially, with the Salvation received by "justifying faith," because the one excludes what the other includes; indeed the one consists of different elements from the other. Substantially then, the salvation that comes through "saving faith" differs from the salvation that comes through "justifying faith."

But it is not to be supposed that, because two substantially different kinds of salvation are thus actually embodied in the formularies, there is any doubt as to the really authoritative one. That is of course the salvation received by "justifying faith." The other is only met with because the majesty of divine truth constrained the Westminster Divines, as it has constrained all who have adhered to the same type of doctrine except systematic Antinomians, to assign a place somewhere to all its elements. Besides, it must

be borne in mind, that the Westminster Divines, being fully aware of this *substantial* difference, provided an approved *formal* means of turning aside its force. This is found in the paragraph on faith in Chapter XI. That paragraph says: "Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by faith." By means of this formula, while it expressed with perfect precision and integrity their own doctrine of external Justification or Salvation, they could make it appear that their system assigned a due place and paid full homage to all the spiritual and moral requirements of Christianity. I will offer no remark in respect of the satisfactoriness of this formal mode of reconciliation. I will rather allow it to stand on its own merits, because this question has yet to be answered: need there be any such difficulty requiring such a *formal* mode of reconciliation? I believe the difficulty itself to be purely an adventitious matter, and not an inseparable adjunct of the truth which was taught by that Holy Spirit "who is Unity, and in nothing contrarious to Himself."

But that form of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation which caused, and is accompanied by, the difficulties and contradictions already pointed out, has given rise to a central and all-comprehending difficulty in reference as well to the positions in which repentance and new obedience ought to be placed, as to the nature, or even the existence, of the spiritual

and moral obligation which lies on all who hear the Gospel, to repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. But both portions of this central difficulty will be examined more appropriately and advantageously after the history of the Westminster doctrine has been traced, than in this preliminary sketch. It is needless to discuss such collateral questions until it has been ascertained what value ought to be put on the tenets from which they spring, and with which they are inextricably connected. And, in truth, a sense of duty alone will make me examine these questions in the sequel to the extent that may then appear to be necessary. For, were my own wishes and feelings only to be consulted, these questions would have been passed over in the same silence which I have heretofore observed towards them.

I shall now proceed to compare the doctrine of Justification or Salvation that has been sketched in this section, with those forms of the same doctrine which are contained in other reformed and Protestant creeds. A twofold process will be conducted in the pages devoted to this part of my subject. For, while the origin and gradual formation of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation will be traced in the formularies classified at the commencement of this Note, at the same time the points of resemblance and contrast between the Westminster and the other formularies, in respect of the doctrine in question, will be pointed out. In so far as the Confession of John Knox and the Thirty-nine Articles are concerned, a contrast only to the Westminster doctrine, will appear.

But between all the others and the Westminster formularies, a close resemblance in principles combined with differences (differences, however, caused mainly by the extreme character of the Westminster doctrine) will come into view. It will be at the close of this comparative history (if such an expression be allowable) of the Westminster doctrine, that the examination of its effect on the internal and practical influences of Christianity will be made. Indeed a suitable occasion will then occur of stating categorically the several conclusions as to these and other points, which will be warranted by the facts and arguments collected in this Note.

SECTION II.

THE GERMINAL FORM
OF THE
WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE
OF
JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION
AS POTENTIALLY INVOLVED IN
THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.

THE precise and fully warranted reason of the title affixed to this section will appear in the course of the remarks made in it, and especially in its concluding part.

I select the Augsburg Confession as the initial authority for those grounds on which I shall construct the proof of erroneous matter in the Westminster formularies. It will occupy rightfully that position, because it is the production of the Fathers of the Reformation, and not only expresses their mind in words, but most significantly indicates it by unmistakeable signs. Moreover, it is the purely original work of two great and good men. It consequently possesses all the characteristics along with all the

value of a work produced by men who were raised by Providence to accomplish a signal revolution in human thought. It bears evidence that the men who composed it communed face to face with Divine truth, and were not merely bent on copying, faithfully but servilely, awe-inspiring masters, whose perfection it might have seemed to them a species of blasphemy to question. Finally, it is invaluable because it defines the limits within which Melancthon, with Luther as a coadjutor, deemed it right to restrict the peculiar Lutheran tenets as to Justification or Salvation.

Melancthon drew up the Augsburg Confession. It was intended, like most of the early Protestant Creeds of the Continent, rather to be submitted to the imperial authorities as an apologetic explanation of doctrine and discipline, than to serve as a system of tenets fitted to rule the faith and practice of a church with unerring precision and rigorous exactness. Consequently, one need not go beyond its pages to discover the exigencies of the times which demanded a fresh declaration of fundamental Christian truth. It exhibits also with wonderful clearness the points chiefly objected to in respect of that declaration, at the time when it was first made. These objections, and the mode of meeting them adopted by Melancthon, are depicted in it with a life-like veracity which stands in remarkable contrast to later formularies. In a word, it exhibits *in small* the inner spiritual history of an early stage of the Reformation, written under solemn circumstances by its most learned, gentle, and catholic

advocate; and ever since sanctioned by the imprimatur of German civil authorities.

I intend to ascertain, on the authority of the Augsburg Confession, (supplemented to a slight extent by the Belgic,) the following two points: First, what was the exact character and compass of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth by Melancthon; Secondly, in what manner he reconciled that doctrine with the doctrine of new obedience, or of good works. I shall then introduce certain necessary remarks, and will indicate the very remarkable condition in which his work was left to be employed as a basis by others. The document itself shall be made to vouch for every statement that will be advanced.

I. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Augsburg Confession.

I. Melancthon stated his doctrine of Justification or Salvation in the fourth chapter of the Augsburg Confession. This Symbol opens with a chapter on the doctrine of the Trinity. Its second chapter treats of the Fall, and its third of the Mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus Christ. A passage must be cited from the third chapter, for the sake of connection, and in order to prepare the way for Melancthon's description of our Justification or Salvation.

“(Jesus Christ) really suffered, being crucified, dead, and buried, that he might reconcile the Father unto us, and be our propitiation, not only for original sin, but likewise for all the actual sins of men. He also descended into hell, and truly rose again the third day, that he may sit at the

right hand of the Father, and perpetually reign and exercise lordship over all creatures, that he may sanctify (sanctificet) such as believe in Him, the Holy Spirit being sent into their hearts, and that he may give to the sanctified eternal life.”

Immediately after this, the special chapter of Justification proceeds thus :

“ But that we may obtain these benefits of Christ’s, viz., forgiveness of sins, justification, and eternal life, Christ has given the Gospel in which these benefits are offered unto us, as it is written at the close of Luke, *to publish repentance in His Name, and forgiveness of sins among all nations.* For, since all men generated in the natural way have sin, and cannot truly satisfy the requirements of God’s Law, the Gospel convinces of sin, and presents to us the Mediator Christ, and thus teaches concerning the forgiveness of sins.

“ When the Gospel convinces us of sin, our affrighted hearts ought to assure themselves, that there are gratuitously bestowed on us (*donentur gratis*) for Christ’s sake, forgiveness of sins and justification by faith, and by this faith we ought to believe and confess, that these things are gratuitously bestowed on us for Christ’s sake, who was crucified for us, and reconciled the Father. Although therefore the Gospel requires repentance, still, that forgiveness of sin may be certain, it teaches that it is bestowed gratuitously, that is, that it does not depend on the condition of our worthiness, and that it is not given on account of any preceding works, or the worthiness of works following it, because the forgiveness of sins would become uncertain, if one must judge thus, that the forgiveness of our sins is contingent (*contingere*) on the merit of our preceding works, or on the sufficient worth of our repentance.

“ For the conscience, when really affrighted, finds no work which can appease the wrath of God, and Christ has been given and set forth as our Propitiator. This honour belonging to Christ ought not to be transferred to our works.

Accordingly, Paul said, *ye are saved freely* (gratis) ; likewise, *it is therefore of faith, that the promise might be certain* ; that is, so that forgiveness shall be certain, when we know it does not depend on the condition of our worthiness, but is bestowed as a gift for Christ's sake. That is the sure and needful consolation to affrighted minds. And thus teach all the Fathers. And there is extant in the writings of Ambrose a memorable and remarkable statement in these words : ' This was appointed by God, that he who believes in Christ is safe (salvus) without works, by faith only, receiving freely (gratis) forgiveness of sins.'

"And the word faith does not signify merely a knowledge of Christ's history, but also to assent to this promise, peculiar to the Gospel, by which forgiveness of sins, justification, and eternal life are promised to us for Christ's sake. For this promise also belongs to Christ's history, and accordingly the article ' I believe in the forgiveness of sins ' has been added to the history in the Creed. And to this article the others concerning the history of Christ ought to be referred. For this benefit is the final result of the history. On this account Christ has suffered, and been raised again that forgiveness of sins and eternal life may be bestowed on us for His sake."

Keeping, in the mean time, only to what bears in this passage, on the nature of Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation, it plainly supplies a very clear testimony on that point. It evidently makes " forgiveness of sins " equivalent to Justification. The closing sentence, as compared with the previous statements in the chapter, places this beyond doubt. The chapter commences with proposing to speak of these three benefits, viz., Forgiveness of Sins, Justification, and Eternal Life. It then shows how the first of these, Forgiveness of Sins, is bestowed. It next shows how,

in that "free gift of forgiveness" Justification also is involved. It thereafter makes the promise of the Gospel consist in the gift of "Forgiveness, Justification, and Eternal Life;" and the gift is "free" or "gratuitous." And it sums up the recital by declaring, on the authority of the Apostles' Creed, that the "forgiveness of sins and eternal life" are gratuitously bestowed on us for Christ's sake. The omission of the term Justification in the last sentence was caused, I believe, by its absence from the article of the Apostles' Creed quoted by Melancthon. But then, Melancthon's omission of the term also proves that the equivalence of forgiveness and justification was implied. If the latter involved more than the former, or if justification were understood to contain any element not contained in mere forgiveness, then must its omission have palpably maimed the closing definition of the chapter. But let that portion of the Confession be consulted which supplies sundry omissions quite apparent in the foregoing chapter, and it will be clearly seen from Melancthon's own words, that Justification involved in it nothing more than forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, or that it meant at most, as employed in the Confession, the being esteemed just before God through the pardon of sins.

The omissions above referred to are—of any explicit declaration as to the equivalence of pardon and justification, and of an explanation as to the mode in which the *person* is *justified* through the forgiveness of sins enjoyed in Christ. These omissions are supplied in Chapter XX in the section "Of Faith," in the follow-

ing manner. The quotation to be first made from that chapter is fitted to connect it with the chapter quoted above.

“ But there is no sure consolation except this doctrine of the Gospel, which enjoins the belief, that the forgiveness of sins and justification are gratuitously bestowed for Christ’s sake. And this entire doctrine has been provided for that real conflict of the affrighted conscience.

“ But let us add some proofs. Paul, Rom. iii. *We are justified freely (gratis) by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth a Propitiation by faith (per fidem) in His blood.*

“ Rom. iv. *But to him who worketh not but believeth in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned (reputatur) for righteousness.*

“ Eph. ii. *By grace ye are saved by faith (per fidem), and this not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God, not of works that no one should boast.* Paul expressly teaches in these and similar statements, that forgiveness of sins and justification are gratuitously bestowed on us, and not on account of the worth of our good works.”

In the paragraph following that now quoted, occurs the explanation of Justification and of the reckoning or imputing of righteousness.

“ When, therefore, we say, *we are justified by faith*, we do not understand, that we are just on account of the worthiness of faith itself. But we understand this, that we obtain forgiveness of sins and imputation (imputationem not reputationem) of righteousness by mercy for Christ’s sake. But this mercy cannot be received except by faith.”

The exact meaning of imputation, or reckoning of righteousness, is further explained thus :

“ When indeed Paul says, *faith is reckoned* (reputatur not imputatur) *for righteousness*, &c., he speaks concerning the trust (fiducia) of mercy promised for Christ’s sake, and his meaning is, that men are pronounced just, that is, are reconciled, by mercy, and not on account of their own worthiness; but it behoves that the mercy promised for Christ’s sake be received by faith.”

And the closing sentence of the same paragraph runs thus :

“ But justification signifies in these statements of Paul’s, forgiveness of sins, or (seu) reconciliation, or (seu) imputation (imputationem not reputationem) of justice, that is, acceptance of the *person*.”

I will not attempt by any remarks, to explain the subject farther than Melancthon himself has done in these words. Only I must observe, that the quotations now made abundantly confirm my deduction from the statements of the chapter first quoted. Justification or Salvation means, according to the formulary of Luther and Melancthon, the forgiveness of sins, and the consequent merciful reckoning of the *person* of the sinner viewed ideally as reconciled, or just, and acceptable to God for Christ’s sake.

The expression “imputation of the righteousness of Christ” is never employed in the above quotations, or in any other part of the Confession. The imputation or reckoning of justice described in it is “forgiveness of sins, or reconciliation, or imputation of righteousness, that is, acceptance of the *person*.” The cause of this omission will become obviously apparent in the examination of Melancthon’s doctrine as to “good

works," and of his treatment of the scriptural formula "justice (or righteousness) of God." A very different mind from Melancthon's, and a new generation had to appear before that formula was appropriated to fill up in formularies the gap left in the Augsburg one even by Luther and his learned coadjutor. But still another step had to be taken before the orthodoxy of the Westminster Divines was attained to.

But the subject of "the assurance of faith" remains to be noticed. It is expressed in the above quotations; but it will be best represented by quoting the brief statement "Of Justification" in the Confession of 1531, and the anathematising clause in the Confession of 1540 against those who question that tenet. The former passage says :

"They likewise teach, that men cannot be justified before God by their own proper strength, merits, or works, but that they can be justified for Christ's sake by faith, when they believe that they are received into favour, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who made satisfaction for our sins by His own death. God imputes this faith (imputat) for righteousness before Himself. Rom. iii and iv."

I would first remark, that an imputation of faith as righteousness is here declared, which the third "position negative" of Chapter XI in the Westminster Confession excludes. However, the passage affirms not merely that men are justified by faith to the exclusion of all besides, but that they are justified when they believe in their own Justification. It is the latter act of faith which God imputes as their righteousness. That is Luther's pure doctrine of Justification or Sal-

vation. It was fenced, doubtless by Luther's command, by these words of the Confession of 1540.

“They are to be condemned who teach nothing as to this faith by which forgiveness of sins is received, but enjoin on consciences to doubt whether they are receiving forgiveness, and add that this doubt is not sin.”

This quotation and the preceding one call for only one observation. A distinction, then, ought to be religiously taken between these two things: 1st, the question, viewed in its independent character, as to the legitimate entertainment by the Christian of a good hope; and 2d, the question as to the legitimacy of that good hope when it is called the assurance of faith, and connected with a doctrine like that propounded by Melancthon.

For what is that doctrine viewed in its *positive aspect*? The words positive aspect are used with a distinct purpose, and in reference to a certain aspect of Melancthon's statement, which will be considered at the conclusion of this Section. But in the mean time, let its positive aspect only be considered. That it has such an aspect is proved by the melancholy contentions it has caused, and by the very extraordinary dogmatic results in which it landed its positive adherents.

And to exhibit aright this view of the doctrine, Melancthon's treatment of the element of Sanctification, or a Divinely implanted principle of righteousness and holiness must be first attended to. He acted towards it exactly as the Westminster Divines did.

The tyranny of his leading principle would permit him to do no otherwise; and his conduct, precisely as in the case of the Westminster Divines, proved what his doctrine of Justification viewed positively is equivalent to, namely, what was ultimately called "a completed salvation." We read in the very first quotation made above from the chapter of Christ the Mediator: "He rose again the third day, that He might sit at the right hand of the Father, and perpetually reign and exercise lordship over all creatures, that He may sanctify (sanctificet) such as believe in Him, the Holy Spirit being sent into their hearts, and that He may give to the sanctified eternal life." Let this be compared with the closing sentence of the chapter "Of Justification:" "On this account Christ has suffered and been raised again, that forgiveness of sins and eternal life may be bestowed on us for His sake." Obviously all mention of sanctification is omitted in the latter passage. But this was certainly to deal most unsatisfactorily with an all-important element of truth. But his leading principle would permit nothing else to be done; since to insist on sanctification in the chapter "Of Forgiveness, Justification, and Eternal Life," must have been to contend for and against a thing in the same breath.

Melancthon's doctrine, viewed in its positive aspect, amounts to this: Justification or Salvation consists absolutely of forgiveness of sins only, or its equivalents, as already explained; and this, with its consequent Eternal Life, is bestowed on the sinner in an absolutely gratuitous manner. In this description, I have refrained with

scrupulous care from saying anything such as follows : that Melancthon affirmed the bestowal of Justification or Salvation quite irrespectively, or without any recognition, of repentance and new obedience. However correct that may be in strict logical truth, still it would not be true in fact ; because the majesty of Divine Truth compelled Luther and Melancthon to find a place for that new life, righteousness, and holiness, which Christianity was given to impart. What would be fair as matter of strict logic has been made to give way to what is true in unmethodical fact. But the description which I have given of this method of Justification or Salvation is strictly correct. The ground of its bestowal on the sinner is external to him just as it ought to be, namely, in Jesus Christ. But it is also in itself absolutely external or extrinsic to the sinner, since it consists of forgiveness only, or its equivalents. The object for which it is bestowed, too, is external or extrinsic, namely, eternal life ; for the new life now commenced and enjoyed is excluded from this Justification or Salvation, and a future immortal life is affirmed to be its consequence. Moreover, it is absolutely gratuitous. That, again, is exactly as it ought to be ; and it cannot be too much insisted on in connection with a true doctrine of Justification or Salvation. The passages cited from Rom. iii, and Eph. ii, in the quotations made above from the chapter "Of Faith," prove it to be an absolutely gratuitous gift. God bestows Justification or Salvation without money and without price on every sinner who will accept the gift. All who follow Melancthon are not

only entitled but bound by most solemn obligations to insist on that. It is, indeed, obvious that remarkable consequences inevitably flow from holding that Justification or Salvation is purely external, and that it is also absolutely gratuitous. And though these consequences, as they may be deduced from it, or have been deduced from it, are not at present the subject of consideration, still they render it more imperative to place their source, which is this doctrine, in as clear a light as possible. Thereby will the truth or falseness of the doctrine be more surely ascertained; and it is only when that is done, that one can know whether it and the consequences which it involves ought both to be accepted or rejected. And as respects the doctrine itself, while the attention of its authors to repentance and other internal elements has been acknowledged, it is certainly what I have described it, namely, a doctrine teaching that Justification and Salvation are purely external benefits followed by Eternal Life, and bestowed as an absolutely gratuitous gift on sinners for Christ's sake. By faith or trust only do they receive this Salvation.

The above doctrine has been usually denominated, the doctrine of "Forensic Justification." But it has no just title to appropriate exclusively the epithet "forensic" as descriptive of a divine judicial act of unmerited and gratuitous mercy to the sinner for Christ's sake. For a widely different doctrine of Justification or Salvation is characterised by its declaration of that very "Forensic" act of mercy. The Confession of John Knox will illustrate in due

time my meaning. But even what has been already ascertained as to Melancthon's doctrine shows, that it is most accurately described when we call it an external or extrinsic Justification or Salvation. The elements which compose it at once exhibit the correctness of this description; for they are all external to the sinner. By the above title, accordingly, it will be designated in the sequel; because it is ever a duty to characterise important matters correctly, and not to misapply useful words.

Again, Justification or Salvation in the Lutheran and cognate systems has been usually distinguished from Repentance and New Obedience, as follows. It is said, that the former describes a change in man's relation towards God, whereas the latter describe the change brought about in man's character. But such statements proceed on the taking of distinctions in the very points where there is no difference; and they, accordingly, confound or perplex what would be otherwise symmetrical, while they are also flagrant examples of the abuse of language. They distinguish in points where there is no difference; for to believe, to repent, to lay aside enmity to God, are as complete changes in the condition, or relations of a man towards God, as to be forgiven and justified of God in His Son our Redeemer. Whatever these parallel things may differ in, they are exactly alike in respect of their both being equally changes of condition, or relation, towards God. To distinguish them, therefore, in the very point in which they are alike is, to twist what is straight, and confound what is harmonious. It has

been mainly adverted to, however, as a signal instance of the abuse of language. And that is no trifling abuse. The Prophet has said: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

But besides, as was hinted at a little way back, extraordinary consequences flow from the making of Justification or Salvation external or extrinsic to the sinner, as well as gratuitous. Thus, what place is assigned to Repentance unto Life, or unto Salvation, when it has been excluded as an element from Justification or Salvation? Moreover, the undeniable truth that Justification or Salvation is a gratuitous gift to every sinner who will accept it by faith, entails extraordinary consequences when that gift is also declared to be purely external. For that gift, according to the Scriptures, alone makes its recipient an heir of Eternal Life, and how is the declaration that the sinner is made the recipient of Eternal Life by a gratuitous and mere external Justification or Salvation, reconcilable with the declaration that Eternal Life can only be reached by the way of penitence, obedience, and holiness. Nay more, how can the Divine sanctions which oblige to penitence, obedience, and holiness, be urged with any of the cogency which common sense, the mother of logic, wields, if Justification or Salvation, which alone guarantees Eternal Life, be at once external and gratuitous? Such questions force themselves on the attention of every one who considers Melancthon's doctrine; and his mode of meeting them must now be examined.

In the course of that examination, the all-important subject, "righteousness of God," will come up for consideration. Though Justification or Salvation can only be external provided "righteousness of God" be also external, Melancthon never mentioned this subject in the special chapter that has formed the text of the preceding remarks. Indeed, it is only by means of certain quotations from Augustine, that he introduces the subject at all into his Confession. These will present themselves for consideration in what follows.

II. First: I will now examine how Melancthon adjusted what Scripture teaches and enjoins as to Repentance, to his doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation. He shall be allowed to speak for himself on the subject of Repentance, just as was done in regard to his doctrine of Justification or Salvation. In Chapter XI, "Of Repentance," we read as follows:

II. The teaching of the Augsburg Confession in reference to "Repentance and Good Works."

"But Repentance, that is, the conversion of the ungodly, consists properly of these two parts. The first is contrition, that is, the terrors with which the conscience is stricken through a knowledge of sin, by which terrors we are brought to know the wrath of God, to grieve that we have sinned, and to hate and flee from our sins. To this Joel exhorts, saying, *Rend your hearts and not your garments and turn to the Lord your God.* Faith (*fides*), the second part of Repentance, is received through the Gospel or form of absolution: it believes that sins are certainly forgiven, it comforts the conscience, and frees from terrors; Paul speaks of this faith in these words, *Being justified by faith, we have peace towards God.* Thereafter, the good fruits of Repentance ought to

follow, that is, obedience to God according to the saying, *We are not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live.*"

It is to be observed, that in this passage Melancthon separates contrition from faith, and that he speaks as if the former could exist antecedently to, and independently of, the latter. That this is a quite incorrect style of language, when contrition or repentance and faith, in the full and proper sense of these terms, are concerned, will appear by Melancthon's own showing, in the immediate sequel. For it will be seen how, after various extraordinary dealings with "contrition or repentance," he lands one in the conclusion that it can only be "worked" by that spiritual power which faith, properly so called, receives. His language in this passage is explained by the circumstance, that he means by faith in reality the "Justifying Faith" of the Westminster Divines, and not faith in the full sense or the "Saving Faith" of the Westminster Divines. But what is mainly in point at present, is Melancthon's clear and unwavering announcement, that contrition is the first part of Repentance, and that it precedes the forgiveness of sins. In this respect, there is no obscurity or doubtfulness in his statement. Neither is there the slightest shadow of contradictoriness, or of difficulty. In fact, the passage makes no express reference to his doctrine of Justification, or Salvation and Eternal Life. But let it be now compared with the following sentences, which form the commencement of the second section of Chapter XX, that "Of Faith."

“First of all, therefore, they teach of faith and justification according as Christ Himself has fitly summed up the Gospel, when, as we read at the close of Luke’s Gospel, He enjoins the preaching of Repentance and Forgiveness of sins in His own Name. For the Gospel convinces of sin and enjoins Repentance, and at the same time offers the Forgiveness of sins for Christ’s sake, gratuitously and not on account of our merit. And as the proclamation of Repentance is universal, so also is the promise of grace universal, and it enjoins on all to believe and accept the benefit of Christ, just as Christ Himself says, *Come unto me all ye that are heavily laden.* Paul likewise says, *He is rich to all,* &c. Although therefore some repentance or contrition (aliqua pœnitentia seu contritio) is necessary, still we must consider that forgiveness of sins is bestowed on us, and that we are made just instead of unjust, that is, reconciled or accepted and Sons of God, gratuitously for Christ’s sake, and not on account of the worth of contrition or of other works preceding or following. But this benefit must be received by faith, and by this faith it behoves us to believe that forgiveness of sins and justification are bestowed on us for Christ’s sake.”

Now this passage obviously differs from the last one, inasmuch as it includes Justification and the being constituted sons of God, as well as forgiveness of sins, and declares that these things are received gratuitously for Christ’s sake by faith. Besides, it wavers in its statement as to Repentance, for only “some repentance or contrition” is affirmed in it to be necessary. The nature and measure of this “some repentance or contrition” are left quite undefined, while the duty of holding fast by the gratuitousness of Forgiveness, Justification, and the being Sons of God for Christ’s sake, is strongly asserted. The passage

forms, in these respects, an exact parallel to the statement in Chapter IV, which puts aside Repentance with the words "although it be required," and then contends for the certainty as well as the gratuitousness of "Forgiveness, Justification, and Eternal Life." As Chapter IV, too, takes the lead in the Confession, so does the passage now in question say that, "First of all they (the Churches) teach of Faith and Justification." But this passage says nothing, in express terms, of Eternal Life. This omission, however, is supplied in the passage that I shall next cite from the third section of Chapter XX. And this passage will be compared with peculiar propriety with the two that have been already cited, for it contains the reassertion by Melancthon of his full doctrine as to Forgiveness, Justification, and Eternal Life, in that section of Chapter XX which treats as well of Repentance as of Renewal and Good Works. The correctness of this statement will appear, when almost the entire section just referred to has been quoted in the immediate sequel. The passage in question runs thus :

"And thus must we judge of good works, that they ought indeed to be adorned with the most lavish praises, because they are necessary, because they are the worship and spiritual sacrifices of God, and merit rewards. But still this necessary consolation respecting the person, so necessary in the conflict of the conscience, must first be held, namely, that by faith we possess gratuitously the forgiveness of sins, and that *the person* is just, that is, reconciled, and an heir of Eternal Life for Christ's sake, but that afterwards obedience pleases according to the saying, *Ye are not under the Law but under Grace.*"

It is the last of these sentences that bears on Melancthon's mode of adjusting Repentance to his doctrine of Justification or Salvation. And it is plain that, though it refers to Repentance as well as to its fruits in Good Works, still it does not mention even "some repentance or contrition" as the necessary antecedent of Justification and the Heirship of Eternal Life. It is quite manifest from all that has appeared, that Melancthon's treatment of Repentance was eminently unsteady and unsatisfactory. It is impossible to decide conclusively, from his statement, what place was assigned systematically to Repentance in connection with his doctrine of Justification or Salvation. One may conclude negatively, however, that, in the practical application of his Theology, Repentance does not precede, but follow, Justification, Salvation, and the Heirship to Eternal Life. For not only does he treat in Chapter IV, before all other subjects, of "Forgiveness, Justification, and Eternal Life," but he twice repeats, as the preceding quotations show, that that benefit must be first of all apprehended. But by this arrangement, Repentance in the full sense of the term became exposed, as well as Good Works, to the Antinomian influence wielded by the principle of gratuitousness, when that principle is combined with an external Justification or Salvation by trust without works. That Melancthon was fully aware of this, and that he employed the only available means for remedying its evil consequences, will be seen in his treatment of Repentance and Good Works in the third section of Chapter XX, which will be quoted immediately.

Secondly : As the ground and warrant of my remarks on Melancthon's treatment of Good Works in connection with his doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, I will now cite the greater part of the section which has just been referred to. It proceeds thus :

“When we set before the Churches the doctrine as to faith and comfort, the doctrine of Good Works is also added, because obedience in the reconciled to the Law of God is evidently necessary. For the Gospel makes public proclamation of a new life, according to this declaration, *I will put my Law in their hearts.* Therefore this new life ought to consist of obedience to God. Moreover, the Gospel proclaims Repentance ; nor can faith exist (*nec existere potest fides*) except in those who work repentance, because faith (*fides*) comforts hearts in the midst of contrition and terror on account of sin, as Paul says, *Being justified by faith we have peace towards God ;* and he says of Repentance, Rom. vi, *Our old man has been crucified, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that thereafter we may not serve sin.* Isaiah also says, *Where will the Lord dwell ? In a contrite and humble heart.*

“Secondly : The chief among Good Works, and the highest form of Divine worship is faith itself, which also produces many other virtues that could not exist unless faith have first been produced in our hearts ; for Paul says, *How shall they call unless they have believed ?* So long as we doubt whether God listens to us, so long as we think that we are rejected by God, we do not truly call on God. But when we discern by faith the mercy of God, we flee to Him, we love Him, hope in Him, expect assistance from Him, and obey Him in our afflictions, because we know now that we are His Sons, and that our sacrifice, even our afflictions, please Him. Faith produces these acts of worship. Excellent, therefore, is the remark of Augustine, ‘Faith is the mother of good volition, and of righteous action.’ Our

adversaries, however, wish to appear to adorn magnificently the doctrine of Good Works. Still they say nothing concerning these spiritual works, concerning faith, concerning the exercise of faith in all the affairs of life, both in deliberation and in danger: neither indeed can they speak rightly respecting such an exercise of faith, while their consciences are left in doubt and they do not know that God requires faith as the chief act of worship. Besides, when that great array of external works is set before the eyes of men, their minds, and especially the minds of the ill-instructed, are led aside from the contemplation of internal and spiritual exercises. But it is necessary for men to be taught in the Church concerning these internal works, and the fruits of the Spirit. For these form the distinction between the pious and hypocritical. Even hypocrites can perform external acts of worship, external ceremonies, and other external works. But the acts of worship that distinguish the true Church only, are true repentance, fear, faith, prayer, &c. Such acts of worship are principally demanded and praised in the Scriptures, as in Ps. xl, 9, *Sacrifice to God the sacrifice of praise, call on Him in the day of trouble.*

“Thirdly: By this faith, which comforts our hearts in Repentance, we receive the Holy Spirit, who is given that He may govern and assist us, that we may resist sin and the Devil, that we may grow in the knowledge of our own weakness, and that our knowledge of God as well as our fear of Him may increase. Wherefore obedience and a new life ought to grow apace in us, just as Paul teaches, that *it behoveth us to be renewed in the knowledge of God, that there may be wrought out in us the new light and Image of Him who created us.*

“Fourthly: We also teach when this imperfect obedience pleases God. For since the Saints (sancti), in their so weak and unclean state of nature, do not fulfil the requirements of the Law, the pious (pii) have accordingly need of comfort, that they may know how their small and imperfect obedience may please God. For it does not please because it satisfies the requirements of the Law, but because *their*

persons are reconciled and just for Christ's sake, and they believe that their weakness is forgiven. Thus Paul teaches in these words, There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, &c. Although, therefore, their new obedience comes far short of the perfection of the Law, it is nevertheless righteousness (justitia) and merits rewards, because their persons are reconciled. And we must judge of Works thus, that they ought indeed to be adorned with the most lavish praises because they are necessary, because they are the worship and spiritual sacrifices offered to God, and merit rewards. But still this consolation respecting the person, so necessary in the conflict of the conscience, must first be held, namely, that by faith we possess gratuitously the forgiveness of sins, and that the person is just, that is, reconciled, and an heir of Eternal Life, for Christ's sake; but that afterwards obedience pleases according to the saying, Ye are not under the Law but under Grace. For our works cannot stand before the wrath and judgment of God, but the terrors of sin and death must be overcome by trust (fiducia) in Christ the Mediator, as it is written, Oh death, I will be thy death. And Christ says, John vi, This is the will of the Father who sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life. Paul likewise says, Being justified by faith we have peace. Besides, the Church always prays, Forgive us our debts; and in like manner teach the Sainted Fathers themselves, concerning the weakness of the Saints and concerning Faith. Augustine says, &c."

I will leave the passage from Augustine for citation in the sequel, because it treats of "righteousness of God." Leaving also for citation at the same time, the remarks of Melancthon which close the long paragraph just quoted in part, I shall conclude this quotation with the short paragraph that immediately follows the omitted portion. It belongs to, and indeed winds up,

the fourth head under which he speaks of Good Works. It proceeds as follows :

“ But we also teach concerning this obedience, that those persons who commit mortal sins are not righteous, because the obedience that God demands is, resistance to vicious affections. But such persons as do not fight against these affections, but yield to them contrary to the commandment of God, and commit actions contrary to the dictates of conscience, are unrighteous, and retain neither the Holy Spirit nor Faith (*fidem*), that is, Trust (*fiduciam*) of mercy. For indeed the Trust (*fiducia*) that seeks Forgiveness of sins, cannot exist (*ne potest existere*) in those who delight in sins and do not work Repentance.”

I should first point out, in reference to this long quotation, that it obviously treats of Repentance as well as of Good Works. It reasserts the necessity for Repentance, shows in what Repentance consists, and speaks of “working Repentance.” I was quite correct, then, in quoting, as an illustration of Melancthon’s mode of adjusting to the doctrine of Repentance his own doctrine of Justification or Salvation and the Heirship to Eternal Life, the passage that reasserts his tenets on the latter subject towards the close of the last quotation. How he establishes in that quotation the necessity of Repentance, will be examined after adverting to what he says in it as to the necessity for Good Works or New Obedience. This naturally takes the lead, because the passage treats primarily of Good Works, and only subsidiarily of Repentance. Besides, it will thus be seen that, just as Good Works are placed in a very remarkable position in consequence of

Melancthon's doctrine as to Justification or Salvation, so likewise does it happen to Repentance in the full sense of that term.

Melancthon, then, only makes a bare assertion as to the necessity of Good Works. Thus, he merely says in the first paragraph of the preceding quotation, that "obedience is evidently necessary in the reconciled to the Law of God." Again, he merely repeats this assertion in the fourth paragraph as follows: "Good Works should be adorned with most lavish praises, because they are necessary, because they are the worship and spiritual sacrifices of God, and merit rewards." I call both of these statements mere assertions, because the first assigns no explicit reasons for the necessity lying on all to obey the Law or Will of God; and because the second as little assigns any explicit reasons, since the words "because they are necessary, because they are the worship and spiritual sacrifices of God, and merit rewards," may assign the reasons for Good Works being "lavishly praised," and not for their being "necessary." This obvious characteristic of Melancthon's statement is not adverted to on the ground that there is any need, caused by the obscurity of the subject, to prove by formal ratiocination the necessity of Obedience and Good Works. That necessity is almost a self-evident truth, so that from the absolute point of view Melancthon needed only to say that "obedience was evidently necessary in the reconciled to the Law of God." The characteristic of Melancthon's statement, then, is adverted to because it is in his case deeply significant. This will

at once appear when the reasons which he passed over *sub silentio* are declared along with his doctrine as to Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life.

These reasons are not seen merely in the abstract obligation lying on all men—the reconciled as well as the impenitent—to obey the Law or Will of the Creator and Redeemer, the Divine Master of the household of faith. They are also seen in the Divine sanctions which accompany the declared Law or Will of God, and which manifest the necessity of Obedience and Good Works in order to escape from the Divine displeasure and to reach the enjoyment of Eternal Life—sanctions whose reality will be proved when Christ shall judge the Quick and the Dead, and every man will “receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” But how are reasons like these reconcilable with that mode of reaching Eternal Life which Melancthon described? For he maintains, that Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life are not only bestowed gratuitously on the sinner exactly as the Bible describes, but that the former benefit (on which the latter entirely depends, as the Scriptures avouch) is purely external, that is to say, it does not involve as a necessary element an internal change in the sinner, followed by a change of conduct. Nay, more, for as may already have been observed, and as will be proved in the sequel, it excludes every internal element so absolutely, that the abstract personality of the sinner alone remains to be justified or saved. According to this doctrine, Eternal Life is declared to be bestowed

on the sinner in a mode which the Scriptures show to be impossible. A palpable contradiction between Melancthon's doctrine and the Divine sanctions that necessitate obedience is thus disclosed to view. And his bare assertion as to the necessity of Obedience and Good Works, is just a consequence and evidence of that contradiction. For this contradiction makes it impossible to apply, on the ground of common sense, the proofs of that necessity, and it necessitates a mere empirical appeal to the Law or Will of God. Since Obedience and Good Works are not necessary as elements of Justification or Salvation, and since they cannot be declared necessary as conditions, inasmuch as that benefit is gratuitous, it only remains to affirm their necessity by an appeal to the Divine Law or Will. That argument, as has been already declared, is unanswerable from the absolute point of view. But it cannot be so viewed; it must be taken in connection with Melancthon's doctrine; and when this is done, the declarations of the doctrine are seen coming into perpetual collision with the Divine commandments. The doctrine of an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation is a standing declaration that that is not necessary for Eternal Life, which the unrepealed and unrepealable Divine commands declare to be necessary.

But Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation places Repentance in exactly the same predicament with Good Works. It has already been pointed out that his treatment of Repentance, as an admitted antecedent of Justification or Salvation and the Heirship to Eternal Life, was eminently unsteady.

Indeed, it appeared very clear from that treatment that, in the practical application of his Theology, Repentance properly so called does not precede but follow Justification or Salvation. That view of the subject is, in certain respects, very far from being objected to. But since its place is such in Melancthon's system, it was remarked that Repentance must be placed in the same predicament with Good Works in this system—nay, more, that Melancthon was aware of this, and that he employed the only available means for remedying the evil consequent on that arrangement of doctrines. A corroboration of these remarks is supplied by comparing the first and last paragraphs of the preceding quotation. Thus he says in the first paragraph, "that faith cannot exist (*nec fides potest existere*) except in those who work Repentance, because faith comforts hearts in the midst of contrition and terror on account of sin." And he says in the last one, "For indeed the Trust (*fiducia*) that seeks forgiveness of sins cannot exist (*ne potest existere*) in those who delight in sins, and do not work Repentance." These statements clearly testify to a consciousness on the part of Melancthon that Repentance, which he had rendered insecure by his unsteady handling of it and by the position which he ultimately assigned to it, needed to be enforced by some kind of argument. The statements supply that argument. And it is at once admitted, that this argument is as irrefragable on its own ground, as that which declares obedience in the reconciled to the Law or Will of God to be "evidently necessary." To point to the Law, or

declared Will, of God, is enough to prove the necessity of obedience, and the gross impiety of Antinomianism. To say that the bold and habitual sinner does not truly believe, or has no real trust and affiance in the Redeemer, is an unanswerable proposition. But both of these statements evade the difficulty that led to the use of them in the form of empirical arguments, and they leave in full integrity the favorite propositions of the Antinomian, as these are laid down in the doctrine of Melancthon. Neither of them removes the contradiction existing between his doctrine as to the enjoyment of Eternal Life through an extrinsic Justification or Salvation, and the Divine sanctions that make Repentance and Obedience necessary in order to the enjoyment of Eternal Life. Neither of them proves that the Antinomian is scripturally and logically wrong on his own ground, as that exists in the doctrine of an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation. Nay, more, for such arguments enable him to exult in the idea of his tenets being as irrefragable on the ground of Scripture as they are irresistible in their demonstrative force against the necessity of all conditions on the enjoyment of Eternal Life. The Antinomian can thus exult in them because, by evading, they defer to the presumed authority of the difficulty that demands their use, and because they subordinate the truth and force of the Divine commands to the force of Melancthon's dogma. Nothing can justify this, except the most irrefragable demonstration that that dogma is the very and eternal truth of our Redeemer and Lord.

But these two passages present, besides their peculiar treatment of Repentance, a remarkable ambiguity in the use of the term "Faith" (*fides*). The term is employed in the first passage just as if its full, scriptural sense were meant, whereas it is evident that its sense is the same with what is defined as "Trust" (*fiducia*) in the second passage. The most marked instance of this ambiguity appears in the third paragraph of the Section "Of Good Works," where it is said, "By this Faith (*fides*) which comforts our hearts in Repentance, we receive the Holy Spirit." Now it is Trust (*fiducia*), by Melancthon's own showing, that comforts the heart by resting on an external Justification or Salvation; still in this passage he calls that Trust by the name of Faith, and says that it receives the Holy Spirit. This signal ambiguity pervades the Augsburg Confession; and it deserves to be specially animadverted on, even were nothing more important than propriety of language as a true symbol of things concerned in it. That much is certainly concerned, for it is plain that Trust (*fiducia*) is no more Faith (*fides*) than a part is the whole. It is plainly contrary to fact to describe the Faith which receives the Spirit as identical with the Trust which, according to Melancthon, is instrumental in receiving the purely external Justification or Salvation. Let the truth of fact, then, have its corresponding truth of language. And in accordance with this, Melancthon ought uniformly to have said that the sinner is justified or saved externally and so made an heir of Eternal Life by Trust; and, after his example, the Westminster

Divines ought to have distinguished between "Justifying Trust" and "Saving Faith," and not between "Justifying Faith" and "Saving Faith."

To this, indeed, it may be answered that, while Trust (or whatever part or parts of Faith be its instrumental part or parts) alone receives the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, still this Trust must be portion of a true and full Faith, because Faith proper is necessary as the "condition" of enjoying the external benefit, and as the medium for receiving the internal benefits which, according to the Westminster Divines, always accompany Justification or Salvation. But this answer proceeds on the supposition that the use of the term "Faith" is as ambiguous in the Scriptures as in the Augsburg and Westminster Confessions; and that it was correct to make Trust the "instrument" for receiving a purely external Justification or Salvation. But if that be so, why did Melancthon, like the Westminster Divines, prefer using the term "Faith" rather than Trust, even where the latter was alone concerned, and indeed could alone be concerned in respect of recipiency, since, in their view, Justification or Salvation presents nothing for internal reception. This appears to indicate the conviction that the Scriptures employ Faith in the full sense, and a consequent doubt as to their warranting the use of "Trust." But it appears to indicate also that Faith, in the full sense, not Trust merely, has to do with Justification or Salvation in some way not explained by Melancthon. And the likelihood of this being the case is confirmed, by the fact of his maintain-

ing that the Faith which, as Trust, according to his view, comforts the heart by its reception of an external Justification or Salvation, yet also as Faith receives the Spirit, and works "spiritual righteousness," or (as the earlier Augsburg Confession says), "righteousness of God." Indeed, the insisting on Faith where Trust only acts, convinces one of the existence in this doctrine of a residual quantity, and this conviction is quite confirmed by finding that Faith is there, because it receives the Spirit, and so works "righteousness of God." But it must suffice, in the mean time, to have thus pointed out Melancthon's ambiguous use of the term "Faith." Matter will be adduced, in the immediate sequel, which will help to disentangle these perplexities.

It must here be pointed out more distinctly than has yet been done, that Melancthon always represented Eternal Life as a future reality. He never speaks of it as a Life to which Christians are begotten in Time, and which, being begun on Earth, they shall enjoy in the regions of Immortality. Now, Eternal Life is undoubtedly as often spoken of in the Scriptures in the latter sense as in the former. But Melancthon's doctrine of an external Justification or Salvation led directly to the contemplation of Eternal Life as a purely external and future reality. It divorced the terrestrial and celestial portions of the one Eternal Life which is in Christ, just as it was itself divorced from everything spiritual that must dwell in the Christian.

*III. Melan-
thon's treat-
ment of the
formula
"righteous-
ness of God."*

III. The expression "righteousness of God" is unhesitatingly employed in the earlier form of the Augsburg Confession as equivalent to "spiritual righteousness." Its chapter "Of Free Will" opens with these words:

"But (the will of man) has not power without the Holy Spirit to work righteousness of God (*justitiæ Dei*) or spiritual righteousness (*justitiæ spiritualis*), because the natural man does not perceive the things of the Spirit of God, but that is wrought in our hearts when the Holy Spirit is received by the word. Augustine says this in so many words in his *Hypognosticon* (see his *Hypomnesticon*), Book Third."

The chapter "Of Free Will," the eighteenth, of the later Confession, opens thus:

"They teach as to free will, that the human will may possess some liberty in the working of civil righteousness, and in the loving of things subjected to the reason. But it has not power, apart from the Holy Spirit, to perform spiritual righteousness (*justitiæ spiritualis*); because Paul says, *The animal man does not perceive the things of the Spirit of God*: and Christ says, *Without me ye can do nothing*. But spiritual righteousness is wrought in us, when we are assisted by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, we receive the Holy Spirit when we assent to the word of God so that we may be comforted in our terrors by faith (*fide*); just as Paul teaches when he says, *That ye may receive the promise of the Spirit by faith (per fidem)*. Augustine says the same thing in so many words in his *Hypognosticon* (see Augustine's *Hypomnesticon*), Book Third.

The passage in Augustine's works here referred to needs not to be cited, since it contains nothing bearing directly on our main subject. In reference to the

quotation just made, it is to be observed that, though Melancthon does not employ in it the expression "righteousness of God," he does not deny, or even question, the use made of that expression in the previous citation. Moreover, it is remarkable that he does not cite in the Confession any of the numerous Pauline statements as to "righteousness of God." In fact, he leaves his sentiments on that all-important subject to be learned by means of quotations from Augustine, in the second and third sections of Chapter XX.

In the second section of Chapter XX, which treats of Faith, there is a statement to the following effect, coming immediately after his own account of Justification, and closing the section :

"Neither do we introduce a new doctrine into the Church. For the Scriptures treat largely of this doctrine concerning Faith, and it forms the principal topic of several of St. Paul's Epistles. The Saints, the Fathers, likewise teach the same thing. For Ambrose, in his work on the Calling of the Gentiles, speaks thus : 'The Redemption which was effected by the blood of Christ would lose its value, and the claim of human works would not give place to the mercy of God, if Justification, which takes place (quæ fit) by grace, were owing to antecedent merits, and if it were not the gift of a donor but the reward of a worker.' Besides, many dissertations of Augustine are entirely devoted to this subject, and the following are his words : 'His own weakness is shown by Law to Man, in order that seeking refuge in the mercy of God he might be healed (sanaretur) by faith ; for it is said that God carries on his tongue both Law and Mercy, namely, the Law by which He makes the proud guilty and the Mercy by which He justifies the humbled. *Righteousness of God, therefore, by faith of Jesus Christ is in all (in omnes) who believe, &c.*'

“And the Council of Milevis writes: ‘Is it not abundantly plain that what is performed by Law is this, that sin might be so known as to induce men to seek refuge from its victorious power in the Divine Grace which is set forth in the promises, that liberation might thus be sought in the promises, that is, in the grace of God, and that righteousness should begin to be in Man (in homine), not his own righteousness, but righteousness of God.’”

Since Melancthon thus boldly appealed even to Augustine as holding a doctrine identical with his own, he must have had in his mind some specific grounds and motives for doing so. In order to discern these, however, it is necessary to examine the quotations from Ambrose and Augustine that are made in the passage just cited. The last of the three quotations, which is in reality taken from a letter of Augustine's, will prove of particular importance, not only on its own account, but from its connection with Knox's Symbol. The passages will be examined with special reference to their teaching as to “righteousness of God,” or “spiritual righteousness.”

The testimony from Ambrose, besides saying nothing in express terms in regard to “righteousness of God,” merely appropriates scriptural statements without throwing any distinct light on the exact and full sense attached by its author to Justification or Salvation. In this respect, it exactly resembles the quotation made from the same Father in Chapter IV to the effect that, “he who believes in Christ is safe without works, by faith only, receiving freely forgiveness of sins.” It may be left, accordingly, without further remark. But the second testimony, which is adduced

from Augustine, does mention "righteousness of God." Indeed, it introduces that subject in those words of St. Paul which immediately precede that Apostle's description of Justification as a free gift in Rom. iii. Moreover, that description was quoted by Augustine in continuation of the passage which Melancthon gives, as will appear when the quotation shall be completed in the immediate sequel. Meanwhile, it may be observed that the quotation is made from Augustine's Treatise, "De Litera et Spiritu," than which no work of that Father is more completely antagonistic to the doctrine of purely external Justification or Salvation that had its matrix in Melancthon's statement, as well as to the mode of interpreting the Bible on which that completed doctrine rests. If the very opposite of this doctrine in its completed form, and of this style of interpretation in its last results, be sought for in the most compact form and clearest expression, then let Augustine's Tract, "De Litera et Spiritu," be resorted to before any other work in the entire round of Patristic Literature. I say this, because nothing can be more explicit than the Tract in question. As a specimen of its teaching quite in point, one need only read, in continuation of the passage cited by Melancthon, the following remarks as to "righteousness of God" and Justification. Carrying on his statement, Augustine writes thus: "*Righteousness of God, therefore, by faith of Jesus Christ is in all who believe: for there is no difference. For all have sinned and need (egent) the glory of God, not their own glory. For what have they which they have not received?*"

But if they have received, why do they glory as if they have not received (1 Cor. vi, 7)? They need therefore the glory of God; and look at what follows: Being justified gratuitously by His Grace (Rom. iii, 20, 24). Accordingly, they are not justified by Law, nor are they justified by their own proper will: *but they are justified gratuitously by His Grace*; not that this takes place (fiat) without our will, but our will is proved by Law to be infirm that Grace may heal (sanet) the will, and that a holy will may fulfil Law, not being placed however under Law, nor wanting (indigens) Law." Now, it is abundantly evident, from the entire passage as it has been thus cited, that, whatever else Augustine might include under the Pauline description of "Righteousness of God," and of Justification or Salvation, he included under it a rectifying of the will and a healing of human nature.

The third testimony is not cited, as would appear from Melancthon's words, from the letter which the Council of Milevis (A. D. 417) addressed to Innocent, Bishop of Rome, in reference to Pelagius. It is cited from another letter which was also addressed to Innocent in reference to Pelagius, by five members of that Council. Augustine was one of the five; the letter bears unmistakable marks of its having been written by him, and it is found amongst his other letters. The following quotations from it will illustrate, first, the opinions and conduct of Pelagius; second, Augustine's manner of refuting these opinions; and third, the truth as maintained by Augustine in opposition to

Pelagius and his followers. The quotations follow each other in the order in which they are met with in the letter itself. And it may be premised that, as the quotations will make manifest in due course, the substantial matter in dispute was man's need of the Grace which is ministered by the Holy Spirit, as well as of the Grace of Forgiveness and Instruction in duty.

First: Pelagius and his followers are spoken of in the opening paragraph as those "who trust in their own strength, and say in substance to the Creator, Thou hast made us, but we have made ourselves righteous; who say that human nature is so free that it does not need a Liberator, that it is so safe that they esteem a Saviour superfluous. For they declare man to be so strong that he can subjugate and extinguish all lusts, and overcome all temptations by his own powers which were once for all received at his creation in virtue of his free-will. Hence he needs no further aid from his Creator. Many such rise against us and say to our soul, *There is no Salvation for him in his God.*" The parties who were thus described, evidently denied the grace of the Holy Spirit, whatever else they might deny or maintain. It would appear, however, that Pelagius employed the term Grace in reference to the ability which man was believed by him to possess naturally; and that by employing the term without explaining his own understanding of it, he had been acknowledged as orthodox by the Eastern Churches. Augustine adverts to this in the second paragraph of his letter as follows: "For when these words were heard, Catholic Priests

could understand no other Grace than what they read of in the word of God, and were accustomed to preach to the People. They would understand that Grace of which the Apostle says, *I do not make void the Grace of God. For if righteousness be by Law, then has Christ died in vain* (Gal. ii, 21). They would undoubtedly understand the Grace by which we are justified from iniquity and saved from infirmity, not the Grace which created us, and endowed us with free-will." Amongst other proofs that Pelagius denied the Grace of the Holy Spirit, Augustine alleges at the commencement of the fourth paragraph: "Whether (Pelagius) may have called Grace free-will, or the Forgiveness of sins, or the precepts of Law, he says nothing about those things which pertain to the conquest over lusts and temptations through the supplying of the Holy Spirit, which Christ, who ascended into the heavens leading captive captivity and gave gifts to men (Eph. iv, 8), has most abundantly poured out on us (Tit. iii, 6)." This passage intimates that, while Pelagius ranked the forgiveness of sins and the clear revelation of the Divine will among the elements of Grace, he was silent as to that all-important element—the bestowal by God of the Holy Ghost through Christ to regenerate and renew human nature. He was silent as to this, because he substituted in its place the power of free-will with which man was originally endowed.

Second: In refutation of the errors of Pelagius, Augustine illustrates part of the office of Law, proves the weakness of man's will and the necessity for Divine assistance or Grace, in the fifth paragraph, as

follows: "Law and Grace ought to be distinguished from each other. Law commands, Grace assists. Neither could Law command unless there were will, nor could Grace assist were will sufficient for obedience. Thus we are commanded by Law to have understanding when it is said, *Be not as the horse or mule, which do not understand* (Ps. xxxi, 9); and yet we pray for understanding, as when it is said, *Give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments* (Ps. cxix, 125). We are commanded to have wisdom when it is said, *Ye fools, when will ye be wise* (Ps. xciv, 8); and yet we pray for wisdom, as when it is said, *But if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth richly to all and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him* (James i, 5). We are commanded to be continent when it is said, *Let your loins be girded* (Luke xii, 35); and yet we pray for continence, as when it is said, *When I would know why none is able to be continent unless God bestow the power, even this was a part of wisdom to learn whose was the gift, I drew near to God and besought Him* (Wisd. viii, 21). Finally, to avoid the tediousness of recounting each particular, we are commanded not to do evil, when it is said, *Turn away from evil*; and yet we pray that we may not do evil, as when it is said, *But we pray to the Lord that ye may do no evil*. We are commanded to do good, when it is said, *Turn away from evil, and do good*; and yet we pray that we may do good, as when it is said, *We cease not in our prayers and supplications for you*; and amongst other supplications of the Apostle for the Colossians, is this, *That ye walk worthy*

of God in all well-pleasing, in every good work and word (Col. i, 9, 10). As we then acknowledge Will since these things are commanded, so let Pelagius acknowledge Grace since the same things are prayed for." Law is spoken of in this passage, principally as giving forth commands; but another important part of its office is described in the passage that shall be cited last from Augustine's letter. And now let his mode of meeting the error of Pelagius that Grace means the natural ability of man, be adverted to. He says in the seventh paragraph: "But if Pelagius denies that this book is his, or if he disowns those parts of the book, we will not differ with him; let him anathematise these tenets, and confess openly that Grace which the Christian doctrine demonstrates and declares to belong peculiarly to Christians. This Grace is not nature, but that by which nature is saved. This Grace does not merely encourage nature by means of instructions heard only by the ear, nor by any visible aid such as that by which the planter or irrigator works on nature from without; but by supplying the Spirit and by a hidden mercy, just as God works who gives the increase (1 Cor. iii, 6). For although with a certain amount of reason we describe as Grace our creation by God, by which we entered on existence; not the existence of a lifeless carcass, or of an insensate tree, or of irrational cattle, but the existence of men who live, who feel, who know, and can give thanks to our Creator for this great benefit: although this may be rightly termed Grace, since it was bestowed on account of no preceding meritorious works of ours,

but only by the gratuitous goodness of God; still, widely different is that Grace by which, having been predestinated, we are called, justified, glorified, and enabled to say, *If God be for us, who is against us? Who spared not His own Son but gave Him for us all* (Rom. viii, 31, 32).” In the following paragraph of the letter, the subject is continuously treated thus: “The question turned on this Grace when those whom Pelagius offended and disturbed told him, that he appugned it by asserting the ability of human nature not only to do, but to do thoroughly, the Divine commands by free-will alone. This Grace by which we are saved and justified by faith of Christ, the Apostolic doctrine calls deservedly by that very name of Grace. Concerning this is it written, *I do not make void the Grace of God. For if righteousness be by Law, then Christ died in vain* (Gal. ii, 21). Concerning this is it written, *Christ has become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by Law, ye have fallen from Grace* (Gal. v, 4). Concerning this is it written, *And if by Grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise Grace is no more Grace* (Rom. x, 16). Concerning this is it written, *Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness* (Rom. iv, 5). There are many other statements to the same effect, which you can much better recollect, more thoroughly understand, and clearly explain than we can. But even although the Grace by which we are created as men may be called not improperly by that name, still is it

surprising if we read of it under that name in any of the genuine prophetic, evangelical, or apostolical writings.”

Third: The two quotations which I shall next make, and particularly the last of them, may be considered as setting forth, in a more independent form, Augustine’s own belief on the subject of the letter. The last one is also important from the statement made in it as to another function of Law than that of issuing commands, namely, the function of convicting the sinner of his sin and guilt, and of thus impelling him to seek deliverance from God. The first of the two quotations proceeds thus: “Therefore, righteousness is neither by Law nor by man’s natural ability, but by faith and the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, the one Mediator between God and Man (I Tim. ii, 5); for unless Christ had died in the Fulness of Time for our sins, and risen again for our justification, truly both the faith of the Fathers and of ourselves would be void. But faith being void, what righteousness can remain to man, since *The just man by faith lives* (Cum justus ex fide vivat, Hab. ii, 4)? For inasmuch as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed on all men by him in whom (in quo) all have sinned (Rom. v, 12); without doubt, therefore, no man has been freed, or can free himself, by his own power, from the body of this death in which another Law wars against the Law of the mind. For that power being lost, needs a Redeemer, and being wounded it needs a Saviour. On the contrary, man is saved by the Grace of God through faith of the one Mediator between God and

Man, the Man Christ Jesus (Rom. vii, 21, 25); Who, inasmuch as He was God, created man, and Who, continuing to be God when He became Man, has Himself re-made what He at first created." Immediately after this passage, the state of the Fathers under the Law is specially adverted to, and a truth is pointed out which Pelagius overlooked when deducing from their case the ability of man to fulfil Law, namely, the truth that the Fathers were saved by faith of the Redeemer who was to appear in the Fulness of Time. Then comes the passage which will close my quotations from this letter. It contains the words which Melancthon cited; but I shall give the paragraph in full. "But the Law having already been given in the Letter, respecting which the Apostle says that it has entered that sin might abound, and of which he says further, *If, therefore, the inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of promise. But God gave it to Abraham of promise. Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was set forth till the seed should come to whom the promise was made, and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator. Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one. Is the Law then against the promises of God? God forbid, for if there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by Law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe* (Gal. iii, 18, 22). Is it not quite manifest that this is what is accomplished by Law, namely, that sin should be known, and should

be increased by transgression (Rom. iv, 15); and that a refuge from the victorious power of sin should be sought in the Divine Grace that is set forth in the promises? Therefore, the Law was not against the promises of God; because a knowledge of sin is produced by the Law, and by transgression of the Law sin is increased, just in order that the promises of God, which are the Grace of God, might be resorted to for liberation from sin, and that righteousness should begin to be in man, not his own righteousness but God's, because it is bestowed by the Divine gift." Enough has now been quoted to show the sentiments of Augustine, and set forth the sense of the passage which Melancthon cited from his letter. But it appears well to wind up this part of the subject with that portion of the decrees of the Council of Milevis, which stands related to Augustine's letter. It is as follows: "Decreed also, that whosoever shall say that the Grace of God, in which we are justified through our Lord Jesus Christ, avails only for the forgiveness of sins that have been already committed, and not also for assistance that sins should not be committed, let him be anathema."

It is quite clear that, while Augustine and the Council of Milevis maintained the gratuitous remission of sins to be a principal part of Justification or Salvation, they also maintained it to be heretical to deny that another important part of that benefit is the gift of spiritual power for the resisting and overcoming of sin. It is likewise clear that Augustine understood the formula "righteousness of God" in a sense iden-

tical with that of Justification or Salvation. What then did Melancthon mean by making such an appeal to Augustine and the Council of Milevis? Since he was the most learned of the primitive Reformers, it would be absurd to suppose that he made this appeal in ignorance of Augustine's opinions. Charity, apart from the respect and esteem which the character of Melancthon is fitted to inspire, forbids us to entertain the supposition that he sought for countenance to his own tenets by misrepresenting the sentiments of the Fathers. Only one other explanation of his conduct remains, namely, that he wished to depart as little as possible from the form of belief of the ancient Church, and that he especially wished to coincide with it as far as the most available means of defending the truth as to the gratuitousness of forgiveness would permit. That was the point really at stake, and if he could secure that by reasoning from two central passages like Rom. iii, 24, and Eph. ii, 8, as if they meant only forgiveness, he did not wish to contradict the entire sentiments of men like Augustine on subjects intimately connected with Justification or Salvation. Accordingly, he not only refrained from making the sense of "righteousness of God" absolutely external, as Calvin was mainly instrumental in doing, but he sought even for an identity of opinion on that subject with Augustine and the early Church in general.

This view of Melancthon's conduct is confirmed by his language in reference to a quotation from Augustine, and to some of his own statements re-

asserting his own doctrine of Justification or Salvation. I now refer to that portion of the section on Good Works in Chapter XX, which was omitted when the greater part of the section was quoted a little time ago. The omitted portion shall now be cited.

“Augustine says, in his homily on Psalm xxx (see xxxi, v. 1), ‘*Save me in thy righteousness.* For it is righteousness of God’s which also becomes ours, when it is bestowed on us as a gift. But it is called righteousness of God on this account, that no man may suppose that he has this righteousness of himself; for the Apostle uses these words, *To the believer in Him who justifies the ungodly*, that is, who makes an ungodly man just. If God should act according to the fixed rule of Law, the sinner must be condemned. If He should act by that rule, whom could He liberate? for He has found all to be sinners. The Apostle says this in these words, *All have sinned and need (egent) the glory of God.* What mean these words, *Need the glory of God?* That God should set thee free, not thou; because thou caust not free thyself, thou needest a Liberator. What dost thou boast of in thyself? What dost thou undertake concerning the Law and Righteousness? Dost thou not see what carries on a conflict within thee? Dost thou not hear him, who, ceasing from that conflict, both confesses inability, and longs for assistance, *Oh miserable man that I am, &c.*’ But we can easily judge how necessary this doctrine is to the Church, that men may know that they cannot satisfy the Law, but may yet enjoy comfort by virtue of the mode in which their imperfect obedience pleases God. This doctrine has in former times been horribly crushed down by certain absurd opinions in which unlearned persons have fictitiously represented, in opposition to the authority of the Scriptures and Ancient Church, that men satisfy the Law, &c.; also that Monks are perfect, and that they perform greater and more excellent works than the Law of God demands. Meanwhile, there was deepest silence as to the manner in which Christ, the Mediator, ought to be appre-

hended by faith ; but they enjoined on men to doubt, or to trust in their own works.”

The above quotation from Augustine at once evinces a resemblance in its doctrine and mode of understanding the Scriptures to those which were previously made from his works. But its identity of meaning with these will be placed beyond doubt, by simply citing the words with which Augustine closes the paragraph from which the above quotation is taken. He says : “ *Save me in thy righteousness, and deliver me : because thou hast not found in me any righteousness of my own, save me in thine ; that is, that saves me which justifies me, which makes me godly instead of ungodly, just instead of unjust, rising instead of falling, seeing instead of blind, rejoicing instead of weeping. That liberates me, not my own power. Save me in thy righteousness and deliver me.*” And, on adverting to Melancthon’s remarks on the statement of Augustine and the re-assertion of his own doctrine of Justification or Salvation, these remarks plainly manifest what Melancthon primarily and principally contended for. This was that all-important element in Justification or Salvation, namely, the gratuitous forgiveness of sins for Christ’s sake only by faith to the penitent and obedient ; that all-important element without which there can be no Justification, no Salvation, no Eternal Life ; that all-important element to which even Augustine in his controversies failed to give due prominence, and which was quite obscured in Melancthon’s time by such causes as he has pointed out.

*IV. Remarks
on the dogmatic
aspect of
Melancthon's
doctrine of
Justification
or Salvation.*

IV. But in whatever light Melancthon might intend his statement to be viewed by the well instructed, he had exerted himself in expressing and defending in its germinal form a doctrine which, when believed to be absolute truth, was destined to give a purely external character to everything in the Scriptures that treats of Justification or Salvation. For when viewed as absolute truth, that germinal doctrine acquired an overwhelming force, and was carried out into consequences which, though logically involved in it, were carefully eschewed and even sought to be guarded against by its most learned expounder, while he was acting in the responsible character of a Creed-framer. This germinal doctrine has been set forth in the first part of this section, as it was expressed by Melancthon. And its own character, but still more its influence as an all-pervading germ, demand that some special remarks should be made on it, now that its exact meaning and its influence on the spiritual and moral elements of Christianity have been ascertained, and before its strictly germinal character in relation to subsequent embodiments of its principles in other Symbols is pointed out.

I would now repeat what was stated at the commencement of my historical sketch of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, that I use the Confession of John Knox as the standard of the correct doctrine in all my remarks; and that these remarks are put forth as receiving full countenance from the primitive Scottish Symbol. The proof of this will

appear when that Symbol shall in due course be examined. And I cannot refrain from expressing my conviction, that there is a large measure of retributive justice in behalf of one of the least selfish, least honoured, and most misunderstood of the great Primitive Reformers, in the fact that his Confession of Faith can be brought from its state of long and complete oblivion to witness against a germinal as well as a fully developed error, by which it was itself overwhelmed along with many other things—to witness against that germ and its development with a force which all modern exegesis and scholarship amply corroborate.

First, I remark in regard to Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation and the Heirship to Eternal Life, as it is specially set forth in Chapter IV of the Augsburg Confession, that it is supported by an argument bearing on Repentance which labours under a twofold error. The argument just referred to, appears in Melancthon's mode of reasoning in behalf of the certainty as well as the gratuitousness of Forgiveness, Justification, and the Heirship to Eternal Life. Thus he says, at the close of the second paragraph of Chapter IV, that "the Forgiveness of sins would become uncertain if one must judge thus: the Forgiveness of sins is contingent on the merit of our preceding works, or on the sufficient worth of our Repentance." Now this argument is fallacious, inasmuch as the Forgiveness of sins would become not merely uncertain but impossible, and that, by Melancthon's own showing, if it were contingent on the merit and worth of Repentance or of any Good Works whatever. By his own

admission, I say, since he states truly, in the following paragraph of the same chapter, that “the conscience, when really affrighted, finds no work that can appease the wrath of God, and Christ has been given and set forth as our Propitiator. This honour (namely, the merit through which Forgiveness is bestowed on the penitent), belonging to Christ, ought not to be transferred to our works.” Now the matter is correctly stated in these words. It is consequently fallacious, and even palpably absurd, when Melancthon argues that Forgiveness must be uncertain if contingent on human merit. For if contingent on the condition of our merits, Forgiveness is made not uncertain but impossible; and Melancthon’s argument is consequently absurd, inasmuch as it is absurd to reason about either certainty or uncertainty in the case of an impossibility. Nevertheless, Melancthon did reason in that fashion.

But besides, while Melancthon thus supported his peculiar tenet as to the certainty and gratuitousness of an external Justification or Salvation, he was overlooking for the time an all-important scriptural truth, and reasoning on an insecure basis. He overlooked the truth as to Repentance, and reasoned as if Repentance were not an all-important part of the gift of Salvation, the other part of the gift being Forgiveness. He plainly did not insist, in Chapter IV, on Repentance as being a gift, and still less on its being a necessary portion of the gift of Salvation, when he argued for and set forth the certainty and gratuitousness of Forgiveness and its equivalents in his estimation, namely, Justification and Reconciliation. Now one

among many similar apostolic statements says: "Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins." In these words the entire gift of Salvation is described, and not only is Repentance named as an essential portion, but as the antecedent portion, of the gift. And how Repentance comes to be represented as a gift, and a portion of the one great gift of Salvation, is very plain. For when understood in its full sense as a complete change of mind, purpose, and life, on the part of the sinner, Repentance simply stands for the same thing as Regeneration and Renewal. The only difference between them is, that while Regeneration and Renewal describe the great change in a man's character from that point of view which discloses God as the Agent, Repentance on the other hand describes it from that point of view in which man is contemplated as the Agent. God regenerates and renews, but man is commanded to repent, and when man does repent, he goes through the process of Regeneration and Renewal consciously and voluntarily, but by Divine aid and in accordance with revealed truth. Moreover, Faith is the root and the operative principle in this conscious and voluntary process of Repentance, Regeneration, and Renewal, inasmuch as, apart from Faith, man could not know the Divine command that enjoins on him Repentance, nor the Divine mercy that makes Repentance available to Forgiveness; neither could man, apart from Faith, receive and employ the Grace by which, and the truth according to which he repents.

Now it could not be safe to argue, in the first place, as Melancthon did, for the certainty and gratuitousness of a purely external Justification or Salvation, while he not only omitted insisting on Repentance, but omitted mentioning it as an undoubted portion of the gift of Salvation. In saying this, I raise no question as to the propriety of insisting on the certainty and gratuitousness of Forgiveness. On the contrary, that cannot be too much insisted on by a correct exposition of Christian truth. Forgiveness and its equivalent elements in the complex terms Reconciliation, Salvation, and Justification in the blood of Christ, are bestowed on the sinner as purely gratuitous gifts of Divine mercy. And as to the certainty of Forgiveness, that is vouched by a Divine promise; and “God is not a man that He should lie; neither the son of man that He should repent; hath He said and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” The ground of confidence in God’s promise of Forgiveness is firmer than the rock, and more stable than the everlasting hills. At the same time, He whose mercy is wholly unmerited by man, and absolutely gratuitous, and whose unchangeable faithfulness is pledged for its bestowal has, as Melancthon himself admitted, made clearly known who they are that can alone hope to enjoy the mercy of God. Melancthon’s own selected proof manifests this, for it sets forth that the Gospel of God proclaims “Repentance in His name, and the Forgiveness of sins.” This Divine proclamation first summons men everywhere to repent, and then makes known the glad

news of Forgiveness. The proclamation is God's. They, therefore, who obey the first part of the proclamation may build their hopes as on the "Everlasting Rock," that the second part of it is, or shall be performed. Not that their penitence and contrition have purchased the Forgiveness, since that is as little the case as that the labours of the husbandman purchase the refreshing rains and the quickening beams which bless his fruitful fields; but because God in fact demands Repentance as the antecedent of Forgiveness, as He in fact demands that the labours of the husbandman should precede that fruit of his toils which the mercy dropping from the clouds and beaming from the heavens secures. And by following the Divine order, man may rest with a deeper confidence in the mercy and faithfulness of God in the bestowal of spiritual gifts, than even in the bestowal of the material benefits which His hand showers down. For sooner shall the sun cease to rise than the Father of Lights fail to meet in mercy and receive in love the penitent in heart and contrite in spirit.

Second: Melancthon supported, and gave a semblance of consistency to his doctrine of external Justification or Salvation and the Heirship to Eternal Life, by using terms as equivalent, some of which are most undeniably not equivalent, while others are not so for reasons whose truth Melancthon did not question. The following passage, for example, quoted in the first part of this section, from Melancthon's account of Faith, proves that he employed certain terms as equivalent. "But Justification signifies in these words of

Paul's, Forgiveness of sins, or Reconciliation, or Imputation of Righteousness, that is, acceptance of the person." Justification, Forgiveness of sins, and Reconciliation, are evidently employed in this passage as equivalent. To these I would direct attention at present, for the expression "acceptance of the person" so often employed in the Augsburg Confession, will form my third subject of remark in reference to Melancthon's doctrine of external Justification or Salvation; and what he said as to the "imputation of righteousness" will be considered in the next part of this Section. But to the three terms just pointed out as employed convertibly by Melancthon must be added a fourth, namely, Salvation. For this term occurs in certain important scriptural statements, and in a passage of Ambrose, which were all adduced by Melancthon as expressing and supporting his tenet of Forgiveness of sins, or Reconciliation, or Justification.

To employ the terms in question as Melancthon did, was absolutely necessary to support his doctrine, and to give it even that semblance of consistency which it possesses. But such an employment of these terms is quite unwarrantable. In the case of some of them, this unwarrantableness is very glaring. For example, take Forgiveness of sins and Reconciliation. The former has, and can only have, one simple meaning, according to its received theological use. It can only mean that Divine act external to the sinner, by which his sins are forgiven, and his guilt is remitted. Reconciliation, on the other hand has, and must always have, the twofold sense of a man's laying aside his

enmity to God in obedience to the Divine command, and in confidence in the Divine mercy promised in Christ, and God's being thereupon reconciled to man; or, in other words, forgiving the man's sins and receiving him into favour for Christ's sake, who died for sinners. Consequently, only one half of the meaning of Reconciliation is convertible with the meaning of Forgiveness of sins,—the other half being convertible with Repentance. In short, a fallacy lurks under Melancthon's use of the term Reconciliation, exactly similar to that which was seen to vitiate his argument as to the certainty and gratuitousness of Forgiveness. Just as he omitted in that argument all mention of Repentance as an antecedent portion of the gift of Salvation, Forgiveness being the other portion, so does he drop one half of the meaning of Reconciliation in order to make that term an equivalent of Forgiveness. Again, the fact of Forgiveness being only a part of the gift of Salvation proves the utter disallowableness of employing Forgiveness and Salvation as equivalents. Finally, if Augustine's use of the term Justification to denote a rectifying or healing of human nature as well as Forgiveness of sins, be considered correct, that term is as little the equivalent of Forgiveness as are Reconciliation and Salvation. And it must be borne in mind, that Melancthon most certainly did not condemn as erroneous, Augustine's understanding of the formula "Righteousness of God," which is the all-important element to be taken into account in deciding as to the sense of the scriptural doctrine of Justification.

Indeed, when the Augustinian sense of “Righteousness of God” and Justification is applied, not a vestige remains of the inextricable confusion which disfigures Christianity as presented after the model of Melancthon’s germinal doctrine. A beautiful parallelism and symmetry are seen to pervade all the descriptions of man’s recovery from his estate of sin and guilt, instead of a system which forces an apparent consistency up to a certain point, after which insoluble contradictions strike perplexity into the mind, while elements are seen to remain quite unaccounted for, and irretrievably confused. The symmetrical system just referred to can be readily illustrated. Thus to begin with the simplest illustration, let Repentance be acknowledged as a gift of God to man, and as the antecedent of Forgiveness and acceptance with God, then does the most common description of man’s Salvation from sin and guilt through Divine Grace and for Christ’s sake alone appear in its native clearness and convincingness. Next, take the twofold but perfect sense of Reconciliation, and another aspect of the Gospel of the Grace of God is beheld, shining with a like fulness of Grace and Truth. Lastly, take “Righteousness of God” and Justification in the Augustinian sense as involving a healing or rectifying of human nature as well as Forgiveness of sins, and still again is the Gospel seen immediately to be “The power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.” But this simple directness and beautiful harmony of revealed truth was incipiently broken up, when, in defence of the

gratuitousness of Forgiveness against the purchase of it by meritorious works, Melancthon reasoned from two central statements of Scripture respecting Justification or Salvation, as if they meant only that forensic act by which God justifies or saves. Henceforth, the terms Reconciliation, Salvation, and Justification, become stripped of half their meaning in the minds of Melancthon's less learned, or less liberal, followers. Henceforth, too, the portions of meaning thus separated from these terms could find neither a correct expression, nor intelligible positions and functions. This is strikingly exemplified in the case of Salvation, which, as it is (along with "righteousness of God,") the most nearly and vitally connected with a right or wrong view of Justification or Salvation, was the last and most difficult to be subjected to a complete harmony with the one-sided opinions of the dogmatic followers of Melancthon. Only in the Westminster formularies was Salvation reduced thoroughly and systematically to an equivalence, not merely with Melancthon's dogma, but with that dogma as it was finally developed by the Westminster Divines. And as a consequence of this, we do not read, in their formularies, of Repentance and Faith as portions of Salvation, but as Saving Graces. It may be theoretically affirmed on irrefragable grounds, that the term "Saving" is applied to them in strict accordance with the grammatical principle couched in the words "lucus a non lucendo." Neither Faith, nor Repentance, nor Sanctification, nor Evangelical Obedience could in these formularies be called part of

Salvation, or Reconciliation, or Justification, since the latter benefits were all dogmatically laid down as purely external and gratuitous benefits. And whatever they might be, they were no parts of Justification or Salvation; just as whatever they might be necessary for, they were not necessary for Justification or Salvation.

Melancthon's ambiguous use of the term "Faith" has been already pointed out. And when that was done, it was also shown that a residual quantity existed in the fact of Faith in the full sense being always declared necessary, even where Trust, or Assent, or whatever be the "instrumental" part of Faith was alone needed. The usual explanations and defences of this fact proceed on the supposition that this ambiguity in the use of the term "Faith" has a scriptural basis, and that Melancthon's doctrine of an external as well as gratuitous Justification or Salvation is unquestionably correct. But the preference on the part of Melancthon and his followers of Faith over Trust, even where the latter is undoubtedly meant, is sufficient of itself to make the existence of the ambiguity in question as a scriptural fact very doubtful. And not only has enough of fallacy and contradiction in Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation been now pointed out to throw discredit on its correctness as commonly understood and copied, but matters have been brought to light which explain most satisfactorily the appearance in it of the residual quantity just referred to. Its appearance can be accounted for, and all ambiguity

can be removed, by what has come to light respecting Melancthon's use of the terms Salvation, Reconciliation, and Justification. For Faith is mentioned in the Augsburg and cognate Confessions instead of Trust, because Salvation contains internal benefits as well as external, and not Trust only but a full Faith receives these in their entirety and unity. Faith is mentioned there, because Reconciliation also can only be effected and enjoyed in its entirety and unity by a full Faith, and not by Trust only. Faith is mentioned there, because, as Augustine held, and Melancthon never denied, "righteousness of God," and, of a necessity, Justification also contain internal as well as external benefits; and these can be received in their entirety and unity only by a full Faith, and not by Trust only.

The causes that led to Melancthon's ambiguous use of the term "Faith" can be clearly traced. It is beyond the scope of this Note to enter on the consideration of these causes. However, I shall refer to them, from a general point of view, in the apologetic statement at the end of the Note. And I may remark at this point, that the possibility in Melancthon's time, and even until a late period, of maintaining without the appearance of error, or without encountering an unanswerable proof of error, that Trust (*fiducia*), and not Faith (*fides*) in the full sense, was meant in certain leading statements of the Bible as to Justification or Salvation, was at once cause and effect in relation to Melancthon's doctrine. That possibility suggested and countenanced the formation of such a doctrine;

and after the doctrine was formed, the necessities of defence, along with other considerations, re-acted on the primary cause. This subject forms one of the most important elements of consideration, when a judgment is to be formed and pronounced on the ultimate and only supremely authoritative ground as to the correctness of Melancthon's statement. That judgment must be, of course, the rule in reference to all the Creeds which copied, or developed, only the one-sided and erroneous aspect of Melancthon's statement.

Thirdly: a striking characteristic of Melancthon's statement remains to be considered. It exhibits more clearly than anything yet pointed out the exact character and remarkable consequences of the positive aspect of his doctrine.

This characteristic appears when one looks into the account given in the Augsburg Confession of what takes place in the act of acquitting, justifying, or saving. Who, or what, according to it, is forgiven, or justified, and, of course, made an heir of eternal life? Now, that is not the man composed of spirit, soul, and body, who has approached in true contrition and penitence to the Father of Spirits through the only Begotten Son. It is by no means such a substantial being thus acting in obedience to the twofold celestial proclamation, whom God acquits and justifies according to the Augsburg Confession. Just at the point of time when the penitent sinner draws near to the mercy seat, Melancthon draws a distinction, with true German subtlety, between the man and the man's personality.

The man's "person" or ideal personality is forgiven and justified; and thus is an abstraction introduced into the Gospel instead of the realities which alone actually compose it. Melancthon harps on this distinction in the chapters of "Faith" and "Good Works;" exactly as if the Gospel had been framed by a Teutonic Metaphysician. But that blessed revelation has for its author as well as its foundation, Him who uttered the parable of the Prodigal Son.

No truth is more undoubted than this, that the thrice holy Father only for the merit of His Son and through Him receives in mercy, and beholds with compassion, the contrite and believing sinner. But nevertheless, it is the man himself, and not his abstract personality, whom God thus acquits, justifies, and saves; and not merely so, for He henceforth loves and treats as a son in the Wellbeloved the returned Prodigal. God did not give to man a Gospel based on abstractions, any more than He gave it to save man from abstract evils. And to convert the Gospel into an abstraction, or to base its central transactions between God and man on abstractions, are grievous mistakes. But, in truth, these abstractions are only the inevitable logical consequences of the ground which Melancthon had taken up; or rather, they exhibit most clearly and strikingly the exact nature of that ground and the doctrine resulting from it. These left no choice but to treat repentance and the element of sanctification involved in it in the manner already described. They necessitated the conversion

of Justification or Salvation into purely external or extrinsic benefits; and rendered it impossible to say why, or for what, righteousness, holiness, and new obedience are necessary. And after leading into contradictions and difficulties of ever-increasing portentousness, they landed their advocate in a pure Teutonic abstraction, as the substitute for that noblest of all compositions, the parable of the Prodigal Son.

It ought to be mentioned, however, that the conception of the personality being justified, was not purely original on the part of Melancthon. Its real origin is in the external and ceremonial usages of the Jewish Law, many of whose modes of conception and expression had been introduced into the Canon Law. The latter, accordingly, had habituated the minds of men to the idea, and countenanced Luther and Melancthon in their introduction of it into the spiritual realities of the Gospel. At the same time, it was an idea of the abstract and mystical kind which has always been so congenial to a numerous class of minds in Germany. The Lutheran Confessions generally adopted it, as will appear in the quotations from the Saxon Confession. On the other hand, the early and pure Calvinistic Creeds avoided it; and adhered more closely to the language of the New Testament Scriptures. But, notwithstanding what has been pointed out as to the origin of the conception, it holds true to the fullest extent, that it is the necessary logical result of the principles on which Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation is

constructed. For as these made Justification or Salvation consist purely of elements external to the sinner who was put in possession of its benefits by Trust for the enjoyment of eternal life, and as in its bestowal the sinfulness of the recipient was necessarily considered as nonexistent on the one hand, and his penitence, with its fruits, was not taken into account on the other; consequently, the abstract personality alone remained to be justified, saved, and made an heir of Eternal Life.

The ideal personality became the centre which the whole of the Gospel that treats of Justification or Salvation encircled, after it had gone through a complete course of evacuation. Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession testifies to this; for it states that the "effectually called" are justified by "the accounting and accepting of their persons as righteous." But a great deal had to be added to the doctrine of Philip Melancthon, viewed in its positive aspect, before it reached the stage of ultimate development exhibited in the combined work of the Doctrinal Puritans and Scottish Covenanters.

IV. Remarks on the undogmatic aspect and the germinal character of Melancthon's doctrine.

IV. The quotations from Melancthon's statement, which have been made in this section, exhibit a striking contrast to those which were made from the Westminster Confession in the last section. The one

set presents a natural and undogmatic character, the other presents an artificial and dogmatic character. To see completely, however, how free from dogmatism the Augsburg Confession, is as compared with the

Westminster one, the two formularies must be read throughout, with an eye to their respective characters in regard of mere formulistic authoritativeness. But even those quotations that have been made from the Augsburg Confession, exhibit as their chief characteristic an earnest and moderate pleading in behalf of great truths which, though affirmed and defended in a novel and peculiar form, are still maintained in opposition to manifest errors. The quotations from the Westminster Confession, on the other hand, not only reaffirm, in the most dogmatic fashion, all the peculiarities of the Augsburg one as to Justification and Salvation, but exhibit, in a similar fashion, additions that were made to them in the cause of controversies which must be noticed in the sequel. Indeed, the peculiarities of the Augsburg Confession are to a considerable extent latent; and they are stated in an apologetic manner as well as kept within the most moderate limits. In this respect, it is superior to all the Confessions which were formed in exact accordance with its principles, and infinitely superior to those that dogmatically developed these principles. And a growing dogmatism will be observed in such Confessions, from the Belgic one downwards to the Westminster formulary, in which a mere authoritative assertion of Lutherano-Calvinistical tenets reached its climax.

These remarks apply solely to the style of language and the mode of presenting his subject, which were adopted by Melancthon. As respects the former of these points, it may be observed, by way of example,

that he never affirms, in express terms of his own, that the sinner is justified or saved in his purely external sense by faith, that is to say, trust only. The term "instrument" is of course never employed by him to describe the office of faith or trust in apprehending the external Justification or Salvation which he advocated. The notion that faith acts in a mere "instrumental capacity" in the matter of Justification or Salvation, is, of course, involved in the common dogmatic sense of his statement, because, if that benefit be not only gratuitous but purely external or extrinsic as regards the sinner, nothing but "assent," or "trust," or whatever suchlike characteristic of faith be fixed on as its "instrumental capacity," is needed. But we must consult other Confessions than the Augsburg one to find the technical declaration of this notion. Again, Melancthon's mode of presenting his subject is characterised by the fullest acknowledgment, made in a practical manner, of the necessity for establishing his tenets by argument. The same thing may be seen in those Confessions that more immediately succeeded the Augsburg one, but in a smaller measure; and at last even that small measure was supplanted in the latest formularies by utterly unreasoned and purely dogmatic statements. Moreover, the Augsburg Confession exhibits this peculiarity in the presentment of its doctrine as to Justification or Salvation, namely, it adduces from the writings of Ambrose, as proofs of its own doctrine, passages which certainly do not affirm that Justification or Salvation is absolutely external as well as gratuitous.

And another Latin Father, Augustine, is made to speak, in a remarkable manner, in reference to the formula "righteousness of God," on whose meaning entirely depends the sense of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation.

But it must be observed besides, that the doctrine of Justification or Salvation, which is set forth in the Augsburg Confession, is strictly germinal in relation to that which is contained in the Confessions to be hereafter examined. This statement applies particularly to the Westminster formulary. The full proof of the statement must be gradually produced in the following parts of this Note. But, in the mean time, it is necessary to direct attention to the germinal character of Melancthon's doctrine; and it is possible to prove and illustrate it by a comparison of the Augsburg Confession with the sketch of the Westminster one that has been already made.

Firstly, then, Melancthon's statement entirely wants an element, which afterwards became the most important element in the fully-developed doctrine of external Justification or Salvation. Thus, it is to be observed, that Melancthon only says that the sinner is justified or saved, in his external sense and gratuitously, "for Christ's sake." He never employs the expressions, "righteousness of Christ" and "imputation of the righteousness of Christ;" and he never says in express terms that the sinner, besides enjoying forgiveness of sins as one element of Justification or Salvation, enjoys the "imputation of the Righteousness or Obedience of Christ" as another element of his

Justification or Salvation. His definition, as founded on the words of St. Paul, is—"But justification signifies, in these statements of St. Paul's, forgiveness of sins, or reconciliation, or imputation (*imputationem*) of righteousness, that is, acceptance of *the person*." And the imputation here mentioned is thus described by him: "When indeed Paul says, *faith is reckoned* (*reputatur*, not *imputatur*) *for righteousness*, &c., he speaks concerning the trust of mercy for Christ's sake, and his meaning is, that men are pronounced just, that is, are reconciled by mercy and not on account of their own worthiness." Manifestly, Melancthon does not employ in these passages the expressions, "righteousness of Christ" and "imputation of Christ's righteousness." Besides, the passages plainly show that, while he maintained that sinners are externally justified only for Christ's sake, he held the exact equivalence of that justification to forgiveness and reconciliation conferred on the sinner by an act of Divine mercy. The whole language and statements of the Augsburg Confession harmonise with what has just been pointed out.

The reasons of the omission that has just been pointed out are obvious. For the portion of the perfected doctrine of external Justification or Salvation which contains the expressions, "Righteousness or Obedience of Christ" and "imputation of the Righteousness or Obedience of Christ," was based on an interpretation of the formula, "righteousness of God," as employed by St. Paul, which Melancthon refrained from putting forth in the Augsburg Confession. It

was shown, that that formula was unhesitatingly employed, in the earlier form of the Augsburg Confession, as the exact equivalent of "spiritual righteousness." That use of it, however, was dropped in the later form of the Confession, and even perfect silence was observed in regard to it, except when it occurs in the quotations from Augustine's works, made in the sections "Of Faith" and "Good Works," in Chapter XX. The sense in which this formula is employed in these quotations has been already pointed out. It is plainly not the external sense; and involving, as it is there understood, a gift of internal righteousness bestowed by God on man, the formula must stand directly opposed to the doctrine of an absolutely external Justification or Salvation. For Justification or Salvation must partake of the sense inherent in the formula "righteousness of God." And Melancthon certainly did not contradict in the Augsburg Confession Augustine's understanding of the formula. But that very formula, as employed by St. Paul, afterwards became the basis of the second element in the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, namely, the element of "an imputation of the Righteousness or Obedience of Christ" to the sinner, in addition to the element of forgiveness of the sinner's transgressions. It was thus employed after it had been reduced, especially in the Calvinistic Confessions, to the purely external sense which harmonises with Melancthon's understanding of the two central texts in Rom. iii and Eph. ii; and had been taken in connection with St. Paul's statement, in Rom. v, as to Christ's "one

obedience." And, in reality, the germ in Melancthon's statement, when insisted on in its positive sense, led to all this by an inevitable logical necessity. But let it suffice, in the mean time, to have shown the purely germinal character of Melancthon's doctrine in that respect which has now been considered.

Secondly : The remarks which have just been made suggest another respect in which the doctrine of Melancthon is germinal, though in this case also the influence of the germ was all-powerful, if the positive aspect of the doctrine was to be rigidly and systematically maintained. I refer to its influence in determining the sense in which all of the Bible that bears immediately or remotely on the subject of Justification or Salvation must be understood. So far as the Augsburg Confession is concerned, the external or extrinsic sense is necessarily affixed only to the two texts in Rom. iii, and Eph. ii, which are employed in it to prove the gratuitousness of forgiveness, or at most it is only necessarily affixed to the passages which speak of Justification in express terms, such as those which are quoted in the Chapter "Of Good Works." But things could not remain long in this state, if the positive aspect of Melancthon's doctrine was to be maintained and systematically defended. In that case, all of Scripture that directly militated against the purely external view of Justification or Salvation, must be reduced to harmony with it ; and even all of Scripture that might more remotely counteract the same view, must be watched and guarded. And, accordingly, the zealous advocates of a mere external Justification or

Salvation of the sinner by an "instrumental trust" in Christ, advanced step by step in fixing down what Melancthon left free, until at last almost all that is said in the Bible about righteousness came to be understood in the purely external sense. First, all that is said by St. Paul in express terms as to "righteousness of God," went through that process. Consistency, too, made it necessary to understand parallel formulas in the same way. The portion of revealed truth thus affected was very large. Next came Rom. v, and all that is connected with the statements which it makes in reference to the first and second Adams. And, in the end, any one, who placed value on his character for so-called orthodoxy, would deem it safest never to mention righteousness, excepting in the external and imputative sense. He would even feel bound to use extreme caution when speaking of holiness, for exigences of "the system" not unfrequently demanded that that also should be esteemed to be merely external or imputative. The truth of this statement as to holiness will be verified in due course by the examination of certain formularies. But the entire influence in question is not a matter which can be discerned only in formulas of earlier or later dates. I have seen it myself, working with the force of a resistless torrent.

Thirdly : The influence of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation which is set forth in the Augsburg Confession, is strictly germinal in another important respect. I now refer to the collision which takes place between that form of doctrine and those Divine

sanctions which prove the necessity of Repentance and Evangelical Obedience.

An indubitable instance of that collision has been already pointed out in the circumstance, that Melancthon only made a bare assertion as to the "necessity of obedience in the reconciled." It was impossible for him to do more than barely assert that necessity. For he had made Justification or Salvation, which according to the Scriptures is the only mode of reaching Eternal Life, not only gratuitous, as it certainly is, but also purely external or extrinsic to the sinner, that is to say, it does not involve in itself as a necessary element an internal change in the sinner, which must be followed by a change of his life and conduct. But such a mode of reaching Eternal Life is plainly contradictory to what is taught in the Scriptures, namely, that sinners cannot be justified or saved, and made heirs of Eternal Life without an internal change and a change of conduct. For "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," and "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world by that man whom He hath ordained." Melancthon could not insist explicitly on those truths which at once prove the necessity of repentance and obedience, and the absurdity of Antinomianism, because such truths are the contradictories of his statement as to Justification or Salvation, and its consequent, Eternal Life. He was constrained to be content with a bare assertion, by which he might at once save the appearance of contradiction, and condemn the blasphemy of Antinomianism.

According to Melancthon's doctrine, however, an internal change in the sinner is not necessary as a constituent element of that Justification or Salvation which alone leads to Eternal Life; and it cannot be urged to be necessary as a condition, because the blessings in question are undeniably gratuitous. From the combination of these two characteristics, springs the lamentable collision which, however evident in the Augsburg Confession, can only be seen in its full effects in the Westminster one.

To repent unto life, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, is either necessary to the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life, or it is not necessary. Antinomians affirm it to be unnecessary. They do so mainly on the ground that Justification or Salvation is an external and gratuitous gift to the sinner, and that on it alone depends the enjoyment of Eternal Life. Apart from that form of doctrine they could not make the use which they do of what is said in the Scriptures as to Christian liberty. But the Antinomian conclusion was abhorred by Melancthon, as it must be by every man who knows and reveres revealed truth. However, he only affirmed that repentance and obedience are "evidently necessary in the reconciled." That affirmation is unquestionably true. But why, and for what, are they necessary, when viewed in connection with Melancthon's doctrine as to Justification or Salvation and its consequent, Eternal Life? So far from their being "evidently necessary" in connection with that doctrine, their necessity in that very connection was denied

and most successfully controverted by a numerous party during successive contests, until the fully developed doctrine of a "completed" external Justification or Salvation which is bestowed gratuitously on the sinner, along with its sure reversionary consequent of Eternal Life, was elaborated by the Westminster Divines. Were repentance unto life through the grace of God, and the working out of our own salvation with fear and trembling, through God's working in us, affirmed to be necessary for Justification or Salvation, and its consequent Eternal Life? Then were these things affirmed in opposition not to be necessary, and that was done in strict logical accordance with the principles of an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, to be followed by Eternal Life. Were faith, the work of believing, and evangelical obedience affirmed to be necessary? Then were these also declared not to be necessary, because Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life were affirmed to be gratuitously bestowed on the sinner through the forgiveness of his sins and the imputation to him of the Righteousness of Christ by faith alone. Repentance and Obedience are not, according to this doctrine, necessary for Justification or Salvation and the Heirship of Eternal Life, whatever else may necessitate them.

Many reasons have been assigned in connection with this form of doctrine, to show why the sinner must repent and obey. And it is even possible, when a contradiction is not seen or felt, to hold at one and the same time that the sinner is justified or saved externally, and made an heir of Eternal Life, with an

absolute gratuitousness by trust only, and that, nevertheless, except he repent and work out his salvation with fear and trembling, he cannot be justified or saved, and made an heir of Eternal Life. That is, in reality, an explicit assertion that repentance and obedience are not necessary either as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life, while it is followed by an implicit, but most substantial, declaration that they are absolutely necessary as conditions.

It is impossible to get rid of the fact that there is in this dogma an insoluble puzzle, paradox, or contradiction; and that one of its contradictory propositions is armed, in a logical sense, with a resistless Antinomian force. This is proved by the history of the theological contests which terminated at Westminster. That proposition carried all before it in these prolonged controversies. It is possible, indeed, to evade the Antinomian force of the proposition, but it cannot be reconciled with its contradictory, or disarmed of its unmitigated logical power. It is possible to show empirically the falsehood of the Antinomianism that builds on it, but, meanwhile, the logical force of the proposition itself remains intact, and always comes into renewed collision with the empirical arguments themselves. For example, take the statement that an inoperative faith is no faith, and that, consequently, the Antinomian does not believe, and cannot be justified or saved, and made an heir of Eternal Life. That statement proves empirically how false are the hopes of the Antinomian, but it does not dissipate the con-

tradiction in question, or at all impair the logical force of the proposition on which the Antinomian rests. The objection, then, that this proposition is directly Antinomian, is evaded and not met by such empirical arguments. Another answer to the difficulty, differs in its result from the one just noticed. I now refer to the statement, that "justifying faith" must itself be justified by works. This argument actually makes works after all the ultimate ground on which a man is justified or saved, and made an heir of Eternal Life. Accordingly, it just illustrates the very contradiction that is in question. But, moreover, the proposition continually comes into collision with the reasons and motives that urge to obedience. However powerful these reasons and persuasive these motives in their absolute character, they are constantly liable to be counteracted, with resistless logical force, by the proposition which affirms the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation of the sinner by faith only. To godly and righteous hearts, indeed, that collision can produce only perplexing thoughts, for it is the glorious and benignant prerogative of Christianity to rule supreme over those that receive in faith and love the entire body of its dictates, however these dictates may have been distorted. And it would be well if no other evil flowed from the form of doctrine in question than perplexing cogitations in Christian hearts. But history and experience prove that that comes far short of the entire evil, and this entire evil suggests most painful reflections when it is seen to have emerged from purely factitious causes.

Before adverting, however, to the factitiousness of the collision which has been pointed out, it must be carefully observed that that collision is purely incipient or germinal in the Augsburg Confession as compared with other Confessions, and especially with the Westminster one. The latter records and enforces, in its own peculiar manner, the results of all the controversies as to the necessity of repentance and good works, that were caused throughout the Protestant world, during a century and a quarter, by the collision between an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, and the moral requirements of revealed religion as viewed in the light of their Divine sanctions. Everything that had been maintained as necessary either as an element or condition of Justification or Salvation from the framing of the Augsburg Confession till the framing of the Westminster one, was declared in the latter to be necessary neither as an element nor condition of Justification or Salvation. Every conceivable spiritual and moral element was precisely and dogmatically excluded from that benefit, and it was declared to be free, or gratuitous, or unconditioned to the utmost extent that logic would go. At the same time, I maintain that, on its own ground, the Westminster Confession was incontrovertibly correct, in the logical point of view, when it thus decreed. For once admit the extrinsic character as well as the gratuitousness of Justification or Salvation, then must the only logical result be that which was arrived at by the Doctrinal Puritans and Scottish Covenanters. Even the division and allotment of the

“one righteousness” of Christ which the Covenanters, building on the Calvinistic interpretation of “righteousness of God,” introduced, was, in fact, only a most ingenious and skilful development of an otherwise incomplete dogma.

A little way back, I adverted to the factitious character of those causes that produce the peculiar collision which has been considered. The full proof of these causes being factitious will appear in the sequel, when that type of doctrine has been examined, which secures all the important truths that Melancthon really advocated, and, at the same time, avoids the peculiarities whence flow the disastrous consequences of his dogma. But symptoms of their being factitious have already appeared in Melancthon’s overlooking the truth that repentance is a gift as well as forgiveness, in his treatment of the formula “righteousness of God,” and in his thus making Justification or Salvation not only absolutely gratuitous but completely external. And that very character of his dogma caused its collision with all the Divine sanctions which necessitate the putting on of righteousness and holiness. But this collision, and the contradiction in which it originates, being factitious, as in part has been already shown, and in the sequel will be proved, they differ completely from the apparent contradictions and real difficulties which we encounter in other departments of theology and in philosophy. Nay, more, they differ completely from a peculiar aspect of Grace, or gratuitous mercy, which will show itself during the examination of the true type of doctrine. But what

remains to be said on this subject, must be reserved for that part of the Note in which the true Type of doctrine will be considered.

Fourthly : Only one other respect in which the Augsburg Confession is germinal, remains to be noticed. I refer to the derangement of those spiritual and moral elements, which are found to be symmetrically disposed in a truly scriptural representation of Justification or Salvation. There is a manifest derangement of these elements in the Augsburg Confession, but it is only incipient. This initial breaking up of a divinely composed harmony, is characteristically marked by three circumstances which have been pointed out in the course of the previous remarks. They are—firstly, the thrusting aside of repentance unto salvation or life, which is a Divine gift, and involves all the elements of the new life that is enjoyed through the Gospel ; secondly, in consequence of the displacement of repentance, sanctification, or the element of holiness, is also displaced and left in a quite uncertain position ; and thirdly, the all-important element of “righteousness of God” is made doubtful both as regards its meaning and position. This initial derangement was caused by making Justification or Salvation a merely external benefit, which is received by trust (*fiducia*) only. Everything essential to the complete conception and correct representation of that benefit was thus excluded, and faith was reduced to the mere shadow of itself in connection with Justification or Salvation. For in the correct and scriptural representation of that benefit, the manifold capacities

and powers of faith are set forth as acting harmoniously, so as to receive fully and realise completely all that Christ lived and died among men to procure for sinners, and was exalted to bestow on the penitent and believing, or on the believing and penitent. Thus to transpose faith and penitence is strictly correct; for the one cannot exist without the other, and the one when perfect wants nothing that the other possesses.

But what was only incipient in the Augsburg Confession, was in due time developed and systematised. What "righteousness of God" was developed into and where it was placed, has been already pointed out and will be illustrated historically in future Sections. It will then also be seen, that repentance was, at least, placed before Justification or Salvation in the Calvinistic Creeds, but it was these Creeds that specially disposed of "righteousness of God" as a purely external element. In the case of the Westminster Confession, however, a return was made to the mode of treating repentance which the Augsburg one had adopted, and it not only completely excluded all that is meant by repentance unto salvation and faith from any place as elements in Justification or Salvation, but thrust them into the background under the name of the saving graces "repentance unto life" and "saving faith." In the Westminster Confession, too, sanctification was at last elaborated into a distinct doctrine, and a place was assigned to it after Justification or Salvation and Adoption, but before repentance and faith. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that, as the derangement in question was caused by the principle

of an external as well as gratuitous Justification or Salvation, so was it forced on and completed by the promoters and advocates of that type of doctrine.

VI. Two modes of procedure indicated by the state in which Melancthon left the doctrine of Justification or Salvation.

VI. In the several respects that have been pointed out, then, the doctrine of Justification or Salvation which is set forth in the Augsburg Confession, is strictly germinal as compared with that of other Confessions, and especially the Westminster one. However, the invincible power that resides in a principle makes the germinal contradictions and difficulties of the Augsburg Confession almost as palpable as those that adhere to the Westminster one. Still in the case of the former Confession, all its peculiarities are in the strictest sense germinal; and they were caused by its mode of advocating an all-important evangelical truth. That truth is made very manifest by Melancthon's statements, and it ought to be specially indicated. That truth is, the sufficiency of Christ's Priestly work and office for the procuring of forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and reception into the Divine favour, and the bestowal of these benefits on the penitent and believing, or on the believing and penitent, as a free gift for Christ's sake, and not as blessings which must be merited by the sinner's repentance, or faith, or any act of obedience. By the grace and power manifested in this truth, as Melancthon truly said, could the penitent and believing at once find solid peace and comfort, feel towards the Almighty Father as reconciled children

and not as trembling slaves, and enter on a course of obedience, that completing of repentance unto salvation, with the peace and hope which can alone make obedience a filial instead of a servile work. And it ought to be observed, that Melancthon specially aimed in his chapter "Of Good Works" to place his doctrine in this light, and to save it from the contradictions and difficulties which inevitably result from a systematic development of it. These are all caused solely by making the two central statements of St. Paul, which describe Justification or Salvation as a gift, mean only forgiveness, or its equivalents. When these texts, indeed, were so employed, they enabled Melancthon to make good his defence of the gratuitousness of forgiveness, and a great evangelical truth was thus secured from being reabsorbed and hidden by the erroneous beliefs and practices which had previously concealed it. But it was just by so understanding two all-important scriptural statements that Melancthon's doctrine was made to involve a germ of manifold error, which might either be extracted from it or forced onwards to a full development.

A consideration of Melancthon's statement by parties competent to judge of it, and free either to adopt or reject its peculiarities could not but suggest the question: Can the truth which this statement contains not be cleared from the contradictions and difficulties which embarrass that truth? And two most important circumstances would inevitably give force to this question. The one of these has already come frequently into view, namely, Melancthon's treatment of the for-

mula "righteousness of God." He certainly said nothing in the Augsburg Confession which shows unequivocally his conviction that that formula as employed by St. Paul must be understood in the mere external, or forensic, or imputative sense. On the contrary, he quoted and adopted a comment of St. Augustine's on that formula as it is employed in one of the Psalms; and he gave not the slightest hint that he held that Father to err in interpreting "righteousness of God," when employed by St. Paul, as involving the sense of "spiritual righteousness." But unless the expression, as employed by St. Paul, can be proved on indisputable grounds to convey only that external sense which the Calvinistic Confessions affixed to it after Calvin's example, then will it not hold good to affix a purely external sense to the two central passages in Rom. iii and Eph. ii, which describe Justification or Salvation as a gift. Let "righteousness of God," mean either "deliverance from the guilt and power" or "deliverance from the power and guilt" of sin, then must Justification or Salvation, as described in Rom. iii and Eph. ii, involve that twofold meaning. It cannot be understood in the mere external sense. The second circumstance which I referred to above is, that there are two statements of the Apostle Paul which stand as the exact complements of those two on which Melancthon based his doctrine. It is due to the interests of the truth that these two passages should be cited at this point, and the more so on account of the usage which they will be seen in the sequel to have received. The first passage occurs in

I Cor. vi, and is as follows: "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God." The second is found in Tit. iii, and it says: "But after the kindness and love of God towards men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly by Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of Eternal Life." The doubtful state in which Melancthon left the meaning of the expression "righteousness of God," would of itself suggest the question: Is there no way of avoiding the difficulties and confusion which exist in his doctrine, and at the same time securing the great truths which they disfigure? But that question would be enforced with indefinite power, when it was considered that in the two passages just cited the means were supplied for preventing all the contradictions and confusion incident to a doctrine of purely external Justification or Salvation.

I firmly believe that the exact question, which I have put above, was raised in the mind of John Knox, and was answered by him in the affirmative. And I believe as firmly, that in accordance with that affirmative answer he framed his own Confession. For that Symbol is, in fact, characterised by the prominent exhibition of all the great and invaluable truths which Melancthon's statement contains, and by the avoidance of those causes of contradiction and confusion which

inhere in the positive aspect of Melancthon's statement. It is, consequently, a perfectly unblemished and symmetrical representation of revealed truth. And I doubt not that Knox was the more stimulated in his exertions to secure such a Symbol, by observing that all the errors and difficulties which inhered germinally in the Augsburg Confession were increasing in gravity on the Continent, and that they were there in the course of being fully developed and made paramount in their influence over the Scriptures.

But both this development and the conduct of Knox in the midst of it must now be examined in detail. Those Lutheran and Calvinistic Confessions which have been selected to illustrate the first stage in the development of Melancthon's doctrine, will not need a minute scrutiny. They will be principally employed to show the additions which their authors made to Melancthon's statement, and how they prepared that statement for its ultimate development by the Westminster Divines. They will call for few such remarks as have been made in this Section. For what has been said in reference to the positive aspect of the Augsburg Confession, is equally applicable to these Confessions, inasmuch as they only copied that aspect, and exaggerated its features. The Confession of Knox, on the other hand, will receive a closer examination. That is demanded by its remarkable character and intrinsic excellence. And besides, the fitness of that Confession to subserve an important end makes it deserving of the most careful examination. That end is, the supplying of presumptive proof that neither

Christianity itself, nor the Protestant representation of Christianity, which was made by perhaps the most zealous primitive Reformer, is characterised by those blemishes which I have so freely criticised in the Augsburg Confession. Indeed, only the prospect of examining in due course the Confession of Knox, has allowed me to throw my remarks on the Augsburg one into the form which they wear. For these remarks present, for the most part, only a series of criticisms and objections. They chiefly insist on the germs of error in Melancthon's statement, and on the consequences which inevitably flowed from these germinal errors. They therefore want the necessary complement of all just criticism, namely, that correct statement of the truth which ought to be substituted for the erroneous one. That will be supplied by the noble Confession of John Knox.

Before proceeding to show how different classes of men acted towards the subject thus left by Melancthon, a quotation from the Belgic Confession, which has been several times referred to, may now be made. It will fittingly close this necessarily large section of the Note.

This much may be premised as to the quotation. It will be seen to speak distinctly of Christ's righteousness. In so far it differs from the language of the Augsburg Confession; but this circumstance is to be expected as the consequence of its later composition, and of the influence exerted on its authors by the process of development that was going forward. It refrains, however, from deciding as to the sense

that must be attached to certain scriptural formulas, and in this it differs from the formularies to be hereafter examined. But it corresponds exactly in substance with the doctrine explained above; while it presents its positive aspect in a distinctly dogmatic form. In it we find the technical term "instrument" employed.

"Deservedly and justly, therefore, we say with St. Paul, that we are justified by faith only, or by faith without works of law. But, to speak with perfect accuracy, we by no means understand that faith itself justifies us by itself (*per se*) or of itself (*ex se*), since it does that simply as an instrument, by which we apprehend Christ our righteousness. Christ Himself therefore is our Righteousness, who imputes all His own merits to us; faith, however, is the instrument by which we are united to Him in the fellowship and communion of all His blessings: and we are retained in this fellowship or communion; so that all those blessings having been made ours, they may be more than sufficient for our absolution from every sin.

"We believe our entire felicity to be placed in the forgiveness of our sins, which is in Christ Jesus; and that in it is contained our single and entire righteousness before God; as St. Paul teaches us, in the words of David, who proclaims the blessedness of those to whom God imputes righteousness without works. But the same Apostle also says: We are justified freely by the redemption made in Christ Jesus. Resting, therefore, on this firm foundation, we ascribe all the glory to God, since we have rightly learned who, and what sort of persons, we really are. And accordingly we do not in the least presume on ourselves or on any merits of our own, but borne up only by the obedience of Jesus Christ crucified, we rest entirely on it; and we believe in Him that it may be made ours. Moreover, this one thing abundantly suffices as well to cover all our iniquities, as to secure us against all temptations. For it

drives far from the conscience all dread, all trembling, all timidity, so that we can approach nearer to God, and need not copy the example of our first parent who, fleeing for fear, endeavoured to cover and conceal himself with fig leaves. And it is a certain truth, that we should be immediately consumed, if it behoved us to stand before God leaning ever so little on ourselves or any other creature. Therefore, ought each of us rather to exclaim with David : O Lord enter not into judgment with thy servant, because no man living shall be justified in thy sight.”

SECTION III.

THE FIRST STAGE

IN THE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE

OF

JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION.

THE first step towards the development of the peculiar Lutheran doctrine of Justification or Salvation is exemplified in the second class of Protestant formularies. This class comprises the Saxon, the final Helvetic, and the Gallic Confessions. The Saxon Confession is to be distinguished, of course, as Lutheran from the other two, which are Calvinistic. But curiously enough the former is, in certain respects, more akin than the latter to the Westminster formularies in its treatment of repentance in connection with Justification. On the other hand, the purely Calvinistic Confessions prepared the way authoritatively for the use of certain important elements in the only sense entirely suitable to a completely external or extrinsic Justification or Salvation.

I. The causes that led to the second form of the Lutheran doctrine of Justification or Salvation.

I. While the positive aspect of the doctrine set forth in the Augsburg Confession was felt to be impregnable on one point by all who adhered to it, there were others which were felt to require a fuller and more consistent expression, or even to be put in a safer relation to the moral elements of Christianity as contained in the doctrine of repentance. The objections of parties within the Protestant churches, or at least on the Protestant side, mainly occasioned the introduction into new formularies of the things needed to improve, as it was thought, the original sketch made by Melancthon. The authoritative mode of expression by formularies was now deemed useful in two respects. First: it effectually stopped for the future all objections where the formularies were authoritative; and, secondly, the supposed improvements of the doctrine which they contained could be pointed to as a sufficient answer to objections where they might be made.

The point in respect of which perfect security was felt was the famous one of Justification or Salvation by Faith alone, and by faith understood in its instrumental sense alone. All who chose to adopt and defend that view could do so with perfect safety. For it is an indubitable dictate of revelation that the sinner is justified by faith, and not by works. The Bible most certainly teaches that; but it also declares that a man "is justified by works and not by faith only," and never once says that the sinner is justified by faith only. Of course the word instrument is searched

for in vain in the Holy Scriptures. However, they affirm the Justification or Salvation of the sinner by faith and not by works. Any man may, if he chooses, understand this to mean exactly what the Belgic Confession, for example, expresses; and no power whatever could dislodge him from the ground he had taken up, if his understanding of terms were either admitted to be correct or could not be proved erroneous. So long as faith was admitted, or could not be disproved, to mean simply assent or trust, and works of law simply obedience to the moral law, nothing could result but endless and utterly profitless argumentation around the theological puzzle couched in the words "Justification by faith alone, but not by faith which is alone." Only exhaustion and heartsickness in the combatants could lay controversy on such a theme. And if the Church of Rome be instructed and guided by Heaven in a manner different from and superior to all others, why did she not put an end to the contest on this point by at once untying instead of cutting the knot which had been formed by a misunderstanding of terms? She did not do that, because she could not. She was baffled and effectually foiled by her own Vulgate. As this version of the Bible suggested that sense in which the reformers understood the scriptural proofs of their doctrine, so it appeared in nine cases out of ten to countenance by its language exactly that sense. It was, therefore, impossible to prove them in error incontrovertibly by the Vulgate alone. Thus God overruled a source of error so as to educe from it a world-wide good. The

Greek Church only could have explained the question at that time; but she was lying crushed and dishonoured beneath the rule of the Moslems.

The point in respect of which the Lutheran Churches of the Continent chiefly felt anxiety during this period, was connected with Melancthon's omitting to say anything as to the "righteousness of Christ," and his treatment of the subject of "righteousness of God." The first of these matters will be seen distinctly mentioned in the Saxon Confession, and placed in close connection with the second. But this is done in that Symbol in exact conformity to the plan sketched by Melancthon. The Saxon Confession is, in short, only the repetition in a fuller and more perfect, but also more dogmatic form, of what is contained in the Augsburg. It presents, however, one interesting peculiarity, namely, an illustration of the gradual advance made in the extrication of the internal from the external elements of Justification or Salvation. It may be viewed in connection with the Helvetic and Gallic Symbols as illustrative of this process, since it preceded them by several years, and they were more thoroughgoing than it in the same direction.

But the two Calvinistic Symbols are characterised by an important feature, which here calls for attention. Being framed under the influence of Calvin, they are on that account as much superior in one respect to the Lutheran Symbols as they are inferior in another. Their superiority lies in the place and prominence assigned in them to Repentance. Calvin certainly did good service to the cause of truth, by substituting for

the extremely meager Lutheran idea of Repentance, those substantial statements on the subject set forth in Calvinistic formularies. Repentance was, in his opinion, no mere conviction of sin such as Melancthon made it appear, or no mere "effectual call," such as the Westminster Divines set before Justification, but a full, living, and correct representation of Repentance which he also made to precede Justification. But if Calvin did good service in this way, it was he who first unhesitatingly gave the weight of his great authority to the purely external mode of understanding "righteousness of God;" and who thus laid the second part of the foundation of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation. That doctrine could never have appeared without the aid previously afforded by Calvin in his mode of treating that important subject.

He was led to act in this manner by exactly the same influence which told on the framers of the Saxon Symbol. That was the influence of certain parties in Germany, of whom Osiander is the best known; and who contended that "righteousness of God" meant a Divine bestowal on man of a righteousness to dwell and work in him. But Osiander at least entertained mystical, and in so far indefensible, opinions on the subject. These parties were met in Germany in the same spirit of moderation originally exhibited by Melancthon, in treating this subject. But the Institutes of Calvin remain to testify as to his treatment both of the subject in dispute, and of Osiander. He passed the decree, a decree never to be questioned by his fol-

lowers, that "righteousness of God" had only the external or extrinsic sense exactly suitable to his doctrine of Justification. But while doing so, neither was his treatment of the subject fair, nor his conduct to Osiander justifiable. He represented the side of the subject that was opposed by him only in the erroneous manner of Osiander, and not as his great knowledge could have enabled him to do. He thus gained an easy victory over manifest blunders, and in its strength carried his own point over his opponent, whom he failed not to paint in colours which only an unscrupulous controversialist would employ. But his own opinions must be yet subjected to the scrutiny of a more impartial judgment than his own times, or his own avowed followers have allowed. And when that has been done, it will be well for the memory of Calvin, if he come off as clear as some of those whom he in part overcame and unmeasuredly abused.

II. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Saxon Confession.

II. I shall first quote from the Saxon Confession. It was composed, as already stated, in 1561. Thirty years, consequently, intervened between the times of composition of the Augsburg and Saxon Symbols. The controversy during that interval, which mainly influenced the later Creed, has been already pointed out.

The Confession opens with a chapter entitled, "Of Doctrine;" and in it a faithful adherence to the sacred canon and the three catholic creeds is avowed. Its second chapter treats of "Original sin;" and in the

third my special subject is discussed at great length. Only that portion of it which fully and continuously explains the doctrine of Justification or Salvation which it was intended to authorise can be quoted. It is to the following effect :

“It is to be observed, in explanation of the term *to be justified* (justificari), that it is employed according to usage. To be justified signifies, to become a righteous instead of an unrighteous person, which being rightly understood also suits here. Instead of an unrighteous person, that is, guilty and disobedient, and without Christ, to become righteous, that is, to be absolved from guilt for the sake of the Son of God, and to lay hold by faith of Christ Himself, who is our Righteousness, as Jeremiah and Paul say ; because by His merit we have forgiveness, and God imputes (imputat) righteousness to us, and for His sake reckons (reputat) us righteous ; and by His Holy Spirit given to us quickens and regenerates us. This is exactly what is said in John v : *And this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life* ; and in Rom. iii : *That He Himself may be just and justifying* (justificans). But although a newness is begun at the same time, which shall be perfected in the eternal life to which we have been redeemed ; yet not for the sake of new qualities or working is any person in this life righteous, that is, accepted of God and an heir of eternal life ; but for the sake of the Mediator Himself, who suffered and rose again, who reigns and intercedes for us, who obumbrates (obumbrantem) and quickens us. For although virtues have been begun, still they are as yet imperfect, and the remnants of sin inhere in us. Therefore, this consolation ought to be kept hold of, that *the person* is pleasing for the sake of the Son of God, His Righteousness being imputed to us, as is said in Rom., iv : *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed* (imputatum est, not reputatum est) *to him for righteousness* : also, *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins*

are covered. In a corresponding sense, therefore, must one understand the expression, *we are justified by faith*, that is, we are justified by trust (fiducia) in the Son of God, not for the sake of our own character, but because He is our Propitiator, in whom the heart rests by trust (fiducia) of mercy promised for His sake. And He Himself excites this trust (fiduciam) in us by His Holy Spirit, as Paul says : *Ye have received the Spirit of the adoption of sons, by which we cry aloud, Abba Father."*

My first remark on this quotation will refer to a peculiarity very noticeable in it, and with an eye to which an observation was made at the commencement of this Note. That observation was : that exactly as the formularies of Henry the Eighth's reign show the breaking up in England of the old Romanist system, and the advance to the reformed and purely catholic position finally occupied in that highly favoured land ; so do certain continental formularies illustrate the advance from the ground occupied by Melancthon to that farthest possible point reached by the Westminster Divines in respect of all that was peculiar, contradictory, and dangerous, in the doctrine of Melancthon. For example, this formulary, while obviously Lutheran, yet quotes passages from John v, and Rom. iii, in a sense, especially in the case of the latter, which Westminster Divines, and all of their exact mind, would on no account have tolerated. To do so must have been subversive of Chapter XI ; at least, to do so must have left it in a condition of unstable equilibrium. The sense attached, in the above quotation, to the words "just and justifying," though sanctioned by Fathers like Chrysostom and Augustine,

was finally put an end to by Westminster Divines and men like Cocceius and Witsius, wherever their influence predominated. The liberty of interpreting such passages in the manner approved by the tenor of the Scriptures, the ancient church, and many of the Primitive Reformers themselves, was just the bone of contention in doctrinal matters between Scottish Covenanters and their opponents. And that the former were wrong, John Knox himself shall be found to bear unambiguous testimony.

The doctrine contained in the quotations just made is manifestly the same in its general principles as that in the Augsburg Confession. Both exhibit the inversion of the Catholic axiom, that the sinner must surrender himself to the Divine mercy in penitence and faith, that he may be delivered from the power of sin, as well as from its guilt. Both exhibit the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation of the personality by trust: whence springs the impossibility of manifesting, on any principle of common sense, the necessity of obedience. The same insoluble element of inconsistency and contradiction traceable in the Augsburg Confession, is also seen running athwart the statements of the Saxon one; and is evidently advancing, in the case of the latter, towards the completion of its inevitable result, namely, the utter rending in twain of the robe of internal and external righteousness prepared by God for all who should be received in Repentance and Faith into the body of His Son. Important formulas left untouched by the Augsburg Confession are preparing in the Saxon one to be

understood in the external sense. Thus, as appears from the quotations just made, the following passages of Jeremiah and Paul were employed by the framers of this formulary, as if bearing the external sense. Thus it is said in Jeremiah, xxiii, "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His Name wherewith He shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." (This ought, by the way, to be compared with what Jeremiah says in another part of his prophesyings, xxxiii, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness.") The passage, again, of Paul's Epistles most obviously suggested is 1 Cor. i: "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." The way was prepared by the use made in the Saxon Confession, not to mention others, of the first and last of these passages, to interpret them and all their parallels in the purely external sense.

This Confession being purely Lutheran, treats the doctrine of Good Works exactly as was seen to be done in the Augsburg. This is said in reference to the spirit and substance of its doctrine on that subject, for the treatment is much more methodical and precise than that given to it by Melancthon. It is methodically

discussed in Chapters bearing the following titles : V. "Of Free Will; VI. Of New Obedience;" VII. "What Works ought to be done;" VIII. "How New Obedience may please;" IX. "Of Rewards."

III. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Helvetic and Gallic Confessions.

III. The Helvetic Confession was framed in 1566, and consequently at a later date than the Saxon. The Gallic Confession was laid before Charles IX, in 1561; but it was not published till 1566.

These two confessions being Calvinistic are, of course, marked by the prominence given in them to the doctrine of Predestination. But what concerns my subject more is the manner in which the Helvetic Confession in particular treats of repentance. It is discussed fully in Chapter XIV, entitled "Of Repentance and the Conversion of Man." Its treatment, indeed, is fuller than the treatment of Justification in Chapter XV; which is entitled "Of the true Justification of the Faithful." Since this chapter involves in its spirit and substance all the pure elements of an external Justification or Salvation already ascertained, it is only of absolute necessity to quote what is peculiar to itself. However, it will be as well to quote the concluding part of the first paragraph, and the second and third paragraphs. The second paragraph contains the additions made to the doctrine by the framers of this Confession, while the concluding part of the first paragraph and the third one will illustrate the appropriation of matters held to be already settled by the Augsburg Confession.

“ But it is most certain that we are all by nature sinners and ungodly, as well as convicted of ungodliness before the Divine tribunal, and liable to death : but to be justified, is to be freed from the guilt of sin and from death, by God our Judge, on account of the grace of Christ alone, and not for the sake of any merit or any personal consideration of our own. For what can be clearer than what Paul has said?—Rom. iii. *For all have sinned, and come short (destituuntur) of the glory of God. But they are justified freely (justificantur gratis) by His grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*”

“ Christ received and bore in Himself the sins of the world and made satisfaction to Divine justice. God is therefore propitious to our sins, only for the sake of Christ, who suffered and was raised again ; neither does He impute them to us, but He imputes the righteousness of Christ as ours, 2 Cor. v, Rom. iv ; so that we are now not only washed and purged from sins, or holy (sancti), but have also bestowed on us (donati) the righteousness of Christ ; we are therefore absolved from sin, death, and condemnation, and, in a word, we become righteous, and heirs of eternal life. Properly speaking, therefore, God alone justifies us for Christ’s sake only, not imputing to us our sins, but imputing to us His righteousness.

“ But since we receive this justification, not by any works, but by faith in the mercy of God and in Christ ; we therefore teach and believe with the Apostle, that sinful men are justified only by faith in Christ, not by the Law, or any works. For the Apostle says, Rom. iii : *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.* He likewise says, Rom. iv : *If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Gen. xv. But to him that worketh not, but believeth in God who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* And again, St. Paul says, Eph. ii : *For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast, &c.* Since

faith thus receives Christ our righteousness, and attributes everything to the grace of God in Christ, accordingly Justification is attributed to faith, especially on account of Christ, and not because it is our own work. For Faith is the gift of God. But that we receive Christ by faith, our Lord teaches in many places in the Gospel by St. John, as in Chapter VI, where he employs the expression 'to eat' in place of the expression 'to believe,' and 'to believe' in place of 'to eat.' For as we receive food by eating, so do we participate in Christ by believing. Therefore we do not attribute the benefit of Justification partly to the grace of God or of Christ, and partly to ourselves or any works and merits of our own, but entirely to the grace of God in Christ, by faith. Besides our love and works could not please God, if they were done by us while yet unjust; and therefore it behoves us to be just before we can love or do good works. We are made truly just, as we have said, by faith in Christ, out of the mere grace of God, Who does not impute our sins to us but the righteousness of Christ, inasmuch as He imputes to us faith in Christ for righteousness. Besides, the Apostle most distinctly derives love from faith, saying in 1 Tim. i, *Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.*"

Now the second of these paragraphs in particular clearly exhibits an important step taken by the framers of this formulary, beyond the point at which Melancthon paused in the Augsburg Confession. Thus it appeared in our examination of the Augsburg Confession, that the sinner was said in it to be justified, or saved for "Christ's sake," neither the righteousness of Christ nor the imputation of Christ's righteousness being mentioned. But in the second of the paragraphs just quoted from the Helvetic Confession we read: 'Properly speaking, therefore, God alone justifies us

for Christ's sake, not imputing to us our sins, but imputing to us Christ's righteousness." And again in the last of the three paragraphs, it is said: "We are made truly just, as we have said, by faith in Christ, out of the mere grace of God, who does not impute our sins to us, but the righteousness of Christ, inasmuch as He imputes to us faith in Christ for righteousness." The additional step is clear.

The second paragraph also names certain passages of scripture supposed to prove this imputation of the righteousness of Christ, in order to Justification or Salvation; namely, Rom. iv, 25, and 2 Cor. v, 21. The former says: "Who (Jesus Christ) was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification;" the latter, "He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might become righteousness of God in Him." While both of these passages then are understood in this Confession in the external sense, the "righteousness of God" mentioned in the second of them is wholly identified with that substitutionary and imputative obedience of Christ, spoken of in Rom. v, 18. But we need not be surprised at such a style of interpretation in the case of a passage like that just pointed out, when it is seen applied in a most evident manner even to one of the two formulas already pointed out as cautions, expressly given by the Holy Ghost, against assigning to Justification or Salvation the merely external and imputative sense. Thus the text, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the spirit of our God," is manifestly paraphrased in

the external sense, in the following words of this Confession, "so that we are not only washed and purged from sins, or holy (*sancti*), but have also bestowed on us the righteousness of Christ." And, in connection with the peculiarities observable in this formulary, it may well be asked in what conceivable sense Faith can be said in it to be imputed for righteousness, in the matter of Justification or Salvation? It is indeed said to be so imputed in Holy Scripture, and in the last paragraph quoted above from the Helvetic Confession, as well as in one of the quotations made in the last Section from the Augsburg Confession. But, if the imputation of faith for righteousness be in fact inconsistent with even the pure Lutheran doctrine, it becomes a manifest contradiction to speak of such imputation in the case of the Calvinistic doctrine, inasmuch as that doctrine makes the righteousness of Christ, and not Faith to be imputed for Justification or Salvation. Nevertheless this imputation of Faith is in reality a scriptural truth, which, being converted into a paradox by the Augsburg and Helvetic Symbols, was in the end articulately denied by the Westminster formularies.

In judging of the important addition, clearly made by the chief Calvinistic creed of the Continent, to the doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, care must be taken to separate what is true in it from what is false. Thus if in mentioning the imputation of Christ's righteousness or obedience it had in view only what St. Paul teaches in Rom. v, 18, it would be incontrovertibly correct. For there can

be no question, that the "one righteousness," or "one obedience," mentioned in that passage in contrast with the "one offence" or "one disobedience" of Adam, is the source of Forgiveness and basis of Justification or Salvation; and one wonders how Melancthon could avoid touching on it in the Augsburg Confession. The error then of Calvin and his followers lies in identifying wholly with that substitutionary or imputative righteousness of Christ, what St. Paul says as to "righteousness of God." One of the merits of the Confession of Knox will be seen in the sequel to consist in the avoidance of this error, just as another of its merits was the avoidance of the fundamental error of interpreting the Augsburg Confession in accordance with its dogmatic aspect.

However, the imputation mentioned in the pure Calvinistical Creeds of the Continent means no more, when explained by themselves, than the accounting of penitent sinners as acquitted or just in virtue of the "one righteousness" or "one obedience" of Christ. This is shown very clearly by the statements made in the second of the three paragraphs now under consideration. And it is proved incontestibly by the following passage from the Gallic Confession:

"We believe our entire righteousness to be placed in the forgiveness of our sins, which becomes also, as David testifies, our only (unica) blessedness. We therefore repudiate all other grounds on which men esteem themselves to be justified before God. And every opinion of virtues and merits having been rejected, we rest entirely on the obedience of Christ alone; which is indeed imputed to us,

that as well all our sins may be covered as that we may obtain grace.”

The doctrine in this passage is the same in spirit and substance with that of Melancthon, that is, it makes Justification or Salvation consist of Forgiveness, or Reconciliation, or Acceptance for Christ's sake only. But this was declared by Dr. Chalmers to be a mere Socinian doctrine; and it certainly comes far short of what he, along with the Westminster Divines, maintained to be the orthodox doctrine, namely, that Justification or Salvation consists of Forgiveness through Christ's atonement on the one hand, and of the imputation of Christ's righteousness on the other.

Since these Calvinistic Creeds of the Continent placed a full and, in so far, correct exposition of Repentance before their account of Justification or Salvation; and made this latter only equivalent in reality to Forgiveness and Acceptance by virtue of Christ's obedience unto death, their doctrine appeared to harmonise better with the Scriptures than that of the Lutheran ones. They gained strength too by giving a place to what St. Paul teaches respecting the “one righteousness” or “one obedience” of Christ; and were even enabled by its means to support better the Lutheran sense affixed by them to what St. Paul teaches respecting “righteousness of God.” They owed their superiority in these respects to the clear methodical intellect of Calvin. Nevertheless they only increased the difficulties resulting from the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession; for embody-

ing all embraced in that, they also assigned authoritatively the mere external sense to the Scriptural formulas touching "righteousness of God;" and, as has just been remarked, gave an appearance of verisimilitude to that interpretation by identifying "righteousness of God" with the "one righteousness" or "one obedience" of Christ.

IV. How much of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation was formed at this stage.

IV. It is necessary to indicate distinctly at this point, how much of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation had been now formed. As has been already shown, its leading principle of a purely external or extrinsic Salvation was contained in the positive aspect of the Augsburg Confession; and on that account the whole of it was potentially involved also in the statement of Melancthon. However, it was only involved potentially, and much remained to be done both negatively and positively on the basis of that statement, viewed dogmatically, before the fully developed Westminster doctrine appeared. An important stage in this development presents itself in the Creeds just examined, especially the Calvinistic ones. Thus their framers had determined and articulately declared that all produced in the Christian by Divine grace, whether described in the Scriptures as "Repentance unto Salvation," or "Regeneration and Sanctification," or "Righteousness of God," was neither an element nor a condition of Justification or Salvation. Accordingly, the second "position negative" in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, declaring that nothing "wrought in us, or

done by us," forms any element or condition of Justification or Salvation, was now fully formed. Besides, the basis was now firmly laid and the materials were prepared for the second part of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, namely, the imputation of the Righteousness or Obedience of Christ. That basis, and these materials, are very remarkable. They are none else than that "Righteousness of God" which Melancthon refrained from subjecting to the Lutheran sense; and such expressions as "the Lord our Righteousness." The meaning of all such scriptural formulas was now become purely external under the influence of Calvin. But as yet they were not employed in exactly the same manner as afterwards by the Scottish Covenanters and Doctrinal Puritans. For while the framers of these Continental Creeds employed these passages freely as signifying only an imputation of Christ's righteousness or obedience, still this imputation had a meaning only the same in reality as that of Melancthon's expression "for Christ's sake." And Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession itself affords a proof of this. For its second "position negative," which expresses the excluding process of this stage, says "not for anything wrought in us, or done by us," while the corresponding positive proposition says, "but for Christ's sake alone." The latter is Melancthon's own expression, and it exactly expresses what was meant in the Continental Calvinistic Creeds by "forgiveness on account of Christ's righteousness."

Thus only the second stage of the Westminster

doctrine of Justification or Salvation has yet been reached, though the materials were new collected and fashioned to a certain extent for the formation of the complete doctrine. But a third stage of negative and of positive assertion had yet to be passed through, before the doctrine of a "complete Salvation" had been formed. The subject of Faith was as yet left open to a certain extent, so that an attempt could be made, even after apparently granting all that was definitely settled by the Continental Confessions, to show that "faith itself, the act of believing, and evangelical obedience," had something to do as conditions at least, in the matter of Justification or Salvation. Accordingly, such an attempt had to be defeated, and rendered impossible for the future by appropriate "positions negative." Besides, certain important divisions and allotments had to be made in regard to the "righteousness of Christ," that being of course the meaning affixed to the portions of Scripture met with in this section, and their parallels. And to countenance this portion of the work, the primeval condition of man and his Fall had to be peculiarly explained by means of the Law of Moses, so as to quadrate with the account of the righteousness of Christ, and to support the doctrine of a fully completed Justification or Salvation of the sinner, in which faith had nothing to do but receive it, in the manner of an instrument, as an absolutely gratuitous and unconditioned gift. Most important aid will be derived from the Aberdeen Confession in tracing this stage of the development of the Westminster doctrine.

The advancement made on the Continent during this stage of the business, was a comparatively easy matter within the Protestant Churches. All that Melancthon, for example, in his full knowledge of all sides of the subject, would not do more than express in the words of others, or leave in a form calculated as much to warn as to authorise, would, when insisted on by men now in authority, though only children when Luther and Melancthon first came into notice, be adopted undoubtingly by still another generation. The points of keenest debate in 1540 had become the settled questions of 1560 and 1566. And always would there be younger men to whom new points only could afford room for controversy, and its desired result, namely, a decision on the side of acknowledged principles. These would urge on the advance of a fully systematised so-called Protestant doctrine. Never have men been awanting to uphold the principle, that to remove to the greatest distance on all points from the Church of Rome, is the sure way to reach the centre and secure the circumference of the whole truth. But haply this principle may be every whit as absurd as that of the man who, having felt the antarctic regions to be frost-bitten, hunger-bitten, and most dangerous, should retire along the entire meridian without any relish of the more genial climes, till he had at length arrived where regions frost-bitten, hunger-bitten, and most dangerous, had again received him in their cold embrace. That was certainly not the method adopted by John Knox in

doctrinal matters; which are assuredly not the least important to the well-being of a Church. And in testimony of this his Symbol shall now be made to speak for him.

SECTION IV.

THE CONFESSION OF JOHN KNOX

AND

THE ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THIS must be considered in one sense an intercalary Section. It ought not to be placed here if my more special subject, namely, the development of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation from its germ in the positive aspect of the Augsburg Confession, were to be continuously pursued. The formularies of which it treats will contribute nothing to that subject. The contrary will rather be found to be the case.

But this appears for several reasons to be the right point for entering on the examination of the Confession of Knox and the Thirty-nine Articles. For, as both of them (and especially the Confession) have been generally considered to be Calvinistic, it is obviously appropriate to examine them after the confessedly Calvinistic formularies. The result of this examination, however, will show that Knox was unquestionably no disciple of either Luther or Calvin, and that the very doctrine which he

confessed at large can be read in the Thirty-nine Articles. And this characteristic of Knox's doctrine is another reason for examining it with particular care just at this stage of my remarks. For it will be of material service thus to ascertain from his own solemn testimony what judgment he had formed in regard to the type of doctrine which has been already examined, and which was, after his day, to be fully developed in a manner that will be exhibited in the sequel. And so obviously adverse will that judgment appear to have been, that I shall employ it and the reasons on which it is manifestly based, as the representative and defence respectively of the true doctrine of Justification or Salvation. Thus shall the authentic and genuine Protestant doctrine as it was confessed by Knox, be set forth midway between the appearance of germinal errors in the Augsburg Confession, and their final development in the Westminster one.

I have spoken throughout of the Primitive Scottish Confession, as the Confession of Knox. His name is placed last in the list of four persons, who are mentioned as the parties appointed to prepare it. But there can be no question that it speaks the mind of Knox, and in an important sense only his mind. His judgment, sagacity, and experience alone made it what it is. In the hands of others, it would inevitably have borne the stamp of that Continental influence, which could only have been firmly put aside by a man who felt himself as competent to judge in such matters as Luther, or Melancthon, or Calvin, and who felt that there lay on him imperative duties in the discharge of

which neither German, Swiss, nor even English influences had any right to interfere.

It has been already stated, that the Thirty-nine Articles were framed and authorised in 1553, and that they were reauthorised in 1563. It has been also stated that the Confession of Knox was framed and authorised in 1560, and that it was reauthorised in 1580.

My remarks will be confined in the first place to the Confession of Knox. Some of these remarks are at once suggested by a comparison of the date at which that Symbol was framed, with the dates at which some of the Symbols that were examined in the last Section were framed. But these observations must be postponed, because their force cannot be appreciated till the doctrine which Knox confessed has been ascertained.

What Knox really held as to the doctrine of Justification or Salvation will be exhibited in the first place by quotations from his Confession, and these will be given in the same order in which they are met with in the Symbol itself. I will quote from the edition of Knox's works published by the Wodrow Society. The Confession as given in that publication agrees with what must be of course considered the most authentic form of the Symbol, namely, that Act of the Scottish Parliament in which it was embodied. Excepting one omission, which will be pointed out at the proper time, the Latin version of the Confession contained in the "Corpus et Syntagma Confessionum" corresponds with what we read in the Wodrow pub-

lication, and in the Act of Parliament. The Latin version deserves to be specially noticed. It is found in both of the editions of the *Corpus et Syntagma Confessionum*, which were published successively in 1612 and 1654, while in the latter edition of that valuable work the Westminster Confession is not found. This version of the primitive Scottish Confession is admirable in respect of its Latinity.

The circumstance that the Westminster Confession has been generally understood to embody and protect by necessary safeguards the same reformed tenets which Knox symbolised, makes it necessary to quote somewhat largely from Knox's Creed. At least, the quotations must be sufficient to show distinctly what Knox believed on those subjects which are treated of under the head of the Covenants in the Westminster formularies. As was pointed out in my preliminary sketch of these formularies, their declarations as to the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace formed an essential part, and were all-important as an explanation, of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation. Accordingly, the parallel portions of the Primitive Scottish Confession must be quoted. And to do that, will accomplish more than the mere supplying of data for a comparison between the doctrines that were symbolised by Knox and the Westminster Divines respectively. It will afford the means of comparing in certain respects the tenets of the latter with those which were held by the primitive Reformers in general. For, in fact, all the early Confessions are as free as that of Knox will show itself to

be, of the peculiarities which signalise the Westminster description of the Covenant of Works on the one hand, and the Covenant of Grace on the other.

It may also be premised, that the Confession of Knox contains no such Chapter "Of Justification" as has been already quoted in full from the Augsburg and Westminster Symbols, and from the Saxon, Helvetic, and Gallic ones in part. Nay more, for the words Justification and Salvation are not employed in those chapters, which treat specially of forgiveness and acceptance with God. This is in reality one of the most significant and important features of the Confession as regards the special doctrine under consideration. I intend at present only to direct attention to this circumstance, that it may be observed when it comes into view in the following quotations. However, notwithstanding that omission, or rather just on account of it, even a first perusal of the Confession enables one to see clearly what its real doctrine of Justification or Salvation is, and a more careful examination of it confirms the correctness of the first impression. It at once presents a meaning which is clear throughout, and symmetrical in every part.

I. Knox's doctrine of Justification or Salvation exhibited in his own words.

I. I deem it right, that the belief of Knox as to the doctrine which is specially under consideration should be fully exhibited in the first place by means of his own words. For that reason, the entire chapters of his Confession, which either open the subject prelusively or explain it in detail, shall now be

successively quoted in the same order in which they are found in the Symbol itself. It would, indeed, be less cumbrous and less apt to produce repetitions, were I to give no such compend of Knox's belief in his own words, and were I at once to examine his belief by means of the passages which unequivocally declare it. But these are small considerations, as compared with the justice, and because of its justice, the prudence of allowing this so ill-used Symbol to speak fully for itself on the subject which is alone in question. I will only make such remarks between the quotations, as are necessary to indicate certain variations which exist in different copies of the Confession, or to connect the successive quotations, or to direct attention at the right moment to the characteristic features of these quotations. My correctness in the fulfilment of the last of these commentatorial offices will find a sufficient guarantee in the quotations themselves.

I will commence the citations with a chapter, which may be called the key-note of this Confessional Psalm or Hymn. That chapter is the third; it is entitled "Of Original Sin;" and it may be considered to be the exact parallel to Chapter VII in the Westminster Confession. The chapter in question proceeds thus:

"By which transgression, commonly called Original Sin, was the image of God utterly defaced in man; and he and his posterity became enemies to God, slaves to Satan, and servants to sin, insomuch that death everlasting has had, and shall have power and dominion over all that have not been, are not, or shall not be regenerated from above: which regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy

Ghost, working in the hearts of the elect of God an assured faith in the promise of God, revealed to us in His word; by which faith they apprehend Christ Jesus, with the graces and benefits promised in Him."

A note in the Wodrow edition states, that "in the old printed copies 'we apprehend'" occurs instead of "they apprehend;" and the Latin version gives the former expression. I must also point out my reasons for calling the chapter just quoted the Key-note of Knox's Confessional Hymn. These appear in his mode of speaking, First: in reference to Regeneration and Faith; and Second: in reference to the promise of God, and apprehending Christ Jesus. As to the former of these two points, it indicates beforehand the order in which Knox treated the subject of the application of Redemption to man, and prepares for his full and scriptural treatment of that subject. Regeneration and faith are not insisted on merely so far forth as they supply an "instrumental trust" by which an external Justification or Salvation is received, but as that necessary internal change without which death everlasting must continue to reign over sinful men. And as to the second of the two points, it is not less significant. His mode of speaking of the promise of God and apprehending Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him, is characterised by a peculiar openness or width of meaning. This is seen particularly in what he says as to "apprehending Christ Jesus," for, whatever be the precise sense in which we understand the "graces and benefits" that are promised in Christ, it is plain that the meaning is: Christ Jesus

must be apprehended with all his graces and benefits, none of them being singled out and specially insisted on. And this peculiarity becomes more evident when the following chapter, which is entitled "Of the Revelation of the Promise" is read. It shall now be quoted in full.

"For this we constantly believe, that God, after the fearful and horrible defection of man from his obedience, did seek Adam again, call upon him, rebuke his sin, convict him of the same, and in the end made unto him a most joyful promise, to wit, 'That the Seed of the Woman should break down the Serpent's head;' that is, He should destroy the works of the Devil. Which promise, as it was repeated and made more clear from time to time, so was it embraced with joy, and most constantly retained by all the faithful, from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to David, and so forth to the incarnation of Christ Jesus: who all (we mean the faithful Fathers under the Law,) did see the joyful days of Christ Jesus, and did rejoice."

An examination of what is said in the chapter just quoted, as to the nature of the Divine promise, abundantly confirms the truth of my remarks on the words, "by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him." For as the promise was, that Christ the Seed of the Woman should destroy the works of the Devil, or in short redeem the faithful from all the consequences of the Fall, so to enjoy that, Christ must be apprehended with all the graces and benefits promised in Him, just as Knox confessed. And this meaning is still farther opened up in the chapter which will be next quoted.

I pass over the following Chapters, V “Of the Continuance, Increase, and Preservation of the Church,” VI “Of the Incarnation of Christ,” and VII “Why it behoved the Mediator to be very God and very Man.” But I will quote in full Chapter VIII, because it involves much of what is said in the omitted chapters, and will also be of material service in unfolding the principal subject.

Chapter VIII is entitled “Of Election,” and it runs thus :

“For that same eternal God and Father who of mere mercy elected us in Christ Jesus His Son, before the foundation of the world was laid, appointed Him to be our Head, our Brother, our Pastor, and great Bishop of our souls. But because that the enmity betwixt the justice of God and our sins was such, that no flesh by itself could or might have attained unto God, it behoved that the Son of God should descend unto us, and take unto himself a body of our body, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bones, and so become the perfect Mediator betwixt God and man ; giving power to as many as believe in Him to be the Sons of God, as Himself does witness : ‘ I pass up to my Father and unto your Father, to my God and unto your God.’ By which most holy fraternity, whatsoever we have lost in Adam is restored unto us again. And for this cause are we not afraid to call God our Father, not so much in that He hath created us, (which we have in common with the reprobate,) as for that He has given to us His only Son to be our Brother, and given unto us grace to (acknowledge and) embrace Him for our only Mediator, as before is said. It behoved farther, the Messias and Redeemer to be very God and very Man, because He was to underlye the punishment due for our transgressions and inobedience, by death to overcome him that was author of death. But because the only Godhead could not suffer death, neither could the

only manhood overcome the same ; He joined both together in one person, that the imbecility of the one should suffer, and be subject to death (which we had deserved), and the infinite and invincible power of the other, to wit, of the Godhead, should triumph and purchase to us life, liberty, and perpetual victory. And so we confess, and most undoubtedly believe.”

The closing sentence of this chapter connects it with the three chapters that follow it in the Confession. Before I cite these, however, one or two remarks are called for on the last quotation.

It is evident, then, that Knox observed the same order of thought, and the same openness or breadth of expression in the Chapter “Of Election,” which were pointed out in those that preceded it. Thus, having described the necessity for a Mediator between God and Man, which is caused by our sinfulness, and having declared that Mediator to be the Son of God, he first insists on the brotherhood or fraternity which that Mediator bestows on such as believe in Him, and on the truth that by that fraternity, “whatsoever we have lost in Adam is restored to us again.” He next declares how the Mediator was Emmanuel, in order that He might not only underlye the punishment due to our sins but overcome the author of death, and that He might “triumph and purchase to us life, liberty, and perpetual victory.” In fact, the order in question is apparent in these very words, “life, liberty, and perpetual victory,” with which he sums up the special subject of the chapter. I chiefly insist in the meantime on the undeniable fact, that the Confession of

Knox exhibits one regular order in the statement of the elements of Redemption. The fact obviously deserves to be specially pointed out, and the more so because, while clearly seen in the portions of the Confession which have been already cited, it will be both traced in the portions that must be quoted in the sequel and explained by them. These portions will fully explain what is meant by the "life," what by the "liberty," and what by the "perpetual victory" of which Knox speaks.

The first of the three chapters with which the one "Of Election" stands connected, is entitled "Of Christ's Death, Passion, Burial, &c." It proceeds thus :

"That our Lord Jesus Christ offered Himself a voluntary sacrifice unto His Father for us ; that He suffered contradiction of sinners ; that He was wounded and plagued for our transgressions ; that He being the clean, and innocent Lamb of God, was damned in the presence of an earthly judge, that we might be absolved before the tribunal seat of our God ; that He suffered not only the cruel death of the Cross (which was accursed by the sentence of God,) but also that He suffered for a season the wrath of His Father, which sinners had deserved. But yet we avow, that He remained the only and well-beloved and blessed Son of His Father, even in the midst of His anguish and torment, which He suffered in body and soul, to make the full satisfaction for the sins of His people. After the which, we confess and avow, that there remains no other sacrifice for sin ; which if any affirm, we nothing doubt to avow that they are blasphemers against Christ's death, and the everlasting purgation and satisfaction purchased to us by the same."

The next chapter "Of the Resurrection" proceeds thus :

“ We undoubtedly believe, that insomuch as it was impossible that the doulours of death should retain in bondage the Author of Life, that our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified, dead, and buried, who descended into hell, did rise again for our Justification, and destroying (of) him who was (the) author of death, brought life again to us that were subject to death and the bondage of the same. We know that His resurrection was confirmed by the testimony of His very enemies ; by the resurrection of the dead, whose sepulchres did open, and they did arise and appeared to many within the City of Jerusalem. It was also confirmed by the testimony of (His) Angels, and by the senses and judgments of His Apostles, and of others, who had conversation, and did eat and drink with Him after His resurrection.”

The last of the three chapters which were referred to above, is entitled “ Of the Ascension,” and proceeds thus :

“ We nothing doubt, but that the selfsame body, which was born of the Virgin, was crucified, dead, and buried, and which did rise again, did ascend into the heavens for the accomplishment of all things ; where, in our names, and for our comfort He has received all power in heaven and in earth, where He sits at the right hand of the Father inaugurate in His kingdom, Advocate and only Mediator for us ; which glory, honour, and prerogative He alone among the brethren shall possess, till that all His enemies be made His footstool, as that we undoubtedly believe they shall be in the final judgment ; to the execution whereof we certainly believe that the same our Lord Jesus shall visibly return as that he was seen to ascend : And then we firmly believe, that the time of refreshing and restitution of all things shall come, insomuch that they that from the beginning have suffered violence, injury, and wrong for righteousness’ sake shall inherit that blessed immortality promised from the beginning ; but contrariwise, the stubborn, inobedient, cruel, oppressors, filthy persons, adul-

terers, and all sorts of unfaithful men shall be cast in the dungeon of utter darkness, where their worm shall not die, neither yet their fire shall be extinguished. The remembrance of the which day, and of the judgment to be executed in the same, is not only to us a bridle whereby our carnal lusts are refrained; but also such inestimable comfort, that neither may the threatening of worldly Princes, neither yet the fear of temporal death and present danger move us to renounce and forsake that blessed society, which we the members have with our Head and only Mediator Christ Jesus, whom we confess and avow to be the Messiah promised, the only Head of His Church, our just Lawgiver, our only High Priest, Advocate, and Mediator. In which honours and offices, if man or angel presume to intrude themselves, we utterly detest and abhor them, as blasphemers to our Sovereign and Supreme Governor, Christ Jesus."

It has been already pointed out that the closing words of the chapter "Of Election"—these words namely, "and so we confess and most undoubtedly believe,"—connect that chapter with the three which have just been quoted. And it is to be observed that, as we are told in the chapter "Of Election" how the union of the Divine and human natures in Christ fitted Him to "triumph and purchase for us life, liberty, and perpetual victory," so are we told at large in the three chapters which were last quoted how Christ effected that triumph and purchase. And in these three chapters two things chiefly demand attention; first, what is said in the first of them as to the trial and passion of our Lord; second, the mode of introducing the term "Justification" (for the first and last time in the Confession,) in the second of these three chapters.

As respects the former point, it is obvious that, while Knox described the death of Christ as the only sacrifice for sin, and as the "everlasting purgation and satisfaction for our sins," he employs these words,—namely, "that we might be absolved before the tribunal seat of God," to describe the forensic act of Divine mercy towards the believing which proceeds on the consideration of Christ's having been condemned to death in their stead. He obviously does not use the scriptural term "justify," but the term "absolve." Again, as respects the second point, it is equally obvious that, besides employing the purely scriptural statement,—namely, "he did rise again for our Justification," he introduces that statement in a certain connection. That connection is apparent in these words, "our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified, dead, and buried, who descended into hell, did rise again for our Justification, and destroying of him who was the author of death, brought life again to us that were subject to death and the bondage of the same." The connection in which the term Justification stands in this passage ought to be the more observed, since this is the solitary example of its use in the Confession. And all the features of this connection have not been aright attended to, unless several parts of the passage be viewed in the light of statements which were previously made in the Confession. Thus, does Knox say, "did rise again for our Justification, and destroying of him who was the author of death?" Then had he already declared that the promise of God was to the effect, that "the seed of the woman should

break down the serpent's head, that is, should destroy the works of the Devil." Farther, does he follow up the statement as to Christ's rising again for our Justification, and destroying of him who was the author of death with this additional statement, namely, "brought life again to us that were subject to death and the bondage of the same?" Then had he already declared in the very chapter "Of Election" which stands connected with those now commented on, that Emmanuel alone could "triumph and purchase for us life, liberty, and perpetual victory." In short, it is obvious that Knox did not only not call our forgiveness, or absolving for Christ's sake from the condemnation due to our sins Justification, but that he placed that term, when introduced for the first and last time into his Symbol, in a connection of a peculiarly significant kind.

But it is not my intention to do more at present than point out these palpable features in Knox's mode of representing the fundamental articles of the Faith. They certainly present a striking contrast to what was pointed out in the two previous Sections as characteristic of the Continental Confessions. But it would be premature to draw any conclusions from them in reference to my special subject. That cannot be done until those portions of the Confession have been cited, which unquestionably treat at large of that subject. These portions will be found to illustrate so completely the points to which attention has been already directed, that Knox's doctrine of Justification or Salvation will make itself quite apparent.

I shall now cite in full the chapter "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost." In the Confession it immediately follows the one which was last quoted, and, as evidently appears from its commencing words, it was intended to carry forward the statement of the truth in a connected manner and in what was also doubtless judged to be the correct order. It proceeds thus :

"This our faith, and the assurance of the same, proceeds not from flesh and blood, that is to say, from no natural powers within us, but is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost : Whom we confess God, equal with the Father and with the Son ; who sanctifieth us, and bringeth us into all verity by His own operation ; without whom we should remain for ever enemies to God, and ignorant of his Son, Christ Jesus. For of nature we are so dead, so blind, and so perverse, that neither can we feel when we are pricked, see the light when it shines, nor assent to the will of God when it is revealed ; only the Spirit of the Lord Jesus quickeneth that which is dead, removeth the darkness from our minds, and boweth our stubborn hearts to the obedience of His blessed will. And so as we confess that God the Father created us when we were not ; as His Son, our Lord Jesus redeemed us when we were enemies to Him ; so also do we confess that the Holy Ghost does sanctify and regenerate us, without all respect of any merit proceeding from us, be it before, or be at after our regeneration. To speak this one thing yet in more plain words, as we willingly spoil ourselves of all honour and glory of our own creation and redemption ; so do we also of our regeneration and sanctification : For of ourselves, we are not sufficient to think one good thought ; but He who has begun the good work in us, is only He that continueth us in the same, to the praise and glory of His undeserved Grace."

I shall reserve all further comment to the next division of this Section, and proceed in the mean time

with the quotations. The chapter that follows the one just quoted, must also be cited in full. It is entitled "The Cause of Good Works," and proceeds thus :

"So that the cause of Good Works, we confess to be, not our free will, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, who dwelling in our hearts by true faith, brings forth such good works as God has prepared for us to walk in : for this we must boldly affirm, that blasphemy it is to say, that Christ Jesus abides in the hearts of such as in whom there is no spirit of Sanctification. And therefore we fear not to affirm, that murderers, oppressors, cruel persecutors, adulterers, whoremongers, filthy persons, idolators, drunkards, thieves, and all workers of iniquity, have neither true faith, neither any portion of the spirit of Sanctification, which proceedeth from the Lord Jesus, so long as they obstinately continue in their wickedness. For how soon that ever the spirit of the Lord Jesus, (which God's elect children receive by true faith,) takes possession in the heart of any man, so soon does he regenerate and renew the same man ; so that he begins to hate that which before he loved, and begins to love that which before he hated ; and from thence comes that continual battle which is betwixt the flesh and the spirit in God's children ; while the flesh and natural man (according to its own corruption,) lusts for things pleasing and delectable unto itself, grudges in adversity, is lifted up in prosperity, and at every moment is prone and ready to offend the Majesty of God. But the Spirit of God, which giveth witnessing to our Spirit, that we are the sons of God, makes us to resist the Devil, to abhor filthy pleasures, to groan in God's presence for deliverance from this bondage of corruption ; and finally, so triumph over sin that it reign not in our mortal bodies. This battle has not the carnal man, being destitute of God's Spirit ; but do follow and obey sin with greediness, and without repentance, even as the Devil and their corrupt lusts do prick them. But the Sons of God (as before is said) do fight against sin, do sob and mourn, when they perceive themselves tempted to

iniquity ; and if they fall, they rise again with earnest and unfeigned repentance. And these things they do not by their own power, but by the power of the Lord Jesus (without whom they were able to do nothing) worketh in them all that is good.”

Passing over one Chapter (that, namely, which is entitled “What Works are reputed Good before God,” I will now quote in full the chapter on “The Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man.” It proceeds thus :

“The Law of God, we confess and acknowledge most just, most equal, most holy, and most perfect ; commanding those things, which being wrought in perfection, were able to give life, and (able) to bring man to eternal felicity : But our nature is so corrupt, so weak, and so imperfect, that we are never able to fulfil the works of the Law in perfection ; yea, ‘If we say we have no sin, (even after we are regenerated,) we deceive ourselves, and the verity of God is not in us.’” And therefore it behoved us to apprehend Christ Jesus, with His justice and satisfaction, who is the end and accomplishment of the Law, to all that believe, by whom we are set at this liberty, that the curse and malediction of God, fall not upon us, albeit that we fulfil not the same in all points. For God the Father beholding us in the body of His Son Christ Jesus, accepteth our imperfect obedience as it were perfect, and covereth our works, which are defiled with many spots, with the justice of His Son. We do not mean that we are so set at liberty, that we owe no obedience to the Law, (for that before we have plainly confessed) ; but this we affirm, that no man in earth (Christ Jesus alone excepted,) hath given, giveth, or shall give in work, that obedience to the Law which the Law requireth. But when we have done all things, we must fall down and unfeignedly confess, ‘That we are unprofitable servants.’ And therefore whosoever boast themselves of the merits of their own

works, or put their trust in the works of supererogation, they boast themselves of that which is not, and put their trust in damnable idolatry."

It may be remarked that the commencement of the second sentence in this chapter is rendered in the Latin version of the Confession thus: "Et ideo oportet nos Christum cum ipsius justitia et satisfactione apprehendere, qui est finis et complementum Legis; per quem, &c." The word "oportet" does not exactly render the word "beloved;" and the expression, "to all that believe" is omitted. However, the same rendering is given in the two editions of the "Corpus et Syntagma Confessionum," which have been already mentioned. And the passage as given in English in the edition of Calderwood's History which was published in 1678, agrees with the Latin. It runs thus: "And therefore it behoveth us to apprehend Christ Jesus with his justice and satisfaction, who is the end and accomplishment of the Law, by whom, &c."

The chapter which follows that one last quoted, is entitled "Of the Church." In it some things are found that bear on my special subject. The same remark applies to other chapters in the latter half of the Confession. But it is needless to cite any more entire chapters for the sake of such passages only; and besides, the passages themselves will find an appropriate place in the next division of this Section. Accordingly, I will now close the statement of Knox's belief as given in his own words with the last chapter of the Confession. It is entitled, "The Gifts freely given to the Church," and proceeds thus:—

“ Albeit that the word of God truly preached, and the Sacraments rightly administered, and discipline executed according to the word of God, be the certain and infallible signs of the true Church ; yet do we not so mean, that every particular person joined with such a company, be an elect member of Christ Jesus. For we acknowledge and confess, that darnel, cockel, and chaff, may be sown, grow, and in great abundance lye in the midst of the wheat ; that is, the reprobate may be joined in the society of the elect, and may externally use with them the benefits of the word and sacraments ; but such being but temporal professors in mouth, but not in heart, do fall back and continue not to the end : and therefore have they no fruit of Christ’s death, resurrection nor ascension. But such as with heart unfeignedly believe, and with mouth boldly confess the Lord Jesus, (as before we have said,) shall most assuredly receive these gifts ; first, In this life, remission of sins, and that by faith only in Christ’s blood, in so much, that albeit sin remain and continually abide in these our mortal bodies, yet it is not imputed unto us, but is remitted and covered with Christ’s justice. Secondly, In the general judgment there shall be given to every man and woman resurrection of the flesh ; for the sea shall give her dead, the earth those that therein be inclosed ; yea, the Eternal, our God, shall stretch out His hand upon the dust, and the dead shall arise incorruptible, and that in the substance of the (self) same flesh that every man now bears, to receive, according to their works, glory or punishment : for such as now delight in vanity, cruelty, filthiness, superstition, or idolatry, shall be adjudged to the fire inextinguishable, in the which they shall be tormented for ever as well in their own bodies, as in their souls, which now they give to serve the Devil in all abomination. But such as continue in well doing to the end, boldly professing the Lord Jesus, we constantly believe, that they shall receive glory, honour, and immortality, to reign for ever in life everlasting with Christ Jesus, to whose glorified body all His Elect shall be made like, when He shall appear again to judgment, and shall render up the Kingdom to God his Father, who then shall be, and ever shall remain

in all things, God blessed for ever: To whom, with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

“Arise, O Lord, and let thy enemies be confounded: Let them fly from thy presence that hate thy Godly name: Give thy servants strength to speak thy word in boldness; and let all nations attain to thy true knowledge.”

II. The four Chapters just quoted abundantly confirm the remarks made on those previously cited. Thus what was said in regard to the arrangement of truths seen in the Chapter “Of Original Sin,” is fully verified by the order in which the same truths are treated of in the four last-cited Chapters. Indeed, this point of a certain order having been adopted by Knox at the commencement of his Confession, and adhered to till its close, scarcely needs to be indicated—so palpable is it. But it was also pointed out, that Knox, not only adhered in the Chapter “Of Election” to his adopted order of setting forth the elements of Christian Truth, but connected that Chapter with the three on “The Passion,” “The Resurrection,” and “The Exaltation” of our Lord; and that he spake in particular of the Passion viewed as the ground of an absolution from guilt, and of the Resurrection viewed as resulting in our justification—that he spake of these, I say, in a remarkable manner as compared with the previously examined Confessions. To these points, as they are fully explained in the four last-cited Chapters, must attention be now directed.

II. A digest of Knox's doctrine as to Justification or Salvation.

Adhering to the order adopted by Knox himself, I

shall commence with examining what is said in the Chapters "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost" and "Of the Cause of Good works," in regard to Faith, Regeneration, Sanctification and Renewal. But these subjects, and also what is said in the Chapters "Of the Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man" and "Of the Gifts freely given to the Church" in regard to the remission of sins and covering of them with Christ's justice, must be considered in connection with the prelude and brief statements made on the same subjects in the earlier Chapters of the Confession. It is indeed quite necessary to do this, since, from the Chapter "Of Original Sin"—that key-note of this Confessional Psalm—onwards, the closest connection is discernible in the train of thought, as well as the most complete harmony in their development of Revealed Truth.

My object, then, is to present in this division of the Section a digest of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation contained in the preceding quotations. While doing this, certain things will present themselves prominently, and prepare the way for an examination of Knox's mode of interpreting the *Loci Classici* of the New Testament which treat of Justification or Salvation.

First: It is to be observed that Faith, said in the Chapter "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost" to embrace the Truth confessed in the previous portions of the Symbol, is ascribed in that Chapter to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, just as had been previously stated in the Chapter "Of Original Sin." And having confessed in the former Chapter all the truth respecting the person of the Holy Ghost, as well as having ascribed

Faith to His inspiration, Knox proceeded to describe in detail, in the remainder of the Chapter, what is effectuated in a twofold manner by this Faith, operating by virtue of a Divine energy. He describes the laying aside of enmity to God and the acquisition of the knowledge of Christ, the passing from death to life, the putting off of the old man and putting on of the new man in Christ, in a word Repentance unto Life and Salvation. It is to be observed, that he calls this process indifferently Sanctification and Regeneration, or Regeneration and Sanctification. The scriptural grounds of this mode of speaking shall be considered in the next division of this section. It is also to be observed, that he held Faith to be the means of accomplishing this process by virtue of a divinely bestowed power, as appears from a comparison of this Chapter with the statements as to Faith in the Chapter "Of Original Sin;" and from the express declaration on the subject in the Chapter "Of the Cause of Good Works." Thus it is said, in the latter Chapter: "For how soon that ever the Spirit of Jesus, (which God's elect children receive by true faith,) takes possession in the heart of any man, so soon does He regenerate and renew the same man; so that he begins to hate that which before he loved, and begins to love that which before he hated." These words speak explicitly of capacities and powers inherent in Faith by Divine appointment and working, and which make Faith, through the divinely bestowed energy that it receives, the instrument for effectuating the great change in human nature.

By combining the statements as to Faith made in the chapters just referred to, it appears even at this point how deep and broad was the basis of Scriptural truth, on which Knox constructed his Confession. Thus he evidently recognised both of two fundamental scriptural truths respecting Faith—its origin in the inspiration and teaching of the Holy Ghost, and its office, when thus originated, as a conduit or medium for receiving the Spirit of Jesus. And his recognition of the second of these characteristics of Faith has a particularly important bearing on the character and value of his Confession. It is true, indeed, that he did nothing more in thus recognising this characteristic of Faith than was done by Melancthon. For in the quotation made from that Reformer's statement on Good Works, we read thus, "By this Faith which comforts our hearts in Repentance we receive the Holy Spirit, Who is given that He may govern and assist us, that we may resist sin and the Devil, &c." Melancthon confessed besides, as appeared in the quotation from his Chapter "Of Free Will," that "spiritual righteousness is wrought in us when we are assisted by the Holy Ghost. Moreover, we receive the Holy Spirit when we assent to the word of God so that we may be comforted by Faith; just as Paul teaches when he says, *That ye may receive the promise of the Spirit by Faith.* Augustine says the same thing in his Hypomnesticon." (It ought to be repeated here, in passing, that the parallel of the last-cited passage in the earlier form of the Augsburg Confession, contains the expression "righteousness of God" as the exact

equivalent to the expression "spiritual righteousness.") To proceed: Knox and Melancthon were plainly at one in their confessing that Faith is the divinely appointed recipient of the Holy Spirit; and that Faith thus becomes the instrument for effectuating the radical change in human nature, meant by Repentance, Regeneration, Sanctification, and Renewal. But the statements of Knox on this subject are in a strictly literal accordance with those of Holy Writ—a thing which cannot be affirmed of Melancthon's. For example, Melancthon says nothing in express terms about Regeneration, and Sanctification or Renewal in the first quotation made above, and in the second quotation he drops the expression "righteousness of God" which, however understood, is purely scriptural, and employs the expression "spiritual righteousness" which is not literally scriptural. Knox, on the other hand, having described at length in his Chapter "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost" how men are "regenerated and sanctified," says expressly in the immediately following Chapter "Of the Cause of Good Works:" "For how soon that ever the Spirit of the Lord Jesus (which God's elect children receive by true faith), takes possession in the heart of any man, so soon does He regenerate and renew the same man; so that he begins to hate that which before he loved, and begins to love that which before he hated." The treatment by Knox of the formula "righteousness of God" will be considered in the next division of this section, along with other subjects which show how he interpreted the statements of Scripture as to Justification or Salvation.

The entire treatment, by Knox, of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit exactly accords with what is seen in Holy Scripture. To speak of the Eternal Spirit as Knox did, now as the Holy Ghost the third person in the Trinity who works all things in the Church on Earth as it were independently—now as the “Spirit of the Father,” and now as the “Spirit of Jesus,” is in exact accordance with the scriptural mode of manifesting the manifold and mysterious operations of the Comforter. Thus, it stands out broadly on the pages of the Bible that, as the Father is the primal author and source of our Redemption, and as the Son meritoriously and triumphantly accomplished it, so does the Holy Ghost bring us to the knowledge of it and apply it unto us. He was sent forth to carry on this work, after the exaltation of the Messias. Not that the Eternal Spirit then first began to work among men in order to their Justification or Salvation, but that He then commenced to work in accordance with the dispensation, from which “old things had passed away, and (in which) all things were new.” Viewed in this aspect, the Holy Ghost may be contemplated as the Almighty and Independent Agent, so to speak, of all things in the Church, who, convincing the world “of sin, righteousness, and judgment,” carries on the work commenced on earth by Christ in the days of His Flesh,—who also dwells in the Church and builds it up “on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.” But the Holy Ghost may be contemplated while thus working, as the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, who executes

the counsels of the Father in regard to the Church and the World, and who enables men to possess and enjoy in the Son all that was effected for them by His death and resurrection. For the Father draws men to the Son by the teaching of the Spirit, sheds down the Spirit on men through the Son, and will not refuse His Spirit to such as ask that gift of Him any more than an earthly parent will refuse a good gift to his child. The Father does all this, and the Son co-operates in it, just that men, being drawn to the Son and united to Him by the one Eternal Spirit, may thus "by sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" become heirs with Him of the inheritance in light. Such are some of the various aspects in which the doctrine of the Spirit is taught in Holy Scripture. Indeed, the manifold and mysterious nature of the subject demands for its manifestation, so far as it is capable of being manifested to us, such various modes of presentment as those just hinted at. And not only are such modes of presentment employed in the Bible, but they are so insisted on as to show, that the operations revealed by them are strictly co-ordinate with, and complementary of, both the counsels of the Father and the work of the Son for our Redemption; and that they ought to be considered and acted on at the same time and equally with the mercy of the Father and the grace of our High Priest, who can "be touched with the feeling of our infirmity."

The primitive Scottish Confession derives great value from its scriptural representation of these various

modes of Divine operation, and especially from the due prominence given by it to certain of the most important of them. This is said with reference to its admission of that aspect of the subject, which represents the Holy Ghost as "the Spirit of Jesus," who is received by true faith in order to the effectuating in us the work of Redemption by our Sanctification and Regeneration, or Regeneration and Sanctification. The full importance of this element of truth in Knox's Confession cannot appear, until we have considered the other elements of Redemption and their connection as they are set forth in this Symbol. But the element now in question ought to be the more insisted on at this point, because it became quite obliterated, in the systematic view, by the extreme Predestinarian tenets, and the correlate tenets as to human nature, which appeared in their mature form from the time of the Synod of Dort. Thus the principle of the Westminster Confession (adopted from the Dort Decrees) that man is altogether "passive in his effectual calling," with its applications in that Symbol, had a most adverse effect on the element in question. It removed from the minds subjected to its sway the proper consciousness of the truths, that the Father gives the Spirit to such as ask it of Him, and that the Spirit of Jesus is received by faith. It changed the correct and, therefore, the benignant and cheering aspect of the agency of the Holy Ghost to notions of a purely fatalistic and mechanical kind. Had I no other warrant or ground for making this assertion than my own experience learned in the intellectual and moral atmos-

phere formed by the Westminster theology, I would nevertheless confidently make it.

There are, of course, deep mysteries surrounding this subject, and, consequently, insoluble questions are also connected with it. But these ought only to make us hold more firmly by all the practical aspects of the manifold theme, which are presented in the Scriptures for our instruction and guidance unto Salvation. The truth that the Holy Ghost convinces the world "of sin, and righteousness, and judgment," and brings men to believe in the promise of God and apprehend Jesus Christ with the graces and benefits promised in Him, lands us, if considered speculatively, in the mysterious and insoluble questions which were settled entirely on one side by the Synod of Dordt. Has man any part, and if any, what part, in his first coming to know the truth and believe in Christ? According to the Synod of Dort and the Westminster Assembly, he has absolutely no part in that momentous work, because, as they declare, "he is altogether passive in his effectual calling." But can this dogma be reconciled with the whole teaching of Scripture, any more than the opposite Pelagian extreme? I believe that both extremes do violence respectively to certain clear and important declarations of Holy Writ. Similar questions are connected with the truth that the Spirit of Jesus is bestowed on them that believe, and is received by faith, in order that men may be enabled to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness as new creatures in Christ. This truth also involves speculative questions which man's intellect cannot solve. Nevertheless,

heretofore questions both of this and the former class have been discussed and dogmatically decided by one party against another. And by these decisions damage has been done to the entire truth and to all the interests involved in these important spiritual subjects. Nothing but damage to the truth and the highest interests of men can result, when complementary portions of revealed truth are either torn away or forced into oblivion, if not even maligned and trodden under foot.

Secondly: Adverting now to Knox's doctrine as to the Forgiveness of sins, we must first attend to the statement on that subject in the Chapter "Of the Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man." The three following sentences of that Chapter demand particular attention. "Yea if we say we have no sin even after we are regenerated, we deceive ourselves and the verity of God is not in us. And therefore it behoved us to apprehend Christ Jesus with His justice and satisfaction, Who is the end and accomplishment of the Law, to all that believe, by Whom we are set at this liberty that the curse and malediction of God fall not upon us, albeit that we fulfil not the same in all points. For God the Father beholding us in the body of His Son Christ Jesus, accepteth our imperfect obedience as it were perfect; and covers our works, which are defiled with many spots, with the justice of His Son."

It is to be observed first, that this passage is characterised negatively by an absolute avoidance of the Lutheran and Calvinistic forms of expression as to Justification or Salvation by faith, that is, Trust only.

This avoidance is an obvious fact. No statement is made in it like those which are seen in Chapter IV of the Augsburg Confession, already quoted, or in the parallel chapters also quoted already from the other Continental Symbols, statements wholly identifying the forgiveness of sins with Justification or Salvation. And this circumstance is more remarkable, inasmuch as the expression "covers our works, which are defiled with many spots," particularly directs attention to Rom. iv, and the use made of it in the Continental Symbols, while it does not in the least approve that use. Neither can the expression "apprehend Christ Jesus with His justice and satisfaction, who is the end and accomplishment of the Law, to them that believe," be supposed to imply the Lutheran and Calvinistic doctrines. Several circumstances forbid this supposition. Thus, what is said in the Chapter "Of Original Sin"—that key-note of the Confession—shows that Knox did not employ the words "apprehend by faith" in the narrow sense, as regards Justification or Salvation, seen in the Augsburg Confession. His words in that chapter are, "by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him." This evidently means the apprehension of Christ as Mediator in order to the enjoyment of the whole of Redemption, whereas the apprehension of Him as our Priest in order to enjoy forgiveness, a part only of Redemption, is unmistakably meant in the passage now in question. Besides, the words "graces and benefits promised in Him" occurring in the chapter "Of Original Sin," will be seen to have an application, not only to the

second sentence of the passage under consideration, but to the third one, which says, "For God the Father beholding us in the body &c." And finally, any one must contradict the plainest dictates touching the right mode of interpreting so solemn a document as a Creed, who should affix a Lutheran or Calvinistic sense, as the only correct one, to statements which obviously avoid the distinctive Lutheran and Calvinistic definitions. And the contradiction must be flagrant, when another mode of understanding these statements is directly suggested by the statements themselves, as well as by the entire tenor and contents of the Creed.

But next, let the positive characteristics of the foregoing quotation be considered, or its statements as to that on account of which our sins are forgiven and covered. This is declared to be done on account of the justice and satisfaction of Christ. How, then, must the words "justice" and "satisfaction" of Christ be understood? Now, that the one of these terms is meant to explain the other, is proved by the very sentences in which they occur. For if these sentences be read carefully as they are quoted above, it will be seen that the expressions "justice and satisfaction," "end and accomplishment," "curse and malediction," follow one another in rapid succession, showing clearly that each of them is a phrase formed to express and explain one truth by two equivalent terms. Indeed, this binary form of expression characterises alike the Confession of Knox and the formularies of the Church of England. And it ought to be observed, that, though the binary form of expression is used in the second of

the three sentences, only the single term justice is used in the last of them. And it will be seen immediately that this single term "justice," that is, righteousness is employed also in the chapters "Of the Sacraments" and "Of the Gifts freely given to the Church." Besides several circumstances evince that Knox, when speaking of the justice and satisfaction of Christ, could not mean any such division into parts of the "one righteousness" of Christ, nor any such allotment of these parts, as were insisted on in aftertimes by the Fœderalist Theologians. For, first, it has been already shown that even the Gallic Confession exhibits no such division and allotment, but ascribes Forgiveness to the merit of Christ's "one righteousness." And secondly, Article XI of the Church of England has "for the merit" in its English form, and "propter meritum" in its Latin form. But thirdly, it is scarcely necessary to advert to such points as these two just indicated, because the examination of Knox's Confession will issue in the unquestionable result, that its theology is fundamentally different from the Fœderalist, and is based on a totally different mode of interpreting the New Testament.

In the chapter "Of the Gifts freely given to the Church," which closes the Confession, it is said: "But such as with heart unfeignedly believe, and with mouth boldly confess the Lord Jesus, shall most assuredly receive these gifts; first, In this life, remission of sins, and that by faith only in Christ's blood, insomuch, that albeit sin remain and continually abide in these our mortal bodies, yet it is not imputed unto

us, but is remitted and covered with Christ's justice." This statement entirely resembles that previously cited from the chapter "Of the Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man," and the two are identical in their doctrine as to the Forgiveness of Sins. While in this passage the Forgiveness of Sins is declared to be gratuitous,—a gift received by faith only, it is not made the exact equivalent of Justification or Salvation. This is an undeniable fact. Besides, in this passage the expression Christ's justice is employed in a manner which identifies its meaning with that of the expression Christ's blood, or with Christ's death on the Cross, viewed as the consummation of His life of humiliation and suffering endured for our sake. And if this statement needed other proof than that supplied by the passage in question, such additional proof is afforded by the following quotations from the chapter "Of the Sacraments." "We assuredly believe, that by baptism we are engrafted into Christ Jesus to be made partakers of His justice, by the which our sins are covered and remitted." Here the justice of Christ obviously means the Obedience of "the clean, innocent Lamb of God" unto the death of the Cross, in Whom, through his Obedience, our sins are covered and remitted, and we are dealt with as righteous, in the manner which Knox will be seen to have still further described with much distinctness, and in exact accordance with the declarations of Holy Writ.

Thirdly: Those sentences of the chapter "Of the Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man," which explain that on account of which we are for-

given, also explain the connection between the internal elements of redemption, viz., sanctification and regeneration, or regeneration and sanctification, and the external ones, viz., the covering and remission of our sins through the justice of Christ. They also explain the immutable dependence of the enjoyment of the latter benefits on the enjoyment of the former.

It is said in the first two of the sentences in question: "If we say we have no sin even after we are regenerated, we deceive ourselves, and the verity of God is not in us. And therefore it behoved us to apprehend Christ Jesus, with his justice and satisfaction, who is the end and accomplishment of the law, to them that believe, by whom we are set at this liberty, that the curse and malediction of the law fall not upon us, albeit we fulfil not the same in all points." These words declare that the sinfulness of our estates—not only previous to our regeneration and sanctification, but as well after that change—makes such a Redeemer as the Lord Jesus Christ absolutely essential for our deliverance from its consequences, and necessitates our apprehension of Him, and cleaving to him from first to last, as the Deliverer. From first to last, I say, because the words "And therefore it behoved us to apprehend Christ Jesus with His justice and satisfaction," immediately direct the mind to this passage in the chapter "Of Original Sin," "by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him." And while this latter passage obviously declares the necessity for apprehending and cleaving to Christ from first to last in

order to enjoy the entire redemption provided in Him—for its declaration is undeniably general and comprehensive of all Christ's graces and benefits—so does the former teach that He must be apprehended and cleaved to, from first to last, in respect of His fundamental mediatorial office of priest and propitiator. He must be thus apprehended and cleaved to as the “clean, innocent Lamb of God,” who, being slain in the purpose of the Father from the foundation of the world, was at length actually given by the Father, and gave Himself to be judged, condemned, and crucified, in order that we “might be absolved before the tribunal-seat of God.” He must be thus apprehended and cleaved to as the mediator in whom all divine gifts are stored for sinful men, through whom they came unto sinful men, and in whom they are enjoyed, but—as the mediator in whom all these gifts can be enjoyed, because He has merited them all for us as the second Adam and the only begotten Son of God, and because He has made us capable, by His obedience even unto death in our room, of receiving and enjoying them in Himself through the forgiveness and acceptableness with the Father, vouchsafed in this the well beloved Son.

But while Knox thus confessed that Jesus Christ must be apprehended as our only priest and propitiation, he was most careful to declare, in accordance with the clear dictates of Holy Scripture, in what manner the benefits of Christ's priestly work are enjoyed. He leaves no room for any mistake in regard to the circumstances in which the forgiveness

and covering of our sins can be alone enjoyed. For having stated in the second of the sentences last quoted, that “we are set at this liberty (through Christ the end and accomplishment of the law, to them that believe), that the curse and malediction of the law fall not upon us, albeit we fulfil not the same in all points,” he adds, in the immediately subsequent sentence, “for God the Father beholding us in the body of His Son, Christ Jesus, accepteth our imperfect obedience as it were perfect, and covers our works, which are defiled with many spots, with the justice of His Son.” What Knox meant by the body of Christ will appear from the following passage of the chapter “Of the Church.” “The Church is a company and multitude of men chosen of God, who rightly worship and embrace Him, by true faith in Christ Jesus, who is the only head of the same church, which also is the body and spouse of Christ Jesus; which church is catholic, that is, universal, because it contains the elect of all ages, of all realms, nations, and tongues, be they of the Jews, or be they of the Gentiles, who have communion with God the Father, and with His Son, Christ Jesus, through the sanctification of His Holy Spirit.” By the body of Christ, then, is meant the Church of Christ, and especially that “one new man” whose source of life and whose head is Christ, and in whom are united Jews as well as Gentiles. And it is when we are beheld by the Father as members of this body or Church,—united to Christ by His Spirit received by faith to the effectuating of our regeneration and sanctification,

or repentance unto life and salvation in the full sense, that our sins are covered with the justice of Christ, and remitted. And that all this is in exact accordance with the declarations of Holy Writ, is proved by numerous incontrovertible statements. For example, St. Peter says, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you and peace be multiplied." Again, St. Paul says, "There is now, therefore, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." Or he says in other words, "Therefore if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ." Or still again, St. Paul announces the same thing in these three exactly parallel passages—"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," or, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love," or "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." Knox dared not to contradict or explain away such statements, but rather confessed in exact accordance with them, thus, "For God the Father beholding us in the body of his Son, Christ Jesus, accepteth our imperfect obedience as it were perfect, and covereth our works, which are defiled with many spots, with the justice

of his Son." That is, only they who are beheld by the Father living in the Son as new creatures, or with a faith working by love, or keeping the commandments, enjoy the covering and non-imputation of their sins through the justice of the Only begotten and Well beloved.

What is said in the chapter "Of the gifts freely given to the Church," completely agrees with what has just been pointed out. For after describing, at the commencement of the chapter, the mixture in the Church of the good and bad, Knox carefully indicated, by two significant marks, those who can alone enjoy the covering and non-imputation of their sins for Christ's sake. These words, "such as with heart unfeignedly believe, and with mouth boldly confess the Lord Jesus," present the first very significant mark. The exhibition of its significancy does not require even a reference to the full exegetical meaning of the expressions "believe from the heart," and "confess with the mouth," as they are met with in Rom. x. For the mention previously made in the chapter of "the darnel, cockle, and chaff," which "may be sown, grow, and in great abundance lie amidst the wheat," proves at once that the "wheat," or such as "unfeignedly believe and boldly confess the Lord Jesus," and enjoy in Him the covering and non-imputation of their sins, are not mere trusters or assentients, but regenerate persons and "doers of the word." With the first mark, the second completely corresponds. The latter is seen in the penultimate clause of the following passage: "such as

with heart unfeignedly believe, and with mouth boldly confess the Lord Jesus, as before we have said, shall most assuredly receive these gifts," &c. For the words "as before we have said" send us back to the entire preceding portion of the confession, and consequently to those passages of it explained in the foregoing paragraphs. Accordingly, we are again led to understand that the regenerate and sanctified alone enjoy the forgiveness or covering of their sins with the justice of Christ; and that the enjoyment of the latter benefit presupposes the enjoyment of the former. The internal elements of redemption are thus not only inseparably and intelligibly connected with the external, but the former are realised in us, incipiently at least, antecedently to our actual personal enjoyment of the latter.

What is thus seen to be taught in the portions of Knox's confession just examined, corresponds exactly with the order which he manifestly adopted and adhered to in all the preceding portions of his symbol. Thus it corresponds with the treating of sanctification and regeneration, or regeneration and sanctification, immediately after treating of the passion, resurrection, and exaltation of our Saviour; and before entering on the consideration of the manner in which forgiveness is enjoyed. It corresponds with the statement in the chapter "Of Election," "that Christ purchased for us life, liberty, and perpetual victory." Finally, it corresponds with the generality and comprehensiveness of the statement made in the chapter "Of Original Sin." In fact, it is just the

development of what is therein stated in a germinal form.

I am quite aware that the antecedence of sanctification and regeneration, or regeneration and sanctification, to the enjoyment of forgiveness and its equivalents has been denied. Indeed, while the Westminster divines condemned the tenet that the elect are justified or saved from all eternity, they left a door open for maintaining that Justification or Salvation, as explained by them, and consequently the heirship of eternal life, are enjoyed previous to sanctification or regeneration. I will examine these points in a distinct division of this section, after having considered, in the next division, Knox's mode of interpreting the loci classici of the New Testament bearing on Justification or Salvation.

Fourthly: I must now advert to the clear expression given, in the Confession of Knox, to the truth respecting the spiritual life to which Christians are begotten on earth, that thus, having escaped from the power of spiritual death, they may enjoy life in heaven. This subject is treated very differently in the primitive Scottish symbol than in the Augsburg one. One of the radical defects pointed out in the latter, was the complete divorce effected in it between the two portions of that eternal life which can only be enjoyed through faith in Christ. The terrestrial portion is separated from the celestial, in consequence of the Justification or Salvation that is followed by eternal life being made an absolutely external benefit. But no such blemish mars the symmetry of

Knox's Symbol. A consistent and correct treatment of the subject can be traced from the first utterance made respecting it in the chapter "Of Original Sin," till the confession closes with the sublime announcement as to the final state of Christians and wicked and hypocritical persons respectively.

Thus we read, in the former chapter, "death everlasting has had, and shall have power and dominion over all that have not been, are not, or shall not be regenerated from above; which regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost working in the hearts of the elect of God an assured faith in the promise of God, revealed to us in His word; by which faith they apprehend Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him." In these words, the absolutely essential condition for escaping from the power of death in time, and so escaping from it in eternity, is declared to be the regeneration from above, or the entering on the christian life. Thus, then, is the immortal life, which Christians are taught to hope for, set forth in the key-note of the confession as a life which must be commenced and pursued on earth. The announcement is made at the same time, that this life must be sought for and found, in accordance with the promise of the Father, in the Son, in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen, and who said, "I am the resurrection and the life, whosoever believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." And as in the key-note, so throughout the entire psalm. For it confesses that,

“by faith, which is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we receive the spirit of Jesus, who, so soon that he takes possession in the heart of any man, so soon does he regenerate and renew that man.” In the strength of this new life does the Christian carry on his continual battle with sin within him and sin without him. By this strength he strives to manifest in his life all that should adorn the doctrine of his Saviour and Lord, and be exhibited by one who calls God his Father. And while in this struggle, though conducted by an energy not the Christian’s own, there will appear, alas! too frequently, the outbursts of a defiling sin which is all his own, still there also appears what even Melancthon declared to be “justice meriting rewards,” and God beholding the work as it is carried on in the body of His Son, remits the sin, covering it with the justice of Christ, and accepts the imperfect obedience as it were perfect. For it is God’s own spiritual and moral mode of forming and preparing on earth, for another scene of existence, a new moral creation, out of a spiritually dead, morally corrupted, and guilty race.

It was pointed out in the first division of this section, that the mention of Justification made by Knox in express terms was highly significant. In the chapter “Of the Resurrection of Christ,” it is said, “Our Lord Jesus Christ crucified, dead, and buried, did rise again for our Justification, and destroying of him who was the author of death, brought life again to us that were subject to death, and the

bondage of the same." It was also pointed out, that the significancy of the connection in which the words "did rise again for our justification" are here placed, becomes much greater when this whole passage is viewed in the light cast on it by the statements contained in the chapters "Of Original Sin," "Of the Revelation of God's Promise," "Of Election," and "Of Christ's Passion, Death, and Burial." So may it be remarked now, that no doubt remains as to the sense in which Knox understood the revealed teaching respecting Justification or Salvation, after the survey that has been made of his entire statements on those departments of Christian truth which unquestionably involve Justification or Salvation. We can point now, not merely to his prelusive and brief announcements, but to his full and detailed utterances. For certainly we can look nowhere else in the Confession for the special and detailed account of Justification or Salvation, than to the chapters "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost," "Of the Cause of Good Works," and especially, as proceeding on these, to the chapters "Of the Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man," and "Of the Gifts freely given to the Church." We might now, then, proceed at once to compare the doctrine of Knox, as thus unmistakeably taught, with that contained in the Augsburg and other continental symbols. But, previous to doing that, other things most clearly evidenced by this remarkable creed demand as full and exact an exhibition as the limits of this mere Note will permit.

III. Knox's mode of interpreting the Loci Classici of the New Testament which treat of Justification or Salvation.

III. The first of the things referred to in the last sentence, is Knox's mode of interpreting the Loci Classici of the New Testament which treat most directly, and generally in express terms, of the great subject of Justification or Salvation. His

Confession contains irrefragable proof that he kept before his mind all the scriptural formulas that ought to be attended to, in order to frame an adequate and correct representation of Justification or Salvation. It also presents unambiguous proof as to his style of interpreting and mode of applying those portions of Holy Writ.

With a view to this part of my subject, it was pointed out at the conclusion of my remarks on the Augsburg Confession that, even though the full sense of the formula "righteousness of God" were not a sufficient check to the formation of a doctrine of absolutely external as well as absolutely gratuitous Justification or Salvation, there are two passages exactly complementary of those two on which Melancthon unquestionably based his germinal doctrine, and completely fitted to guard against the dogmatic development of that germinal doctrine. The passages in question are met with in 1 Cor. vi and Tit. iii; and they immediately approve themselves as the complements of Rom. iii and Eph. ii, as well as Divinely appointed guards against an erroneous interpretation of the latter. Now the Symbol of Knox presents unanswerable proof of the fact, that its framer took the quite opposite mode of employing the former

passages from that taken by Calvin and Boza, who reduced them, as far as they could, into a forced conformity with the Lutheran interpretation of the passages in Rom. iii and Eph. ii. Knox gave that place, and assigned that meaning, which common sense demands and secures for the passages in 1 Cor. vi and Tit. iii, when common sense is hearkened to rather than the requirements of an adopted system. Thus when he speaks of "Regeneration and Sanctification" in the Chapter "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost," and of "Regeneration and Renewal" in the Chapter "Of the Cause of Good Works," and that before he has shown how our sins are "covered with the justice of Christ," it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that he had in view the two passages in question. These I shall now quote. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." And again: "But after that the love and kindness of God our Saviour appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of Eternal Life."

And here an important sense of the terms Sanctification and Renewal—a sense evidently adopted by Knox—ought to be pointed out in contrast with the familiar technical sense of comparatively late origin. The latter is apt to cause, by its undivided influence on the mind, much confusion of thought, and to operate

against the formation of correct conceptions touching the right arrangement of the elements of Redemption. The terms Sanctification and Renewal express, when employed in passages like those just cited, the formation of that character, and the production of those principles in the sinner, whence righteousness and holiness spring, rather than the life-long process of "dying unto sin and living unto righteousness" commonly meant by them. It is by overlooking the former sense, and by attending only to the latter, that it appears contradictory to Scriptural statements to maintain that Sanctification or Renewal is a necessary element of Justification or Salvation. For this seems to imply, in the judgment of many, that a man is not, and cannot be, justified or saved forensically through the merit of Christ, until he has completed in doubt and slavish fear a lengthened course of arduous obedience. Whereas, in fact, it only asserts what those parties themselves must maintain substantially at least, unless they be prepared to adopt and advocate consistently those views already proved in part to be erroneous, and to be considered more fully in the next division of this section,—namely, the view that a man is forensically justified or saved and made an heir of eternal life before he repents through divine instruction and grace. Besides, to understand these terms in the sense just pointed out, is attended with the incomparable advantage of making it possible to represent Justification or Salvation in a symmetrical, intelligible, and convincing aspect. But this will appear when we contrast Knox's Confession with the Continental ones.

That Knox understood the terms Sanctification and Renewal in the sense just pointed out, is very clearly proved by certain things in the Chapter "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost." These things were adverted to cursorily in our remarks on that Chapter in the last division of this section ; but they will be advantageously and appropriately considered in this division, which is devoted to an investigation of Knox's mode of interpreting the *Loci Classici* of the New Testament. He says, then, in the Chapter referred to : " so also do we confess that the Holy Ghost does sanctify and regenerate us, without all respect of any merit proceeding from us, be it before, or be it after our regeneration." In these words, he not only makes Sanctification precede Regeneration, but also speaks as if the two terms meant substantially one and the same thing. For, as is obvious, he omits Sanctification and mentions Regeneration only at the end of the quotation. But this is not all ; for immediately after the words just quoted, follow these : " To speak this one thing yet in more plain words, as we willingly spoil ourselves of all honour and glory of our own creation and redemption ; so do we also of our regeneration and sanctification." Though professedly treating in this passage of the same subject as in the last one, he makes regeneration precede sanctification. Now, as the latter mode of speaking has been proved to accord exactly with the language of certain important texts, so also may the former. And by attending to this proof, additional light will be cast on Knox's mode of interpreting the New Testament, as well as on the sense in which he

understood the terms Regeneration, Sanctification, and Renewal.

The passages of Scripture which Knox had in view when giving to Sanctification a place before Regeneration, are such as the following: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; whereunto He called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Regeneration, indeed, is not expressly named in this passage; but it is frequently described in the New Testament as resulting from "belief of the truth," as in these words, "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures." Another passage in which Sanctification takes the precedence, is this: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." It is so evident that the Sanctification of the Spirit here spoken of involves Regeneration, that no further remark is called for. But it is to be observed, that passages like these fully warranted Knox to speak as if Sanctification preceded and involved Regeneration, just as the passages previously quoted from 1 Cor. v and Tit. iii warranted him to speak as if Regeneration preceded and involved Sanctification. When using the former mode of expression, indeed, Sanctification has rather the meaning of Repentance, and presents

Repentance in that aspect which it means when contemplated as the work of God; whereas when using the latter mode of expression, Sanctification rather means the character in which Repentance issues. Both views of the subject are substantially set forth in the commission given to St. Paul by the Lord, in these words: "But rise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." It is evident that the "opening of the eyes," and other spiritual gifts mentioned in the first part of the concluding verse, are just parts of the Sanctification described in the previously quoted passages, if not even parts of the Sanctification declared to be through "the faith which is" in Christ—a point which I shall not stop to discuss. But two things are placed beyond doubt by a comparison of Knox's statements touching Sanctification and Regeneration, or Regeneration and Sanctification, with the several classes of passages that have been cited. First: he had full scriptural warrant for his modes of speaking, which are consequently of a purely scriptural and correct kind. Secondly: he correctly set forth Sanctification and Regeneration, or Regeneration and Sanctification, as both meaning the

formation of the Christian character, by the introduction of new powers and principles, and in not assigning to Sanctification or Renewal such a technical sense as afterwards became common.

Melancthon gave too much countenance to what became ere long the recognised primary and special meaning of Sanctification. Calvin materially aided in the furtherance of technical conceptions touching this subject, which, if taken in all the length and breadth, height and depth, of its scriptural treatment, may be seen to represent one aspect of the entire work of Redemption. But the purely technical sense of Sanctification, now in question, came to a head along with many other cognate conceptions at the time when the Westminster formularies were framed. Truly had Knox re-appeared among the Theologians of the time of the Covenants, he would have felt himself amidst people speaking in an unknown tongue.

The sense in which Knox understood the formula "righteousness of God," as employed by St. Paul, is unmistakeable. With the view of showing this, we commence with considering again the sentences already cited from the Chapter "Of the Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man." One of these sentences runs thus: "And therefore it behoved us to apprehend Christ Jesus with His justice and satisfaction, Who is the end and accomplishment of the Law, to them that believe, by Whom we are set at this liberty, that the curse and malediction of the Law fall not upon us, albeit that we fulfil not the same in all points." This sentence obviously rests, as one part of

its proof, on the following passage of the Epistle to the Romans: "For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to them that believe." But on comparing the sentence quoted from the Confession with these verses, it is to be noted that the former does not say, like the latter, that "Christ is the end of the Law for *righteousness* to them that believe," but only "the end and accomplishment of the Law, to them that believe." Why was the term "righteousness" thus omitted by Knox? This omission cannot be accounted for legitimately by saying that Knox's words, "Christ with His justice and satisfaction," are the exact and full equivalents of St. Paul's term "righteousness," unless there be no other more appropriate and legitimate explanation. But there is such another explanation. This explanation is suggested by the very omission itself just pointed out; it also harmonises completely with all the prominent characteristics of Knox's Symbol; and, above all, it harmonises with the articulate declarations of St. Paul as to our Lord being the end of the Law for righteousness, and as to the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ.

I observe, then, that this explanation is suggested by the very omission itself which has been pointed out. For Knox's saying "end and accomplishment of the Law, to them that believe," without making mention of "righteousness," was intended to have the effect, as

it most certainly has the effect, of making us look more carefully into what he actually and fully confessed respecting Christ as "the end and accomplishment of the Law," and of thus leading us to see the full sense in which he understood our Redeemer, "with His justice and satisfaction," to be "the end and accomplishment of the Law" for *righteousness* "to them that believe." And this sense is seen when we study the sentence of the Confession, that immediately follows the one last quoted. It says: "For God the Father beholding us in the body of His Son Christ Jesus, accepteth our imperfect obedience as it were perfect, and covers our works, which are defiled with many spots, with the justice of His Son." This sentence shows distinctly how Christ is "the end and accomplishment of the Law" for *righteousness*, "to them that believe," and explains how Knox understood the "righteousness of God" which cometh by faith of Christ and is enjoyed in Him. For it declares that it is when the Father beholds us in the body of His Son Christ Jesus, that is, united to Christ by His regenerating and sanctifying, or sanctifying and regenerating Spirit, that He covers our sins with the justice of Christ and accepts that obedience which is a "righteousness and holiness" wrought in us by Himself. This is the "righteousness of God" revealed in the Gospel, by which the Gospel revealing it is constituted "the power of God unto Salvation."

But Knox's mode of treating this subject is further explained, when we attend to certain of St. Paul's statements which treat articulately of "righteousness

of God." These prove that Christ's "justice and satisfaction" are not to be considered the only elements which constitute Him "the end of the Law for righteousness to them that believe," nor consequently the only elements of that righteousness of God" which comes through faith of Christ; but that this is twofold, involving the internal as well as the external benefits of Redemption just as Knox confessed. Thus let the following central passage of the Epistle to the Romans be considered: "For until the Law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no Law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence (or, as in the margin, one offence) death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Christ Jesus. Therefore, as by the offence of one (or, as in the margin, one offence) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one (or, as in the margin, by one righteousness) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one

man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the Law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; That as sin hath reigned unto death; even so might grace reign through righteousness unto Eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." This passage unquestionably treats in detail of the "righteousness of God" that comes through faith of Christ, and, consequently, it also shows how "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to them that believe." And it is to be observed that, while it manifestly makes articulate mention of the "one righteousness or obedience" of Christ, this cannot be affirmed to be identical with its other declarations as to our Justification or Salvation in Christ, without doing violence to sense and language. Both sense and language must suffer force, if all said in this passage has affixed to it the same external meaning that unquestionably belongs to the expression "one righteousness" or "righteousness of one." For example, the expressions "abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness," "justification of life," "made righteous," cannot be understood in the absolutely external sense even as they stand by themselves. Much less so, when they are compared with many exact parallels which might be readily adduced. But without doing that, the contraries, these expressions in the passage itself forbid the understanding of them in the imputative sense only. Thus did Adam's "one offence" make us only externally or imputatively sinful? Certainly not. Therefore, the expressions previously quoted cannot be understood in

that sense without introducing extraordinary confusion of meaning, as well as inflicting violence on plain language. Moreover, when one compares the last two verses which sum up the passage, with certain parallel portions of the same Epistle, it appears utterly disallowable to contend for the mere external sense. The last two verses of the passage say, "Moreover the Law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." With this let the following passage be compared: "There is now therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The Apostle evidently treats of the same subject in both the passages just cited. But it is impossible to understand the latter one in the external

sense; no more, then, can the former one be understood in that sense, which unquestionably treats of the "righteousness of God" that comes by faith of "Christ the end of the Law for righteousness." Knox was, therefore, warranted by the passage that has been now examined, to refrain from identifying his articulate statement as to the "one righteousness," or "the justice and satisfaction," of Christ, with the whole of what constitutes Christ the "end and the accomplishment of the Law, to them that believe," but rather to leave the full meaning of this to be gathered from the whole tenor of his statement. And that the sense thus gathered is not the external one, is proved alike by the tenor of that statement, and by the portions of Scripture which it suggests.

I am fully aware, of course, that all these passages were *potentially* converted into the external sense by the Calvinistic Creeds in particular. I am as well aware that, in the course of time, they were all *actually* converted into this sense as far as it was possible to do so. Thus even the passage quoted near the close of the last paragraph from the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, was necessarily so far understood in the external sense that no man could tell where that ended, or where the internal sense must begin to be understood. Of such extreme views neither Melancthon nor Calvin could have well imagined. And, as regards Knox, it is to be remembered, that he carefully avoided even the symbolising of Melancthon's germinal definitions, whence flowed the necessity of interpreting so much of Scrip-

ture in the external sense. This is enough to show the disallowableness of supposing that Knox adopted in his Confession even germinally, this style of interpretation. But positive proof that he did not adopt it will be supplied in the immediate sequel. And in the mean time I shall adduce the remainder of the proof as to his understanding the formula "righteousness of God" in its full scriptural sense.

This additional proof is contained in the last Chapter of the Confession, entitled "Of the Gifts freely given to the Church." It is there said: "But such as with heart unfeignedly believe, and with mouth boldly confess the Lord Jesus (as before we have said), shall most assuredly receive these gifts; first, in this life, remission of sins, insomuch, that albeit sin remain and continually abide in these our mortal bodies, yet it is not imputed unto us, but is remitted and covered with Christ's justice." Now this statement is evidently based, as one part of its proof, on the following passage in Rom. x: "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, That the man which doeth these things shall live in them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above), or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath

raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord is rich in mercy to all that call upon Him." That this passage, like those already cited from the Epistle to the Romans, contains an account of the "righteousness of God," which comes through Jesus Christ "the end of the Law for righteousness," cannot be questioned. And the sense in which Knox understood it is manifested both by his words "as before we have said" occurring in the passage just cited from his Confession, and by his description, given in that passage, of those whose sins are not imputed to them, but covered with the justice of Christ. For the words "as before we have said" send us back to the preceding portions of the Confession to learn who they are that "unfeignedly believe, and boldly confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus," and who, consequently, enjoy the non-imputation of their sins and the covering them with the justice of Christ. And those are persons who, being "in the body of God's Son," possess the internal as well as the external benefits of Redemption. And the passage now in question agrees completely with this, since, while declaring that the external or forensic portions of Reconciliation, or Salvation, or Justification, are enjoyed gratuitously, or "by faith only," it shows that the recipients of these are the sanctified and regenerate, or the regenerate

and sanctified, in whom, though "sin remains and continually abides," it is destined to be completely overcome and destroyed.

How Knox treated the fundamentally important subject Faith, has already appeared in part in our examination of the Chapters "Of Original Sin," "Of Faith in the Holy Ghost," and "Of the Cause of Good Works." But a striking illustration of it occurs in the quotation just made from the Chapter "Of the Gifts freely given to the Church." The persons there described are said to receive, "first: In this life, remission of sins, and that by faith only in Christ's blood." The words "by faith only in his blood" deserve special attention from the meaning conveyed by them respecting faith, but since they also suggest certain most important passages of Scripture as well as throw light on Knox's mode of interpreting them, I shall first advert to these passages.

The passages thus suggested are these two from the third and fifth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood:" and again, "Much more, then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Knox, indeed, had evidently many more passages in his mind when framing the expressions which so directly suggest these two.

This is proved by his mode of handling the full truth contained in these two passages—a mode that makes them harmonise with the entire scope of Scripture teaching. For let it be observed that, while evidently bending his attention towards these two passages, he does not make the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ which is involved in their meaning—he does not, I say, make this the entire meaning involved in them. He scrupulously avoids doing that, inasmuch as, singling out forgiveness of sins as one element of the truth taught in them, and affirming that this is received “by faith only” or gratuitously, he leaves the remainder of their meaning to be gathered in the proper way, namely, a consideration of his entire Confession and a comparison of it with the entire Scriptures. This course of procedure is the exact contrary of that adopted and pursued by the framers of the Continental Symbols. For these expressly cited as one of their two central proofs the first of the two passages just quoted, and solemnly declared that it, with its parallels like Eph. II, 8, meant only forgiveness of sins. Thus they made Justification or Salvation, as spoken of in the Bible, mean only the external elements of redemption. The avoidance of this error by Knox proves that, while he knew well the importance of the truth respecting the gratuitousness of forgiveness, and took care to secure it, he also knew well and avoided carefully the sources of error which lurked in Melancthon’s mode of defending that truth,—sources which were widened by Calvin and Beza.

But besides, Knox not only avoided identifying the forgiveness received “by faith only in Christ’s blood” with Justification or Salvation, but the identifying of this faith with trust. This was most wise. For while, undoubtedly, trust, reliance, or affiance in Him who died for our sins is an all-important element in the faith that receives forgiveness, there is, obviously, much more in it than trust. There is, on the one hand, the spiritual insight, through revealed truth, into our own sinful and guilty condition, and, on the other, a like spiritual perception of the ineffable grace and excellency of Emmanuel, who humbled Himself to die even on the cross as our ransom. Without these spiritual perceptions there can be no real and efficient trust in the Redeemer; this trust or affiance being, as it were, the putting forth of every feeling of confidence in the Son of God, consequent on what we have seen of our own sinfulness and of His complete adaptation to be our Saviour. All this is involved in Knox’s use of the term faith instead of trust, and flows forth naturally from that use. At the same time it harmonises completely with his account of the capacities and functions of faith given in other parts of the Confession, and frees his entire description of this subject from those misconceptions and misrepresentations which, commencing with the distortion of such a fundamentally important member in the body of revealed truth, results immediately in the distorting and rendering dangerous the great practical doctrine of Christianity, and terminates in distorting and deranging all the practical departments of the Gospel.

There is no inextricable knot in Knox's descriptions of faith; they rather represent it as a spiritual power all of whose capacities and acts are intelligible in their nature, and harmonious as well as direct in their operations. It is thus seen to correspond exactly with an intelligible, direct, and symmetrical adaptation of means provided by God for our deliverance from sin and guilt in His Son, Jesus Christ, and by His Holy Spirit. By the combined and harmoniously working percipiency and recipiency of faith, it enables the sinner within whom it is formed to take up and bear the cross, and to enter on the course first trodden by Jesus, while he ceases not to look steadfastly and hopefully at this lamb of God for forgiveness and acceptance with the Father. It enables the sinner to see that all the external and forensic elements of Reconciliation, Salvation, and Justification, are richly stored in the Redeemer; but that this, instead of contradicting, coalesces with his being reconciled personally unto God, with his repenting unto salvation, and hungering after the gift of righteousness.

IV. Origin of the mistaken tenet that Forgiveness and the other external elements of Justification or Salvation, precede Repentance or Regeneration and Sanctification

IV. The second thing that demands consideration before formally contrasting Knox's doctrine of Justification or Salvation with the Continental ones, is that suggested, a little way back, by the dependence, as seen to be confessed by Knox, of the external elements of Justification, Reconciliation and Salvation on the internal elements. It then appeared clear that,

while Knox scrupulously avoided identifying the forgiveness of our sins, and the covering them with the justice of Christ, with Justification, Reconciliation, and Salvation, he also made the enjoyment of these external or imputative elements to depend entirely on the enjoyment, as necessary precedents, of Regeneration and Sanctification, or Sanctification and Regeneration. But the occupation of this ground by Knox, suggests the opposing ground that must be occupied, in logical consistency, by the thoroughgoing adherents of the Lutheran type of doctrine, as well as the extreme and fanatical tenet which sprung from that type of doctrine, but was condemned by the Westminster Divines.

Before and after the framing of the Westminster formularies, certain parties maintained that the elect are, not only actually forgiven, but also justified or saved in their sense of the terms, and made heirs of everlasting life from all eternity. The Westminster divines, greatly to their credit, condemned that wild and fanatical tenet in the following passage of Chapter XI of their Confession: "God did, from all eternity, decree to justify the elect, and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise for their justification; nevertheless they are not justified until the Holy Spirit doth in due time apply Christ unto them." But while these words sufficiently warn against one error, they leave quite open an entrance for another strictly analogous error. For what did the Westminster divines mean by the words, "the Holy Spirit doth in due time apply Christ unto them?" Does that application of Christ which ensures the

external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation involve sanctification and regeneration, or regeneration and sanctification, as a necessary antecedent of the external and gratuitous benefit? The words themselves throw no light on this subject. They leave the question strictly open. And certain it is that many have held, under the Westminster formularies, that the forgiveness of sins and the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation precede regeneration and repentance properly so called. But this tenet is, in fact, quite as unscriptural as that which the Westminster divines condemned. It has no warrant whatever in the Word of God, but rather stands in plain contradiction to its most solemn statements. It may harmonise with the dogmatic aspect of Melancthon's statement, or may even be a logical consequence of it, but Calvin most certainly opposed it as far as it was in his power to do.

All the confusion and controversy connected with this subject have originated in two causes. First: they have originated in the conception that Justification or Salvation is not only gratuitous but external; and, secondly, in a misapprehension relative to certain modes of viewing the work of redemption, and to certain modes of describing it employed in Holy Scripture.

First: It can be readily shown, that the making Justification or Salvation absolutely external in addition to its being absolutely gratuitous, causes the apparent truthfulness of the tenet as to the enjoyment of this external benefit as well as of its consequent, the title to Eternal Life, prior to Repentance, or Regeneration,

or Sanctification. For St. Paul, the apostle who mainly treats of the work of Redemption under the form of a way of Justification or Salvation, sets this forth palpably and incontrovertibly in his Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, as the gift bestowed by God at once and unconditionally on the sinner, who has merely to receive it by Faith in order to enter, through it, on the enjoyment of the hope of Everlasting Life. If this gift, then, be not only confessedly gratuitous, but also absolutely external (as it is potentially declared to be in the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession, and articulately in the Westminster one;) that is, if it exclude from itself as elements, Repentance, or Regeneration, or Sanctification, or Faith viewed in its organic and moral aspects; and if moreover it be palpably and incontestably, by St. Paul's showing, the benefit first bestowed on the sinner who receives it merely by an "Instrumental Faith" to the legitimate enjoyment by him of the hope of Eternal Life; if all this, I say, be the case, then must this benefit, according to St. Paul's teaching in the Epistles just named, precede Repentance, and every other internal spiritual and moral change on the sinner. The point is demonstratively clear, and therefore undeniable. The endeavour to confute it, or to turn it aside, must be utterly futile, if the premises on which it rests be unqualifiedly assented to. For if these premises be correct, then does St. Paul unquestionably teach, in the most methodical and most generally important of his Epistles, that an external and gratuitous Justification

or Salvation with its consequent, the title to **Eternal Life**, precedes Regeneration and Sanctification. And on this may all who choose to do so stand and set at defiance every argument adduced against them from other parts of Scripture, yea even from other portions of the writings, or addresses of St. Paul himself.

But it is impossible for those who, influenced by many clear Scriptural statements, either feel the erroneousness, or doubt the correctness, of making Repentance and Regeneration to follow a purely external Justification or Salvation, to assign to the former any certain and intelligible place in the process of Justification or Salvation, or to say when they take place in that process. This was exemplified in what appeared as to Melancthon's treatment of Repentance in the Augsburg Confession. Constrained by the many express statements of Scripture as to the antecedency of Repentance to Forgiveness and the other external elements of Redemption, he was compelled to treat of Repentance in one part of his Confession just as if he held it to precede Forgiveness. But a complete uncertainty was seen to characterise his treatment of this subject, when his statements in other parts of the Confession, both preceding and following the Chapter on Repentance, were attended to. And it appeared that, in the actual result, his theory as to St. Paul's meaning of Justification or Salvation compelled him to place Repentance after Justification. And so it must indeed be, if the Justification or Salvation described by St. Paul in the Epistles already referred to, be maintained to be absolutely external in addition to

its being absolutely gratuitous. If that be the form of doctrine maintained, it must always result, in addition to other inevitable consequences, in the rigorously theoretical postponement of Repentance and Regeneration to Justification or Salvation and the Heirship of Eternal Life, since the latter are unquestionably according to St. Paul the benefits first bestowed on the sinner gratuitously. And in whatever form the attempt be made by the upholders of this doctrine of absolutely external Justification or Salvation to place Repentance as the Scriptures so expressly and reiteratively declare that it ought to be placed, still must a similar unsatisfactory result follow. Thus, however a place may be assigned, in the pure Calvinistic Creeds, to Repentance before Justification or Salvation, still the correctness so given to them is a mere mechanical thing; it possesses no internal, vital, and necessary consistence. For no sooner is the Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation (already shown to be more completely external than even the Lutheran,) insisted on consistently, than Repentance must necessarily retreat into the background. For how can it be affirmed to precede Justification or Salvation, when this benefit is maintained to be external, as well as what is primarily bestowed on the sinner by God? And all this is confirmed and illustrated by the exhibition of Calvinism made in the formulary of its loudest and most thorough-going advocates—the Westminster Divines. Thus it is all very good in appearance, that such a Chapter as that “Of Effectual Calling,” which insists on certain internal elements of

Redemption should precede the Chapter "Of Justification" in the Westminster Confession; and that it should be affirmed in the Chapter "Of Repentance" that "repentance is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it." This I say is all very good in appearance, but in appearance only. It is only a placing of some fragments of truth over a body of error and contradiction. Thus, on looking into the Chapter "Of Justification," it will be seen to exclude from Justification or Salvation, equally as elements and conditions, all internal qualities mentioned in the Chapter "Of Effectual Calling," or in any other part of the Confession; and to make this purely external Justification or Salvation also purely gratuitous—all on the authority of those very statements of St. Paul which undoubtedly affirm Justification or Salvation (whatever they mean by these terms) to be the *primary gift* bestowed on sinners by God. And in accordance with this, the Chapters "Of Effectual Calling" and "Of Justification" are so expressed as to allow any one to hold, that the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation described in the latter precedes Regeneration, or Repentance, or Sanctification. They who do hold this find themselves, of course, arrayed in direct opposition to the statements of both the Confession and the Bible as to the precedency of Repentance to Forgiveness; but then, this is only one of the many instances of contradiction exhibited by the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession, and by the other Creeds built in accordance with that aspect. And as experience has proved, the strong conviction that they read St. Paul

aright has enabled many to endure this and all the other contradictions in which the doctrine of an external as well as gratuitous Justification or Salvation results.

But with these contradictions I am not so much concerned at present, my subject being the mistaken tenet that Forgiveness and the other external elements of Redemption precede Repentance or Regeneration. However, it may be pointed out here that, in the examination some way back of the dogmatic aspect of Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation, as well these contradictions as other troublesome questions like the one now under consideration disappear, when St. Paul's descriptions of Reconciliation, or Salvation, or Justification are understood to involve internal elements, such as Repentance, or Regeneration, or Renewal, or Righteousness of God, as well as the external or imputative ones. And it will be shown in the next division of this section, that Knox has actually arranged his Confession with the utmost care and skill, so as to avoid the difficulties that spring from maintaining the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession—difficulties that are increased by building in accordance with that aspect alone, as Calvin and Calvinisers have done in the matter of Justification or Salvation. It would never do, indeed, to make St. Paul include the internal elements as well as the external under his description of Justification or Salvation, merely in order to escape thereby from the contradictions and paradoxes that must otherwise characterise his doctrine. This would be utterly disallowable. If there be no sufficient ground for questioning the cor-

rectness of the interpretations that make St. Paul describe an absolutely external as well as gratuitous Justification or Salvation—still more, if there be sufficient proof that Paul can mean nothing else than that, then ought we to acquiesce unreservedly in what has been thus proved to be his teaching, whatever difficulties may surround it. But the case is completely altered, when we can now point not only to those sufficient reasons that induced Knox and others in his day to understand St. Paul as including the internal as well as the external in his account of Justification or Salvation, but to the ultimate exegetical proof that such must have been his meaning, supposing the language in which he wrote to be amenable to the ordinary laws of grammar and philology. It is on this ground, and on this alone, that I side fearlessly with Knox in opposition to Luther, Calvin, Beza, and any others who have walked in Luther's and Calvin's leading-strings.

Secondly : But another source of the erroneous tenet that Forgiveness and the other external elements of Redemption precede Repentance and Regeneration, remains to be noticed. This is a misapprehension relative to a certain mode of viewing the work of Redemption, and to certain modes of speaking in the Bible respecting the forgiveness of sins in particular. As the latter branch of this misapprehension relates to the Forgiveness of sins, it must consequently directly affect Justification or Salvation when Forgiveness is maintained to be either identical with Justification or Salvation, or the first portion of it.

Thus it is undoubted that the Omniscient One did

even decree from all eternity to forgive the elect, who may, therefore, be said to have been potentially forgiven from all eternity. Farther, viewing Redemption as originating entirely in the divine power and mercy, it may be said that God has potentially forgiven the sins, and is actually "merciful to the sins" of such as He regenerates and leads to repent, before He regenerates them or before they repent. But, obviously, this divine procedure towards sinners is strictly one of "the secret things of God," in so far as its execution is concerned. Therefore, for this reason alone we ought to deduce from it lessons of humility and awe rather than conclusions tending to a forward confidence in grasping at Forgiveness. But, moreover, this view of Redemption is quite misapprehended when it is supposed to teach that the sinner is put into the actual possession and enjoyment of forgiveness before he has been regenerated and led to repentance. It teaches nothing of this sort, else it would teach in direct contradiction of innumerable clear and solemn announcements. Though teaching a potential pardon, and enabling us to conceive an unseen preventient mercy and grace, still this is quite different from a sinner's actually enjoying forgiveness previous to his regeneration and conversion, and it is obviously quite consistent with those solemn injunctions laid on sinners to repent and walk in the paths formed by the thrice Holy, in order to their actually enjoying forgiveness out of His abundant mercy.

As has already been observed, while the Westminster divines wisely condemned the extreme error

as to the Justification or Salvation of the elect from all eternity, founded on the misapprehension just pointed out, they left an open door for the entrance of the strictly analogous one, that the forgiveness of the sinner precedes, as a matter of actual enjoyment, his sanctification and regeneration. Besides the two supports of this latter error already examined, there remains for examination a third, namely, the manner in which one or more of the elements of our redemption are sometimes spoken of in the Bible as contemporaneous with the death of Christ. This scriptural mode of speaking is exemplified in the following passage. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses." Now it appears to be plainly taught in the last sentence of this passage, that the non-imputation, or the forgiveness, unto men of their sins was an act performed by God contemporaneously with the work of Christ on Earth. But who would

argue from this that sinful men have been put into actual possession of forgiveness from the time of Christ's death, and irrespectively of their repenting? To do so would be a grievous error. What the passage teaches is a potential forgiveness of sins manifested by Christ's death, and an attitude of mercy on God's part towards sinners. And agreeably to this view, St. Paul says immediately afterwards, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." This shows that men must be "reconciled to God" before they can enjoy in Christ the non-imputation of their sins.

Still it can be said of those who are reconciled to God by a change in their minds, affections, and lives, entered on under Divine teaching and in Divine strength, that their sins were potentially forgiven and mercifully dealt with even from eternity in the Divine counsels; and this was clearly manifested from the time when Christ died for them, rose again, and sent forth His ambassadors. The forgiveness of sins, indeed, is dated as it were from the death of Christ on the cross in another passage complementary of the one last quoted. Thus St. Paul says: "And ye are complete in Him, Which is the head of all principality and power. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.

And you, being dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, that was contrary to us, nailing it to His cross. And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it." Now it must be observed, that this passage connects the quickening of the Collossians with a past event, namely, the quickening of Christ from His death, just as the forgiving of their trespasses by God is described as a past event, even contemporaneous with the death of Christ on that cross to which were nailed the condemnatory ordinances of the law. Moreover, the passage intimates clearly that the grace of God was exerted in quickening the Collossians, just because God had determined to be merciful to their sins, and had manifested this mercifulness by being "in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses." This passage, then, simply proceeds on the principle already pointed out as most liable to be misapprehended, and on the manifestation of that principle made when the Son of God effected our Redemption on the Cross. Consequently, to argue from it, as has been done, that sinners are put into the actual possession and enjoyment of Forgiveness previous to their Sanctification and Regeneration, or Regeneration and Sanctification, is to argue on the manifest misapprehension of a clear principle, and on as manifest a misunderstanding of a remarkable scriptural mode of unfolding the mystery

of Redemption. It is, besides, contrary to what is taught in the passage itself, as follows: "Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye have risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead." These words teach by reference to the symbol of Baptism what is necessary for the enjoyment of Forgiveness, namely, a burial and rising again with Christ by faith, or Repentance unto Life and Salvation, and consequently demonstrate that without this, or previous to this, there cannot be the possession and enjoyment of Forgiveness.

V. The doctrine of Knox as to Justification or Salvation contrasted with that of the Continental Lutheran and Calvinistic Symbols.

V. Even a cursory perusal of Knox's Confession causes surprise that he should have ever been classed as a legislator of christian doctrine with either Luther or Melancthon, or Calvin, or Beza. His doctrine as to the second great catholic article plainly differs *toto cælo* from theirs in certain fundamentally important points.

Some important points of difference between the Confession of Knox and the Continental ones have forced themselves on attention in the preceding remarks. These, as well as others not yet expressly adverted to, must now be specially examined. One of the most prominent of these differences not yet specially adverted to, is that symmetrical arrangement of truths which presents itself in the Confession of Knox, instead of the displacement of these truths, and the consequent confusion which are seen in the continental Symbols. Another difference is the free-

dom of the primitive Scottish Symbol from the contradictions that mar the Lutheran and Calvinistic representations of the Gospel; and, as a consequence of this, its freedom from the dangerous tendencies caused by contradictory statements on practical matters of extreme religious and moral importance. While the primitive Scottish Symbol possesses these advantages, it embodies precisely the same truths contained in the others. This is said on the understanding that the Lutheran and Calvinistic Symbols not only disclaim the Antinomian consequences which flow directly from their most prominent tenets, but insist with zeal, though in a relation of sheer contradiction, on the necessity of those very things which they have previously proved to be unnecessary for Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life. The beauty and excellency of Knox's Confession consist in this, that, while confessing in the right order every part of Christian truth, it avoids those statements which have raised a question as to the necessity of repentance and evangelical obedience; caused the denial of that necessity in every possible form; and consequently produced an incalculable amount of misunderstanding and strife. A comparison, in these respects, of the primitive Scottish Symbol and the primitive Continental ones, is peculiarly appropriate at this point. For the correct and adequate representation of Justification or Salvation will be thus exhibited in contrast with those germinal errors which shall be seen, in the sequel, both in their advance towards completion and in their state of final development.

First: It appeared, from an examination of the Augsburg Confession, that its peculiar statement on Forgiveness, Justification, and Eternal Life was not only ranked first in the didactic treatment of its own class of doctrines, but was, in fact, maintained to be an exposition of the benefits which must first be appropriated by the sinner. This was so much the case that, though Sanctification was declared, in the third Chapter of the Confession, to be the antecedent of Eternal Life, still all mention of it was omitted in the fourth Chapter, which contends not only for an external Justification or Salvation, but for the gratuitousness both of that benefit and of its consequent, Eternal Life. But Sanctification was not the only thing displaced in that Symbol. It exhibited, on the first view, an utter uncertainty as to the place which Repentance should occupy; but left it quite clear in the result that Repentance follows the appropriating "by trust" of the external and gratuitous Justification or "Salvation." Omitting at present other peculiarities of this form of doctrine, and confining attention to the point of order and symmetry, I observe that this displacement of important elements, and the impossibility of afterwards assigning to them any intelligible places, were traced to the making of Justification or Salvation, not only gratuitous, agreeably to the truth, but external, contrary to the strongest reasons. Consequently, there was apparent even in the germinal doctrine of the Augsburg Confession, a thorough theoretical separation of Justification or Salvation

from all the life and every spiritual and moral element intended by God to dwell in man under the Gospel. The former by a singular abuse of language was characterised, in accordance with this Symbol, as a change in the relation of the sinner towards God, whereas the latter were represented as changes in the character of the sinner. Just as if to repent and obey agreeably to Christ's teaching and in the strength of His Spirit, were not as much a change in the relation of the sinner towards God, as his being forgiven and received into favour for the sake of Christ. Just as if God had not declared that He looks in a totally different manner on the believing, penitent, and obedient, from persons of an opposite character, and that the former only are, and indeed only can be, looked upon and treated as reconciled, justified, saved, and heirs of Eternal Life.

It also appeared that, under the influence of Calvin, Repentance was treated more fully and correctly in the Helvetic Confession than in the Augsburg. In the former, Repentance is treated of before the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, and represented more in accordance with its full scriptural meaning than as a mere "convincing of sin." But the Calvinistic Creeds contain all the peculiar tenets of the Augsburg Confession as to Justification or Salvation. Nay, more. For that type of doctrine was materially advanced and secured by the Calvinistic symbols. Thus, the Helvetic Confession obviously gave a purely external sense to the Apostolic statement, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but

ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God." These Confessions treated similarly the important formula "righteousness of God." This formula became, when understood in the purely Calvinistic sense, the basis of the statements as to the "Righteousness and Obedience of Christ" which appear prominently in the Aberdeen Confession, but are seen in their perfected state in the Westminster formularies. It formed the basis of the tenet as to a Righteousness of Christ, which, after the sinner is forgiven, is imputed to him and forms his "only title" to Eternal Life. And when the doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, thus completed, was made by the Westminster Divines after the example of Melancthon, to precede Repentance and Sanctification, and to be received by the sinner immediately after his "effectual call," the derangement of the symmetry of Divine Truth became complete.

Knox avoided the confusion and contradictions consequent on the Lutheran and Calvinistic schemes, simply by avoiding their cause. This cause was the definition of Justification or Salvation which both of these schemes contained, and which they both founded on a similar understanding and application of the same scriptural statements. They made Reconciliation, Salvation, and Justification identical with the Forgiveness of sins. But Knox avoided this error, as is undeniably proved by his Confession. And, in fact, while the doctrine of his Symbol is quite conspicuous to every competent reader of it, he had the wisdom

to avoid any dogmatic definition of Justification or Salvation. He rather set forth a strictly scriptural and correct description of all the elements that must, by the admission of all parties except systematic Antinomians, find a place of abode and operation in human nature, and which it must enjoy by imputation in order to its being in a justified or saved condition, and so made an heir of Eternal Life. But by simply doing this, Knox succeeded in giving by far the best definition of Justification or Salvation. He hit the mark, by following with a single eye the guidance of all the great lights made by God to shine from His word on that all important subject.

I firmly believe that a higher than human wisdom controlled and directed Knox in this matter. It may have been done, too, to serve purposes whose fulfilment is yet in the womb of futurity. At the same time, we can discern certain reasons which led secondarily to the adoption of his peculiar method by Knox; and we can most clearly discern in the unquestionable records of history certain consequences that flowed from it. But of this, more in due course.

To proceed, I remark that, in virtue of the method adopted by Knox every element of Redemption was at once assigned to its right place. There was nothing in the way to prevent this from being done. There was no definition of Justification or Salvation, necessarily displacing all the internal elements of Redemption, and then rendering it impossible to assign to them any fixed and intelligible position. Regeneration and Sanctification or Faith and Repentance,

were at once and from the first assigned to their proper places, set forth in their full proportions, and shown to operate without collision with the external or imputative benefits that are enjoyed in Christ. By doing this, an incalculable advantage was secured to Christianity. Not only its infinite value to a sinful race, but its perfect symmetry and beauty in the eye of an intelligent race, were thus exhibited. Christianity was thus shown to be strictly analogous to every other manifestation of the wisdom, power, and love of Him, who is wise in counsel, mighty in working, and full of compassions. For each of its parts can thus be seen working harmoniously, and with an unimpeded movement towards its own end; while mercy ineffable may be beheld guiding each part to the great end of redemption from the power of sin, as well as dispensing that boon of more than orient worth,—redemption from the guilt of sin.

Secondly. On comparing the Confession of Knox with the Continental ones, it is evident that the former attributes the Forgiveness of sins as entirely to the unmerited and gratuitous mercy of God in Christ, as the latter. In regard to the certainty of Forgiveness, too, the Confession of Knox sets forth a less “doubtful” doctrine than the Augsburg one, or than any of the Symbols which copied the positive aspect of the doctrine of the Augsburg Confession. Moreover, it ought to be carefully considered, that Knox not only established, as firmly as either Melancthon or Calvin, the truth that we are just before God only for the sake of Christ and by the free grace of God, but that he did this

without making that fundamental verity come into collision with those other verities on which the moral government of the world is based.

As for the gratuitousness of Forgiveness, and the equivalent elements in Reconciliation, Salvation, and Justification, how does it stand in Knox's Confession? Now Knox, no more than Melancthon, makes these benefits dependent or contingent on the merit of repentance and good works. He ascribes them solely to the meritorious obedience unto death of Jesus Christ, and to the covering of our sins with His righteousness. This honour is not ascribed to our works by Knox. He utterly denies the possibility of any other sacrifice for sin than Christ's; and shows that no man could procure forgiveness for himself, since sin cleaves even to the regenerate, and their best works are defiled with many spots. Neither did Knox maintain, any more than Melancthon or Beza, that the forgiveness of sins must hang in suspense until a long-continued and slavish course of obedience has been completed. This was not his meaning while confessing the truth as to faith and its fruits in repentance, before he confessed in detail how Christ must be apprehended with His justice and satisfaction in order to the enjoyment of forgiveness. He rather did that for the same reason which made Melancthon insist (strange that he should need to insist!) on the necessity for repentance and obedience; and which also made the framers of the Helvetic Confession place their account of repentance before their account of Justification or Salvation. It was done because the Scriptures teach

that these are necessary elements in the justified or saved condition. But this is not maintaining that a man is forgiven, or enjoys reconciliation on the part of God, and justification from guilt through the merit of repentance and evangelical obedience. It only declares that, without these, the man cannot be in a justified or saved condition, a thing which the Continental Confessions were constrained to admit substantially, and in the result. Neither is this maintaining that a man is not justified or saved from the guilt of his sin, nor accepted as a son of God and heir of immortal life, until he has proved himself righteous by a course of doubting and servile obedience. On the contrary, according to this form of doctrine, Justification or Salvation from the guilt of sin in the blood of Christ, and all the advantages of Sonship, are enjoyed from the time of the sinner's repenting and entering on a course of evangelical obedience. Did the Lutheran and Calvinistic symbols affirm consistently and thoroughly anything different from this, they would be flatly Antinomian, and flagrantly heretical. But they, in fact, affirm exactly the same thing, but in an inconsistent and contradictory manner. They admit substantially, that only the penitent and obedient are forgiven, or can be forgiven; but only after they have maintained principles which directly disprove the necessity of repentance and new obedience either as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation.

In regard to the certainty of forgiveness, again, the form of faith confessed by Knox is superior to that symbolised by Melancthon, and those who imitated

him. The doctrine of the latter is "doubtful:" not that of Knox. That must be a "doubtful" doctrine which first disproves the necessity of repentance and obedience alike as elements and conditions of Justification or Salvation, and is afterwards constrained to admit tacitly their necessity as conditions. That must be a "doubtful" doctrine which provides for the internal elements of redemption no intelligible place, and subjects them to all the vacillation consequent on their occupying the position of a contradictory. What certainty can there be as to the gaining of any end, when one is told that certain things are not necessary to the gaining of it, but is straightway informed that they are necessary? Confusion and contradiction of this kind are as opposed to certainty, as light is opposed to darkness. On the other hand, every mark of certainty belongs to that system, which, guided by all the lights of Revelation, admits from the first each element into its own place, affixes to it its due importance, and assigns to it its right functions. That is the certain system which says at once to you, be this, or do that, (which none dares to deny as necessary,) if you wish to reach a certain end. These are the characteristics of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation, as taught in Knox's Confession. And its consequent symmetry, along with its embodiment of every element of Evangelical truth, gives it the palm over all those whose overmastering influence overcame it and buried it in oblivion.

But moreover, Knox established as firmly as either Melancthon or Beza the truth, that we are just before

God only for the sake of Christ and by the gratuitous grace of God. Reference is of course now made to the external or forensic elements of Redemption; but it will be well to premise my remarks on them by pointing out distinctly the analogous statements in Knox's Confession as to the internal elements. It is evident, then, that Knox, in direct contradiction to Pelagian error in all its forms, ascribed Sanctification and Regeneration, or Regeneration and Sanctification,—in short, the entire Christian Life, to the gift and operation of the Holy Ghost. Human ability to change from a carnal to a spiritual state, from a sinful to a righteous course, from an earthly to a heavenly career, was denied by him. These things, according to Knox, are accomplished by Divine teaching, illumination, and operation in man. In this respect, he cuts away all ground of boasting from mankind, and the dependence of the sinner on the mercy and grace of God for deliverance from the internal bondage of sin is maintained. The fundamental truth is upheld that “the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus frees from the Law of sin and death.” And as completely does the Symbol of Knox cut away all ground of boasting, as respects the forgiveness of sins and the forensic elements of Reconciliation, Salvation, and Justification. Its declarations on this subject are as emphatic and as clearly evangelical as any in the symbol of Melancthon or Beza. For let it be observed that, according to its declarations, the forensic Justification or Salvation of the regenerate and obedient, and their consequent right and title to the enjoyment

of eternal life, are purely matters of Grace on God's part. For Christ's sake alone, and in Him only, are these benefits enjoyed. But for the grace of the Father and the justice of the Son, the sins of the regenerate must prevent them, as well as the wicked, from being "just before God," nor could the former, any more than the latter, claim an entrance in their own right into the joys of immortality. For, not only are false claims to perfection disallowed, and works of supererogation denounced as vain idolatry, but "when we have done all things, we must fall down and unfeignedly confess, that we are unprofitable servants." Since it is thus even at the best, where then are the forensic Justification and Salvation to be looked for? Only from the grace of God in Christ. Of Christ's Righteousness alone are we thus called on to make mention, as that which has merited for us every blessing; as that on account of which alone God's servants, imperfect and sinful as they are, can hope to escape the condemnation deserved by their sins, and to have the "gates of righteousness" opened for their entrance.

It is thus made to appear clearly by this form of doctrine, that not only our conversion is of Grace and Mercy alone, that not only our forgiveness is of Grace and Mercy alone, that not only the acceptance of our imperfect obedience is of Grace and Mercy alone, but that, consequently, our being esteemed just before God, and our admission into heaven, are of Grace and Mercy alone, being vouchsafed to us in and through the Son of God and on account of His righteousness

only. For this is a fundamental Evangelical truth, against which every assault must prove as abortive as against all the other truths which are based on the dictates of Revelation. But this truth does not, as it is confessed by Knox, come into collision with those other truths which must also have free course and be glorified. With showing how this freedom from contradiction is secured, I shall now close my critical examination of Knox's symbol.

Thirdly. Knox avoided the lamentable collision just referred to, by avoiding, under the guidance of all the concentrated lights of Revelation, a definition of Justification or Salvation which, having excluded potentially (for the definition was germinal, or had advanced by one stage only, in Knox's day), every spiritual and moral element intended by God to find a place in the hearts of sinful men, made that benefit consist only in the judicial act of ineffable mercy performed by God in Christ, as the Sovereign Judge of mankind and the irresponsible Disposer of the destinies of His servants. That this was the exact character of the Continental doctrine, has been already proved as completely as any spiritual or moral subject can, and additional proof—even proof *ex abundantia*—will be supplied in the sequel.

But since, according to this doctrine, Justification or Salvation is absolutely external as well as absolutely gratuitous, it must henceforth be a contradiction in terms to insist on "Wisdom, or Righteousness, or Holiness," as being either elements or conditions of that benefit which brings along with it as a necessary

consequent, the title to **Eternal Life**. Henceforth, **Eternal Life** must be considered as bestowed, through the external and gratuitous **Justification** or **Salvation**, on the sinner, who receives the benefit by faith acting instrumentally as trust, or assent, or whatever be the instrumental part of faith. Henceforth, it is a manifest contradiction in terms to maintain that any spiritual or moral condition whatsoever is necessary for the enjoyment either of **Justification** or **Salvation**, or of **Eternal Life**. By making the above doctrine all that the Bible teaches respecting **Justification** or **Salvation**, a collision takes place between that doctrine which forms the central practical department of Christianity (for such is in reality the doctrine of **Justification** or **Salvation**,) and the entire body of spiritual and moral commandments made known by God as of absolute necessity to be obeyed through faith and penitence, in order to the enjoyment of **Eternal Life**. But, moreover, this doctrine—this special and unmistakeable doctrine—makes it appear that God, in performing His supreme judicial act of grace, recognises no distinction of a precise moral import between repentance and impenitence, though the difference between them is as great as that between the morning light and the darkness of a subterranean cavern; and that He distinguishes as little between the imperfect and spotted, but real and purifiable, righteousness of the regenerate, and the unrelenting disobedience of the unregenerate. For, according to this doctrine, while God justifies or saves the sinner and makes him an heir of **Eternal Life**, He not only takes no account of

sins and guilt inasmuch as He forgives them, but he takes account as little of penitence and obedience, since, according to Melancthon, the "person of the sinner" is externally and gratuitously justified, or saved, and made an heir of eternal life "for Christ's sake;" or according to the complete Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine, the "person of the sinner" being forgiven, and having imputed to it the righteousness of Christ, is thus, and thus only, justified or saved and made an heir of Eternal Life. According to this doctrine, therefore, the regards of the all-merciful but thrice holy God are, without question, as little directed towards any moral distinction whatever, in the matter of justifying, or saving, and constituting men heirs of life, as if no such distinctions existed. I say any moral distinction whatever, because, while it is admitted that a penitent is by his own confession sinful, and the most perfect saint has ground only for abasement before God, still the penitent is as different from the impenitent as diaphanous glass is different from opaque marble, and the foundations of the moral world in man must be disturbed if he must believe that a son of God presents no difference from a son of Satan. But according to this doctrine, all such differences are obliterated in the matter of justifying or saving, and constituting men heirs of immortality.

Very different from all this does the Divine work of Redemption appear, when contemplated in its symbolization by Knox. No contradictions are seen in it, because their source in an external as well as gratuitous Justification or Salvation is avoided. Knox

involved in this benefit, from the first, those internal elements Sanctification and Regeneration, or Regeneration and Sanctification, as being no less essential to it than the external ones,—those internal elements which even Melancthon and Beza were constrained to admit substantially in the result as so necessary that there can be no Justification or Salvation without them. It is chargeable with no obliteration of moral distinctions, and with no tendency to such a disastrous result, because Knox at once admitted that God does distinguish between the impenitent and unrighteous man on the one hand, and the sanctified and regenerate on the other, accepting in Christ as real though imperfect and spotted the penitence and obedience of the latter. And this also was admitted by Melancthon in the result, when he said, “Although, therefore, this new obedience be far removed from the perfection required by the Law, still it is righteousness, and merits rewards, because the persons of Christians are reconciled.” Again, in this symbolization of Christianity, both the divine commands and the Divine promises are allowed to act on the intellect, heart, and conscience, with the force measured out by Him Who uttered them. They do this, because nothing in this form of doctrine comes into collision with the former, and nothing prevents the latter from presenting an intelligible use as motives to holiness. That the doctrine of Knox is signalled by these characteristics may be discerned at a glance in a statement like the following: “Yea, if we say we have no sin even after we are regenerated, we deceive ourselves, and the verity of

God is not in us. And, therefore, it behoved us to apprehend Christ Jesus with His justice and satisfaction, Who is the end and accomplishment of the Law, to them that believe, by Whom we are set at this liberty, that the curse and malediction of God fall not upon us, albeit that we fulfil not the same in all points. For God the Father beholding us in the body of His Son Christ Jesus, accepteth our imperfect obedience as it were perfect, and covers our works, which are defiled with many spots, with the justice of His Son. We do not mean that we are so set at liberty, that we owe no obedience to the Law (for that before we have plainly confessed,) but this we affirm, that no man on Earth (Christ Jesus only excepted,) hath given, gives, or shall give in works that obedience to the Law which the Law requires. But when we have done all things, we must fall down and unfeignedly confess that we are unprofitable servants. And, therefore, whosoever boast themselves of merit of their own works, or put their trust in the works of supererogation, they boast themselves of that which is not, and put their trust in damnable idolatry." While these words declare, with unanswerable force of truth, that our deliverance from guilt and acceptableness to God depend on His gratuitous mercy alone, vouchsafed to us in Christ and for Christ's sake only, they nevertheless suggest no contradiction between this truth and the commands necessitating repentance and obedience, such as disfigures the representation of Christianity made in the Continental Confessions, and brings the gratuitous

grace of God as our Judge into collision with His authority as our King. On the contrary, it allows the latter to act with unembarrassed force—a force of terror and despair only to the impenitent. To the penitent and faithful it is accompanied with godly reverence, confidence, love and hope. For, as regards such persons, though unprofitable servants, even if doing perfectly all required of them, and though called to humble themselves even for their best deeds, still God has promised to absolve them from guilt and accept them as just in Christ Jesus their refuge, when they repent and believe; and to accept—even to reward—for Christ's sake, the Evangelical life and obedience manifested by them through the energy of His own enlightening and quickening spirit.

The sublime passage that closes the primitive Scottish Confession harmonises completely in its doctrine with the one quoted in the last paragraph.

I have insisted on what is taught in these passages because of the proof borne by it, as also by what is taught in the entire Confession of Knox, that the contradiction involved in the type of doctrine symbolised by Melancthon, is no necessary part either of Revealed Truth or of Protestant doctrine properly so called. On the contrary, it is purely factitious; and ought on that account to be corrected wherever it has got power to bind the consciences of men and Holy Scripture to a conformity with itself. Its purely factitious character has been now manifested in our examination even of that phase or aspect of the gratuitousness of Divine grace in forensically justifying and saving sinful men,

which was alluded to in our closing remarks on the germinal character of Melancthon's doctrine. For, as regards that phase or aspect of the gratuitousness of Grace or Mercy, it has appeared that the doctrine of Knox involves the following truth. No man, not even the regenerate man, can be just in himself before God. All the hope of even the regenerate for final acquittal and acceptance, or for the enjoyment of the forensic elements in Reconciliation, Salvation, and Justification, must be placed in the gratuitous mercy of God vouchsafed to him in Christ and for Christ's sake. But this truth, as set forth by Knox, produces no collision with the eternal principles of God's moral government. On the contrary, it is made to harmonise with these by the simple and obvious means of just involving at once in the conception of Justification or Salvation all that Scripture directs, instead of at first excluding these things at the expense of afterwards contradictorily including them. As Scripture directs, I say, for this most excellent harmony is the product of Revelation itself. It is not reached by forcing, or explaining away, the sense of any part of Scripture, but in full coincidence with the analogy of the Faith, and the exact rendering of the nicest statements in the inspired Volume. Indeed, its coincidence with the analogy of the faith secures its coincidence with the nicest statements seen in Scripture. The forcing and explaining away of senses are to be looked for in the representations of Christianity avoided by Knox. In fact, we cannot but conclude that he foresaw, while eschewing the germinal definitions of Melanc-

thon's Symbol, the disastrous consequences to the symmetry, integrity, and power of Revealed Truth, to which these definitions tended.

The example in this respect of such a man as Knox is most important, when viewed in connection with the consequences that flowed from the forsaking of his method, as these will be exhibited in the sequel. And if he avoided even the germ, what would he have thought of the full-grown tree? But, in reality, nothing can be worse than the introduction even germinally into the representation of Christianity of factitious contradictions,—not even the forcing them on to their final results, since the error will certainly explode on its completion. Nothing can warrant the promulgation, in the name of Christianity, of such a proposition as that Justification or Salvation is absolutely external as well as gratuitous, excepting the most unchallengeable proof of its being Scriptural. Unless supported by such proof, it is no apology for it to say, that repentance and obedience are enforced in the strength of every Legal and Evangelical command. For it is these very commands that the proposition in question comes into collision with. If the commands prove, by the admission of all parties except Antinomians, that repentance and obedience are necessary in some way for Justification or Salvation and the enjoyment of **Eternal Life**, the proposition affirms that they are necessary neither as elements nor conditions of that benefit, on which **Eternal Life** depends. To make this state of things satisfactory, the proof of the proposition in question ought at the

least to be as unchallengeable as the proof of the necessity of repentance and obedience. But Knox certainly did not believe that proposition to be thus demonstrable, otherwise he would have made it as prominent as Melancthon did.

VI. Remarks on the influences that guided Knox in the drawing up of his Confession.

VI. It was remarked at the commencement of this Section, that certain things suggested by comparing the dates at which the Confession of Knox and the Continental Symbols, particularly the Calvinistic ones, were respectively framed, would be considered more advantageously after the contents of Knox's Creed had been examined. The point has now been reached at which the consideration of the matters referred to may be entered on.

The Confession of Knox was nominally framed, and was certainly put into its final form, in 1560. It is to be observed, then, that it was framed in the same year as the Belgic Confession; one year earlier than the Saxon and Gallic Confessions; and five years earlier than the Helvetic Confession. Now it might be supposed that the relation in respect of time of the primitive Scottish Symbol towards the other Symbols just named, materially affects the testimony of the former as to the points in which it differs from the others. For example, it might be supposed that its avoidance of the peculiarities of the Gallic and Helvetic Confessions in their doctrine of Justification or Salvation, is sufficiently explained by the circumstance of its being framed at an earlier date than the two for-

mularies just named. But this supposition could only be admitted as valid, if the Confession of Knox were seen to embody, in an explicit and unmistakeable form, the real groundwork of the peculiarities of the Gallic and Helvetic Confessions as that exists more loosely in the Augsburg Confession, and more dogmatically in the Belgic one. But the primitive Scottish Symbol does not embody even the peculiarities of the Augsburg Confession. On the contrary it manifestly avoids everything that made the Augsburg Confession peculiar in its doctrine of Justification or Salvation, and constituted that doctrine the matrix of what is seen in the Gallic, Helvetic, and Westminster Symbols. There cannot be a more complete proof than this that Knox avoided intentionally the Calvinistic peculiarities. But this proof is confirmed by another circumstance. This is the fact that the controversies whose particular results on one side are recorded in the Saxon, Helvetic, and Gallic Confessions, preceded by years the appearance of the formularies thus affected by them. In fact, these controversies were not the least powerful of the causes that led to the substitution of the elaborate Helvetic Confession for the primitive Swiss Creed, which was short and simple. Indeed, long before any of the Calvinist Creeds were framed, Calvin had decided on the matters involved in those controversies; and his decision was of course adhered to by his followers. But Knox must have been well acquainted with the opinions of Calvin and the Continental Calvinists on all these points, since he returned from Geneva to Edinburgh immediately before

his Confession was put into its final form. This Symbol, accordingly, manifestly bears direct and unequivocal testimony as to the judgment of Knox not only on the Augsburg Confession, but on the peculiar Calvinistic tenets embodied in the Helvetic and Gallic Confessions.

In saying these things, I do not mean it to be implied that Knox made no use of what Melancthon embodied in the Augsburg Confession, or of what was afterwards symbolised under the prevailing influence of Calvin in the Gallic and Helvetic Confessions. On the contrary, I believe that he learned much, both positively and negatively, from the labours of those two Reformers. He learned from them, positively, to give due prominence and force to the essence of the all-important truths contended for by them; and he learned, negatively, to take warning from the consequences seen to flow from their mode of embodying and defending these truths, and to avoid that mode. The negative portion of his lesson would be powerfully enforced, I believe, by the intimate acquaintance he is known to have formed with the writings of Jerome and Augustine. And he would be more inclined to hearken to the teaching of Augustine, by the numerous and remarkable appeals made to the works of that Father in the Augsburg Confession. Besides, the Symbol of Knox supplies particular proofs as well as evidence of a general kind of his acquaintance with the writings of Augustine, and of his respect for the teaching of that Father. But far above all these influences guiding Knox in the construction of

his Confession, must rank the influence of Holy Scripture; and he must have had the deepest conviction that the volume of Revelation would warrant no other type of doctrine than that which, as it appears, was symbolised by him. In considering somewhat more fully the three sources of authority over the mind of Knox that have just been pointed out, I shall commence with the one named last, viz., the teaching of Holy Scripture.

Knox was led to frame his Confession in the manner that has appeared rather by contemplating all the aspects of the Gospel as they are set forth in the descriptive or definitive statements of the Scriptures, or by grasping what has been technically called "the Analogy of the Faith" as that is discernible in the Scriptures, than by perceiving the ultimate grammatical, philological, and exegetical grounds which, as they exist in the Original Scriptures, establish beyond the possibility of doubt the absolute correctness of his type of doctrine. Knox cannot have known any more than others in his own day, the ultimate proofs, just referred to, of the correctness of his own Confession. Indeed, like every other similar document of those times, and even of times much later, Knox's Confession presents in its language evidence that its author was not acquainted with those ultimate proofs as they exist in the Original Scriptures. And had these proofs been known in the seventeenth century, this Confession would not have been exchanged for such a Symbol as the Aberdeen Assembly will be seen to have adopted in 1616; still less for that one framed at

Westminster thirty years later. The Greek Church was the most likely to possess the power in those times of pointing out the ultimate proof referred to. But it is questionable whether even she could have done it in the exact and scientific manner that is needful. For the unconsciously correct knowledge or use of any language,—or indeed, of any instrument—is widely different from the scientific and consciously correct knowledge or use of it. And exact learning was to be looked for anywhere at that time rather than in the Greek Church, though, as her controversy with Cyrillus Lucaris and the Confession resulting from it show, she adhered to her ancient type of doctrine on that very subject which was rending and tormenting the Protestant Churches, as well as baffling all the skill and power of the Church of Rome.

But to perceive the ultimate grounds of proof on which the correct form of any doctrine is based, is not absolutely necessary in order to discern that correct form, and to feel its superiority in respect of simplicity and harmony over an incorrect one. The true form of each doctrine may always be discerned by an unprejudiced, patient, and reverent student of Holy Scripture. The broad, varied, and nicely adjusted statements therein made are always sufficient for that. When these statements have been all collected; when each of them has been allowed without prejudice from any other to supply its own portion or aspect of the truth; and when that only is rested in as the truth which all these portions and aspects evidently supply; then must the truth be approached and apprehended

with a closeness and perfectness exactly proportioned to the freedom from prejudice and the reverential solicitude and labour of the search after it. This is indeed just a description of the mode in which "the analogy or proportion of the Faith" acts, as it is gradually discerned, in leading any one to apprehend the correct form of any doctrine, or to approach more or less closely to a correct systematic view of all the doctrines. For believing that there exists in the Volume of Revelation a consistent though complex body of truth, which, as respects all the practical doctrines that compose it, is clearly apprehensible by the careful and reverent investigator, it is clear that the only sure mode of learning correctly either that body of truth or any of those practical doctrines is just that which has been pointed out. We speak at this point of course, as throughout our remarks, on the supposition of a dispute having arisen as to the meaning of some portion of the Faith. And our position is, that such a dispute must be settled by reaching the Analogy or Proportion of the Faith in the way that has been pointed out, namely, a careful collection and comparison of the statements of the Scripture on the subject, and the preventing of any one statement being overborne by another. And to deny the existence in the Scriptures of an Analogy and Proportion of the Faith, or in other words a consistent body or system of spiritual and moral truth, ascertainable in the mode just pointed out, is to maintain that the Bible is a cloudland wherein every dreamer has the right to fancy that he beholds his own Creed. Such a cloudland Knox was far from conceiving the Bible to be. His

Confession shows more strongly by its general plan than even by its express statements that he believed in the existence of the Analogy or Proportion of the Faith ; and that, perceiving it, he employed it as a rule and guide in matters of doctrine. He does say expressly, however, among other things, in the chapter "Of the Notes by which the true Church is discerned from the False, and Who shall be Judge of the Doctrine:" "For this is a thing universally granted, that the Spirit of God, which is a Spirit of Unity, is in nothing contrarious to Himself." And his Confession is in reality just an illustration of this principle, inasmuch as, while obviously founded throughout on the statements of the Holy Ghost, these are all allowed to speak so that a perfectly harmonious system of doctrine is the result.

But though for the reasons just stated the correct form of any doctrine may be discerned without a perception of the ultimate exegetical proof of that form, it does not follow that such ultimate proof is of small importance. On the contrary, to possess that ultimate proof is of the utmost practical importance. Thus the possession of it ensures a much more speedy and certain apprehension of the correct form of doctrine on the part of every mind capable of discerning the proof, and leaves comparatively no room for misunderstanding or error so far as concerns the intellectual apprehension of the doctrine. This primary use of the ultimate exegetical proof results in others of extreme importance both as regards Christian Truth itself and its beneficial effects on the temporal and eternal interests of mankind. For this ultimate proof enables its possessors

to make the defence of the correct form of doctrine thoroughly good in the judgment of all competent parties, against every attack that may be made on it under the influence either of ignorance or enmity. But besides this office of mere defence the ultimate proof now under consideration must sooner or later accomplish much more. As the possessors of it increase in numbers and apply it to its true purpose, the unquestionable aspect of the correct form of doctrine founded on it must gradually quash all controversy, a consummation most devoutly to be desired. And if christianly employed it will, by the blessing of its benignant Author, gain its victories in the truly glorious mode of vanquishing ignorance by instruction and subduing enmity by the invincible might of integrity and patience. These two, integrity and patience, are so essential parts of that charity which is the fulfilment of the Law, that she is blind and halting without them.

There is no doubt that the Confession of Knox, though incomparably the best Protestant Confession, finally passed into oblivion just because the ultimate exegetical proof of its correctness was wanting; and, consequently, its defence against doctrines contrary to its own could not be made good. Nevertheless, the primitive Scottish Symbol can be now proved thoroughly correct as respects the second great Catholic doctrine of Justification or Salvation. And most certainly the form of Faith symbolised in it shall not only never die, but shall revive and overcome what has for so long a time oppressed it, whatever may be the destiny in store for the Confession itself.

I believe that what most influenced the mind of Knox in the framing of his Symbol, next after the inspired writings of the Apostles and Prophets, were the works of certain great writers of the early Church, especially those of Augustine. It is related as one of the best accredited parts of his history, that he was first drawn aside from the technical theology of the Schools by his relish for the solid information based on Scripture, which he met with in the writings of Jerome and Augustine. This is an important circumstance in his history, since it enables one to judge to a certain extent with certainty as to the state of his mind ever after its occurrence. It does this in virtue of the sure principle, that every mind which passes through marked revolutions in its belief, and, consequently, in its mode of feeling and acting, must continue to be powerfully influenced by the instructors who were most influential in producing the change. A mind of native capacity and independent action will, of course, always search and judge for itself in exact proportion to the largeness and vigour of the powers bestowed on it by the Father of Spirits. Still no man can quite free himself from the divinely appointed conditions of all education. And none of these conditions is more certain than that which gives instructors of real power and influence a lasting control over the minds of their scholars, even when the scholars may be themselves unconscious of the influence that continues to be exerted over them. It is to be considered, too, that the appeals made to Augustine by Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession would not

a little enforce the authority of the great Latin Father on the mind of Knox. For Melancthon affirmed in the Augsburg Confession, as appeared in the quotations made above from that Symbol, the identity of his own tenets as to Justification or Salvation with those of the Fathers, and he cited Augustine with particular fulness and confidence as teaching exactly what he had himself laid down respecting man's sinful condition and the mode of man's restoration. Knox could not avoid being induced by such statements to give a renewed and even increased attention to the writings of his earliest influential instructor.

But Knox's Confession presents special proof, as well as evidence of a general kind, as to his acquaintance with the writings of Augustine, and his deference to the opinions of that Father. In fact, the chapter "Of Original Sin"—called by me the keynote of the Confession—fully exemplifies the truth of this statement. Thus his mode of speaking, in the chapter "Of Original Sin," of Adam's "one offence" was cursorily remarked on in the first part of this Note as being singular. His words in reference to it are, "By which transgression commonly called Original Sin." But the "one offence" of Adam is not now, and has not been for a long time, described as Original Sin. We find, however, that Augustine so described it, as for example in the following passage from his tract *De Natura et Gratia*, written against Pelagius—"Certainly the nature of man was at first created blameless and free from all sin; but the nature which each man now derives from Adam needs a Physician

because it is diseased. It indeed receives from the Supreme God, its Creator and Artificer, every good thing that it possesses in its bodily frame, its life, its senses, its mind. But the sin which clouds and weakens those natural powers, so that there is need of enlightenment and healing, was not derived from the immaculate Artificer, but from the Original Sin committed by Adam." This passage shows plainly where Knox got his now singular use of the expression Original Sin. This coincidence of expression between him and Augustine could not be esteemed fortuitous even were it the only instance of agreement between them ; but it is far from being thus solitary.

The second portion of the chapter "Of Original Sin," which treats of the Remedy of Sin in the brief prelude manner already pointed out, is, in fact, just a condensed statement of the principles set forth in the letter of Augustine quoted by Melancthon as if written by the Council of Milevis. Indeed the quotation made from that letter by Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession, speaking as it does of "the promises, that is, the grace of God," immediately directs the mind to what Knox said, in the prefatory chapter just referred to, of "the promise of God" and of "the graces and benefits promised in Christ" And by following out the obvious meaning of this prefatory announcement through its development by Knox in the body of his Confession, there is clearly manifested a complete harmony between his doctrine and that of Augustine, not only as the latter may be seen in the brief letter concerning Pelagius, but in his

larger works. The harmony is complete, inasmuch as the Confession not only contains no dogmatic statement contrary to the teaching of Augustine on the second great doctrine of Christianity, but agrees with it particularly as respects the mode of understanding the greater part of the *Loci Classici* of the New Testament which treat of that doctrine. Knox thus showed in *practice* the same deference to the opinions of Augustine as Melancthon did in *profession*, and by doing this Knox occupied a quite different position from Calvin. For that Reformer having, as has been shown, adopted and advanced in its development by an important stage the doctrine of an external Justification or Salvation, came into inevitable collision with Augustine's tenets, whose authority on that doctrine he consequently failed not to declare had no weight, though the authority of the same Father formed the main support of Calvin's own predestinarian tenets.

But Knox did not yield to the authority, in so far as uninspired authors are concerned, only of writers like Augustine of the early Church, and refuse to learn from the other Primitive Reformers where their lessons excelled in depth and clearness even those of Augustine and Jerome. Knox did not refuse to take advantage of the light which these Reformers were instrumental, under the good providence of God, in causing to shine on the entire field of Christian doctrine and discipline. The very contrary of this was the case. Thus no other Symbol exhibited a more enlightened and determined opposition to all the known corrupt additions made to Christianity by the time of the Reformation than that of

Knox. This Symbol is sufficient of itself to prove that Luther himself was neither a more intelligent nor bolder opponent of all these things than the Scottish Reformer. He joined too with the other primitive Reformers in setting forth, but in the correct and symmetrical form presented in the Scriptures, the great truths touching the gratuitous covering of our sins with the justice of Christ and remitting of them. Indeed he plainly adopted from them the formula that marks this gratuitousness, namely, the expression "by faith only" occurring in the chapter "Of the Gifts freely given to the Church." From them he also learned the use of the word "apprehend" in connection with faith; but he took care that his mode of employing that term should not countenance the dividing of Faith into, firstly, a "Justifying Faith" which never has been, and never can be, intelligibly defined, and, secondly, a "Saving Faith" which, however correct and correctly described in itself, has no intelligible connection with the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation. This latter statement is proved by the circumstance that Saving Faith was excluded by the Westminster Divines, even to the furthest possible degree, from having anything to do with Justification or Salvation either as an element or condition. Knox, as has been pointed out, took care to avoid the fundamental principle whence flow with an iron necessity, if it be once allowed, this inextricable confusion in reference to Faith as well as many other utterly perplexing and confounding, but purely factitious, positions as to Justification or Salvation.

Knox plainly did not make his Confession different from the Continental ones through ignorance, or through an aversion to scientific precision. On the contrary, he was evidently guided in his work by a thorough and mature knowledge of theology. Like a brave and good man he conscientiously employed this knowledge according to the dictates of the truthful and sagacious mind which God had bestowed on him. His Confession proves that, seeing the flaw in the theology of the Reformed Continental Creeds, and being convinced that that flaw was rapidly advancing towards a complete severance of things joined by God and therefore to be separated on no account, he eschewed the definitions of Justification or Salvation of both Melancthon and Calvin; symbolised the correct doctrine of Justification or Salvation; and clearly indicated at the same time the correct mode of interpreting what the Scriptures say on that subject. Leaving the Continental Reformers to follow their own questionable course in theological matters, he was evidently guided in his own conduct by two great objects. The one was the setting forth under the guidance of all the lights of revelation as correct and pure a form of faith as he could frame, that the genuine truth of Christianity might thus be made clearly apparent when stripped of all erroneous incrustations. The other was the substantial religious welfare of the Land for whose deliverance from Papal domination he had endured exile, and had not feared to face death itself. He saw enough in the purified Catholic truth to form a barrier amongst an educated people

(and what Reformer did so much for the education of the people?) against all the real corruptions which he had laboured to abolish, and he was too wise and good a man to provide a place in Scotland for tenets in which he did not believe, as his Confession shows.

It is the circumstance of Knox's Symbol being a Confession that gives it so much value. For it is a full and articulate body of religious truth constructed so as to make the opinions of its framers quite evident, as well as the scriptural grounds on which these opinions were based. But it deserves to be also remarked that, as far as one can see, the ultimate superseding of this Confession by a totally different form of belief as regards the second great doctrine of Christianity was caused just by its Catholic purity, combined with the circumstance already pointed out, namely, the want of the ultimate exegetical proof of its correctness. For since it clearly could not, without most gratuitous assumptions and extravagant twistings, be made to countenance the Continental tenets that came afterwards into such remarkable favour and authority, and since it could not in those days be effectually defended, it went down in the midst of angry contentions, and was superseded first by the Aberdeen Confession and secondly by the Westminster one. Its fate shows the irresistible force with which the tide of Lutherano-Calvinistical opinions rose from the period of Knox's death till the time of the Westminster Assembly, when nothing but the iron will and predominating mind of Cromwell under Providence restrained the flood. To that same Providence have this

Empire and even the world been indebted for a Church like that of England, whose Articles I will now consider.

VII. I shall now state as briefly as possible the grounds of my affirmation that the Articles of the Church of England contain a doctrine of Justification or Salvation identical with that set forth in the Confession of Knox. Indeed, no lengthened remarks on this subject are called for, because the declarations of the Articles will be at once seen to coincide with the doctrine already traced in the Confession of Knox. These formularies really explain each other in a remarkable manner.

VII. The Articles of the Church of England contain a doctrine of Justification or Salvation identical with that of Knox's Confession.

The Eleventh Article is entitled "Of the Justification of Man." It says: "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 and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification." Now, on looking at the contents of this Article, they are seen to consist of an affirmative statement, and a consequence deduced from that statement. Let us, then, attend first to the affirmative statement.

The affirmative portion of the Article says: "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." I would first

remark on these words, that the expression “for the merit of our Lord and Saviour,” or, as it runs in the Latin, “propter meritum Domini et Servatoris nostri,” explains the meaning of Knox when he speaks of the “justice and satisfaction,” or the “justice” of the Son of God; and confirms my correctness in maintaining that the two terms justice and satisfaction were employed by him to express one and the same meaning. The Confession as explained by the Articles plainly means the “one righteousness” or “one obedience” of Jesus Christ. And looking now to the above positive portion of the Article as describing the forensic element in our Justification or Salvation, it is seen to be exactly equivalent to the doctrine of Knox that from first to last, in the Christian course, our sins are forgiven and covered with the justice of Christ, so that we may be accounted righteous before God. Both the Article and the Confession of Knox teach that thus only can men be forgiven and freed from condemnation on their first believing and repenting, and when as yet they have no evangelical obedience to show. They both teach also that men are thus forgiven and justified continuously even after they are working out their salvation with fear and trembling, but with the weakness, imperfection, and sinfulness which ever cleave to the Christian in this state of being.

But the statement in question does not exclude from the conception of Justification or Salvation suggested by it, either an element of holiness implanted prior to the entrance on the enjoyment of this external benefit, or the value and necessity of Good Works thereafter.

On the contrary, the statement at once coalesces harmoniously with what is said both as to the prevenient grace of God and as to good works, in the Articles that treat respectively of these subjects. Thus it is said in Article XII, entitled "Of Works before Justification:" "Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, are not pleasing to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or, (as the School-men say) deserve grace of congruity: yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not that they have the nature of sin." Now this plainly intimates that the Faith by which, according to Article XI, men are accounted righteous before God for the merit of Christ, must not be considered to be mere Trust (Fiducia), or whatever else be the unascertainable something meant by an "instrumental Faith," but a grace including a principle of righteousness and holiness inspired by the Spirit of Jesus. Article XII, again, shows how works performed after a man's entrance on the forensically justified or saved condition must be viewed. This Article is entitled "Of Good Works," and runs thus: "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." This Article evidently

contains exactly the same doctrine that was seen to be declared in the chapter "Of the Perfection of the Law and Imperfection of Man," in the Confession of Knox.

Turning to the second part of Article XI, it is seen to contain a conclusion drawn from the first part, and to direct attention to the Homily of Justification or Salvation. Thus it says: "Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more fully is expressed in the Homily of Justification." Now it is plain that "the Justification by Faith only," mentioned in these words, must be understood as the exact equivalent of the being "accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour by Faith," mentioned in the previous part of the Article. It accordingly describes the external or forensic element of Justification or Salvation, just as the previous part of the Article has been seen to do. And it deserves particular notice that, though the expression "by Faith only" occurs in this latter part of the Article, that part of the Article no more on this account sets forth an absolutely external Justification or Salvation than the former part of it does. Much more than the words "by Faith only" must be added to the negationary statements of the Article before it could adequately set forth a doctrine of absolutely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation. For example, it would need to be expressly stated that Faith justifies or saves only "instrumentally" and not "organically," and that the external Justification or Salvation

thus received is in fact the entire benefit that issues in the enjoyment of Eternal Life. It would need, in short, to define Justification or Salvation positively and negatively to the same extent and effect that was done by the Westminster Divines in their Formulary. So far, then, as the mere Article is concerned, the agreement between it and that symmetrical type of doctrine symbolised at length in the Confession of Knox is complete.

But the Homily "Of Justification," or the series of discourses on that subject, entitled at large, "The Salvation of mankind by only Christ our Saviour, from Sin and Death everlasting," is referred to in the second part of the Article as explanatory of what it denominates Justification by Faith only. And there can be no doubt that the view of Justification or Salvation given in those discourses, as well as the interpretations of Scripture adduced in them to support that view, are exactly similar to those put forth in the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions. If those discourses, then, present the exclusive model of doctrine, and contain the one only authoritative guide to interpretation, in the Church of England, that Church must be confined in these matters within even narrower limits than the pure Lutheran Churches of the Continent, because the English Homily adopts not merely the interpretations of the Augsburg Confession. but of the Helvetic one also. But certain obvious circumstances demonstrate that this Homily does not occupy a position, nor fulfil functions in the Church of England, exactly similar to those which the Confessions just

named do, in the Continental Churches that respectively maintain them. Thus the Homilies are not the exclusive and paramount authorities in matters of doctrine and interpretation in the Church of England, as the Confessions just named are in the Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches of the Continent. The paramount authority on these matters in the Church of England is undoubtedly vested in the Articles,—in subordination, of course, to the Scriptures themselves. And the Articles, as has already appeared, do not bind their subscribers by a single expression either to the form of doctrine or style of interpretation embodied in the avowedly Lutheran and Calvinistic Symbols. Unquestionably, the reference made in Article XI to the Homily of Justification or Salvation, to which unambiguous Lutheran and Calvinistic elements of doctrine and interpretation are entirely confined, vouches unequivocally for the allowance by the Church of England of that form of doctrine and style of interpretation; but the entire freedom of the Articles themselves from these things, combined with the fact of the Prayer-book's not only sharing in that freedom but being stamped with the Catholic impress, proves that no one is bound in the Church of England to adopt only that style of interpretation set forth in the Homilies, and to adhere only to that style of doctrine in which such interpretation results. Besides, the Homilies themselves disavow as their aim the binding of people down either to their own way of representing the great subjects discussed in them, or to the mode adopted by any other Reformed Church.

On the contrary, they emphatically declare on the one hand, that the Scriptures are, by a Divine pre-eminence, the source whence must be drawn the truth on that subject as well as on every other doctrine of Christianity; and on the other, that a high authority, as instructors in the interpretation of the Scriptures, belongs to the Fathers of the early Church, and in particular to the Fathers of the Eastern Church.

When viewed simply as matter of fact, it cannot be questioned that the arrangements in the Church of England were fitted to allow full liberty to embrace either the type of doctrine seen to have been symbolized by Knox, or that other type set forth in the Homily of Justification or Salvation. For, holding that the Articles dictate authoritatively in matters of doctrine and, consequently, of interpretation, while these unquestionably allow the Lutherano-Calvinistical type of doctrine, they as unquestionably allow the type of doctrine learned by Knox under the influences described a little way back. As to the matter of fact then, I repeat there can be no doubt that the Church of England grants full liberty of choice between the two forms of doctrine in question, whatever opinion may be entertained touching the origin and character of this arrangement. For my own part, I have as little doubt that the arrangement originated in the deliberate and most sagacious intention of its authors, as that its character is not merely defensible, but, in respect of wisdom and charitableness, most admirable.

Several things show that the above arrangements were made in the Church of England with the direct

intention of allowing either of the two forms of doctrine in question. First: This appears in the circumstance that the Articles, though framed to allow the Lutherano-Calvinistical form of doctrine and style of interpretation, do not bind subscribers unequivocally to these as the Continental Symbols do, and as the Articles also must have done had they been intended to allow and authorise only Lutherano-Calvinism. Had the Articles been intended to bind down to that instead of merely allowing it, they would have unmistakably embodied it like the Continental Symbols and the Westminster formularies, and not have handed it over for embodiment in the Homilies. When it is intended to bind men by oath, or the equivalent of an oath—namely, a written obligation—the binding party never so expresses himself, or so arranges matters, as must inevitably suggest freedom exactly where it was intended there should be no freedom. And the significance of all these things is much enhanced by considering how they were all adjusted in the knowledge of what had been done on the Continent and in contrast with that; and that being thus adjusted with care and deliberation at first, they were afterwards solemnly adhered to, after having been tested during most trying times. Second: That the Articles were intended to allow liberty of choice between the two forms of doctrine in question appears from the fact, that the Confession of Knox actually expresses at large that very type of doctrine which it is contended that the Articles not only allow, but really harmonise most completely with as a whole. This fact illustrates

and confirms in a remarkable manner the position, that the Articles, while intended to allow the Lutherano-Calvinistic type of doctrine, were as much intended to allow another. For it presents, in the work of a most earnest and courageous Reformer, that symmetrical mode of representing the Gospel which must have been utterly banned and shut out from England by Ridley and Cranmer, had they embodied the substance of the Homily "Of Justification" in the Articles, as the Westminster Divines embodied that substance in their formularies, and also developed to the furthest possible point in the way of Lutherano-Calvinism.

It may be easily made to appear, too, that this evidently intentional arrangement is not only completely defensible from the objections that at first sight rise up against it, but is in reality the most charitable and prudent that could have been made.

First: It may be objected to the above arrangement that it is lax and unprincipled, inasmuch as it deals with two antagonistic modes of representing the same truths, just as if both of these modes were equally correct. When first stated this objection appears to have considerable force. But its force becomes at once neutralised by the consideration that, in the case of two conflicting views as to important truths, however strong may appear the grounds alleged in support of one of these views, or however numerous the party supporting it, still there may be grounds of indubitable force sustaining amidst utmost disfavour the other view, and forbidding the surrender of it at the command of a mere majority. In such

circumstances truth demands that the latter view and the reasons supporting it should not be condemned and utterly excluded, but at the least allowed to find as many adherents and as much support as experience shall show that they deserve. To act in this way, where truth is concerned and demands it, is plainly obligatory on all men of such intelligence as enables them to comprehend the entire question. Instead of being lax and sinful, it is upright, charitable, and prudent.

The examination of the Augsburg Confession and of Knox's, made in this Note, has shown that very sufficient reasons existed, and were seen at the time of framing both the Confession of Knox and the Articles of the Church of England, for not making either the Lutheran or the Calvinistic form of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation paramount in authority. And as time advanced the wisdom of the Reformers of the Church of England in not doing so, but in rather making such arrangements as now exist, became more and more apparent. Indeed, their wisdom has been becoming ever clearer even until the present day, when exegetical knowledge, as it increases in accuracy and amount, confirms the strength of the reasons by which they were influenced. In these circumstances how unspeakably inconvenient (to use the gentlest term,) must it have proved in England during many generations past, and especially at the present day, had the advocates of an extreme Lutherianism or Calvinism succeeded so far as to ban and utterly exclude the opposite type of doctrine and

style of interpretation, as was done by the Westminster Divines wherever their formularies were made authoritative. Merely to conceive such a state of things will manifest clearly to the minds of all who know these formularies on the one hand, and the history of religious opinion in England on the other, the wisdom of the primitive Reformers of the Church of England in not crushing the Catholic and Evangelical type of doctrine beneath such formularies, but in affording scope for its exposition and maintenance. And at the same time the adherents of the Lutherano-Calvinistic type of doctrine and style of interpretation have enjoyed the fullest measure of justice ; and have possessed every advantage, except the power (if that ought to be called an advantage,) of either overriding by sheer authority, or placing in a dishonorable position, all who differed with them. It is sufficiently obvious as a mere abstract question of policy, that the privilege of overcoming or silencing by mere authority opponents who can urge in their own defence arguments of undeniable force, is far from being ultimately advantageous to the party enjoying it. But this will also be abundantly proved and illustrated by facts that must be considered in the sequel. It will there appear how the Westminster formularies were intended to secure paramount authority for the fully developed Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrines, and that hence have sprung disastrous consequences to the Church subjected to their sway.

Secondly : But it may be made the ground of another objection to the preceding account of the arrangement of doctrinal matters in the Church of England, that it

implies a certain looseness and indefiniteness in the teaching of that Church as to Justification or Salvation. And nothing, perhaps, causes more discomfort to many minds than the bare idea of undefinedness in connection with any important matters of opinion and belief, and especially in connection with matters of religious opinion and belief.

But then it ought to be considered in reference to this, that much difference of opinion as to the exact meaning of Justification or Salvation has existed for a long period, as is manifested beyond the possibility of doubt by the state of things within the confines of the Reformed Churches themselves, or even of any one of them. Thus how differently is that doctrine represented in the Confession of Knox on the one hand, and in the Westminster Confession on the other; or when it is treated of now in the works of Whichcote, and now in those of Owen. Where differences in the treatment of a subject—differences so palpable and important to the discriminating and truthful mind—are to be seen, there must also exist in connection with that subject corresponding sources of ambiguity and error. One may, indeed, close his eyes against these differences. He may endeavour to think and feel as if neither they nor their causes had any existence; but that his own way of viewing and expressing the subject is the only, and the correct, way. But however men may act towards them, it continues to be altogether undeniable that most serious differences have existed, even within the Protestant Churches, as to the right mode of understanding the doctrine of

Justification or Salvation. And the peculiarity in the arrangements of the Church of England, insisted on in this Note, is just the undeniable fact that, while setting forth in her Articles the true Evangelical and Catholic doctrine of Justification or Salvation, she so sets it forth that her special statement on the subject in Article XI may be understood and developed either in the Evangelical and Catholic mode, or in the Lutherano-Calvinistical one, up to the point even that was reached by the Westminster Divines. Her members, clerical or lay, can thus interpret them in either of these modes without infringing any solemn obligations in any way whatever. She has thus accommodated herself to what has been for long the actual state of knowledge and opinion in relation to the doctrine in question,—a course of procedure whose wisdom will be considered in the immediate sequel.

It is, of course, not meant to be implied by any of the remarks just made, that there exists now, or ever has existed, any absolute dubiety as to the exact meaning of Justification or Salvation, caused by a hopelessly impenetrable obscurity in the mode of its exposition in Holy Scripture. The whole of this Note proceeds on a totally different view of the subject. It proceeds on the idea of the Scriptural exposition of Justification or Salvation being in reality demonstratively clear and conclusive, and of ambiguity and confusion having been introduced into the subject by distinctly ascertainable causes. These causes have been as yet only incidentally noticed in the previous part of the Note ; but their operation was manifested

in our examination of the Augsburg Confession, as well as the nature of the ambiguities and contradictions introduced by them into men's conceptions of Christianity. It proceeds, also, on the idea that the weight of evidence has always lain in reality on the side of that type of doctrine symbolised by Knox and preached by Theologians like Whichcote. That side has always been able, for example, to allege on its own behalf, with the force wielded only by reality of existence, the internal and vital, no less than the external and formal, symmetry of its representation of Divine Truth—a symmetry resulting from the construction of its type of doctrine in accordance with the analogy of Faith, or, in other words, in accordance with all the great principles of Revelation; and not in contradiction to any of them, such as notoriously takes place when, for instance, Forgiveness is made to precede Repentance. But this Note also proceeds on the idea that this Evangelical and Catholic type of doctrine has never heretofore been thoroughly expounded and defended by means of its ultimate exegetical proofs, as these may be deduced even from the central *Loci Classici* of Scripture, that have for so long formed the only ground and defence of its antagonist. The grounds, however, on which this latter idea rests do not form any part of the proper subject of this Note; since, for reasons already stated, it would be premature to adduce, and insist on, them in the present argument, which professes to be merely presumptive.

Thirdly: But the arrangements as to doctrine made in the Church of England, besides being defensible

against objections like those just considered, approve themselves by many equally obvious and important considerations as having been most wise and charitable. Thus, the stability of the ecclesiastical fabric in England is undoubtedly owing in great part to the arrangement of doctrinal matters made in that country. That fabric survived the great shock under which the entire system introduced by Knox disappeared, and was ultimately replaced by a totally different one—a system so totally different that only extraordinary ignorance or extraordinary misunderstanding could have ever identified it with Knox's. In contrast with the fate of Knox's system, the contemporaneously framed system of England exists at this day in as entire and vigorous a condition as when it was first reared. And a main cause of this durability has been the comprehensiveness of the principles animating the doctrinal arrangements of the Church of England. By virtue of these principles, the great majority of men in England have felt, ever since the subsidence of the commotions just referred to, that each and all of the parties existing in the Church have had their convictions respected and their interests provided for in that system. No one of these parties has been armed with constitutional weapons of a kind enabling them unflinchingly to oppress in doctrinal matters an opposing party, or at the least to place the members of that party in a palpably false position. The several parties have been thus enabled to enjoy an extraordinary amount of freedom in expressing and maintaining their respective tenets—a freedom enjoyed (and this

point is of signal importance,) not in contravention, masked or open, of solemn obligations, but in harmony with the comprehensive and tolerant spirit of the Church.

Indeed, but for the wise adjustment of the Articles and Homilies to meet those peculiarities of opinion that have been unavoidable on the most important doctrinal subjects ever since the Reformation, it is impossible to see how ecclesiastical government could have been carried on in England at any period from the commencement of the seventeenth century. That anything deserving the name of a National Church might subsist in England during all that time, it was necessary to provide a legitimate place for those who might think with Luther, or with Calvin, or with that truly Catholic type of doctrine set forth in the Articles of the Church of England as these are explained either in the English Prayer Book or in the Primitive Scottish Confession. The framers of the reformed ecclesiastical constitution of England adapted their work from the first to what they saw were the conditions of the country in respect of religious belief in their own day, as well as to what they had reason to expect that these conditions would continue for an indefinitely long time to be. They did not, in the manner of mere partisan Theologians, keep in view for their guidance only their own tenets which would appear to them the absolute truth of Christianity; but like statesmen they kept in view the actually existing divisions of opinion, and assigned legitimate places to the respective supporters of these varieties of opinion. In this is to be found a

main reason of the stability and permanence of the Church of England.

And again, but for the liberty that can be rightfully enjoyed under the Articles, of understanding and teaching the Christian Religion as was done by typical minds like those of John Smith of Cambridge, and Bishops Bull and Butler, Europe must have wanted for many ages an asylum in which a form of faith equally removed from Romanist and Protestant extremes could lift an honest, and, because honest, an unabashed front. God preserved in England the favoured spot where, during three hundred years, men have been at freedom to say that neither the Pope, nor Luther, nor Calvin, was his exclusive vicegerent in matters of Faith on Earth. Scripture has been there, infinitely more than in any other land, the very and actual, and not merely the ostensible, rule of Faith and Practice.

SECTION V.

SECOND STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION;

AND

THE CLOSING EFFORT TO PREVENT THE COMPLETION
OF THAT FORM OF DOCTRINE.

THE Confession approved by the Assembly held at Aberdeen in 1616 is a most valuable document in relation to the special subject of this Note. It exhibits an important stage in the advance of the Continental tenets as to Justification or Salvation, to their state of final development by the Westminster Divines. It also enables one to see with much clearness what the Westminster Theology was intended to correct, according to the view of its authors, not merely in the admirable Creed of John Knox, but in the almost perfected Lutherano-Calvinism of one of the aspects of the Aberdeen Confession itself. Almost perfected Lutherano-Calvinism, I say; for those truths respecting Justification or Salvation that were symmetrically and scripturally set forth by Knox, are seen weakly struggling in the Aberdeen Confession against a com-

plete extinction by the over-mastering logical force of the Lutherano-Calvinistical principle, that Justification or Salvation is not only gratuitous, but purely external and imputative.

Another circumstance invests this Confession with considerable importance, and makes an examination of it necessary. I refer to a very remarkable resemblance that exists between some of the characteristic principles of the Aberdeen Confession, and those that characterise certain Acts touching Justification or Salvation, passed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1719 and 1722. In fact, those Acts reduced the doctrine of the Westminster formularies as to Justification or Salvation to an exact identity with the doctrine of the Aberdeen Confession on the same subject: thereby allowing, up to a certain point, exactly what the Westminster Confession was intended to disallow. It is enough, in the mean time, to have thus pointed out in passing this remarkable identity, as a special reason for examining the Aberdeen Confession.

A most important service will be found to be performed by this Creed in respect of what has always been insisted on in this Note, as a matter of primary moment. I refer to the mode of interpreting the *Loci Classici* of the New Testament that bear more or less directly on the subject of Justification or Salvation. Indeed, inasmuch as this Creed contains the almost perfected form of the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation, it is remarkable that it should present such specimens of interpreta-

tion as are seen in it. For many of these are directly antagonistic in their style and results, to the Lutheran and Calvinistic style and the doctrinal results in which it issues. But this is explained by the circumstance that this Creed is an attempt to amalgamate, or to enunciate by one form of expression, the two quite contradictory forms of doctrine that have been seen to be symbolised by Melancthon and Knox respectively.

I. The portion of the Aberdeen Confession parallel to the account of the two Covenants in the Westminster Formularies.

I. The portion of the Aberdeen Confession which first demands attention is that corresponding to the account of the two Covenants in the Westminster Formularies. Attention to this subject is made necessary by the circumstance frequently alluded to in this Note, namely, that the peculiarities of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation are based as much on the account of the two Covenants, especially the Covenant of Works, given by the Westminster Assembly, as on that mode of understanding the Loci Classici of the New Testament which first led Luther and Calvin to entertain their peculiar doctrine of Justification or Salvation. The genuine characteristics, therefore, of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, which consummated the work of Luther and Calvin, can only be aright ascertained and understood when considered in the light of its cognate doctrines as to the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace. Keeping this in view, I have already particularly directed attention to that portion of Knox's Confes-

sion which must be considered as parallel to the Westminster account of the Covenants. And I shall now likewise quote from the Aberdeen Confession all that is necessary for showing its treatment of that subject, as compared with the treatment of the same subject by the Covenanters and Puritans.

The following passage of the Aberdeen Confession is parallel to the account of the two Covenants in the Westminster Confession.

“ In the beginning of time, when God created of nothing all things in heaven and earth, Visible and Invisible, He made them very good, and above all things He made Man and Angels conform to His own Image in righteousness and true holiness. But some of the angels of their own free motive sinned against God, left their original, forsook their habitation, and abode not in the Truth, and thereby became damned Devils.

“ Then Satan abused the crafty serpent for his instrument, seducing our Mother Eve. She tempted her husband Adam; so both disobeyed the commandments of God, and thereby made themselves and posterity the bondmen of Satan, slaves of sin, and heirs of eternal damnation.

“ By this fall of Adam all his posterity are so corrupted from their conception and nativity, that none of them can do or will anything truly acceptable unto God, till they be renewed by the will and Spirit of God and by faith engrafted in Jesus Christ.

“ This our original and native corruption by regeneration in part is weakened, and mortified; yet it is sin indeed remaining in us, always lusting against the Spirit and tempting us to sin actually, as long as we live.

“ Albeit all mankind be fallen in Adam; yet only those who are elected before all time are in time redeemed, restored, raised, and quickened again, not of themselves or their works, lest any man should glory; but only of the mercy of God through faith in Jesus Christ; Who of God

is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, that, according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.

“This then is Life Eternal to know the true God, and Whom he hath sent Jesus Christ; whereas vengeance shall be taken of them that know not God, and do not subject themselves to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ by the obedience of Faith.”

The first portion of the foregoing passage corresponds to the account of the Covenant of Works in the Westminster Formularies. It obviously wants, however, several things that distinguish its parallel. Thus it contains no account of a primeval transaction between God and Adam, by which the latter was bound to render “a personal, perpetual, exact, and perfect obedience” to the Moral Law that he might enjoy Life, as well as to abstain from eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree on the pain of death. There is in the passage, indeed, an indication of the germination of those conceptions that were ultimately embodied in the fully developed Covenant of Works. For in this statement “she tempted her husband Adam, so both disobeyed the commandments of God,” the term “commandments” might be understood to imply that man was primevally placed exactly in such a spiritual and moral condition as the Westminster, in common with the so-called Fœderalist, Theologians have portrayed. But it may also mean no more than that Adam, when he infringed the precise prohibition laid on him, transgressed the entire Will or Law of God, inasmuch as if any one “offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

In fact, the full and precise conception of the Westminster Covenant of Works had not been yet formed when the Aberdeen Confession was drawn up. At least, however far advanced it might be towards completion at that time, it had not reached such prominence as would give it a chance of even *apparent* embodiment in the Aberdeen Symbol. For it was developed and thrust prominently forward in order to counteract along with its counterpart the Westminster Covenant of Grace, the mode of representing Justification or Salvation exemplified in the Aberdeen Confession. It was thus the latest portion in being formed of the Westminster or Fœderalist Theology, though it is treated of first in the didactic works on that Theology. This inverted order is exactly what usually occurs in the development of any system. For the principles on which any system is based, though almost invariably the last to be discovered or invented, of the elements that compose the system, must take precedence among the things treated of in the didactic exposition of the system. And in the Westminster or Fœderalist system, the principles of its Covenant of Works are strictly analogous to those that regulate its account of Justification or Salvation. Thus as the Covenant of Works proceeds on the principles that Adam was both bound to obey the entire Law in order to merit Eternal Life, and to refrain from eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree in order to escape from death, so Justification or Salvation as provided by the Covenant of Grace, according to this Theology, consists of the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness, or obe-

dience to the law in our stead, as well as of the Forgiveness of our sins through the atonement made by Christ. And, in the didactic exposition of this Theology, the twofold elements of the Covenant of Works are first stated and supported, as evidencing the necessity for a parallel twofold character in the elements of its absolutely external Justification or Salvation.

In accordance with what has just been said, it may be pointed out that, while this Confession presents only a doubtful germinal appearance of the future Covenant of Works, it presents very unmistakeable traces of what was afterwards set forth as the counterpart of that Covenant, namely, the Westminster Covenant of Grace. This latter was certain to show itself first, since it just represents that peculiar view of Justification or Salvation in whose support the parallel view of God's earliest transaction with man was framed. But the unmistakeable traces of the Westminster Covenant of Grace just referred to, are not seen in the passage quoted above. On the contrary, the portion of that passage which describes the Divine method of recovering man from his sinful and guilty estate through and in Christ Jesus, is remarkable for its entire freedom from the artificial distinctions that distinguish the Fœderalist Covenant of Grace, and for its purely scriptural mode of expressing the truth. Indeed, it not only harmonises with the parallel portions of Knox's Confession, but forms an excellent commentary on them. For example, take the two following paragraphs from that passage: "Albeit all mankind be fallen in Adam; yet only those who are

elected before all time are in time redeemed, restored, raised, and quickened again, not of themselves or their works, lest any man should glory; but only of the mercy of God through faith in Jesus Christ, Who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, that, according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." Again, "This then is Life Eternal to know the true God, and Whom He hath sent Jesus Christ, whereas vengeance shall be taken of them that know not God, and do not subject themselves to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ by the obedience of faith." These two paragraphs harmonise completely with what Knox confessed in such passages as the following: "Which regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, working in the hearts of the elect of God an assured faith in the promise of God, revealed to us in His word, by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him." And again, "The remembrance of which day, and of the judgment to be executed in the same is not only to us a bridle whereby our carnal lusts are refrained, but also such inestimable comfort, that neither may the threatening of worldly Princes, neither yet the fear of temporal death and present dangers, move us to renounce that blessed society which we the members have with our Head and only Mediator Christ Jesus, Whom we confess and avow to be the Messiah promised, the only Head of the Church, our just Lawgiver, our only High Priest, Advocate, and Mediator." On comparing the first of the two paragraphs just quoted from the Aberdeen Confession, with the first of the two just

quoted from Knox's, one is forcibly led to conclude that the former was intended to be a comment on the latter, and to prevent a purely external sense from being attached to it. For instead of merely speaking of our "apprehending Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him," it enumerates these graces by means of a text which has been always most difficult to harmonise with the Lutherano-Calvinistic sense of Justification or Salvation.

The statements referred to above as corresponding to the Westminster account of the Covenant of Grace, occur in passages of which the two following may be cited as an example. They form part of the account of Christ the Mediator, and proceed thus :

"This blessed Lord has fulfilled the whole Law for us, to our behoof and in our place, both doing all that the Law requireth of us, and suffering the punishment due to our disobedience, even to the curse of the Law and death of the cross, whereby the fulfilling the Law, our Redemption was sealed and consummated." "We believe that as He died for our sins and rose for our righteousness, so He ascended to heaven to prepare a place for us, and sitteth at the right hand of God to make intercession for us, and is able perfectly to save them that come to God by Him."

Similar passages shall be quoted in the immediate sequel, when we enter on the direct consideration of the subject of Justification or Salvation as it is treated in this Confession. And there will appear in them all, just as in the passage now cited, apparently the same marked division between the active and passive obedience of our Redeemer, which presents itself in the statements of the Westminster Formularies. Thus in Chapter

VIII of the Westminster Confession, "Of Christ the Mediator," it is said: "The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself, which He through the Eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of the Father; and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him." And again, in Chapter XI, "Of Justification," it is said: "Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf." The foregoing quotations from the Aberdeen and Westminster Confessions are exactly alike, in so far as they all mention both the Obedience or Righteousness and the Satisfaction of Christ. And important testimony is borne by one of the foregoing quotations from the Aberdeen Confession as to one point, which was indicated, in my preliminary sketch of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, as being insufficiently and therefore dubiously expressed in one of the statements respecting it in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession. Thus in the last quotation made above, it is said: "Christ by His obedience and death did fully discharge the debt of those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf." Now the meaning of the word "debt" appears rather doubtful as it stands in this statement. Light is cast on it, however, by the statement of the Aberdeen Confession, that "This

blessed Lord has fulfilled the whole Law for us, both doing all that the Law requireth of us, and suffering the punishment due to our disobedience." This, when understood in the Fœderalist sense, expresses much less equivocally than the statement of the Westminster Confession, what was undoubtedly the doctrine meant to be symbolised by the latter, namely, that Jesus Christ not only gave Himself a Sacrifice on the Cross for the Elect to ransom them from guilt, but also rendered in their stead the faultless obedience demanded by the Law; and that thus only, through the fulfilment in their room and stead of the "Covenant of Works" by a Substitute, the Elect are put into possession of Eternal Life. Their Justification or Salvation precisely consists, according to this doctrine, in the gratuitous reckoning of this substitutive twofold obedience of Christ as theirs—gratuitous in the fullest sense, since the doctrine articulately excludes everything that could be urged as a necessary moral or spiritual condition, and makes the external Justification or Salvation meant by it, as also Eternal Life, the consequent of that external benefit, dependent on an "instrumental" Faith only.

The above doctrine, as has just appeared, is very clearly and unequivocally expressed in certain of the statements of the Aberdeen Confession. Not that the doctrine of the Aberdeen Confession is the same as that of the Westminster Formularies. On the contrary, it will be shown clearly in the course of our remarks on the former document that, while using language respecting Justification or Salvation identical in most respects with that found in the Westminster

Formularies, it is yet made to involve, and certainly to allow and countenance, a form of doctrine utterly antagonistic to the Westminster one. This is indeed done with much art, and it might easily escape detection by one perusing the Confession inattentively, or without an adequate comparative knowledge of the Reformed Creeds. Such a person would never suspect that a definition of Justification like that seen in the Aberdeen Confession,—a definition much more precise and thorough-going in appearance than that seen in the Augsburg and Helvetic Symbols, and almost identical with the Westminster one—should have underlying it a form of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation utterly antagonistic to it in principle, and based on a totally opposite mode of understanding important portions of Scripture.

But I shall now proceed to the consideration of this remarkable phase of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation, and leave the Fœderalist view of the Covenants for final treatment in its proper connection, namely, the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation. Both of them will be susceptible of a much clearer and more satisfactory treatment, after the examination that now comes in due course to be made into the form of doctrine ultimately supplanted by them.

II. The following passage in the Aberdeen Confession treats specially of Justification or Salvation. It is not sufficient of itself to explain fully the doctrine of the Confession on that subject, and to make its

II. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation symbolised by the framers of the Aberdeen Confession.

meaning, or rather its two meanings, unevasively precise and clear. Other passages must afterwards be compared with the following one, in order more fully to prove and illustrate certain points, and thus place the exact character of the doctrine beyond the possibility of doubt, by deducing it from all the statements of the Confession that bear on it. The passage to be first cited, however, claims the precedence in our attention, since it treats in express terms, and at considerable length, of Justification or Salvation. It proceeds thus :

“ We believe, that God justifieth sinners by remitting of their sins, and by imputing to them the Righteousness and Obedience of Christ, whereby He fulfilled the whole Law in our place, both in doing the commandments thereof, and in suffering the curse thereof, which was due to us because of our disobedience.

“ We believe, that that Righteousness whereby we are justified before God, is not inherent in us, but in Jesus Christ, and that it is freely given to us of God’s free Grace, through our faith in Jesus Christ.

“ We believe, that we are justified by faith as it is an instrument apprehending and applying the Righteousness of Christ to us, and not as it is a quality and virtue inherent in us ; so that the meritorious cause of our justification is not in the faith which apprehendeth, but in the Righteousness of Christ by faith apprehended.

“ We believe, that albeit we be not justified by Good Works before God, and can merit nothing at God’s hands ; yet they are the way to the Kingdom of God, and are of necessity to be done for obedience to God, for glorifying of His Name, for confirming ourselves anent our Election, and for example to others ; And constantly we affirm that faith, which bringeth not forth Good Works, is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation.

“ We believe, that the Elect being renewed and sealed with the Holy Spirit, in such sort, that albeit they bear

about in their flesh the remnants of that Original corruption, and albeit they offend through infirmity, and through the enticements thereof sin grievously to the offence of God; Yet they cannot altogether fall from Grace, but are raised again through the mercy of God, and are kept to Salvation.

“Concerning the certainty of our Salvation, we believe, that every one of us in particular ought to be fully persuaded thereof, giving credit both to the external promise of the Word, and internal witness of the Spirit. And as for the doubtings thereof, which we often find in ourselves, we do not allow, but contrariwise damn them, as the fruits of the flesh fighting against the Spirit.”

The first three of the above paragraphs express with an ostentatious precision the Lutheran and Calvinistic tenets as to Justification or Salvation. So far as they are concerned, the Confession would appear to embody those tenets in their extreme and finished form. Not only does everything avoided by Knox protrude itself painfully in them, but a large number of the expressions contained in them are identical with those which one reads in the Westminster Confession and Larger Catechism. In respect of one point of Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine, indeed, the Westminster Confession comes short of what the Aberdeen one states in the above quotation. I refer to the declaration, in the last paragraph, of the Lutheran tenet as to the Assurance of Faith. That tenet, as was proved in the second Section of this Note, by a quotation from the earlier Augsburg Confession, is to the effect that he believes unto justification who believes in his own justification, and that he is guilty of sin who doubts as to his being justified. The

statement on the subject in the Aberdeen Confession maintains the same thing. But the Westminster Confession, on the other hand, says in its Chapter "Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation:" "This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties, before he be a partaker of it."

The origin of the tenets and language seen in these three paragraphs is, indeed, unmistakeably and undeniably Continental. To trace them to the Confession of Knox, or to say that they are authorised by that Symbol, must be to interpret it in a sense which its author obviously avoided, and to put language in his mouth which he certainly did not employ. I say that the tenets and language seen in these paragraphs are Continental in their *origin* only. For they bear palpable marks of having undergone a development which neither Melancthon nor Beza had contemplated. This will become more apparent when the use made of them by Henderson, Baillie, and Gillespie, is finally exhibited in the next Section. But, in fact, one needs only to compare the mode in which the Aberdeen Symbol appears to insist on Christ's "having done all that the Law requireth of us," as well as "His suffering the curse of the Law in our stead," and again, on "His Righteousness and Obedience imputed to us," with the total absence of such expressions from the Augsburg Confession, and the modified use made of them in the Gallic and Helvetic ones, in order to see even at this point the process of development

now in question. And these expressions also indicate in what direction development was contended for by the predecessors of the Scottish Covenanters, when the Aberdeen Confession was framed. For these theologians had already had manifestly granted, or at least for peace sake allowed, to them, that the foundation of Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation was correct, and that what Calvin and Beza had built on that foundation was also correct. Without this having been granted, at least in appearance, three such paragraphs as those now under consideration would not have been framed.

But what do the six foregoing paragraphs show to be the real doctrine of this Confession as to Justification or Salvation and its consequent Eternal Life? Now, though Justification is described in the first three of these paragraphs in terms almost identical with those employed in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, and in the account of Justifying Faith in the Westminster Larger Catechism, still it is neither called Salvation, nor said to be "for Salvation" as in the Catechism just named. It is declared, however, to consist of the "remission of sins" and "the imputation of the Righteousness and Obedience of Christ;" to be bestowed freely or gratuitously, and not on account of anything in us or done by us; and to be received by faith as a mere instrument, and not on account of any quality or virtue belonging to Faith. This Justification described in the three paragraphs under consideration, is thus seen to be external as well as gratuitous—to be, to all appearance, identical with

the Justification described in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession. Nevertheless, the doctrine of Justification or Salvation contained in the Aberdeen Confession is widely different from the doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Westminster one. While the Aberdeen Confession at first presents the appearance of having yielded almost everything that could enable the advocates of the Lutherano-Calvinistic tenets to hold them in integrity, it at the same time presents to the view of its careful student a closing effort to express these tenets so that they might not quite swamp the opposite tenets, but leave some scope for the adherents of the latter to maintain both them and the style of interpretation that supports them. In this respect, it exemplifies the struggle between the truth as symbolised by Knox on the one hand, and by Melancthon and Calvin on the other, which took place just before the doctrines of the latter were symbolised in their most developed form by the Assembly of Westminster Divines.

First: The doctrine of the Aberdeen Confession differs from that of the Westminster one inasmuch as the former, unlike the latter, is not a doctrine of absolutely unconditioned and gratuitous Justification or Salvation received by an instrumental Faith. I notice this point first, because it is the most obvious to the reader of the Formulary.

I cite as the first proof of the statement just made, the two following paragraphs which immediately precede in the Confession those paragraphs last quoted. The two paragraphs proceed thus :

“ We believe, that our Communion with Christ our Head is spiritual, by that Holy Spirit that dwelleth powerfully, both in the Body and in the Head, making the members conform to the Head; and it is in no ways corporal, or by any fleshly receiving of His body.

“ We believe, that by virtue of this Communion Christ is ours, and we are Christ’s, and His suffering is our Satisfaction; and by it we have right, title, and interest to all the benefits which He did promerit and purchase to us by His suffering.”

It is to be observed, then, that according to these statements the external, imputative, or forensic Justification or Salvation is enjoyed “by virtue” of the spiritual Communion described in them, and not merely by Faith in its instrumental capacity. And this Communion forming the *sine qua non* of the external elements of Justification or Salvation, is described as consisting of a powerful work of the Holy Ghost, who makes Christians, the members, conform or like unto Christ, their Head. [This statement at once suggests several important parts of Scripture which form its foundation; but these must be reserved for quotation, along with others in the next division of this Section.] Now it is evident that, if the external or imputative Justification or Salvation be enjoyed by virtue of such a Communion as is described in the last quotation, this forms an important spiritual and moral condition annexed to the enjoyment of it. It is not enjoyed by virtue merely of an instrumental Faith, and irrespectively of all moral and spiritual elements; but, on the contrary, it can only be enjoyed where the spiritual and moral process of approximation to the

character of Christ has been instituted. And as this peculiarity in the doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Aberdeen Confession appears from the two paragraphs in the Formulary immediately preceding its special account of that doctrine, so does it appear in the special account of the doctrine itself. Thus, while the fourth of the paragraphs forming that account contains (as may be seen a little way back) a statement as to the motives and considerations that ought to urge Christians to Obedience and Good Works, identical in its form of expression with what is said on the same subject in the Westminster Larger Catechism; it contains at the same time the following statement: "And constantly we affirm that Faith, which bringeth not forth Good Works, is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation." [This statement of the Aberdeen Confession, like the one already examined in this paragraph, at once suggests an important class of Scriptural formulas which constitute its basis; but these must be reserved also for quotation and remark, along with others, in the next division.] And as to the statement itself, it is to be observed that it maintains, at least it would rather countenance than forbid any one bound by it to maintain, that a Faith productive of Good Works, or the Obedience of Faith, or Evangelical Obedience, and not merely Faith in its instrumental character (whatever that may be), is necessary as a spiritual and moral condition for the enjoyment of that Justification or Salvation which entitles to Eternal Life.

It is only affirmed that the statement as to Faith, just referred to, *permitted* the arguing under this Confession for a living and operative Faith, or Evangelical Obedience, as a necessary condition of Justification or Salvation. For the statement in question is so expressed, that, while admitting the maintenance of that tenet, it does not necessarily bind to its maintenance, but might be held and explained in his own way by a thoroughly systematic supporter of the Westminster Theology. For the declarations of the Aberdeen Confession respecting the necessity of a living Faith and Evangelical Obedience are admitted and insisted on by the Westminster Formularies *in their own way*. But what is that way? It consists in not insisting in any form on the necessity of an operative Faith and Evangelical Obedience, until, as has been already proved and shall be proved more fully in the sequel, extraordinary care had been taken to exclude them definitively from holding any place either as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation; and to demonstrate how absolutely external and unconditioned that benefit is according to the Westminster Divines. Indeed, a principal objection, from the Westminster point of view, to the doctrine of the Aberdeen Confession, considered as expressing an external Justification or Salvation, is just that it does not by positive and negative propositions, like those employed in the Westminster Confession, declare the benefit to be as absolutely unconditioned as external. For besides the condition, previously noticed, of a conformity to the character of Christ produced by His Spirit, it allowed the repre-

senting, and arguing for, a living and operative Faith as a necessary spiritual and moral condition of the external Justification or Salvation, and its consequent Eternal Life.

Indeed, to argue for the spiritual and moral elements of Christianity as necessary conditions of an external Justification or Salvation and its consequent Eternal Life, was the only method left to those who, being unable or unwilling to combat the position as to the benefit being absolutely external and imputative, yet wished to combat or at least neutralise its palpable Antinomian consequences. And it was just this only remaining way of arguing for the spiritual and moral elements of Christianity in connection with an apparently completely external Justification or Salvation, *permitted* by the Aberdeen Confession, that the Westminster Theologians set themselves to thoroughly put down. And there can be no question that, when once Justification or Salvation had been declared, though only in appearance, to be purely external and imputative, the whole force of argument henceforth appeared to be on the side of those who denied absolutely that any conditions were annexed to that benefit or its consequent Eternal Life. For nothing can be clearer than the declarations of Scripture as to the gratuitousness of Justification or Salvation (whatever that benefit may mean,) as the necessary antecedent of Eternal Life. Justification or Salvation (whatever be its meaning,) is the *gift* of God to every sinner who will accept it by faith. Consequently, if Repentance, with Righteousness and Holiness, its fruits, be excluded as elements of Justi-

fication or Salvation, instead of being included and thus made so necessary a part of the gift that no man has received Justification or Salvation from God who has not received Repentance and its fruits,—if, instead of this, they be excluded, it must thereafter be utterly futile in the view of logic or common sense to argue that they have any place as conditions. For it is utterly contradictory to admit on the one hand the external and gratuitous character of the benefit, and then to argue on the other hand in support of certain necessary conditions. The contradiction, too, is of that palpable kind which appeals at once to every mind, and the most pointed and express of the two contradictories composing it is sure to gain the victory. Thus through the principle of gratuitousness was every attempt to argue for conditions on Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life defeated, as was proved by successive controversies in the Protestant Churches, terminating with those settled on one side at Westminster.

Second: The doctrine of Justification or Salvation contained in the Aberdeen Confession differs from that of the Westminster Formularies, inasmuch as the former is not a doctrine of absolutely external Justification or Salvation, like the latter. At least the doctrine of the Aberdeen Confession is so expressed, that the understanding it to include, in accordance with Scripture, certain internal spiritual and moral elements as well as the external and imputative ones, is quite possible and legitimate; whereas, in the case of the Westminster Formularies, any such thing is flatly impossible. The framers of the latter Formu-

laries having an eye to the ambiguous modes of expression employed in the Aberdeen Creed, contrived, by the introduction of express negative and positive clauses, as well as by the entire structure of their doctrine, to completely prevent all who respect their obligations to the Westminster Confession from adding any spiritual or moral element whatever to the Justification or Salvation which they are bound to maintain is followed by Eternal Life.

It is easy to prove, both from the form of the doctrine contained in the Aberdeen Confession, and from the ambiguity of its language, that the Confession did not bind its adherents to maintain a purely external Justification or Salvation.

Let attention then be given to the special account of this doctrine contained in the six paragraphs quoted at the commencement of this division of the Section. Now the circumstance that the Justification described in the first three of those paragraphs in almost the identical terms of the Westminster Confession, is still neither called Salvation nor said to be for Salvation, but is rather expressly distinguished from the Justification or Salvation mentioned in the fourth paragraph, proves, when viewed in the light of what is said in this last paragraph and in other parts of the Confession, that Justification or Salvation is not unambiguously external and imputative according to this Creed. For if the internal spiritual and moral elements be completely excluded from the "Justification" described in the first three paragraphs, still that is not the whole account of "Justification or Sal-

vation" according to this Confession, as the fourth paragraph plainly shows; and this latter part of the account does certainly not exclude the internal elements of our Redemption from the conception of Justification or Salvation. For according to that account, Justification or Salvation cannot be conceived to exist except in company with a living and operative Faith, and in entire dependence on the latter. And the paragraph that precedes the six just referred to (a paragraph already quoted to prove that Justification or Salvation is not unconditioned according to the Aberdeen Confession), also proves that it is not purely external or imputative. It says: "By virtue of this Communion (making the members conform to the Head), Christ is ours, and we are Christ's, and His suffering is our Satisfaction; and by it we have right, title, and interest to all the benefits which He did pro-merit and purchase to us by His suffering." It is obvious that statements of this kind do not merely declare a dependence, by way of moral condition, between the possession of the internal elements of Redemption and the enjoyment of its external ones; but form a sufficient *primá facie* ground for holding, that the framers of this Creed did not approve the rigorous and absolute separation of them that takes place when Justification or Salvation is articulately declared to be purely external and imputative.

But to see fully how the "Justification or Salvation" expressly described in the Aberdeen Confession is susceptible of being understood to include, at least to leave ample room for including in it, internal as well as external

elements, a still more searching examination must be made into the exact difference between the mere "Justification" mentioned in the Confession on the one hand, and the full benefit, viz., the "Justification or Salvation" that secures Eternal Life mentioned in it on the other. For it clearly appears that, notwithstanding the apparently perfect resemblance of the mere "Justification" described in the Aberdeen Confession to the Justification or Salvation set forth by the Westminster Divines as that which alone secures Eternal Life, the former may be considered as equivalent only to the Forgiveness of sins through the Covering of them with the Righteousness of Christ which Knox confessed, and as requiring "conformity to Christ" and "an operative Faith" to be combined with it, in order to make up the Justification or Salvation that results in the enjoyment of Eternal Life. That this is so, appears—First, from the account given of the mere "Justification" in different parts of the Aberdeen Confession. Thus it is said in the first of the six paragraphs quoted at the commencement of this division of the Section: "We believe that God justifies sinners, by remitting of their sins, and by imputing to them the righteousness and obedience of Christ, whereby He fulfilled the whole Law in our place, both in doing the commandments thereof, and in suffering the curse thereof, which was due to our disobedience." Now while this passage appears to describe respectively that remission of sins through which Hell is escaped, and that imputation of Christ's righteousness through which Heaven is reached, according to the

Westminster Formularies, and in which these Formularies make Justification or Salvation entirely consist, still the passage is so ambiguous that it may equally well appear to insist on the active obedience of Christ as being merely added to His passive obedience to form the "one Righteousness" through which our sins are forgiven and covered. In fact, this is exactly what is said in the second of the six paragraphs, thus: "We believe, that that Righteousness whereby we are justified before God, is not inherent in us, but in Jesus Christ, and that it is freely given to us of God's free Grace, through our Faith in Jesus Christ." And that the above was intended to be a meaning allowed by the Confession becomes more probable when we examine the two passages that shall next be quoted. Thus it is said in that part of the Confession already quoted as parallel to the Westminster account of the Covenant of Grace: "This blessed Lord has fulfilled the whole Law for us, to our behoof and in our place; both doing all that the Law requireth of us, and suffering the punishment due to our disobedience, even to the curse of the Law and death of the Cross; whereby, the fulfilling of the Law, our Redemption was sealed and consummated." The ambiguousness of this passage is more remarkable even than that of the one first examined, and it consequently bears with more force on the special point under consideration. For it is evident that this passage leaves the sense of the term Redemption ambiguous, in addition to its expressing ambiguously the same elements that were treated of ambiguously

in the former passage. Nothing in the present passage enables one to decide whether the Redemption said in it to be “sealed and consummated by Christ’s fulfilling the whole Law to our behoof and in our place,” is a “complete” though external “Redemption” synonymous with the external and free Justification or Salvation set forth by the Westminster Divines, or a Redemption consisting of a deliverance from the power of sin and “conformity to Christ” as well as of the Forgiveness and Covering of our sins, and resulting from the fulfilment “of the whole Law to our behoof and in our place” by Christ. But the Confession presents additional proof that, while it was intended to allow the almost completed Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine, it was also intended to allow that antagonistic doctrine which admits internal elements into the conception of Redemption, or Justification, or Salvation. Thus let another passage already quoted be again considered: “We believe that by virtue of this Communion, Christ is ours, and we are Christ’s, and His suffering is our Satisfaction, and by it we have right, title, and interest to all the benefits which He did promerit, and purchase to us by His suffering.” Now while the sufferings of Christ are insisted on in this passage as constituting our Satisfaction, perfect freedom is given by the passage to understand the Redemption that flows from this Satisfaction as involving conformity to Christ the Head as well as Forgiveness and Covering of our sins with His righteousness. But, Secondly, that Justification or Salvation is not absolutely external or imputative according to the Aberdeen Confession, appears

from its definition of that benefit being so framed as to leave room for maintaining that the benefit contains internal elements as well as external ones. That definition occurs in the fourth of the six paragraphs quoted above, and runs thus: "We believe, that albeit we be not justified by Good Works before God, and can merit nothing at God's hands; yet they are the way to the kingdom of God, and are of necessity to be done for obedience to God, for glorifying of His name, for confirming ourselves anent our Election, and for example to others: And constantly we affirm that faith which bringeth not forth Good Works, is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation." Now it is plain that an ambiguity marks what is said at the close of this passage respecting Justification or Salvation, exactly like that respecting Redemption and the consequences to us of Christ's Satisfaction observable in the passages previously cited. For in declaring that "Faith which bringeth not forth Good Works, is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation," it is left quite undecided in what sense a living Faith does avail to Justification or Salvation: whether "organically," that is, as a "conduit of grace," or as "the fulfilment of a moral condition," or as a "true affiance and trust in God our Saviour." Indeed, to maintain the necessity of Faith in all these respects as the means of Justification or Salvation, would harmonise completely with the mention made in the Confession, 1st of a mere "Justification," that is, the forgiveness and covering of our sins with the righteousness of Christ; and 2d of "Justification or Salvation," that is, the full benefit

including the internal as well as external elements. It would completely harmonise, too, with what is said of Redemption and the consequences to us of Christ's sufferings, in the passages previously examined in this paragraph: the last of which, as may be here again, and specially, pointed out, acts most significantly as the preface of the special account of "Justification" and of "Justification or Salvation" in this Confession. And, as shall be shown in the next division of this Section, it would harmonise completely with another important passage in the Confession, and particularly with a style of scriptural interpretation demonstrably allowed by the framers of this Creed. This style of interpretation palpably results in assigning internal as well as external elements to Justification or Salvation; and makes Faith equally necessary as a "conduit" for the reception of the internal elements, as a moral habit, and as a spirit of affiance and trust in the Saviour.

In reference to the view of the subject taken in this division of the Section, I remark that, owing to the great concessions made in appearance in the Aberdeen Confession to the Lutherano-Calvinistic type of doctrine (concessions made in terms that seem to express almost the extreme form of doctrine developed by the Westminster Divines,) it is only by a very circuitous process that one can gain a view of the opposite form of doctrine intended to be allowed by this Symbol. In short, this Confession utterly lacks the directness that invariably characterises throughout the fearless advocacy of truth; and which even characterises in an unmistakable fashion the sincere advocacy of error.

Nevertheless, enough has been already pointed out to show, that the framers of the Aberdeen Confession sought to secure for themselves the liberty of holding the same doctrine of Justification or Salvation that was symbolised by Knox, while they also provided a place almost in express terms for the doctrine afterwards symbolised by Henderson, Baillie, Gillespie and others at Westminster. And, as has been already hinted at, an additional proof that such was their object is supplied by the comparatively open adoption in the Aberdeen Confession of the very style of Scriptural interpretation, that results in the symmetrical form of doctrine symbolised by Knox. To this I shall now advert as being a part of the testimony borne by this symbol, still more important than even its testimony as to the state of dogmatic Theology when the Confession was framed.

III. The freedom allowed by the Aberdeen Confession in the interpretation of the Scriptures.

III. The Aberdeen Confession appears at first sight to be constructed unequivocally in accordance with the Lutheran and Calvinistic style of interpretation, and to be intended consequently to authorise that style. Such

is the view suggested by the apparently elaborate precision and completeness with which the Lutheran-Calvinistical tenets as to Justification or Salvation are set forth in it. But just as on a closer inspection of this Confession there came into view totally opposite tenets underlying the apparent ones, so may evident traces be seen in it of the style of interpretation needed to support these less obvious tenets. The

evidences of a style of interpretation directly opposed to the Lutherano-Calvinistical one are as clear as the proofs that antagonistic dogmatic principles underlie the apparent Lutherano-Calvinistical ones. And it is shown by certain unmistakeable marks that this less apparent style of interpretation might be followed out thoroughly without contradicting the intentions of the framers of the Aberdeen Confession. Indeed, the intentions of the framers of this Confession as to the allowance of the Catholic and Evangelical form of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation, are manifested still more clearly in their mode of handling certain important parts of Scripture than even in the dogmatic statements that have been examined.

It is to be observed, however, that the plan according to which this Creed was evidently constructed made it absolutely necessary to mask, or at least to make as unobtrusive as possible, the evidences just referred to of a style of interpretation antagonistic to the Lutherano-Calvinistical one. That plan evidently aimed at assigning, at least in appearance, a place in the Confession to the almost completed Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation, so that the adherents of that form of doctrine might feel themselves conscientiously at freedom to hold and maintain it. I say "in appearance at least," because the Catholic and Evangelical doctrine of Justification or Salvation was in reality as completely confessed in this symbol as the Lutherano-Calvinistical one. In short, this Confession was in its own way a kind of "Formula Concordiæ" intended to reach if possible the result of reconciling parties who

maintained contradictories. This plan then plainly demanded that nothing should be said appearing to contradict flatly the style of interpretation needed to support the Lutherano-Calvinistical form of doctrine. It was especially necessary to refrain as much as possible from appearing to question or contradict the mode of interpreting the central statements of the Bible touching Justification, Salvation, and Righteousness of God, which has been already shown to have been authorised in the Lutheran and Calvinistic Confessions of the Continent. However different a mode of interpreting these central formulas (for instance, Rom. iii, 21, &c., and Eph. ii, 8, 9, 10,) might be in reality permitted by this Formulary, still all appearance of such permission must be masked in order to avoid provoking objections on the part of those who held by the apposite style of interpretation. In short, the language employed in the Confession must be such throughout that, while a Lutherano-Calvinist could not say that any part of it directly opposed his tenets as to Justification or Salvation and their supposed foundation in the Scriptures, still it not only did not disallow, but clearly harmonised with, a mode of reading the Scriptures that results in tenets contradictory of the Lutherano-Calvinistic ones.

All this was accomplished with a success only attainable by men possessing such eminent talents and remarkable knowledge of Theology as did some of the members of the Assembly that sanctioned this Confession. Their success, indeed, is borne unconscious testimony to by such a statement as the following.

“No Assembly was held till August, 1616, when it was summoned to meet at Aberdeen. It is chiefly remarkable on account of a new Confession of Faith drawn up by the Prelatic party, sufficiently orthodox in its doctrines, but meagre and evasive in respect of Church government and discipline, for a very evident reason.” These words occur in a history of the Church of Scotland by an able writer, whose zeal in behalf of the Theology as well as the Discipline of the Westminster Divines has received a sufficiently strong proof in his History of the Westminster Assembly. His words just quoted show the impression which the Aberdeen Confession will produce even on a mind well acquainted with the Westminster Theology, and convinced of its truth, if that mind look not suspiciously and critically at the Theology of the Aberdeen Confession, or if its attention be directed, as appears to have been the case with this author, more to the department of Discipline than of Doctrine. The words certainly testify to the skill with which this Formula Concordiæ was framed, and its consequent fitness to mask from Lutherano-Calvinists both the dogmatic tenets and the interpretations of Scripture condemned by them, but nevertheless embodied in this Confession. For though it be well masked, or rather put with a perfection of ambiguity that forms the best of all masks for the purpose aimed at, that style of interpretation which fundamentally overturns the Lutherano-Calvinist doctrine of Justification or Salvation was undoubtedly involved in this Confession, and intended to be allowed by it. Indeed, this mode of understanding the Scrip-

tures was set forth by this Creed to the greatest advantage possible in the circumstances of Scotland at the time of its formation. That is to say, the attentive reader of the Creed would be led at once by certain expressions (capable of being understood, however, in the Lutherano-Calvinistic sense, and consequently unchallengeable by the parties adhering to that sense), to certain Scriptural formulas that ever have been, and ever must be, irreconcilable with the doctrine of an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation. And while this is done, a key is at the same time supplied, if only by one word, still a very sufficient one, to a sense of such central formulas as Rom. iii, 22, and Eph. ii, 8, totally diverse from that apparently indicated in the paragraphs of the Confession that treat specially of Justification or Salvation.

The Scriptural formulas referred to above as impossible to be reconciled to the doctrine of an absolutely external as well as gratuitous Justification or Salvation, are at once suggested by two passages already quoted from the Confession, and commented on. The first is that which says, "We believe, that by virtue of this Communion Christ is ours and we are Christ's, and His suffering is our Satisfaction, &c." By these words, is at once suggested, among others, the important statement found at the commencement of the eighth Chapter of Romans, whose sense is plainly indicated by these its opening words: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." The second passage is that which says,

“ And constantly we affirm that faith which bringeth not forth Good Works, is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation.” Reference is evidently made in these words to the following important formulas: “ For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision ; but faith which worketh by love ;” “ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature ;” “ Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.” Now statements like those contained in the two classes of passages just exemplified, are manifestly irreconcilable with an absolutely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation enjoyed only through an “ instrumental faith” in Jesus Christ, and accompanied with a “ perfected title” to the fruition of Everlasting Life. They demonstrate that the spiritual and moral truths of Christianity, and their appropriate results in Repentance and a new life, must have some place either as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation. And if these spiritual and moral truths be denied any place as elements of Justification or Salvation, as would appear at first sight to be done in this Confession, then it would only remain to insist on them as conditions, as would also appear at first sight to have been done by the framers of this Confession. But this is only what presents itself on a cursory and uncritical perusal of the Creed. Its framers, as has been already shown in part, were too good Theologians to leave themselves no other resort in

their controversy with the promoters of Lutheran-Calvinism, than the hopeless one of urging conditions such as Repentance and Sanctification to the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation, in contradiction to the inspired statement as to the gratuitousness or freeness of that benefit. They took in reality the other alternative, namely, that of leaving room to contend for the existence of internal spiritual and moral elements of Justification or Salvation; for they really secured to themselves by this Creed the liberty of arguing that the Scriptures do not declare that benefit to be absolutely external or imputative in its elements,—do not declare it so external and imputative that even Faith itself stands absolutely disconnected with it as an “organ,” and has to do with it only as an “instrument.” And while this is plainly indicated by the nature of the quotations made from the Creed at the commencement of this paragraph, and by the classes of Scripture statement pointed at in these quotations, it rests on other as incontestable proofs.

Thus it was stated a little way back that this Confession offers to the attentive reader the key to a sense of such central portions of Scripture as Rom. iii, 21, &c. (and, consequently, Eph. ii, 8, &c. also,) totally different from that which forms the basis of the doctrine of an absolutely external or imputative Justification or Salvation. The key referred to is met with in the following portion of the Confession, already quoted as being parallel to the description of the Covenant of Grace in the Westminster formulary.

“We believe, that as Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose for our righteousness, so He ascended to Heaven to prepare a place for us, and sitteth at the right hand of God to make intercession for us, and is able perfectly to save them that come to God by Him.” The key is seen in the employment of the word “righteousness” instead of “justification” in the first clause of the passage. The clause obviously consists of Rom. iv, 25; and that verse, as also employed, in part, in the Chapter “of the resurrection” in Knox’s Confession, was there rendered “did rise again for our justification,” and not “for our righteousness.” So in the Westminster Confession, Chapter XI, Paragraph IV, we read, “and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise for their justification,” and not, “for their righteousness.” That the term “righteousness,” then should have been employed in the Aberdeen Confession instead of “Justification,” is highly significant on several accounts. First, the term “Justification” has always been the one technically employed, as in the above citation from the Westminster Confession, to denote the mere external or imputative benefit, rather than the term “righteousness:” because, as is allowed on all hands, the former term claims the external sense as an undoubted portion of its meaning, whereas the common and regular meaning of the latter term is personal or inherent righteousness. We mean, of course, by personal or inherent righteousness when spoken of as at present in connection with Justification or Salvation, not any righteousness inherent in man by native capacity

inherited from the first Adam, but that righteousness which is wrought in regenerated humanity by the Holy Ghost and His revealed truth. But this by the way : and now it is to be remarked, that the framers of the Aberdeen Confession could not have taken a more significant mode of indicating liberty in the interpretation of important passages, than by preferring to employ the term "righteousness" rather than "justification" in the case now under consideration. For secondly, it is not only a point of great importance, as respects the doctrine of a purely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, that the particular verse of the Bible here in question should be made out to bear only the external sense, owing to the special portion of proof thus secured to that doctrine ; but it is important, because if this verse do not bear only the external sense, then no more can certain other important passages of Scripture bear that sense. Thus the validity of other parts of the proof of the external doctrine of Justification or Salvation depends on the validity of this alleged portion. For example, the meaning of what is said in express terms respecting Justification in Rom. iii, and v, must depend, in a certain measure, on the meaning attached to the verse in question. And the meaning of the expression "righteousness of God" occurring in a passage confessedly the exact parallel of the one now in question,—a passage frequently referred to in this note,—depends on the sense attached to the term justification or righteousness in Rom. iv, 25. The parallel passage is 2 Cor. v, 21. It runs thus : " For He

made (lit. *made*) Him to be sin for us Who knew no sin, that we might be made (lit. *become* in the peculiar Greek sense of the word,) righteousness of God in Him.”

But besides the proof presented in the language and principles of the Confession itself that it was intended to allow the style of interpretation just pointed out, there remains explicit evidence, in the writings of the most learned and celebrated member of the Aberdeen Assembly, that he advocated in consistency with the Confession of Knox that style of interpretation. That person was William Forbes, afterwards Bishop of Edinburgh. The first chapter of his work ‘*Considerationes Modestæ et Pacificæ Controversiarum,*’ is entitled “*de Justificatione;*” and that subject is treated in it (as indeed all the subjects handled in the volume are treated,) in a manner indicating extraordinary acquaintance with the writings of both the earlier reformers and their opponents. He manifests by numerous quotations from the writings of the former, that they assigned, or did not disapprove the assigning of, the internal sense to a great number of important passages that were understood afterwards in the purely external sense; and among these was the very passage of the Epistle to the Romans that was selected to serve in the Aberdeen Confession as a key to the sense of others. But there are, indeed, few of the *Loci Classici* that he does not show to have been understood in the correct internal sense by one or more of the most eminent Fathers of the Reformation. Now, when one reads the Aberdeen Confession as a work composed in part, or at least influenced to a

certain extent in its composition, by a Theologian maintaining such opinions as Forbes manifestly appears from this work to have done, all doubt vanishes as to its being intended to allow the style of interpretation on which the Catholic and Evangelical doctrine of Justification or Salvation is founded.

But, if proceeding consistently, those who entered on the line of interpretation evidently countenanced by the framers of this Confession, would no more base the paragraphs in it, (the three first of the six paragraphs quoted at the commencement of the last division,) that appear to enunciate the almost completed Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation, on the same portions of Scripture relied on by the advocates of that doctrine, than they would understand those paragraphs in their apparently fully developed Lutherano-Calvinistic sense. For, understanding them to treat only of the external or imputative elements of Justification or Salvation, and not to express the whole of that benefit, they would base those paragraphs on that part of such a description of Justification or Salvation as is given in Rom. v, 14, &c. which confessedly points out the "one obedience" or "one righteousness" of Christ, as the meritorious ground of the external or imputative elements of Justification or Salvation. They would thus base on that part only, and not on the whole passage, because, as has been already shown in our remarks on the Confession of Knox, such a passage clearly proves that Justification or Salvation involves internal as well as external elements, and shows that the "one obedi-

ence" of Christ is the meritorious ground of the one and the procuring cause of the other. And such passages as thus enable one to distinguish between Christ's "one obedience" and the internal as also the external elements of Justification or Salvation that severally flow to us through that "one obedience," or are bestowed upon us on account of it: such passages, I say, served the all-important purpose of enabling parties, who had the necessary knowledge and courage, to keep in check the encroachments of Lutherano-Calvinism in times when it was impossible to demonstrate exegetically the unwarrantableness of assigning the exclusively external sense to central statements like Rom. iii, 24, and Eph. ii, 8. The time came, indeed, when the Lutherano-Calvinisers prevailed, so that even the passage in Rom. v, with all others like it, was reduced to the merely external and imputative sense. This result was mainly secured through the influence of the Westminster formularies. The framers of the Aberdeen Confession, on the other hand, had endeavoured to avert this result, though by means that could scarcely avoid failure.

It deserves also to be pointed out that additional proof of the allowance by this Confession of the above style of interpretation, is borne by two passages already cited to prove that the Confession does not maintain Justification or Salvation to be purely external and imputative. These passages confirm what has just been said as to the portions of Scripture on which William Forbes, for example, would base the paragraphs of the Confession that treat of the external

elements of Justification or Salvation, and in accordance with which such a Theologian would understand those paragraphs. The one of these two passages—that one already pointed out as performing the function of preface to the special account of Justification or Salvation in this Confession,—is characterised by its insisting, among other things, on “the sufferings” of Christ as our “Satisfaction.” The evidently intentional framing of this passage to allow the including of internal as well as external or imputative elements in Redemption, or Reconciliation, or Justification, or Salvation, and its adaptation also to admit of the insisting on conditions to the enjoyment of those benefits viewed imputatively, have been already pointed out; and what now calls for consideration in the passage, is the style of interpretation indicated by its insisting on the “sufferings” of Christ as our “Satisfaction.” For, by doing this, it completely ignores, on the one hand, the Fœderalist division in the work of Christ, and the consequences deduced from that division, and directs attention on the other to that numerous and specific class of Scriptural statements which insist on the “one righteousness” of Christ, or on “the obedience of Christ unto death, even the death of the cross.” The significance of thus directing attention to that special class of proofs shall be alluded to immediately, after noticing the second passage that has been referred to. This passage says: “This blessed Lord has fulfilled the whole Law for us, to our behoof, and in our place, both doing all that the Law requireth of us, and suffering the punishment

due to our disobedience, even to the curse of the Law and death of the cross ; whereby the fulfilling of the Law, our Redemption, was sealed and consummated." Now, as has been already fully shown, while this passage is capable of harmonising with the Fœderalist opinion as to a division in the work of Christ, according to which His "passive obedience" was intended to atone for sin and save from Hell, and His "active obedience" to purchase Heaven, all for the Elect who are thus represented as enjoying a "free" and "complete" redemption ; it is just as capable of meaning that one "obedience" of the clean, innocent Lamb of God, or that "obedience even unto the death of the cross" of the Son of God, by which He effected Redemption in the Catholic and Evangelical sense, that is, deliverance from the power and guilt of sin in order to the enjoyment of Eternal Life. This second passage thus agrees substantially with the first one, even when appearing to countenance that Fœderalist subdivision of the work of Christ, which the first one plainly ignores in its emphatic declaration that the "sufferings" of Christ form our "Satisfaction."

The circumstance that a passage thus insisting expressly on "the sufferings" of Christ as our "Satisfaction" immediately precedes the special account of Justification or Salvation in this Confession, and that other apparently quite different passages are in reality formed so as to agree with that one, is very significant in reference to the style of interpretation intended to be allowed by this formulary. For it points to quite other portions of Scriptures, than those most likely to

suggest themselves, as the proofs of its statements respecting Justification or Salvation, and as the guides to the sense of those statements. Thus, when understanding the Confession in its apparent Lutherano-Calvinistical, or even Fœderalist sense, one might assign as primary proofs of its doctrine of Justification or Salvation the two following passages, for example: "He who knew no sin was made (lit. made,) sin for us, that we might be made (lit. become,) righteousness of God in Him;" and "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." And these texts would be considered primary proofs, because, when interpreted in the Lutherano-Calvinistical or Fœderalist style, they are understood to mean that Christ by his passive obedience merited for us Forgiveness and escape from punishment; and that by his active obedience, when imputed to us, comes our Justification or Salvation proper with its consequent Eternal Life. But the passage which I have called the preface of the account of Justification or Salvation in the Aberdeen Confession, points to a mode of proving and understanding that doctrine quite different from the Fœderalist one just indicated. For, by insisting on Christ's "sufferings" as our "Satisfaction:" first, it directs attention to that class of texts in which Forgiveness is ascribed explicitly to the sacrificial death of the clean innocent Lamb of God, to which also, in accordance with such explicit statements, and not to the imputation of Christ's active obedience viewed as a distinct element from His passive obedience, must Justification or Salvation be

ascribed by those who identify that benefit with Forgiveness. This is the exact amount of what was done by Luther and Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession. And secondly; since the Aberdeen Confession adhering in this respect to the example set by Knox's, did not identify Justification or Salvation with Forgiveness, thereby making the former purely external, but left ample room in all its statements for including internal elements in Justification or Salvation, a theologian bound by this Confession would feel himself left quite at liberty, and even guided by the considerations just pointed out, as well as by Christ's "sufferings" being insisted on as our "Satisfaction," to prove and explain the statements of this Confession as to Justification or Salvation, not at all by two such passages as are quoted at the commencement of this paragraph, and in accordance with the sense there attached to those passages, but by such a passage as Rom. v, 14, &c., understood in the manner already insisted on in this Note. That is, just as that passage manifestly makes Justification or Salvation contain internal elements that are bestowed on us through "the one obedience" of Christ, as well as external ones that are imputed to us on account of "the one obedience" of Christ; so would the supposed theologian understand in accordance with this, that the mere "Justification" mentioned in the Confession as consisting of the "apprehension of the righteousness of Christ" must have added to it the internal elements wrought by the Holy Ghost, in order that a completed Justification or Salvation may result. Thirdly: the same

theologian, guided by the light of the two classes of passages just considered, would include internal as well as external elements under the "righteousness of God," and "Justification," mentioned respectively in the two texts cited at the commencement of this paragraph; and he would understand those texts to be only briefer statements of what is taught in Rom. v, 14, &c., and the parallels of that passage. He would feel confirmed, too, in this interpretation of Rom. iv, 25, and 2 Cor. v, 21, by passages like 1 John i, 9, that are parallel to them, and which manifestly do not countenance that sense on which the mere external or imputative doctrine is based. Finally, the further he advanced along this path of proof and illustration he would feel the more encouraged by many things to understand in the two-fold internal and external sense Rom. iii, 23, &c., and Eph. ii, 8, which, from their being understood only in the external and imputative sense, have always formed the central supports of the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation. And his assurance of correctness would be crowned by seeing that the interpreting of Scripture in this way resulted, through the spontaneous and unforced utterances on the subject of all the leading statements of Scripture itself, in a form of doctrine that may be well called symmetrical since it is equally free from such confusion in the arrangement of important moral elements, such as Repentance for example, and from such contradictions touching even the necessity of those elements, as disfigure the antagonistic form of doctrine.

It only remains to notice the representation made of Faith in this Confession, in connection with Justification or Salvation. It is to be observed then, that, in consideration of the almost completed Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine inscribed on one aspect of this Formula Concordiæ, Faith is described in one part of it in connection with Justification, in terms almost identical with those afterwards employed by the Westminster Divines. Thus it is said: "We believe, that we are justified by faith as it is an instrument apprehending and applying the righteousness of Christ to us, and not as it is a quality and virtue inherent in us; so that the meritorious cause of our Justification is not in the faith which apprehendeth," but "in the righteousness of Christ by faith apprehended." But this, notwithstanding its being so like the language of the Westminster Divines, can be understood in a very different sense from its apparent Lutherano-Calvinistical one; and that in perfect harmony with all the other statements of this Creed. For so far from the passage necessarily meaning that a Justification or Salvation quite complete, though external, is received only by an Instrumental Faith to the enjoyment of Eternal Life, which is the true Lutherano-Calvinistical sense, it is quite consistent with a totally different sense. For first, as appears from the paragraph immediately preceding the one just quoted, the Justification said in the latter to be received by a mere instrumental Faith is not the whole of Justification or Salvation, nor is Faith connected with that entire benefit merely as an instrument. For these words—"And constantly we

affirm that Faith which bringeth not forth Good Works, is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation," plainly mean that a "completed Justification or Salvation" is not reached and enjoyed only by an "instrumental faith," but by the intelligent living and active faith that produces Good Works. Secondly: but besides, in accordance with principles already pointed out as having guided the framers of the Aberdeen Confession, they assigned "organic functions" to Faith in connection with Justification or Salvation, as well as "instrumental" and "operative" functions. That they thus assigned "organic functions" to Faith, follows necessarily from their including internal as well as external elements in Justification or Salvation. And in additional and explicit proof of the embodiment of such principles in this Symbol, let the passages referred to at the close of the last division of the section be now quoted. One of these says: "Albeit all mankind be fallen in Adam, yet only those who are elected before all time are in time redeemed, restored, raised, and quickened again, not of themselves or their works, lest any man should glory, but only of the mercy of God through faith in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Faith is obviously employed in this passage (at least nothing in the passage prevents one from understanding that Faith is employed in it,) in the "organic sense" of the term; that is, as meaning both a bond of connection between Christ

and the Christian, and a "conduit" by which grace in its several forms is received. And the full force and beauty of this meaning of Faith appear when it is borne in mind that, as is indicated by the sense in which the term Righteousness can be understood in this Creed, Christ becomes Righteousness to the faithful through their Faith, in the same internal sense in which He becomes Wisdom and Sanctification to them. The other passage referred to is as follows: "This then is Life Eternal, to know the true God, and Whom He hath sent Jesus Christ, whereas vengeance shall be taken of them that know not God, and do not subject themselves to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ by the obedience of Faith." In this passage, one aspect of the organic view of faith is obviously spoken of under the form of knowledge, while the operative functions of Faith are mentioned in it in express terms.

It must not be supposed, however, because room was evidently secured by this Confession for making a tolerably correct representation of all the functions of Faith in connection with Justification or Salvation, that its framers had a thoroughly correct exegetical knowledge of this important subject; and that they saw exactly the nature of the misunderstanding in which originated the two antagonistic systems of Justification or Salvation attempted to be amalgamated by them. Their ignorance of this is proved by the labour and skill which they obviously expended in framing this Scottish Formula Concordiæ. And the insolubleness, to them, of the *nodus* leading to all the confusion

on this subject, is manifested by the extent to which they found themselves compelled to submit in appearance to its Lutherano-Calvinistical consequences. Indeed, the extent of that concession is very remarkable; for it goes, as has been seen, the length of yielding in appearance all that was ultimately sought to be thoroughly secured by the Westminster formularies. It is seen, too, most markedly in the treatment bestowed on the subject of Faith in this Confession. It comes into clear view in the treatment of this subject, because, while all said of Faith in this Symbol, was carefully adjusted so as not to contradict Lutherano-Calvinism directly, Faith nevertheless formed the very point on the strength of which it was hoped in the last resort to resist successfully that form of doctrine. The power of the adversary must have been deemed very great when the last stronghold needed to be thus masked.

It is curious to observe how Faith should present the materials for carrying on a final struggle against the central doctrine of Lutherano-Calvinism, seeing that that system had taken its rise in a misunderstanding touching Faith. The reasons of this may be summed up under two heads. First: though Faith was declared so early as the framing of the Belgic Confession to be connected with Justification or Salvation only as an instrument; and though all that was ultimately declared respecting the connection between Faith and Justification or Salvation even in the Westminster Confession, was contained germinally in the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession:

still had the subject never been exhaustively dogmatised on from the Lutherano-Calvinistic point of view till the time of the Westminster Assembly. It was, consequently, comparatively open up to that time. Other subjects had been employed previously to the drawing up of the Aberdeen Confession, to combat the development of the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession. Thus it had been attempted to persuade the adherents of that view, that "Repentance" and "Righteousness of God" (or "Spiritual Righteousness," as the latter was called explicitly in the earlier form of the Augsburg Confession, and tacitly in the later one,) were connected with Justification or Salvation as elements and conditions. But such attempts were condemned in Creeds like those examined in the third Section of this part of the Note ; and as a consequence of this decision, what the Scriptures say as to "Righteousness of God" was reduced to the mere external sense. And such respect as the framers of the Aberdeen Confession might be expected to show to these decisions, was shown by them in liberal measure ; that is, in the first three of the six paragraphs treating of Justification or Salvation they appear to adopt these decisions even as they had been developed by the Fœderalist Theologians, while they nevertheless, with much adroitness, left a way open for understanding "Righteousness of God" quite differently from the Lutherano-Calvinists, and also for employing quite differently from Lutherano-Calvinist Theologians, that as well as some other elements of

Redemption quite differently from the Lutherano-Calvinists. And still bolder was their conduct when they had to do with Faith. They affirmed indeed that Faith acts only as an "instrument" in as far as mere "Justification," that is, Forgiveness or covering of sins, is concerned. But they made provision for maintaining that Faith acts in connection with "Justification or Salvation," not only as an "instrument," but as an "organ" or "conduit of grace," and as the operative energy that fulfils certain necessary spiritual and moral conditions. And the Westminster Divines came in just at the point thus left open with the declaration, that neither Faith nor any other Grace can be connected organically with Justification or Salvation, since that benefit does not at all consist of an "infusion of Righteousness," but is purely external, and that its enjoyment in no degree depends on "the imputing of Faith itself, the act of believing, or any other Evangelical obedience." Secondly: but notwithstanding all dogmatic assertions like those of the Westminster Confession, it has always been fundamentally impossible to make the Lutherano-Calvinistic view of Faith square with the Scriptural one; so that the latter has in reality always militated as much against the Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation as the Scriptural account of Repentance itself. An evident symptom of this fundamental antagonism appeared in our examination of the Augsburg Confession, when it was seen that Faith, in the full sense, was always insisted on even where Trust, or whatever else be the "instrumental" attribute of Faith, was alone

meant. This is so, just because Justification or Salvation is always declared in the Bible to be received by Faith, and not by Trust—the Scriptures thus leaving room, even when translated by Lutherano-Calvinists themselves, for ascribing “organic” and “operative” as well as “instrumental” functions to Faith in connection with Justification or Salvation. And this very circumstance, which by a right interpretation results in the total overthrow of the doctrine of external Justification or Salvation, has been employed by the advocates of that doctrine to explain how a connection still subsists, according to them, between things declared expressly by their own system to be exclusive of each other, namely, Justification or Salvation on the one hand, and Repentance with its fruits on the other. But besides this fundamental inconsistency springing from the fundamental mistake as to Faith on which the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine mainly rests, there is also a broad and irreconcilable antagonism between that doctrine and the Scriptural statements as to Faith. For so varied, reiterated, and comprehensive are the statements of Scripture, even as translated by Lutherano-Calvinists, as to the power and the necessity of Faith in its several functions, that Lutherano-Calvinists are themselves compelled, after declaring that Faith has nothing to do with Justification or Salvation and its consequent Eternal Life, but to receive them in the manner of an “instrument,” to insist, out of reverence for Scripture and fear of Antinomianism, explicitly on the necessity of Faith in all its functions in order to enjoy Eternal Life,

and tacitly in order to enjoy Justification or Salvation.

But enough of this subject at present. It will recur for final treatment in the next part of the Note, which will be devoted, among other things, to the collection and summation of matters that necessarily lie scattered in this part.

IV. Remarks on the framers of the Aberdeen Confession, and on the phase of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation observable in it.

IV. What has come to light in the preceding examination of the Aberdeen Confession demonstrates, that its framers were certainly not thorough-going adherents of the Continental, or Lutherano-Calvinistical, dogmas as to Justification or Salvation. No staunch adherent of those dogmas would ever have left them so completely open to evasion as they are in this Creed. But not only is every principle of those dogmas left open to evasion by this formulary—the formulary was intended, in addition, to allow dogmas respecting Justification or Salvation totally antagonistic to the Lutherano-Calvinistic ones; and this is proved both by significant hints given in the formulary itself, and by the careful adjustment of all its statements to that very end. These characteristics of the Confession, so evidently resulting from design, make the supposition quite untenable that the allowance of such tenets is the mere accidental result of the comparatively inartificial character of the formulary. Instead of being inartificial, the formulary is as skilfully contrived as any document could possibly be for the very purpose of

allowing the Catholic and Evangelical doctrine, even while it appears to embody the almost completed Lutherano-Calvinist or Fœderalist one. But besides, there is a consideration which proves uncontestedly that this formulary could not be the work of staunch Lutherano-Calvinists determined to uphold in full integrity their principal and characteristic doctrine. This consideration springs from the nature of the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine itself:—for its principles are so marked that the dullest mind at once apprehends them; and they are, if I may so speak, so sensitively jealous of their integrity, that they make the least logical understandings feel immediately their infringement. Such is the principle that Justification or Salvation is gratuitous or free, when combined with the tenet that the benefit is also external. It could be design alone, therefore, that presented the Lutherano-Calvinist tenets in the form worn by them in this formulary—a form apparently so perfect, but in reality so imperfect and impotent.

But it is remarkable that these Continental dogmas should have found any place whatever in this Scottish Confession,—seeing that Knox, the national Reformer, had refused them utterly an admission into his Symbol; and seeing also that the framers of this new Creed, though assigning an apparent place in it to those foreign tenets, really sacrificed them in order to secure the liberty of maintaining the scriptural and symmetrical form of doctrine that had been originally legalised in Scotland. Who, then, imported these doctrines into the country; who were their real ad-

herents and thorough-going advocates? Now, there can be no doubt that the chief among these were Andrew Melville, Principal Rollock, and the other Fathers of the "second Reformation" in Scotland. The persons just named, and their followers, who, from the period of Knox's death till the meeting of the Westminster Assembly, successfully took a part in defending and advancing, by means of the Pulpit, the Church-Courts, and the Press, the Presbyterian form of Ecclesiastical Polity in opposition to the Episcopal, were also the undoubted importers and defenders of the Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation. The sobriquet of *Simia Bezæ* applied to Melville by his opponents, proves the truth of what has just been affirmed respecting his influence in introducing Lutherano-Calvinism. The theological writings of Rollock remain to attest the share taken by him in the work. And besides that the importation into Scotland of the Continental tenets has been rightly attributed by me to the persons just named, is incontestably proved by the history of the party to which these persons belonged, from the time of its formation under Melville till its culmination under Henderson.

I do not forget, while attributing the importation into Scotland of Lutherano-Calvinism to Melville and his Presbyterian followers, that the Lutheran dogma in its simplest form was known in the country prior to its Reformation by Knox; and that Knox even edited, before he left Scotland for the first time, a work setting forth the simple Lutheran doctrine of Justification or Salvation. Indeed, I am far from questioning the

probability of the supposition that Luther's dogma had become known in Scotland very soon after its promulgation in Germany, and had immediately become a favourite with many. But this Note is not concerned with popular beliefs in any manner whatever : not even with unauthoritative Theological writings, except when an appeal to them is necessary for the purpose of illustration or proof, such as the works of Augustine, or Calvin, or William Forbes have supplied in the former pages. It has to do only with the Theology contained in the Creeds, Confessions, and Formularies that are authorised at this day or have been authorised in former times. Still it may be remarked that, if the Lutheran doctrine of Justification or Salvation was known and esteemed by many in Scotland so early as has just been granted, it becomes the more remarkable that Knox and his coadjutors, when engaged in the awfully solemn work of framing a National Creed, did not feel themselves warranted in embodying it in their works, but excluded it from a place of authority notwithstanding its popularity both at home and abroad. That type of doctrine found no authorised place in Scotland till the framers of the Aberdeen Confession gave it an *apparent* place in their Symbol. And in answering from extraneous sources the question, How did the almost perfected Lutherano-Calvinistic tenets gain an entrance, of all places, into a Confession framed by William Forbes and other Aberdeen Doctors ? it was certainly more correct to point to the prevailing influence of Melville and his coadjutors in Scotland, backed by the names of Luther, Melancthon,

Calvin, and Beza on the Continent, than to any mere Scottish advocates of the Continental tenets prior to Melville's own time. That was the influence which, prevailing over the Episcopal party through motives that will be considered a little way on, secured for Lutherano-Calvinism its first position of authority in Scotland.

Of the sincerity of Melville and his followers in espousing, advocating, and pushing to the extreme point of development the Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation, I have no desire to make question. This form of belief came to the minds of those persons recommended by the same apparently valid foundation in Scripture that has led so many others to adopt it, and enforced by the power residing in names like those of Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and Beza. At the same time, no one can deny that Melville, with his followers of a contemporaneous or subsequent date, found in the Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation their most effective weapon in combating their Episcopal opponents, equally as respects the ground of Theology and the ground of Ecclesiastical Polity. How it possessed such power in the department of Theology can be shown with ease after what has been brought to light in the previous portion of this Note. For, when the opponents of the Presbyterians wished to uphold the really Scriptural and evidently symmetrical form of doctrine confessed by Knox, they could have no chance of success in the contest if they should deem it necessary to admit even tacitly that Justification or

Salvation is purely external and imputative. If they yielded that point even in appearance, through disability to prove fundamentally the erroneousness of the tenet, or through dread of being taxed with Popish or Socinian error, as they should certainly be, if openly disproving and disavowing it,—if for such reasons, I say, it were once granted even in appearance, as was done in the case of the Aberdeen Confession, that Justification or Salvation is purely external and imputative, it became henceforth quite vain to attempt withstanding the erroneous application, to the farthest possible extent, of the principle of freeness or gratuitousness. The conclusion was henceforth irresistible, that this mere external and imputative Justification or Salvation, involving in it and carrying with it the full and only ground and title to the enjoyment of Eternal Life, is the absolutely unconditional gift of God to every sinner who will receive it by an “instrumental faith only.” And such was the doctrine which the Presbyterian Party loudly proclaimed to be the Gospel. It was by means of this dogma as their right hand, and by the principle of Presbytery as their left, that the Covenanters overthrew Episcopacy and all its tenets in Scotland.

Whatever influence the principles of Presbytery might exert in the gaining of that victory, I feel fully warranted in ascribing to their doctrine of Justification or Salvation the paramount influence wielded by the Presbyterian Preachers over the minds of the People. The Preachers wielded in it an irresistible logical force, quite independently of its striking and alluring cha-

racter in the eyes of such as accept it for the Gospel. To the popular mind, which indeed concluded quite correctly from the premises as maintained before it, the whole strength and consistency of argument as well as of principle in purely doctrinal matters appeared to rest on the side of the Presbyterians, and ultimately of the Covenanters. The only chance of success that the Episcopal Party had in this fundamentally important department of doctrine, lay in taking their stand on the Confession of Knox, and proving by all legitimate means—especially by the fundamental exegetical argument, could that have been got at—that the Catholic and Evangelical form of doctrine of the Primitive Confession was correct, and that the Lutherano-Calvinistic one was erroneous. At that time, however, the fundamental exegetical argument in support of the Catholic and Evangelical doctrine was certainly not reached: nay, more, the thorough support supposed to be afforded by the Bible to the antagonist form of doctrine was continually insisted on by its advocates, and feebly, if at all, questioned by its opponents. The former most strenuously upheld the principle that the Bible only contains the Religion of Protestants, not merely out of an unbiassed judgment in favour of that principle viewed as a fundamental religious axiom, but because the writings of both the Eastern and Western Fathers were directly opposed, in the main, to their fundamental doctrine and its foundation as supposed to exist in the Scriptures. When, on the other hand, the advocates of the Catholic and Evangelical doctrine dared to appeal, in

the lack of the conclusive exegetical argument, to Greek or Latin authority in support of their mode of interpreting the Bible, they never failed to bring down on their heads the charge of a leaning to Popery or Socinianism. But the surest workmen on the side of Popery, it ought to be always borne in mind, are those who through ignorance or partisanship labour hardest to identify the fundamental and enduring principles of the Reformation with utterly untenable dogmas.

The parties, then, who really sided with Knox in their understanding of the great central and practical doctrine of Christianity, were placed at a great disadvantage as regards the maintenance of that doctrine. They increased this disadvantage, too, by their own unwise conduct. The drawing up and adopting of the Aberdeen Confession was about the most imprudent step, equally as respects doctrine and polity, that a body in the position of the Episcopal Party in Scotland at that time could have taken. By taking this step they did themselves the most direct damage, and their opponents the most direct good. Thus they laid themselves open to the charge that was brought against them of changing the doctrine introduced by Knox and his coadjutors. Now in reality they did all that their adopted line of conduct would permit them to do in the way of saving the correct form in which Knox had put the very central doctrine on which so much depended: any change introduced by them on that subject was manifestly occasioned by the zealous advocacy, on the part of Melville and his followers, of the Continental dogmas avoided by Knox and his

coadjutors. The former were the real innovators in matters of doctrine. Their labours resulted in the swamping of Knox's unchallengeable Theology beneath the Calvinism not only of Beza, but of the most advanced Calvinists of the Dutch School. And if the undeniable fact be pointed to, that the Episcopal Party also sought to innovate in the way of Ceremonial, then will attention be more surely directed to the very even balance of error between them and the Presbyterians. For if the Episcopal Party aimed at introducing, in opposition to the Confession of Knox, the extreme form of what has been called the "Sacerdotal and Sacramentary System," then it is demonstrated by the existing formularies that their opponents actually did introduce, in most undoubted opposition to the Confession of Knox, the whole fully developed Lutherano-Calvinistical system of dogmas. In one grand point, however, the Presbyterian Party excelled their opponents. By virtue of that, indeed, I believe that they gained their victory through the approval (with reverence be it said) of the Lord. They were consistent, thorough-going, and most determinedly devoted to their own cause. They valued that too much ever to make such a base mixture of it as the Aberdeen Doctors made of theirs by framing the Aberdeen Confession. By a righteous retribution on an act of tampering with a matter so awfully solemn as a National Confession, the consistent Party carried off from its perpetrators all the advantage expected from that act of tampering. The Episcopal Party lent the Presbyterian Party most material aid by

drawing up the Aberdeen Confession. For by giving a place, almost perfect in appearance, in that formulary to the Lutherano-Calvinistic tenets, a speedy and complete victory over the minds of the people was thus secured for those tenets. The very form, too, in which the Episcopal Party put forth these dogmas in the Aberdeen Confession acted as a stimulant in their favour. For it always does act as a stimulant in favour of principles, to witness either a tacit or open acknowledgment of their correctness coexisting with a covert attempt to evade or even counteract them.

The Bishops and their adherents were prompted by several motives to give, in the new Creed drawn up by them, so conspicuous a place to the tenets of their opponents. Now this policy may be very sure to injure for a time, with the careless and unthinking, those against whom it is directed; but, when applied by parties whose own convictions or obligations prevent them from doing full justice to the principles put forth by them, its inbred injustice towards men and injuriousness towards truth doom this policy to a speedy and effectual overthrow. Tenets filched by the promptings of this policy from their authors and rightful owners, invariably receive from their unrighteous proprietors a harsh treatment; if not quite stifled, they are sure to be maimed. But this unjust treatment of tenets that are proved to merit good treatment by the very fact of their adoption, by once open enemies and now doubtful friends, invariably reacts sooner or later in behalf of them and their adherents. The Lutherano-Calvinists in Scotland enjoyed the full benefit

of this principle in their contest with the Episcopalian. There can be no doubt, also, that the Prelatic Party viewed the Creed which they had framed as a Formula Concordiæ ; and that they justified themselves for thus making Confession of their faith under the form of a *double entendre*, by assigning charity and a desire to be at peace with their opponents as their motive. But even supposing such a desire to have been felt, for the Prelatists to draw up such a Confession as the Aberdeen one in the state of opinion in Scotland at that time, was an act sure to be interpreted in the manner pointed out at the commencement of this paragraph ; to add fresh fuel to the theological and ecclesiastical controversy raging at that time in the country ; and to inspire with fresh hope, instead of dispiriting, their opponents. The Confession of Knox, and the ecclesiastical arrangements made by that Reformer, had become the arena on which it should be decided in Scotland, whether a system of “ Reformed Catholicism ” such as was then likely to be produced by the supporters of that idea of the Reformation should hold sway in the country, or a fully developed system of Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine and a government of the most rigid Presbyterian and Puritanical type. The foundation laid by Knox and his coadjutors had proved too correct and too pure for the times that followed its formation ; and after the clear heads, strong wills, and powerful hands that laid it were removed from the scene, that foundation was converted into the mere ground on which to decide which of the two parties just referred to should ultimately prevail ; and

the change in the Creed of the country made by the Bishops was in reality a principal means, though little likely on the first view to have such a result, of procuring for their opponents the ultimate control over the religious belief of the people of Scotland.

A controversy characterised by the two tendencies just referred to was indeed going on at that time throughout the Protestant Churches ; being, however, so influenced and limited by the varying circumstances of different countries, as to present only, or almost only, the Theological aspect in some, but the Ecclesiastical as well as the Theological aspect in others. Thus it exhibited itself in the Belgic Churches in the marked Theological form of the contest between the Calvinisers and Remonstrants—a struggle of opinion which, instead of being settled by the promulgation of the extreme Calvinistic dicta of the Synod of Dordt, was in reality conducted with more success on the side of the Remonstrants, and made itself felt over a much wider area, through the reaction or repugnance caused by these dicta. It thus became one of the tendencies that resulted in limiting and even virtually subverting the authority of Lutherano-Calvinism in some leading divisions of the Protestant portion of the Church. This controversy also exhibited itself in England in a marked manner, but was followed in that country with peculiar results. For while Lutherano-Calvinism aimed in England as much at an Ecclesiastical as a Theological subjugation of the antagonist system as advocated by Laud, still, as was pointed out a little way back in some remarks on the Articles of the Church of England, the

admirable provision made from the very commencement almost of the Reformation in that Church carried her through her difficulties, by again supplying, after both parties were tired with their struggle, an infinitely more just and satisfactory arrangement of doctrinal matters than anything that either of the parties could of itself have supplied at that time ; and the country ultimately fell back on the provisions made by its primitive Reformers, as containing not less a sufficient safeguard against the reintroduction into the Church of Eastern or Western corruptions, than a sufficient security for the enjoyment of liberty of conscience by Catholic and Evangelical Christians, as well as Lutheran-Calvinist ones. The circumstances of Scotland alone were of such a kind at that time, that in her case the struggle eventually resulted in perhaps the most thorough Theological and Ecclesiastical revolution that has ever happened.

For what did Scotland start from at the period of Knox's death ; and where did she land when the principles introduced chiefly by the influence of Melville were finally developed by Henderson and his coadjutors into the form still presented by them ? While Knox, then, certainly made so thorough a clearance from the Reformed Church of everything actually corrupt and Papistical, or even approaching such a character, that he has sometimes been called for that reason the founder of Puritanism ; still, as can be demonstrated, he most decidedly eschewed, if he did not decidedly oppose, the fundamental and most highly cherished principles maintained by the real founders

of Puritanism. Thus he demonstrably gave the country a Creed that religiously eschewed the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation on which Puritanism properly so-called is founded. He also demonstrably countenanced Episcopacy, as far as its characteristic principle of rule is concerned, by appointing what he called Superintendents. Moreover, as is also demonstrable, he chalked out an admirable system of education, embracing all the necessary grades of Schools and Colleges; and had his Creed been retained in authority, it would have encouraged this system through its accordance with revealed truth, instead of stifling it in order to protect an erroneous Creed. But how different from all this is the system of the "second Reformation," imported from Geneva by Melville, the real founder of that Reformation! As respects doctrine, that system not only adopted all the peculiarities of Lutherano-Calvinism that were rejected from the system of Knox, but, as I am now fully prepared to show, developed those principles to the last degree possible, and succeeded in riveting them on the mind and conscience of the country. As respects Ecclesiastical government, that system aimed in its palmy days at extirpating not merely Papistry, but even the Episcopacy of the Church of England, which was almost as bad in its eyes as Papistry. And as to the bearing of that system on learning and the learned institutions of the country, I may at this point make the following statements, leaving the illustration of them for a future place in the Note. First: to men solemnly bound to adhere

to and maintain a Creed that is confessedly highly artificial, complex, and comprehensive—but which is also, as I am now ready articulately to prove, utterly erroneous in its second great department, its doctrine as to Justification or Salvation—learning must be not only disadvantageous, but dangerous, unless it be of the one-sided kind that will always square with the formularies, or unless its owner be a conscious or unconscious master in the casuistical art that can prove the perfect integrity of being sworn to one set of propositions and yet maintaining their contradictories. Secondly: seeing that it is impossible to make all the members of a large body of men masters in this casuistical art, it becomes more prudent to discountenance or, if possible, to banish learning altogether from the Church and Country oppressed by such a Creed—a conclusion come to very generally in Scotland at the beginning of the last century, when many of the Grammar Schools became quite extinct, when, in consequence of this extinction as well as of the causes in which it originated, the Universities and parish schools also suffered an eclipse. In fact, Scotland must have fallen at that time into an utterly unimaginable condition so far as learning is concerned, but for a most extraordinary change effected in her Creed in the years 1720 and 1722. That change amounted to the introduction into the Church of a Creed antagonistic to the Established Westminster one, as shall be shown in due course. It was purely in consequence of the liberty thus introduced in contravention of the Established Theology, that it became possible for Theo-

logians like Campbell, the Gerrards, and Macknight to appear. But more of this extraordinary matter in its proper place.

While writing as above of the Covenanting and Puritan Theology, and of the corresponding ecclesiastical system, I have not lost sight either of the real purification of the Christian Church in many important respects that was accomplished in many quarters through them, or the invaluable principles of freedom in the investigation and promulgation of Divine truth that were contended for and theoretically established by them, to the end that the minds and consciences of men might be ruled only by the pure will of God as made known in the Scriptures, and not by the commandments or traditions of men, whether Greek, Latin, or Protestant. For these admirable features I yield to Puritanism as cordial, and I believe a more intelligent, veneration than that paid to it by many thorough-going adherents of all its Theological and Ecclesiastical principles. From the bottom of my heart, I also believe it to have been the powerful instrument in the hands of the Head of the Church for sweeping out of Scotland the superstitions imported into it from the Greek and Latin Churches (for it ought to be remembered that the Scottish Church belonged originally by conversion to the Greek, and not to the Latin, Church). Just as Puritanism, or Lutherano-Calvinism in its various forms, has been the means of checking in England and in various parts of the Continent a too strong tendency to fall back on the principles and practices that prevailed before the Reformation: so has it

done this with peculiar force in its fully developed Scottish form. Indeed, I believe the thoroughness of its work in Scotland to be the exact measure, according to the principle of action and reaction, of the erroneous extreme to which the opposite system would have been carried, had adherents like William Forbes, who was not averse to a union with the Church of Rome, prevailed; and that the triumph gained by the fully developed Lutherano-Calvinistic Puritanism in Scotland, through most remarkable endurance on the part of its adherents and as remarkable events in the general history of the British Isles, was a necessary safeguard providentially reared against the return of superstition in other quarters of the Protestant Church. And I believe there can be as little question regarding the statement just made as to the establishment of important principles of religious liberty through the Scottish Puritan System. For as well the authors of this properly so-called and fully developed Puritanism, as the bodies of people that supported them, sincerely contended, in the strength of the principle that the Truth made known in Holy Scripture alone possesses by Divine right permanent authority over the faith and practice of men, for the establishment of this doctrinal and ecclesiastical system, as being, in their belief, drawn directly and purely from the Revelation of the Divine will made in Holy Scripture. And when they succeeded in establishing their own system of doctrine and discipline, they thereby gained the most signal triumph that the annals of the Visible Church present,

for the theoretical principles of religious liberty in whose strength they contended.

The establishment of these principles has not been, of course, a mere matter of theory to such professed adherents of the Westminster Theology, whether in its Established or un-Established state, as have been able to accord to it throughout its length and breadth an *ex animo* assent. Such parties have experienced in it not only the triumph of their own theoretical principles of religious freedom, but the triumph in an important field of the dogmas which they themselves have framed or adopted by virtue of that freedom, and in supposed accordance with the dictates of Holy Scripture. Beyond this, however, the establishment of these principles by means of Puritanism has been purely theoretical. Whenever the Theology enrolling these principles among the other Puritanical principles and dogmas adopted by it has been established, it has always in due course become, in spite of the admirable principles to which it owes its own being, either as galling or as ensnaring a system to all who have been subjected to it without being able to accept *ex animo* its undoubted theological sense, as any system that the Christian Church has ever witnessed. Even in the case of its most devoted adherents, it has proved itself over and over again to be the exact counterpart in spiritual matters of the cage framed by the hunters to shut out the Lion, while they should shoot at him in safety from within. It has enclosed along with its framers and supporters, in the form of a doctrine as perplexed and bewildering as it is syste-

matically erroneous, a ravening and rending Lion, which has, at continually recurring periods, torn the Church and Country subjected to its sway with Theological and Ecclesiastical differences. And, so far as the Clergy subjected to this system are concerned, the Church and Country have necessarily been left unreservedly at the mercy of the Lion. To the Clergy it has ever necessarily been next to a moral impossibility to take any direct and effectual measures for overcoming and removing the evil. No effectual relief could ever come from men bound not merely by subscription to the formularies, but by a most stringent formula, to maintain all the dogmas set forth in these formularies to be the very truths of God. Nay, more—for, as if what has been already stated were not enough, the Clergy are bound by special promises taken at their ordination to abjure all Socinian and Arminian tenets, as well as those of Bourignon, the now-forgotten enthusiastic French lady. And still less on principle need relief be looked for from any of the bodies that have separated from the Established form of Puritanism, seeing that these have all seceded from a Church which they did not charge with maintaining in its formularies erroneous doctrines, but with not faithfully maintaining and carrying out the doctrines and principles of these formularies.



PART THIRD.

CONCLUSIONS AS TO THE REAL CHARACTER

OF THE

WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE

OF

JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION,

DEDUCED FROM

THE PRECEDING COMPARISON OF IT WITH THE SAME
DOCTRINE IN OTHER PROTESTANT CREEDS.

I PROPOSE to state and explain, in this third part of the Note, the conclusions as to the real character of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation which can be deduced from, as well as enforced by, the preceding comparison of that doctrine, as set forth in our preliminary sketch of it, with the doctrine of Justification or Salvation contained in other Reformed and Protestant Creeds.

Our preliminary sketch of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, as was stated at the commencement of the second part of the Note, was in certain respects nothing more than provisional in its character. Such a sketch was necessary, in order that the various elements presented to view in it might be

recognised, as they should be seen coming successively into being in the several classes of Confessions on which the Westminster one is built. It was equally necessary, in order that an intelligible statement might be made as to the extraordinary difference of principle existing between the doctrines of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Westminster Confession and its Continental congeners, and in the Confession of Knox and the Articles of the Church of England respectively. My preliminary sketch, then, of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, being intended merely to subserve such purposes, was in the strictest sense of the term provisional; and was not set forth as that on which judgment was to be pronounced, even though this might have been fairly done, since the sketch was exactly copied in all its lineaments from the several Westminster formularies.

Almost all the ends proposed to be secured by means of comparing my preliminary sketch of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation with that set forth in the Lutheran and Lutherano-Calvinistic Confessions of the Continent on the one hand, and that set forth in the Confession of Knox and in the Articles of the Church of England on the other, have now been reached; or, at least, they now only remain to be laid hold of and properly arranged. Thus almost every element, negative as well as positive, pointed out in my preliminary sketch has been traced to its origin in some Lutheran, or Lutherano-Calvinistic Symbol: the same is the case with all the characteristic principles observable in that sketch; and

all that now remains to be done is, to set forth the indubitable Westminster doctrine, by summing these elements and principles up and adding to them the final touches that were given to the doctrine by the Westminster Divines themselves. Moreover, as the superiority in respect of symmetry of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Confession of Knox, and in the Articles of the Church of England as explained by the Confession of Knox, over that set forth in the Augsburg Confession has come clearly into view in the preceding part of the Note ; so am I now prepared to exhibit with much more advantage the like superiority, but in a much higher degree, of the doctrine set forth in Knox's Confession and in the Articles over the Westminster one ; for the latter exhibits the full development of all the objectionable principles which the Augsburg Confession contains only germinally, and as contemplated from the dogmatic point of view.

There is a clearly marked difference between my preliminary and provisional sketch and the final one that shall now be made ; and the latter is accompanied with a corresponding advantage in respect of conclusiveness. The preliminary sketch, though copied directly from the Westminster formularies themselves, and supported at every point by the express statements of these formularies, was liable to be challenged as utterly incorrect in its account of some of the fundamental principles of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation. So startling are the principles referred to, and so little used have many become,

from causes to be pointed out in the sequel, to hear them insisted on, that the certainty of their being challenged, if not incontrovertibly supported, was inevitable. Incontrovertible evidence of the correctness of the sketch was needed ; for it would otherwise have been met with the allegation that it was the one-sided view of the doctrine taken by a party, and not the real historical import of the doctrine. And such incontrovertible evidence has been now adduced in the foregoing investigation of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation as set forth in Protestant and Reformed Creeds. Every element and every principle that appear in my preliminary and provisional sketch will now approve themselves quite demonstratively to be no mere partisan interpretations, or interpolations, of a really Catholic and Evangelical Creed such as Knox's ; but as being all essential items of that fully developed Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation, which the Scottish Covenanters combined with the Doctrinal Puritans to frame at Westminster. Even the unexampled ambiguities of the Aberdeen Confession lend most important aid, as must have already appeared, in demonstrating that the Westminster doctrine is exactly what my preliminary sketch provisionally described.

SECTION I.

ON THE

ABSOLUTELY EXTERNAL AND GRATUITOUS CHARACTER

OF THE

JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION

SET FORTH IN THE

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION ;

AND ON

ITS IDENTITY WITH THE JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION
MAINTAINED BY THE FŒDERALIST DIVINES.

WHAT first presents itself for consideration in accordance with what has just been said, is the verification that can now be made in all respects of the account given, in my preliminary sketch, of the contents and relations of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation. It can now be incontrovertibly shown to be absolutely external or imputative, and gratuitous or free or unconditioned ; to be identical with the doctrine of Justification or Salvation in the so-called Fœderalist School of Theology, and to be indeed a doctrine not merely of Justification, and so differing in its contents and results from the doctrine of Salvation ; but of Justification or Salvation, or of the full

ground, reason, and title to the enjoyment of **Eternal Life.**

*1. The Westminster Formu-
laries set forth a doc-
trine of abso-
lutely exter-
nal and gra-
tuitous Justi-
fication or Sal-
vation.*

I. It was pointed out in the preliminary sketch how absolutely gratuitous or free or unconditional, and external or imputative, Justification or Salvation was declared, by means of negative and positive statements, in the Westminster formularies to be. And it can now be clearly shown by means of the foregoing historical examination of the doctrine, both that the force of the statements contained in the Westminster formularies is what we have pointed out, and in opposition to what supposed errors, and in support of what supposed truths, these negative and positive statements were framed. In exhibiting this, we shall commence with the statements that declare the gratuitousness or freeness of Justification or Salvation, since this will prove itself to be the order that conduces most to consecutiveness and clearness.

First, then, Justification or Salvation, while maintained in the Westminster Confession to be purely external or imputative, is also there declared to be bestowed, "not for anything wrought in them (the justified) or done by them." This clause is intended to condemn as erroneous every attempt made within the confines of Protestantism, subsequently to the drawing up of the Augsburg Confession, to show that Repentance, or Regeneration, or Sanctification had something to do either as an element or condition of Justification or Salvation. For the substance of the

doctrine of the Augsburg and contemporaneous Lutheran Symbols is contained in these words of Chapter XI: "God justifieth by pardoning their sins, and by accounting their *persons* as righteous." And the clause previously quoted was introduced to condemn all attempts to show that Repentance, or Regeneration, or Sanctification, formed an element or condition of this Justification or Salvation, whether the attempt was such as that made by Osiander and his followers, by the Socinians, and even in a way pointed out above by the framers of the Helvetic Creed; or by men like the Forbeses and the other framers of the Aberdeen Confession. Secondly, but Lutherano-Calvinism was becoming more and more developed and dogmatical, as well as popularly influential and overbearing, especially in Holland and Scotland, when the Aberdeen Confession was framed; so that, while extreme caution was needed throughout the attempt made in that Confession to find a place for the tenets antagonistic to Lutherano-Calvinism, such caution was especially needed on points settled, like the one last considered, in Lutherano-Calvinistic Symbols. And such caution was employed. For while all that was condemned in these symbols, and in the first negationary clause of Chapter XIth of the Westminster Confession, was adroitly involved in the passage, in the Aberdeen Confession, that has been so frequently quoted, and that begins with the words, "We believe that by virtue of this Communion;" still, on the other hand, the Aberdeen Confession says nothing in express terms about the necessity of Repentance, or Regeneration,

or Sanctification, as an element or condition of "Justification or Salvation," while it speaks of Justification in terms that might please the most scrupulous Lutherano-Calvinist. But then, in regard to a point which had never been dogmatically settled on the Lutherano-Calvinist side, and which has only been so settled in the Westminster Confession, the Aberdeen one spoke in language which, though cautiously guarded against impugnement, was directly susceptible of that well-known Arminian sense which a special clause was introduced into the Westminster Confession to condemn. I refer to these words of the Aberdeen Confession: "And constantly we affirm that Faith which bringeth not forth good works is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation." The entire Arminian view of the connection between Faith and Justification or Salvation is involved in these words; and that was the view specially meant to be condemned by the following, the second, negationary clause of Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession:—"God justifieth not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them (the justified) as their righteousness." But, thirdly, besides the two negationary statements just examined, which were aimed against attempts to show that there were elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation of some kind or another, there is a paragraph exclusively devoted, in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, to a positive exhibition of the gratuitousness or freeness of the benefit. I refer to the third paragraph, which runs thus: "Christ, by His

obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper real and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them, and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them, their justification is only of free grace ; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners." Here the freeness or gratuitousness of Justification or Salvation is affirmed to be conclusively manifest, inasmuch as it is grounded not at all on anything in the "sinners" that are justified, but on the obedience and satisfaction rendered in their stead by Jesus Christ, and imputed or reckoned to them by Divine Grace as theirs.

It would be impossible to make the exclusion of all conditions to the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation more perfect than that made by means of the declarations just quoted from the Westminster Confession. In fact, the process of exclusion as exhibited in that formulary is quite exhaustive. It is a process made perfect by the experience gained in all the discussions and controversies on the subject that occurred from the time of the drawing-up of the Augsburg Confession till the time of the drawing up of the Westminster one. All the consequences that were involved germinally in the Augsburg Confession when it made Justification or Salvation in reality external as well as gratuitous, are set forth articulately and exhaustively in the Westminster Symbol. The latter declares every moral and spiritual element of Christianity in detail to

be unnecessary as a condition of Justification or Salvation ; and this was just the inevitable result, fully developed, of insisting dogmatically on the principle of the Augsburg Confession that makes Justification or Salvation equivalent to forgiveness, and consequently external as well as gratuitous.

And let it be observed next, that Justification or Salvation is declared in the Westminster formularies to be external, with the same systematic precision and thoroughness, taught by experience in controversies, that mark the declarations of the formularies as to the gratuitousness of the great Gospel benefit. And attention ought to be directed at this point also to the circumstance that, just as was seen to be the case with the principle of gratuitousness, so shall the embodiment of the principle of externality in the Westminster Symbols be seen to be the articulate and thorough development of what is set forth germinally in the Augsburg Confession.

First, then, it is declared in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, that God justifies those that are "effectually called," or "sinners," "not by infusing righteousness into them." Though this negative proposition was involved in the principle of the Augsburg Confession that makes Forgiveness the equivalent of Justification or Salvation ; and which also, as a consequence of such equivalence, makes the latter benefit purely external ; still the negative proposition was not articulately enunciated in that purely germinal symbol. It appears, however, on the very front of the account of Justification or Salvation in the Westminster Confession. One object for its being set there is, that it

may contradict, condemn, and render untenable the opposite doctrine as held by the Greek or Eastern Church, and affirmed in these words of the Tridentine Decrees : " God justifies by infusing righteousness." But while meant to serve this object, the proposition is as much aimed at, and meets as directly, what has been maintained within the confines of Protestantism by Osiander and his adherents, by many Arminians, by the Society of Friends ; and what was allowed, as has been seen, equally by the Confession of Knox, by the Aberdeen Confession, and by the Articles of the Church of England. Second, what follows, in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, the negative proposition just considered, is the statement borrowed from the Augsburg Confession, that God justifies " sinners . . . by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting *their persons* as righteous." And as this proposition stands explained in the Westminster Confession, it not only manifestly presents the sense we assigned to it in our examination of the Augsburg Confession, but also proves demonstrably how external—yea, how absolutely abstract and notional as respects the human being—this Lutherano-Calvinistical Justification or Salvation is. For let what is articulately declared in the Westminster Confession to take place in this Justification or Salvation of " the person " be attended to. Now, that is such as to make it palpably absurd to say that it is a *person* that is justified or saved. For while, on the one hand, the sins of the man to be justified or saved are forgiven and so held to be non-existent, so, on the other hand, is it articulately declared that no

account is taken of any of his spiritual or moral qualifications ; but rather these also are treated in the matter of Justification or Salvation just as if non-existent. But what becomes of the personality of a man when all moral attributes, good as well as bad, are excluded from the conception of it? It may be said, indeed, that the "personality" assumes this purely negationary character in connection with Justification or Salvation, because this benefit is bestowed on "sinners" for "Christ's sake" according to the Augsburg Confession ; and for "Christ's sake," or through "the imputing of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ to them," according to the Westminster Confession. Thirdly : Now this answer to the objection just adduced certainly affords the finishing proof of the complete externality of the Justification or Salvation set forth in the Westminster Confession, whatever may be the value of the answer as an explanation of the apparent paradox that represents a "person" as being justified, saved, and made an heir of Eternal Life, from whom every attribute of personality has been excluded so far as that transaction is concerned. Nothing can prove more conclusively the externality of Justification or Salvation according to the Westminster Divines, than the fact of its consisting by their account in an act of Forgiveness on the one hand, and of an imputation to the "justified person" of another's righteousness on the other hand, all moral qualities, good as well as bad, being the meanwhile rigorously and absolutely excluded from the view taken by the Judge of the person justified or

saved and made an heir of Eternal Life. But this representation of Justification or Salvation ought obviously to make its own correctness quite unassailable on the ground of Scripture, and it must itself be thus fully established, before it can be admitted as a sufficient explanation of the paradox that has just been considered respecting the Justification or Salvation of the "persons" of "sinners." And the same remark may be made when the representation of the great central benefit of Christianity is considered in connection with other still more palpable paradoxes that necessarily emerge from it.

But to show the justice of the reflection just made as to the necessity for adducing the strongest scriptural proof in support of the preceding representation of Justification or Salvation, before the mind can quietly submit to all the paradoxes that emerge from it, all the features of that representation as well as its accompanying paradoxes must be completely set forth. And, in pursuance of this object, the positive aspect of the doctrine now demands attention. That is, as we have in the immediately preceding remarks established the absolute gratuitousness and externality of Justification or Salvation according to the Westminster formularies, so shall we next point out the contents and meaning of this external Justification or Salvation. To do this aright, attention must be directed to the teaching of the Westminster formularies respecting what they denominate the "Covenant of Works" on the one hand, and the "Covenant of Grace" on the other; for, as has been from the first

asserted in this Note, there is an exact parallelism between these two, or rather the one of these Covenants presents the exact counterpart of the other.

II. The Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation identical with that set forth in the so-called Federalist School of Theology.

II. According to the Westminster doctrine, Life, including as has always been understood immortality, was not at first bestowed gratuitously on man, and guaranteed to him by Divine mercy and grace, with this single condition, that he should refrain from eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. On the contrary, though he was placed in the enjoyment of a life that might have been immortal, still man's continued enjoyment of it was made dependent as much on his yielding "a perpetual, personal, and exact obedience" to the whole Divine Law, as on his refraining from the transgression of the special injunction not "to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." It thus represented man as having two things to do in order to his continuance in the enjoyment of the good provided for him by God ; namely, to refrain from transgressing the special command as to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil on the penalty of death, and to render a faultless obedience to the whole Divine Law in order to secure the enjoyment of immortal life. But, by infringing the special command, man, according to the Westminster Divines, failed in both of these respects ; he incurred the penalty of death, and also, of course, utterly failed in securing for himself the enjoyment of Eternal Life. Moreover, by the change wrought in

man's nature through the Fall, he became henceforth as unable to secure for himself, through obedience to the law rendered by his own strength, Eternal Life, as he was manifestly unable to atone for the guilt of Original and Actual sin. For the "Covenant of Works," as the Westminster Divines named the above arrangement supposed to be made primevally between God and man, continued in force over man notwithstanding its infringement; and by it all must be tried who should refuse to come under that Covenant of Grace, which was instituted by Divine wisdom and mercy, and which was also exactly adapted by Divine wisdom and mercy, as well to recover the Elect from the condemnation due to their sins original and actual, as to reinstate them in the enjoyment of the hope of Eternal Life. Over the Elect as well as others, indeed, the "Covenant of Works" remained in force as a rule of Life; but, in consequence of the obedience even unto death rendered to this Covenant by Christ in the room of the Elect, it had no power over them for condemnation; while in behalf of the Elect also its requirement of perpetual, personal, and exact obedience had been satisfied by Christ's obedience: and thus, the Elect being forgiven through Christ's atoning death, and having His righteousness imputed to them, are justified or saved and made heirs of Eternal Life. This Justification or Salvation of the Elect was absolutely external or imputative; while itself and its consequent benefits were as absolutely gratuitous. Christ was thus the "end of the Law for righteousness to them that believe." That is to say, "He was de-

livered for their offences, and raised again for their justification ;” or “ He who knew no sin was made sin for us (the Elect), that we might be made (lit. *become*) righteousness of God in Him.”

The end sought to be secured by framing a Theory of the Covenants like that just described, is manifest. For in the “ Covenant of Works” which it propounded, the theory assigned a reason grounded professedly on the Scriptures, for the absolute necessity of the two-fold division made in the “one righteousness of Christ” in the counterpart representation of the Covenant of Grace. The force of this reason is evidently as follows: Through the infringement of the Covenant of Works, by man’s eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, there was sin to be atoned for and pardoned, and this was secured in the case of the Elect by means of Christ’s death in their stead; and, since the Covenant of Works made a perfect obedience to all its requirements necessary for the enjoyment of Eternal Life, this again was met substitutionally in the case of the Elect by Christ’s fulfilment of all righteousness in their room. By the formation of this theory, the keystone was placed on the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation. In the framing of this theory, too, not only were the most developed expressions met with in the Lutherano-Calvinistical mode of reading the Aberdeen Confession taken for granted as correct, but they were tied down to that sense by means of the principles, according with this sense, that are articulately declared in the Westminster Confession. That is, expressions like “the obedience and satisfac-

tion of Christ," or "Christ and His righteousness," cannot, as employed in the Westminster Confession, be understood ambiguously, as was seen to be the case with similar expressions in the Aberdeen Confession; for the former Symbol, quite unlike the latter, contains an articulate account of the "Covenant of Works" as that is understood in the Fœderalist School of Theology, thus showing that the expression "the obedience and satisfaction of Christ" must be understood in the corresponding Fœderalist sense. In the framing of this theory also was taken for granted the correctness of the interpretation in the Lutherano-Calvinistic style, of all the classes of Scriptural formulas employed in its formation. Thus, on the one hand, not only were the central statements of Scripture touching Justification or Salvation, and touching Righteousness of God, explained unhesitatingly in the external sense, but formulas like this—"He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made (lit., *become*) righteousness of God in Him," were as unhesitatingly employed to frame what I have called the cope-stone of the Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation; and on the other hand, an exactly corresponding use was made of every part of Scripture that could be brought to countenance the Fœderalist account of the "Covenant of Works."

In the above account of the "Covenant of Works," elements are added to the primeval Covenant between God and Adam, of which the records of the primeval Covenant contain no traces. These added elements are borrowed from a Covenant that differed entirely

from the primeval one—from a Covenant that was entered into between God and His chosen People, the Jews, for specific purposes which are clearly stated in the Scriptures. It was entered into with the Israelites for the twofold purpose of teaching those under it their sinfulness and need of Redemption, and of unfolding, by a system of Types, the promise of Redemption made to Adam after the Fall, and repeated to the Patriarchs, especially to Abraham. Of course, many other most important and merciful ends were subserved by the Law of Moses, the Covenant of Works properly so called; but the two purposes just mentioned were its chief ones. But it is obviously a quite disallowable thing to confuse together the primeval Covenant with Adam, which guaranteed to him every blessing on the single condition of his refraining from eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the Mosaic Law, which was given to serve purposes connected with the recovery of man from the miserable bondage to sin, guilt, and death under which he had been brought through Adam's transgression of the real primeval Covenant. By confounding these two things, indeed, controversialists of a certain school were enabled to alter the terms of the primeval Covenant into "Do this and live," the Divine sanction of the Mosaic Law; instead of "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," the Divine sanction of the primeval Covenant between God and Adam. It enabled them also with greater appearance of truth to contend, that Justification or Salvation consists of the twofold elements already described as answering to

the twofold requirements of the factitious Covenant of Works. But, nevertheless, it proceeds on such a total confusing of things distinct, and requires so much violence to be done to the Scriptures for its support, that it would never have been dreamed of in any age, but for the exigencies of controversy, and the necessity for completing, in opposition to a rival system, an else imperfect and halting form of doctrine.

There are no other formularies belonging exactly to the same class as the Westminster ones, from which one might deduce additional proof as to the correctness of our account of the above theory of "the two Covenants." The Westminster formularies were the latest of the Lutherano-Calvinistic formularies in their construction; and they stand alone as specimens in the symbolical form of the so-called Fœderalist Theology. It was after their construction, indeed, that that Theology found so elaborate an exposition as may be seen in the work of 'Witsius de *Economia Fœderum*;' but the Theology itself was formed previous to the drawing-up of the Westminster Confession, as clear traces of it in the Aberdeen Confession show; and works illustrative of it, written after the formation of the Westminster Confession, differ from those written before the formation of that formulary only in their more detailed treatment of the subject. It would be easy to adduce the fullest and clearest proof from such writings, both British and Continental, that the Westminster formularies expressed the opinions of the most advanced and orthodox Lutherano-Calvinists of the seventeenth century, in the theory of the two Covenants which

they contain. Proof might also be adduced from the same sources to show that our account of that theory is correct. But, in truth, extraneous proof bearing on the latter point is unnecessary, since the Westminster formularies are amply sufficient in themselves to verify all that has been said as to their doctrine of the Covenants. Thus, when one has, on the one hand, supplemented the statements respecting the "Covenant of Works," made in Chapter VII of the Confession, with all that is said on the same subject in other parts of the Confession or in the larger Catechism—when, on the other hand, he has done the same thing by the Covenant of Grace, and has afterwards compared the two results reached by that process of comparison—it becomes manifest, beyond the power of being questioned, that the case stands exactly as it has been put by me. That is to say, the theory of the Covenants embodied in the Westminster formularies holds forth, that the two requirements of the broken yet authoritative "Covenant of Works" can only be met exactly by the two provisions alleged to be contained in the Covenant of Grace; that as man, living under the broken yet authoritative "Covenant of Works," can neither of himself make atonement for his sin and guilt so as to avoid Hell, nor render "a personal perpetual and exact obedience" so as to merit Eternal Life, so are these two wants exactly met and freely supplied in the Covenant of Grace, inasmuch as it provides for the Elect pardon through Christ's blood and merit through his imputed righteousness, to the end that, these things being received and enjoyed only by an

instrumental faith, the Elect may, in this way alone, enjoy Eternal Life.

In view of the overwhelming difficulties of all sorts that follow with an iron necessity on the adoption of this system, it is of no use saying that this could not be the system actually adopted by the Westminster Divines, but that their formularies embody some scheme more reconcilable with Scripture and free from palpable contradictions. All these difficulties and contradictions, almost, had from the first presented themselves germinally in the positive or dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession. Knox evidently saw them, and, with a farsighted prudence, forbore embodying in his Symbol the principles from which they spring. But there are very few examples of the prudent conduct pursued by him. Multitudes had combined not only in adopting those tenets notwithstanding their inevitable consequences, but in pushing them onwards to their state of final development. And that final development was assuredly given to the Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine of Justification or Salvation by Covenanters and Puritans, in defiance of all consequences involved in it.

III. That Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession sets forth not only the doctrine of Justification, but of that Salvation which secures Eternal Life.

III. Proof was adduced from the Westminster formularies themselves, in our preliminary sketch of the doctrine they contain, to show that the statements made in Chapter XI of the Confession set forth not only the doctrine of Justification, but of the Salvation that can alone secure Everlasting

Life. But, however clearly the Westminster formularies were seen to manifest this as their doctrine, still additional proof bearing on the point was spoken of as being both desirable and within reach,—desirable because of the extraordinary character of the doctrine itself, as well as of the consequences that flow from it; and within reach, because adducible from formularies of unchallengeable historical authority, and of most unquestionable applicability to the purposes for which they were required. The materials of this proof have now been adduced, and only wait to be applied. The consequences of this application will present themselves in due course.

One important part of the proof just referred to, is that supplied by the Aberdeen Confession. That Symbol declares, “And constantly we affirm that Faith which bringeth not forth good works is dead, and availeth nothing to Justification or Salvation.” Now, as has been already shown, this form of expression would allow any one to maintain, among other things, that “Faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience,” are taken into account by God in the final and full Justification or Salvation of Christians; and that it is only after these things are thus taken into account that Christians are finally and fully justified or saved, and put into possession of Eternal Life. It was only in this form of spiritual and moral conditions that such things could be urged as necessary, after Justification or Salvation had been made in appearance so entirely external as in the Aberdeen Confession. The entire logical force of the

principle of gratuitousness was against this, however; and this force was uncompromisingly urged by Scottish Covenanters and Doctrinal Puritans. Among other "positions negative," they introduced the one that declares "faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience," not to be taken into account by God in the great transaction of justifying or saving, and making men heirs of Eternal Life. They said nothing expressly, indeed, of Life or Salvation in Chapter XI of their Confession, which treats of Justification. This silence was traced in our preliminary sketch to a prudential reason, namely, to conceal the contradictoriness which must otherwise have met the eye in the very heart of the formularies. * But, on the other hand, the parallelism existing between Chapters VII and XI shows that the "life and salvation" spoken of in the former are just what the sinner receives through the justification described in the latter. Besides, the larger Catechism expressly declares that the identical external or imputative elements described in Chapter XI of the Confession are, when received by "justifying faith," "for Salvation." Finally, a comparison of what is thus declared in the Westminster formularies with the declaration quoted above from the Aberdeen Confession, utterly excludes all doubt as to Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession describing Salvation no less than Justification. For, when this comparison has been made, one might as well contend that the door is not locked at night to keep out thieves, as that the negation in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, respecting Faith in all its capacities and actions, is not

aimed against what the Aberdeen Confession allowed respecting a living and operative Faith as a necessary *condition* to the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation. As the result also of such a comparison, it becomes impossible to deny that a "completed Salvation" is described in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, not less than a complete Justification.

But, in fact, such proofs as to the identity of Justification and Salvation, and the immediate dependence on these of Eternal Life, drawn from other Symbols, are in the most proper sense proofs *ex abundantia*. They do, and must, form a superfluity in the estimation not merely of every Theologian, but of every man who only knows his Bible. What common man who knows his Bible, and especially the Pauline Epistles, could ever doubt that the Justification therein described, whatever be its exact contents and character, means exactly the same thing as the Salvation therein described; and that this Justification or Salvation (whatever be its contents and character) forms, for those who enjoy it, their only title to, as well as the only ground on which they can hope for, the enjoyment of Eternal Life? And he would be borne out in this belief by the whole series of the Protestant Symbols, from the Augsburg Confession down to the Westminster formularies. For example, this is shown in those quotations made in the foregoing pages from the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions, in which are adduced as the foundation of their doctrine of Redemption two central statements of St. Paul, contained re-

spectively in the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians ; it not being for a moment questioned that one and the same thing is spoken of in these two statements of the Apostle, now as Justification and anon as Salvation. And there is a consideration of unanswerable power in demonstrating that Salvation was as much involved as Justification in all those weary controversies that found a settlement on one side in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, and in the parallel portions of the other Westminster formularies. The consideration referred to is this—that all those controversies about Justification must have been felt to be utterly devoid of any absorbing interest, had the controversialists been seen to take for granted as respects Salvation and Eternal Life, the very points which they denied as respects Justification and Eternal Life. The world must have been turned upside down, in many quarters, for a matter having no practical bearing on the attainment to Eternal Life, if all aimed at by the controversies on Redemption was to show, that Justification must be maintained to be absolutely external or imputative and gratuitous, but that Salvation and Eternal Life are prizes which men must earnestly labour for, in accordance with the solemn words—“ Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you : for Him hath God the Father sealed.”

Nothing but a conviction of its absolute necessity in order to reach unquestionable and satisfactory conclusions respecting the exact doctrine of Justification or

Salvation contained in the Westminster formularies, could have induced me to persevere in the unspeakably irksome work of tracking the chain of thought which, through numerous ambiguities and in spite of numerous contradictions, led to the formation of that fully developed doctrine. Apart from the demonstrative mode in which I have proved the doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Westminster formularies to be absolutely external and gratuitous—to be, in short, the fully formed Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine—not a single effective step could have been taken in dealing with it as it really deserves. There might have been a perfect moral certainty as to its being a perfected Lutherano-Calvinism, and liable to all the insurmountable objections that lie against that form of doctrine; but such conviction must have been nought apart from the demonstration, that it is such really and demonstratively. For a party in the Church of Scotland had the hardihood, about a generation after the Westminster formularies were finally “ratified” by the State, to declare and maintain by Acts of Assembly, in direct contradiction to the history of doctrine as contained in Symbols, and in defiance of the ungarbled statements of the formularies themselves, that these formularies embody and authorise the very doctrine which they were sedulously framed to exclude. By garbled quotations they made the formularies appear to authorise certain principles of the Catholic and Evangelic type of doctrine, more boldly than even the framers of the Aberdeen Confession had dared to do by means of their Symbol. Now, were this view of the principles

set forth in the Westminster formularies correct, instead of being utterly erroneous as it demonstrably is, it must have been futile as the beating of the air for any one to attempt exposing the errors of the formularies, and endeavouring after relief from their galling bondage. For, according to the view just referred to, no such errors can exist in the formularies, or at least can be undeniably brought home to them; neither consequently, can they impose bondage on any one, but must act exactly as it appeared that the Aberdeen Confession was intended to do. It was with a view to this state of things, then, that I have proceeded step by step with such minute carefulness in establishing the exact force of the different negative and positive propositions that set forth the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation; in establishing the exact contents of that doctrine; and in establishing what is, when viewed independently of all sophistication, a first truth equally as seen from the Scriptural and Theological points of view, namely, the identity of the Westminster doctrines of Justification and Salvation. An immediate advantage will be derived from the elaborateness of my proof respecting these points, when I proceed to show the confusion and contradictions introduced into Christian doctrine by them. But the principal advantage secured by it, will be seen when I enter on the examination of those Acts of Assembly passed in the years 1720 and 1722, which introduced surreptitiously into the Established Church a new Creed quite contradictory of the authorised one, though professing to be iden-

tical with it; and which I scruple not to denounce as a quite unprecedented and unparalleled specimen of Ecclesiastical dishonesty.

SECTION II.

ON THE

UTTER DISLOCATION AND DISPLACEMENT

OF THE

FUNDAMENTAL PRACTICAL ELEMENTS OF THE GOSPEL,

CAUSED BY MAKING JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION
ABSOLUTELY EXTERNAL

AS WELL AS ABSOLUTELY GRATUITOUS.

A COMPLETE dislocation of the fundamental practical elements of the Gospel is caused, by making Justification or Salvation absolutely external as well as absolutely gratuitous. It is meant by this that, as the direct and inevitable consequence of making Justification or Salvation absolutely external, such all-important elements of the Gospel as Repentance, or Regeneration, or Sanctification, or Faith itself in its proper and full sense, and, in a word, all the internal spiritual and moral elements intended to be implanted by means of the Gospel in the spirit and soul of man, are not merely displaced, but cannot possibly find any right place. Other equally inevitable, and still more disastrous, consequences flow from a combination of the principle of externality with the principle of gratuitousness. The principle of gratuitousness would by itself act

quite harmoniously with all the other true facts and principles of the Gospel, but it results directly and inevitably in marring the symmetry, and diminishing the force, of Gospel truth, when combined with the principle of externality. But the disastrous influence thus wielded by the principle of externality in its combination with the principle of gratuitousness will afford matter of consideration in a future Section; and, in the present Section, I shall limit my remarks to the utter confusion that takes place in the fundamental practical elements of the Gospel, when Justification or Salvation is declared to be absolutely external.

Much of what must be considered in this Section has come under notice at different points in the preceding portion of the Note. But a farther advantage than merely that of considering connectedly and fully a subject that has as yet come under notice only in a scattered and partial manner, will be secured, by specially examining, in this Section, the disruption of the symmetry of the Gospel, caused by making Justification or Salvation external. For, as the subject must now be examined, it will be found exhibiting the utter dislocation of elements that is in question, as a necessary consequence throughout of the perfectly articulate manner in which Justification or Salvation has been declared by the Westminster formularies to be external. As the principle of externality is the cause of this dislocation, so is the dislocation utter in the case of the Westminster form of doctrine, inasmuch as the externality of that form of doctrine is utter. In a word, as in that form of doctrine the cause of the con-

fusion is fully developed, and acts with full and continuous force, so is the consequent confusion complete, and completely irremediable as long as its cause continues in its integrity.

I. The dislocation of elements caused by making Justification or Salvation external, appears in the contradictoriness and uncertainty as to the place of Repentance and its parallels.

I. The contradictoriness and uncertainty of statement respecting the position of Repentance and its parallel elements, consequent on the making of Justification or Salvation absolutely external, are clear manifestations of the amorphous and dislocated state into which the truths of the Gospel are thrown, by giving the purely external and imputative character to its central benefit, Justification or Salvation.

The existence of such contradictoriness and uncertainty will become quite manifest from a comparison of the statements of the Westminster formularies with each other, or with the statements and principles of the Holy Scriptures.

In Chapter XV of the Confession, entitled "Of Repentance unto Life," and in the third paragraph of the Chapter, it is said: "Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet is it of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it." In these words, Repentance is unhesitatingly affirmed to be the necessary antecedent to the enjoyment of Forgiveness, in exact accordance with numerous equally plain and solemn declarations of Holy Writ. And

in apparent harmony with the above most orthodox statement, Chapter X, entitled, "Of Effectual Calling," but treating in reality of Repentance unto Life or unto Salvation, precedes, in the Westminster Confession, the Chapter "Of Justification." And it is evident, that the framers of the Confession held, and meant to allow any one to hold, in accordance with their own orthodox principle as to Repentance, that in some way or another—a way, however, that certain parts of their system rendered impossible to be stated without contradiction—this Effectual Calling precedes Justification; for they say at the commencement of the Chapter "Of Justification," "Those whom God effectually calleth He also freely justifieth." But the Westminster system renders it impossible to insist steadily and consistently on its own orthodox principle that Repentance precedes Forgiveness, or to give any explanation of the connection between Repentance and Forgiveness without plunging into contradictions, inasmuch as that system is based on a mode of understanding the portions of Scripture that treat specially of Justification or Salvation, which makes this benefit, understood in a purely external and imputative sense, the very first gift bestowed by God on the sinner. Moreover, the whole formularies are framed, notwithstanding their apparently orthodox principle as to Repentance preceding Forgiveness, with a special eye not to contradict, but rather to tally with, the view that Justification or Salvation, understood externally and imputatively, is the primary gift bestowed by God on the sinner through an "instrumental faith."

The cause, just indicated, of the uncertainty and contradictoriness as to the proper place of Repentance and its parallels in connection with Justification or Salvation considered as absolutely external, was specially adverted to in that subsection of the last part of the Note, entitled: "Origin of the mistaken tenet that Forgiveness and the other external elements of Justification or Salvation, precede Repentance, or Regeneration and Sanctification." It was there shown, in a manner that renders any lengthened remarks at this point unnecessary, that if St. Paul's declarations respecting Justification or Salvation in the Epistle to the Romans, that most systematic and detailed exposition of the Gospel, be understood in the purely external and imputative sense, then must Repentance and its parallels necessarily follow that benefit, inasmuch as Justification or Salvation is there shown to be the "gift" primarily bestowed by God on the sinner, who receives it by Faith. No more, then, need be said on that subject at this point. No enlargement on it could more elucidate the manner in which, by making the Justification or Salvation treated by St. Paul a purely external or imputative benefit, Repentance and its parallels must thereby be made to follow instead of preceding Forgiveness and its parallels, although such precedence be a thing confessedly demanded by the Scriptures themselves. And if the manner in which the Faith that receives the external Justification or Salvation has been employed by many to remove, in appearance at least, the contradiction that has just been seen, as well as to explain the connection

between a purely external Justification or Salvation and "Sanctification," should here suggest itself as being in reality a quite sufficient and satisfactory explanation of the difficulty, I would in reference to this make the following remark. An explanation of the kind just referred to that might be plausible, or even in so far satisfactory, as regards a Confession like the Augsburg one, which merely affirmed an equivalence between Forgiveness and Justification, and refrained from dogmatising as to Faith, will not apply in the same way to a Formulary which has dogmatised on both Justification or Salvation and Faith in the manner of the Westminster Confession. By affirming that "Faith itself, the act of believing or any other evangelical obedience," has nothing to do either as an element or condition of Justification or Salvation, the Westminster Confession just makes more palpable, and clenches more firmly, the difficulties that affect the dogmatic aspect even of the Augsburg Confession; and, consequently, renders less satisfactory the explanation drawn from Faith, that has just been adverted to. But this subject is so fundamentally important, that it will supply matter for special consideration in the immediate sequel.

The Westminster formularies were evidently framed, notwithstanding their orthodox declaration that Repentance precedes Forgiveness, with a special eye not to contradict but rather to tally with the view that an external and imputative Justification or Salvation is the gift primarily bestowed by God on the sinner, who receives it by an "instrumental faith" according

to these formularies. Thus it is said in Chapter VII of the Confession, entitled "Of God's Covenant with Man," "Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life (by the Covenant of Works), the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the Covenant of Grace: whereby he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved; and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe." It was pointed out, in our preliminary sketch of the Westminster doctrine, that what is said in the above passage of God's "freely offering unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ," tallies exactly with what is said about Justification in Chapter XI, where we read, among other things, "inasmuch as (Christ) was given by the Father for (the justified), and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them, their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners." And they both harmonise exactly with the principle that results, as has been shown, from understanding the Justification or Salvation described in the Epistle to the Romans to be purely external, namely, the principle that this external or imputative benefit, with its consequent—the ground and title to—Eternal Life, is the primary gift bestowed on the sinner who receives it by an "instrumental faith." Another clear proof that the Westminster formularies were made to

harmonise with the principle just stated, appears from a comparison of the following portions of the documents. Thus it is to be observed that "Faith in Jesus Christ" and "Repentance unto life" are declared, in the answer to Question 85 of the Shorter Catechism, to be among the chief means of escaping "the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin;" and that in the two following Questions, first Faith and next Repentance are explained. What this is now pointed out mainly with a view to, is the precedence given to Faith over Repentance. In one most important respect this arrangement is strictly correct; for it is only through the power of Faith manifested in its apprehension equally of the reasons that demonstrate the danger and evil of sin, and of the process of Divine mercy and grace in Christ, that true Repentance is entered on and perfected. But then by arranging these two graces as in the Westminster formularies, they are exactly and literally accommodated to the principle that makes the external and imputative Justification or Salvation, with its consequent "the title to Eternal Life," precede Repentance. And with this let the following passage from Chapter X of the Confession, entitled "Of Effectual Calling," be compared: "All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased, in His appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the

things of God ; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh ; renewing their wills, and by his Almighty power determining them to that which is good ; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.” Now, as has been already observed, when a Chapter containing matter like the above stands in the Westminster Confession immediately before the Chapter of Justification, one might be led by it to conclude inadvertently that Repentance, or Regeneration, or Sanctification was certainly set forth in this formulary as the necessary antecedent of Justification or Salvation. So far, however, from that being the case, it is very apparent from the language employed at the commencement of the above passage, that it was intended, like the arrangement of Faith and Repentance in the Shorter Catechism, to harmonise with the principle deduced from the Lutherano-Calvinistical interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistles, that an external Justification or Salvation is the primary gift bestowed on the sinner. For the passage commences with stating, that “ God is pleased ” “ effectually to call ” the predestinated, and predestinated “ only,” “ out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ.” Now this “ grace and salvation ” is quite capable of meaning the Justification or Salvation described in Chapter XI of the Confession ; and it can mean nothing else, when viewed in the light of the Epistle to the Romans interpreted as it was by the Westminster Divines, in the Lutherano-Calvinistic mode.

The remarks now made naturally lead to views that fully explain and confirm what was said towards the close of the first part of this Note, respecting the doctrines treated of in the Westminster formularies under the titles of "Effectual Calling," and "Sanctification." It was there affirmed respecting "Effectual Calling," that, though appearing to be a substitute for Repentance, and to be rightly placed before the external Justification or Salvation, viz., Forgiveness of sins, the doctrine, as set forth in the Westminster Confession, is really formed to harmonise with the Lutheran view (and with St. Paul when interpreted according to Luther), which makes Repentance follow Forgiveness; and that it contains only such portions of Repentance, Regeneration, and Sanctification as might form a groundwork on which to rest a mere instrumental Faith. We are now in so far prepared to prove and illustrate these positions. So in like manner with the affirmation made as to the Westminster doctrine of "Sanctification," namely, that it is a new doctrine formed to fill up in appearance, if not in reality, the complete chasm that exists between Justification or Salvation, and the department of the Gospel treating of the Christian Life and Good Works, when the former has been made absolutely external. But these subjects will find a much more satisfactory treatment after we have examined, in the two following divisions, the dislocation caused in Faith by making Justification or Salvation external, and the mode in which all this derangement of elements, and all these confused conceptions, can be avoided.

II. The entanglement in which the subject of Faith is involved, when Justification or Salvation is understood to be absolutely external.

II. The confusion just adverted to appears in the fact, that it is utterly impossible to give an exact and intelligible account of what it is that constitutes Faith "the instrument," as it has been called technically by Lutherano-Calvinists, of Justification or Salvation. For, as was shown in our preliminary sketch of this form of doctrine, as it is fully developed in the Westminster formularies; and as has been confirmed by all our subsequent investigations, absolutely nothing about Faith has any connection either as an element or condition with the external Justification or Salvation, except that so-called "instrumental" part or function of Faith. What, then, is this part or function of Faith? And, if it can be pointed out, how is it connected with the other parts or functions of Faith, and with the internal elements in general, which, along with the external or imputative elements, constitute our Redemption? It is utterly impossible to answer these questions satisfactorily. For, if answered in one or other of two ways which appear at first sight satisfactory, this answer will be found, on careful consideration, to land one by a direct necessity in one of those modes of viewing Justification or Salvation which the Westminster formularies exclude, in express terms, as erroneous. It may only do so tacitly, for the formularies, generally speaking, make impossible any but a tacit course of procedure in such matters; nevertheless, the mode of viewing Faith now in question lands substantially in the result that has been

stated. And one of the strongest proofs of this is, that another mode of describing the "instrumental" character of Faith in connection with the external Justification or Salvation, is adopted by the most consistent and earnest advocates of that form of doctrine as set forth in the Westminster formularies. But this mode also of explaining the difficulty, though adopted in obedience to the requirements of "the system," and though appearing at first sight to quadrate completely with these requirements, lands ultimately in the same result as the former, when the attempt is made to find in company with Faith a consistent and intelligible place for all the internal elements of Redemption.

In illustration of these remarks, let it be observed what happens when the former of the two modes just referred to is adopted. Thus, agreeably to that mode, it may be said in answer to the question, What is it in Faith that acts instrumentally? that Faith itself is the "instrument" of the external Justification or Salvation; the term Faith, in this answer, being understood to mean the entire Grace bearing that name, and not merely a portion of that Grace, such as the Trust on which Melancthon insisted. The main advantage thought to be secured by this account of Faith as an instrument is, that, besides avoiding the risk that attends the course of pointing to Trust as the medium of Justification or Salvation (whatever that means), while the Scriptures insist on Faith, it presents the means of restoring, in appearance, the connection between a Justification or Salvation that has been

made absolutely external, and the spiritual and moral elements (called technically Sanctification by the Westminster Divines), intended to be implanted in man by the Gospel. I say restoring this connection in appearance, for the restoration of it in reality is rendered impossible by the terms employed to express the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation. Spiritually indeed, or in the way of Divine Grace implanting the Truth in the souls of those who hold the Westminster doctrine, the matter is, of course, different, inasmuch as, when this implantation takes place there is the true vital connection between the external and internal elements of Redemption formed by Faith. But, viewed as the object of intelligence, or as the matter of logic and Theology, the severance is complete in the Westminster type of doctrine between the external Justification or Salvation, and all the internal elements of Christianity, including Faith; and it is utterly impossible to restore the connection except in appearance and by virtue of an oversight, or sophistically, if the terms of the Confession be kept in view by the party that makes the attempt. The truth of what has just been said as to the severance of Justification or Salvation from Sanctification is proved, not only by the fact that every internal element is articulately ejected from Justification or Salvation by Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, but by the contradictions and confusion that accompany the attempt to unite the two things by means of Faith. However, the affirmation that Faith in its full sense, or the Saving Faith described in the Chapter of the

Confession bearing that title, acts instrumentally in our Justification or Salvation, has the appearance of connecting this benefit as described in the Westminster Confession with Sanctification. For this Faith is just the fruitful mother under Divine Grace of all Christian habits and acts. Herself produced under the inspiration and illumination of the Holy Ghost, and receiving through and in Christ, to Whom she always looks, all the elements of a new nature, she involves in herself Sanctification and Renewal. Thus, then, Faith appears to connect these with an external Justification or Salvation in an intelligible and even necessary manner.

But let the expense to the integrity of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation at which this is done be considered. For, according to this representation, everything done by Faith itself, the act of believing, and Evangelical obedience, all which that form of doctrine was formed with such elaborate care to exclude from contact and admixture with Justification or Salvation, is reintroduced into it by the account thus given of the Faith that justifies. And what likewise makes this particularly objectionable, when viewed from the ground occupied by the Westminster Divines, is its fitness to allow the advocacy, in the most substantial form, of moral conditions to the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation, and its consequent direct tendency to interfere with the principle of gratuitousness as that is carried out and applied in the Westminster system of Theology. For, while that system certainly calls

Faith a "condition" of Justification or Salvation in its exponent the Larger Catechism, and says in its still more dignified exponent, the Confession, that "Faith is required in order to Life and Salvation;" still it excludes, in the most absolute and thorough-going manner, every spiritual and moral quality of Faith from any place as an element or moral condition of Justification or Salvation, as a comparison of the Larger Catechism and the Confession will show. Indeed, we need only read the answers to the 72nd and 73rd Questions in the Larger Catechism to see how anxiously everything but its "instrumental" capacity (that, however, being left undefined) was excluded from Faith in its connection with Justification or Salvation. To the Question, What is justifying Faith? it is answered, "Justifying Faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth on Christ and His righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person as righteous in the sight of God for salvation." And, as if this were not sufficiently explicit in showing that Faith has only to do "instrumentally" with Justification or Salvation, it is further said in answer to the Question, "How doth Faith justify a sinner in the sight of God? Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do

always accompany it, or of good works that are the fruits of it, nor as if the grace of Faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification ; but only as it is an instrument by which he receiveth and applieth Christ and His righteousness." And this is just a declaration in another form of what, as has been already shown, is set forth in Chapter XI of the Confession. Now, instead of this "justifying" or "instrumental" Faith, which appears to be the indefinable something remaining after every moral quality involved in, or flowing from, Faith has been abstracted—instead of this, I say, the parties who affirm that Faith itself justifies substitute the "Saving Faith" described in Chapter XIX of the Confession, in which is involved everything that the passages just quoted from the Larger Catechism, and from Chapter XI of the Confession, exclude from "Justifying Faith." They thus undo tacitly, but most substantially, all that the Westminster Divines did to subject Faith, as well as Repentance and its parallels, to the theoretical requirements of an absolutely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation.

The late Principal Hill, in his "Lectures in Divinity," described justifying Faith in the mode just pointed out, in order to make out by its means an apparent connection between Justification and Sanctification. In doing this, however, he only followed in the steps of Dr. Haddow, his predecessor both as Principal of St. Mary's, St. Andrew's, and as Leader of the Church of Scotland, who was mainly concerned in drawing up those Acts of the General Assembly of the Scottish

Church which have been already referred to as introducing into that Church a quite different Creed from its legal and authoritative one contained in the Westminster Confession. Those Acts, as already intimated, will afford matter of remark when I come to show that the Westminster formularies contain no "legitimate" *via media*, or leave no room for the adoption of a different form of doctrine from the extreme Lutherano-Calvinistic one, for they were expressly formed to exclude what Bacon, speaking out of an abundant knowledge of Lutherano-Calvinism, meant to contrast with it on the one hand, and with the Papistical scheme of doctrine on the other, when he spoke of a *via media* in Theology.

Another mode of explaining how Faith may be maintained to justify only as an "instrument;" and how, at the same time, the mere external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation is connected by its means with Sanctification, has been adopted by the undoubted and staunch adherents of the Westminster doctrine because it quadrates more completely, at least at first sight, with the requirements of that doctrine than the mode last considered; and because it is more in accordance than that mode with the undoubted historical meaning of the Westminster doctrine as that has been ascertained in this Note. But though this mode of explanation starts fairly, it will be seen to land by an inevitable necessity in exactly the same consequences as the previous view.

According to the mode of explanation now in question, Justifying Faith (or, as it may with strict

technical accuracy be called, "Instrumental Faith") is simply assent to what is maintained to be revealed truth, namely, an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation for Christ's sake in order to the enjoyment, through that external benefit only, of Eternal Life. This Assent to what is maintained, as above, to be the truth of the Gospel does not, according to the view now under consideration, involve consent to the commandments of God as an element giving it any spiritual or moral efficacy and value in order to Justification or Salvation and its consequent, Eternal Life. In other words, whatever be the connection between the Assent to the Gospel as already explained and Consent to the commandments of God (and, as shall be shown presently, the closest connection is maintained to subsist between them), still it is not any spiritual or moral value accruing to the Assent from this its connection with Consent, that gives to the former its efficacy as the "instrument" of Justification or Salvation. It must rather be considered as having an absolutely neutral character as regards morals, and as being all the better suited on account of that neutral character to be the "instrument" for "apprehending" a Justification or Salvation, whose grounds exist entirely in another than the person or individual justified or saved.

But how is this justifying Assent to a doctrine maintained to be the Gospel, connected with the Sanctifying Consent to the Divine commandments? How, according to this view, are an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation received by mere

assent, and Sanctification and Good Works connected with each other? It is said, then, that this takes place in virtue of a law of Psychology; and that the necessary connection between the two can thus be explained in accordance with the principles of that science. Thus it is argued that, while Assent to truth is clearly distinguishable from all the other capacities and acts of the soul, and can be pointed out as that which alone justifies instrumentally, still, as a consequence of the principles that regulate the working of the mind, consent to the commandments of God will always necessarily accompany a real assent to the truth of the Gospel as the message of God. The mind, it is said, cannot possibly be brought under the influence of Revealed Truth so as to entertain a genuine assent to it, without being also brought to entertain consent to the Laws enjoined by the Author of that Truth.

Though the above be a very meager statement of the second mode of exhibiting the connection alleged to exist between the absolutely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation and Sanctification, when nothing more than bare Assent is made the "instrument" for receiving the former benefit, still the ingeniousness of that mode is at once apparent. I am relieved from the necessity of considering its validness as a Psychological speculation, or its sufficiency to remove the difficulty that demanded such a solution, because abundant presumptive proof has been adduced in this Note to show that that difficulty is purely factitious. No such difficulty exists when Justifica-

tion or Salvation is rightly represented, and, accordingly, in that case there is no need for any such mode of removing it. It will be again shown, indeed, in the concluding part of this Section, that this difficulty, as well as other difficulties of the Westminster Theology noticed in this Section, was avoided in Knox's Creed. It may be remarked, however, that the above scientific speculation finds, I may say of course, no explicit countenance in Holy Scripture. On the contrary, it has never been possible to demonstrate that even mere Trust (not to mention mere Assent), and not rather a full Faith, was meant in the central passages on which the doctrine of a purely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation has been based. And it cannot be doubted for a moment that a full Faith, not Assent merely, or not even Trust, is meant in the numerous passages cited to show that the Faith which justifies must also be a Faith which sanctifies. This is manifest from the quotations made from Scripture even by the advocates of the view now under consideration, so that the result of this second view is the same in fact with that of the view previously examined.

In fact, the circumstance that such attempts at giving a show of intelligibility to the subject of an "instrumental faith" are necessary, demonstrates the existence of disorganization and confusion in the doctrine of which it forms part. A remarkable testimony is also borne to the true form of doctrine by the result of both the above attempts to connect the external Justification or Salvation with Sanctification. For it is to be observed that, with whatever care Theolo-

gians may have separated everything in Faith of a moral kind from any connection, as an element or condition, with Justification or Salvation, making its connection with that external benefit only of the instrumental kind; and however they may have contended that this "instrumental" part of Faith was only Trust or Assent or some such thing, still has the necessity for a full Faith even in connection with Justification or Salvation always made itself evident in the last result. What is proverbially affirmed of nature, "though it be cast out with a fork, it will always return," holds good as to truth in the case now under consideration. And the truth is indeed only asserting its rightful claims when a full Faith is always thus acknowledged to be necessary. The understanding of Trust or Assent, instead of a full Faith, as the recipient of Justification or Salvation, is a pure mistake. In this mistake lies the principal *nodus* that needs a solution in order to reintroduce order into the representation of Reconciliation, or Salvation, or Justification; and to establish harmony between the revealed plan of Redemption and our ineradicable instinct as to the necessity for congruousness in statements. When that knot is unloosed, it appears that the All-wise and All-merciful Father of Spirits accommodated his plan for the recovery of men from their sinfulness and guilt, to those capacities of reason and understanding which He Himself originally bestowed on man.

Dr. Chalmers propounded the last of the above views of Faith, in one of the most elaborate Chapters

of his "Institutes of Theology." The peculiarity of his treatment of the subject does not consist in his making mere Assent the "instrumental" or "justifying" Faith, but in the ingenuity of the grounds on which he argues that there must be a necessary connection between Assent to the truth of the Gospel, and Consent to the commandments of God. In fact, it was quite characteristic of Dr. Chalmers's enlightened aims and philosophical spirit thus to seek for a satisfactory connection between Justification or Salvation and Sanctification; while it was most honorable to him that he strenuously maintained exactly that form of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation which is set forth in the Standards, and avoided the Creed introduced into the Church by the Acts of Assembly already referred to. But he shared the tenet that mere Assent justifies with many whose main, if not only, object appeared to be the upholding, in its most perfect form, of the dogma that Justification or Salvation, with its consequent Eternal Life, comes only by an instrumental faith without works. These parties put aside the Trust fixed on by Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession, and by many of the other early Reformers, and insisted on by the early opponents in the Church of Scotland of the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722, as involving in it too much of a moral quality as well as being something different from mere Assent or Belief, in which they contended that Justifying Faith consists. And along with the tenet that it is Assent that justifies, was sometimes held the cognate one of "Assurance of Faith" in its true Lutheran sense.

But a brief notice of the parties who held such tenets will come in more appropriately when the great reaction against the Theology introduced into the Church of Scotland by means of the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722, comes under review at the close of this Note.

III. On the causes of the dislocations and entanglements just considered, and on a result of them not yet noticed, viz., the production of two factitious doctrines, Effectual Calling and Sanctification.

III. A characteristic excellency of the Confession of Knox, as I pointed out in my examination of that Symbol, was its entire freedom from that dislocation of the elements of Redemption, and entanglement of the subject of Faith, just noticed in the Westminster Confession, and the consequent perfect symmetry that signalled its representation of Justification, or Salvation, or Reconciliation, or Redemption, the second great department of Christian Truth. The causes of this symmetry were at the same time pointed out. The chief of these causes was shown to be the mode in which Knox, avoiding the example set by Melancthon, Calvin, and Beza, left room for including Repentance, or Regeneration, or Sanctification, under the conception of Justification or Salvation. He did not, like the Continental Reformers just named, identify Justification, or Salvation, or Reconciliation with Forgiveness : he did not make the former benefit, in accordance with that identification, purely external or imputative ; and so introduce confusion among the doctrines of Christianity by ejecting the internal elements Repentance, Regeneration, and Sanctification,

from their proper places in the representation of the Gospel. And in the next place, his treatment of the all-important subject of Faith was also shown to be fitted to allow the correct and full representation of it in connection with Justification, or Salvation, or Reconciliation ; and to keep it free from the inextricable entanglements we have noticed in the treatment of it by the Westminster Divines. Thus the “organic functions” of Faith, or its use as a “conduit” of grace, are clearly set forth in Knox’s Confession, as was specially proved by statements quoted from the Confession, in my “digest of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation contained in Knox’s Symbol.” No words could more clearly establish this point than the following : “For how soon that ever the Spirit of Jesus (which God’s elect children receive by true faith) takes possession in the heart of any man, so soon does He regenerate and renew that man.” And in doing this, Knox was fully borne out by statements of the Augsburg Confession ; for example, by the following one : “spiritual righteousness” (or, as in the earlier form of the Augsburg Confession, righteousness of God) “is wrought in us when we are assisted by the Holy Ghost. Moreover, we receive the Holy Spirit when we assent to the Word of God so that we may be comforted by faith, just as Paul teaches when he says, *That ye may receive the promise of the Spirit by faith.* Augustine says the same thing in his Hypomnesticon.” Again, though using the formula “by faith only” to denote the gratuitousness of Forgiveness, and its equivalent elements in Reconciliation, Redemp-

tion, and Justification, Knox throughout his Confession avoided with sedulous care the error of identifying Forgiveness with Reconciliation, or Redemption, or Salvation, or Justification. He avoided even the germinal form of this error seen in the Augsburg Confession. Instead of pursuing the erroneous course suggested by the dogmatic aspect of that Confession, he left room in his own Symbol for adding Repentance to Forgiveness of sins in order to form Salvation ; or for combining the “ organic functions of Faith ” with its functions of Trust and Affiance in order to the securing thereby of a full Justification. By taking this course, not only were the dislocations and entanglements consequent on the other course avoided, but the gratuitousness of the internal elements of Redemption was manifested, without in the least obscuring the gratuitousness of the external ones. Both the external and internal elements form, according to this view, parts of one gift ; which is bestowed with no other condition than this, that it be accepted entire. Finally, the “ operative ” functions of Faith are set forth both by express statements respecting them, and by the manner in which the awful realities of judgment and Eternity are declared to act on Christians through their apprehension of them by Faith.

It may be repeated at this point, that the Articles of the Church of England were unquestionably constructed so as to allow the above mode of adjusting the elements of Redemption, and of understanding Faith in its connection with Justification or Salvation. A similar remark applies to the Aberdeen Confession.

It may be here stated in explicit terms, though by the way, that in the above remarks on the doctrine symbolised by Knox, we employed the terms Justification, Salvation, Reconciliation, and Redemption, as of equivalent meaning. In accordance with principles abundantly confirmed in our examination of Knox's Confession and other Symbols, we understand that each of those terms denotes the spiritual and moral change effected by Divine Grace on man in Christ, as well as the external or imputative benefits bestowed by God for Christ's sake on those who are in Christ. And to the terms just named may now be added Sanctification; for the same twofold benefit is described by means of that term in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that is described in the Epistle to the Ephesians by the term Salvation, and in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians by the terms Justification and Salvation. Perhaps Regeneration ought also to be placed in the same class, but this term would appear to be classed more correctly on the whole with Repentance, Renewal, Faith, and other words appropriated to denote the subjective, spiritual, and moral changes wrought in man by the Gospel. It may be added, that the expression "the Gospel" has the least ambiguous claims to be considered the most general term descriptive of the latest Revelation made by God to man.

Whereas, then, a perfect symmetry is the result of understanding the first class of terms mentioned above in the twofold sense so often insisted on in this Note, irremediable dislocations and inextricable confusion result from the identification of them with Forgive-

ness, combined with the clearly announced principle that Justification or Salvation is the primary gift bestowed on the sinner by God. The first part of this statement has been abundantly verified in our examination of Knox's Confession ; and the second part of it has been abundantly verified in our examination both of the Augsburg and Westminster Confessions. Only one other thing now remains to be done in order to complete our illustration of this part of our subject. That is an exhibition of the mode in which the two peculiar doctrines of the Westminster Confession, "Effectual Calling" and "Sanctification" came into being. This, and particularly the production of the doctrine of "Sanctification," will be seen to be the result of making Justification or Salvation wholly external, and of the derangement so caused. The existence of these two doctrines will also be found to present the crowning proof of the completeness with which both the cause of confusion, and the confusion consequent on that cause, have been introduced into the Westminster Confession.

As respects "Effectual Calling," it is only the influence exerted in its production by an absolutely external form of Justification or Salvation, that now demands our attention ; for the other influences engaged in its formation were treated of in the first Part of this Note. It was there shown that this doctrine was the result of extreme tenets as to Predestination and Election on the one hand ; and of as extreme tenets as to the depravity and moral impotency of Human Nature on the other. And the influence of the Westminster

doctrine of Justification or Salvation in producing it must now be considered, in accordance with my statements made in the First Part of this Note with an eye to the point now reached—the statements, namely, that the Westminster Divines framed their doctrine of “Effectual Calling,” so that it might agree with the main doctrine of their formularies, that is, the doctrine of Salvation. Now the influence under consideration will become quite apparent when attention is given to the interpretation put by the Westminster Divines, in accordance with their own system, on the Scriptural formula that led them to treat of “Calling” immediately before treating of Justification. This Scriptural formula is Romans viii, 29, 30: “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 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.” Now the final end of the Divine decree respecting those whom God foreknew, is declared in this passage to be the conforming of them to the image of Jesus Christ (an end that confessedly can only be reached through Regeneration and Repentance as well as Forgiveness); and the steps by which that end is declared in the passage to be reached are a calling, justifying, and glorifying of them by God. But since the second-named of these steps, Justification, was declared by the Westminster Divines to be absolutely external or imputative; and since the third-named step appears to

have been understood by them as the future state of bliss of the justified, rather than their adoption as sons by God and sealing with the earnest of the Spirit; it only remained, in accordance with this view, to find a place for Repentance, Regeneration and Sanctification (if any place were to be found for them at all), under the first-named step of Calling. And this is exactly what the Westminster Divines did. They framed their doctrine of "Effectual Calling," and included under it, in a way, Regeneration and Repentance, instead of including them in the form of "righteousness of God" under Justification. I say they included Regeneration and Repentance in a way under "Effectual Calling," because if that be "Effectual Calling" which precedes Justification, then must this be restricted in reality to the mere instrumental Faith which receives the Justification that is made purely external by the Westminster Divines, and is declared by St. Paul to be the primary gift bestowed on the sinner; and at the same time, all that is included nominally by the Westminster Divines under the head of "Effectual Calling," must thus fall in reality under what the Westminster Divines call Sanctification. And the Chapter of "Effectual Calling" in the Westminster Confession was framed, as was pointed out a little way back, to agree with this arrangement of elements. Contemplating the Westminster doctrine of "Effectual Calling," however, from the point of view presented in the portion of Scripture quoted at the commencement of this paragraph, that doctrine is seen to illustrate very strikingly the completeness with

which Justification or Salvation was made external or imputative, and the consequent derangement of the symmetry that would, but for this, characterise the positions and the functions of the elements of Redemption. And the Scriptural point of view thus selected by me cannot be objected to on any reasonable ground, since the passage affording it is quoted in the Westminster Confession as the leading proof both of "Effectual Calling" and "Justification."

In addition to what has just been said, it may be remarked that, as confusion is removed from the representation of Christianity in other respects by assigning a place to Regeneration and Sanctification in Justification or Salvation, so by the same means can the subject of the Gospel Call be cleared of that confusion with other elements which it presents in the Westminster Confession. For it is unquestionable that, in consequence of Repentance and Regeneration being excluded by the Westminster Divines from Justification, they were in a way included by the same Divines in the Gospel Call according to the plan suggested to them by their understanding of Romans viii, 29, 30. Consequently, it is of these elements of Gospel truth that they treat under the name of an "Effectual Call," rather than of the Gospel Call itself; and much confusion of thought and language inevitably results from this confounding of subjects that are in themselves distinct. This must be the result when the Call and the obedience to the Call are jumbled together and treated of as one thing, as is the case in Chapter X of the Westminster Confession.

Doubtless, it is by Divine preparation that the sinner at first obeys the Call of the Gospel, according to our Lord's words, "no man cometh unto me except the Father draw him;" and as was illustrated by the preparatory process which led the Jailer of Philippi to obey the invitation, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." It is also by Divine power that the course entered on in obedience to the Call of the Gospel is persevered in. But these things are clearly distinguishable; and they are treated of in the Scriptures as distinct from the Call, which is addressed by the Gospel unto all, in pursuance of God's merciful design, "who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." And the drawing of this distinction is very far from reducing the Call itself to something merely external in its character—to a thing, therefore, of less solemnity and power. On the contrary, it enables the mind to contemplate more satisfactorily, because more clearly and intelligibly, all the elements of truth that combine in giving to the Call of the Gospel such overpowering persuasiveness. The Gospel Call is thereby seen to possess an altogether peculiar persuasiveness by virtue of the grand truths on the basis of which it is uttered, and of the inestimable benefits to whose participation it invites; while it is not less seen to be invested with the infinitely solemn authoritativeness of Man's Creator, Redeemer, and Judge. In a word, when the Gospel Call is thus contemplated, it is seen to be completely adapted by Divine wisdom and goodness to act either as the primary inducement to the sinner to repent and believe, or as the embassy

of grace which the already awakened sinner will with utmost thankfulness accept.

But let the Westminster doctrine of "Sanctification" be now adverted to. It is to be observed first, then, that when Regeneration and Sanctification are involved in Justification or Salvation, in the sense attached to the former terms in Knox's Confession, the connection between Justification or Salvation and Good Works is manifest; and, consequently, there is no necessity for framing such a stopgap between the two as is required in the Westminster system of doctrine, and presented in the Westminster doctrine of "Sanctification." That such an expedient is absolutely necessary in the case of the Westminster system of doctrine, in order to save appearances, becomes quite manifest when one considers that all internal or subjective elements of righteousness, and also good works are excluded in that system from occupying any place whatever as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation; and that the entire system is framed to agree with the tenet, that a quite indefinable "instrumental faith" only receives the purely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, as the primary gift bestowed by God on the sinner. It is obvious, that an urgent necessity emerges in such circumstances for proving and illustrating in some form or another a connection between the external benefit that is affirmed to bring with it Eternal Life, and Good Works. And the Westminster Divines did this in appearance by means of the special doctrine of "Sanctification" set forth in their Formularies.

The doctrine of "Sanctification" is indeed peculiar to the Westminster formularies. I took care to point out in my examination of the Augsburg Confession, with an eye to the point now reached in my investigations, that while the element of Sanctification or Holiness was evidently dislocated in that Symbol by its definition of Justification or Salvation, still the Confession contained no special doctrine of "Sanctification." I pointed out the absence of such a doctrine also in the second class of Symbols, of which the Helvetic Confession was a leading example. Any trace of such a doctrine was, of course, not to be looked for in Knox's Creed, inasmuch as, unlike the Lutheran and Lutherano-Calvinistic Symbols, it avoided that cause of separation between the subjective and the external elements of Redemption, which, when fully developed as in the Westminster Confession, rendered a special doctrine of Sanctification necessary in order to keep up an appearance of connection between the absolutely external Justification or Salvation and the moral elements of Christianity, and consequently between Justification or Salvation and Good Works. And that this Sanctification forms no real, but only an apparent, connection between the external Justification or Salvation, said to be received by an "instrumental faith," and Good Works, appears from the circumstance already pointed out and illustrated in this Section, namely, the impossibility of showing any connection between the "Justifying" or "Instrumental" Faith mentioned in the Westminster formularies and "Sanctification," without covertly reintroducing a view of

Faith in connection with Justification or Salvation which these formularies had already excluded in express terms. And in fact these formularies themselves never pretend to show how the absolutely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation by an "instrumental faith only," can be connected either with "Sanctification" or Good Works. They simply affirm that such a connection exists. For example, it is said in Chapter XI of the Confession, "Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of Justification; yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love." Again it is said in the Larger Catechism, in answer to the Question, Wherein do Justification and Sanctification differ? "Although Sanctification be inseparably joined with Justification, yet they differ," &c. And it is undeniable that the Westminster Divines manifested very great wisdom in thus simply affirming that the connection in question does exist. For the impossibility of establishing such a connection on grounds at once intelligible and consistent with the definition of Justification or Salvation set forth in Chapter XI of the Confession, has been already shown in our examination of the attempts made by Principal Hill and Dr. Chalmers to establish such a connection.

As the passage Rom. viii, 29, 30, is quoted in the Westminster Confession as the proof that "Effectual Calling" rightly precedes "Justification" in that Formulary, so is the passage, 1 Cor. i, 30, 31,

sometimes quoted to prove that the doctrine of "Sanctification" rightly follows that of Justification. This passage is as follows: "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." The passage, indeed, is far from being quoted in the above sense in the Westminster formularies. It is not quoted at all among the proofs of "Sanctification" in the Confession of Faith, but among the proofs of the absolutely external and gratuitous "Justification;" and, following the words of Jeremiah xxiii, 6, "And this is His Name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness," it was evidently meant to bear the external and imputative sense throughout, as is shown by the mode of italicising it. And, as the passage is the exact parallel not only of the one in Jeremiah, but of Rom. viii, 29, 30, and others on which the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation is based, the framers of the "Italicised Edition" of the Westminster formularies were quite correct, according to their own system, in understanding 1 Cor. i, 29, 30, to bear throughout the external and imputative sense. Calvin himself, however, in his 'Institutes,' interpreted the passage in the manner indicated at the commencement of this paragraph; and many professed adherents of the Westminster formularies, departing on this point from strict adherence to the requirements of their own system, have followed Calvin. Principal Hill, for example, as appears from his 'Institutes,' followed

Calvin (at least he expresses himself so as to coincide with Calvin) in his interpretation of this important passage.

The language of the important formula under consideration is most unlikely to suggest or countenance either the purely external and imputative sense affixed to it in the "Italicised Edition" of the Westminster formularies, or the sense attached to it by Calvin. In fact, it was because Justification or Salvation was maintained to be indubitably external and gratuitous, according to the central statements of St. Paul in the Epistles to the Romans, Ephesians, and Galatians, that the entire passage in question was, with thorough consistency, interpreted in the same sense in the Westminster formularies, or, with less consistency; in the manner adopted by Calvin and followed by Principal Hill. In these circumstances, I do not feel called on to do more than to have thus adverted to the support sometimes sought for in Scripture for the arrangement of doctrines in the Westminster Confession, unless it be to add the following remark. I observe, then, that, even if there existed no independent means of showing that passages like Rom. iii, 21, &c., and Eph. ii, 8, &c., are not correctly interpreted in the purely external and imputative sense, passages like 1 Cor. i, 29, 30, ought rather to act as checks on the development of that form of doctrine, instead of being forced into harmony with it. They ought to act exactly as it has been shown that the passages 1 Cor. xi, 6, and Tit. iii, 5, 6, 7, were made to act on their exact complements, Rom. iii, 21,

&c., and Eph. ii, 8, &c., in the Confession of Knox. And this consideration receives a very great accession of force from the fact, that independent exegetical reasons can now be adduced to show that passages like the two last referred to cannot bear the purely external and imputative sense. In this altered state of things, all the important classes of formulas mentioned in this paragraph are seen to agree exactly in declaring what certainly makes itself felt, *primá facie*, as the sense of the words, “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption : that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

I propose to postpone the consideration of some things suggested by the subject treated of in this Section to the close of the next Section, when, along with other things of a similar kind suggested by matters in the latter Section, they will come more conveniently under notice.

SECTION III.

ON THE THOROUGHNESS
OF THE
COLLISION BETWEEN THE SUBJECTIVE AND EXTERNAL
ELEMENTS OF REDEMPTION,
IN THE
WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE
OF
JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION;
AND ON THE
INERADICABLE THEORETICAL ANTINOMIANISM OF THAT
DOCTRINE.

I PROPOSE, in accordance with what was stated at the commencement of the last Section, to consider in this Section the consequences of making Justification or Salvation absolutely external or imputative, when this erroneous principle comes to be combined with the true principle as to the gratuitousness of Justification or Salvation.

I. A thorough collision is caused between Justification and the Divine com-

I. It came clearly into view in my examination of the Augsburg Confession, that a most disastrous collision between Justification or Salvation and the Divine com-

mands enjoining righteousness and holiness, when the former is maintained to be absolutely external as well as absolutely gratuitous.

mands enjoining righteousness and holiness is the direct and inevitable result of making the great Gospel benefit a purely external or imputative as well as a purely gratuitous thing. For whereas the Divine commands promulgated by the Gospel declare that Repentance, Regeneration,

Righteousness, and Holiness are necessary in order to the reaching and enjoying of Eternal Life, this is flatly contradicted by the declaration that these graces are neither elements of Justification or Salvation, for it is external or imputative; nor conditions of Justification or Salvation, for it is as well gratuitous as the undoubted ground or title for the attainment and enjoyment of Eternal Life. A more complete case of contradiction than this can neither be instanced nor imagined.

But it also appeared in my examination of the Augsburg Confession, that the collision between the doctrine of an external and imputative Justification or Salvation, and the Divine commands which enjoin righteousness and holiness as necessary in order to the attainment of Salvation and Eternal Life, is in an important sense only germinal in the case of that Confession. The collision is perfect in principle in that Symbol; but it is also described with perfect truth as being germinal, inasmuch as the principle was applied explicitly in that Symbol to only one of the numerous propositions with which it must inevitably conflict when it is dogmatically insisted on. Indeed, it can scarcely be said that the principle was applied explicitly even to the one case in the Augsburg Con-

fession, just referred to. The case in question appeared in Melancthon's statement "that repentance and good works are necessary;" and the principle was seen to apply here as it constrained Melancthon to forbear stating why repentance and good works are necessary. They could not be affirmed by him to be necessary as elements of Justification or Salvation, for he maintained that benefit to be external; nor as conditions of Justification or Salvation, for the benefit is undeniably a gift to the sinner: nor, consequently, as necessary in order to the enjoyment of Eternal Life, since Justification or Salvation secures that; but, nevertheless, the Bible does declare them necessary, in a manner that Melancthon dared not deny, at least for Eternal Life; and he accordingly compromises the matter by simply stating their necessity. Much skill, indeed, is displayed in the manner in which Melancthon, while maintaining unequivocally the doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, confined the collision between that and the Divine commandments touching righteousness and holiness to one, or, at most, two points; and contrived even in the case of these points to cast a veil over the contradiction that affected them as stated by him.

But this matter presents a very different aspect in the Westminster Confession. In that Symbol the contradiction makes itself heard in every case in which it was possible for it to do so; and the collision is thorough between the doctrine of Justification or Salvation, as set forth in that Symbol, and the Divine commandments enjoining righteousness and

holiness. For its framers took up and decided, in accordance with the principles of an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, all the grounds on which it was urged in successive controversies that righteousness and holiness are not merely *necessary*, but necessary either as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation, and consequently necessary in order to the enjoyment of Eternal Life. The principle that was applied tacitly to one, or, at most, two such grounds in the Augsburg Confession; but which was strictly applicable to every conceivable ground on which the necessity of righteousness and holiness in the above sense can be urged,—this principle was applied articulately and exhaustively by the Westminster Divines. They, indeed, had only to complete a work that was almost finished to their hands by previous labourers; but this they did most effectually. How all this happened has been already substantially related in my account of the building up of the Westminster doctrine of a thoroughly external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation. That process needs only to be considered from the proper point of view, in order to see how, throughout the whole of it, the theologians employed in it were strenuously disputing the necessity of righteousness and holiness in order to Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life, and were making more thorough and complete the collision between their own doctrine and the sanctions of the Divine commandments.

Thus it is declared in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, that the “persons” of the “effectually

called," or of "sinners," are "justified," or saved and made heirs of Eternal Life, "not for anything wrought in them or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone." This statement affirms, undoubtedly on the strength of such passages of Scripture as Rom. iii, 24, and Eph. ii, 8, 9, which declare Justification or Salvation to be a gift, that that benefit is bestowed gratuitously and for Christ's sake alone; so that whatever any or all internal graces, any or all good works, may be necessary for, they are not necessary as conditions in order to enjoy Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life. Again, it is declared in the same Chapter of the Westminster Confession, that the inestimable benefits in question are reached by the "effectually called," or "sinners," "not by (God's) imputing (or reckoning) faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them as their righteousness; but by imputing (or reckoning) the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them." This statement, as has been already fully proved, was directly aimed against another of the grounds on which it was maintained that it was necessary to obey the Evangelical commandments in order to reach Salvation and Eternal Life. But this is not all. The "freeness," that is, the gratuitousness or absolute unconditionateness of Justification or Salvation as understood by Lutherano-Calvinists, was deemed to run particular risk from the Arminian view of Faith, at the time when the Westminster Confession was framed. Hence it is declared in a special paragraph, "Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification;

yet, it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love." The first portion of this paragraph, which declares that Faith justifies only as an "instrument," when combined with the statement last quoted, completely shuts up the only remaining way of attempting to evade the inexorable principle involved in the Lutheran dogma, and makes the application of that principle, so far as the Westminster formularies are concerned, imperative in every conceivable case. In a word, this Chapter of the Westminster Confession declares articulately that Repentance, Regeneration, Sanctification, Good Works, Faith in all its acts and capacities—every spiritual and moral quality, in short, which the Holy Ghost implants in the Christian, and all good works performed by the Christian in the power of the Holy Ghost—are not necessary as conditions any more than as elements of Justification or Salvation; that they are, consequently, not necessary as conditions to the enjoyment of Eternal Life. Hence a thorough and completed antagonism and collision between this doctrine and the sanctions annexed by Divine authority to the Evangelical commandments enjoining Repentance, and demanding the fruits of Repentance in all manner of righteous, holy, and godly conversation.

When considering the germinal state of this collision as it exists in the Augsburg Confession, I proved the reality of the collision by adducing the fact of the general judgment, which shows that men are not put into the enjoyment of Eternal Life in the mode

described germinally in the Augsburg Confession, and in a developed manner in the Westminster Formulary. But it can easily be shown, in like manner, that the propositions of that Chapter come into direct collision with many specific statements of the Scriptures ; and attention to this clearly illustrates by examples the erroneous tenor and scope of the absolutely external and imputative doctrine of Justification or Salvation. Let the few examples that follow suffice. Thus, Scripture says respecting Regeneration, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Respecting Repentance, Scripture says, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" and again, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto Salvation that needs not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Respecting Repentance and Good Works on the one hand, and Justification on the other, Scripture saith, "For he that is dead is justified from sin;" and again, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Lastly, respecting the vision of God in a future state of being, Scripture saith: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" and, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Now, what we deem ourselves to see intellectually through the medium of language must be a mere mirage, if the passages just quoted do not really teach the absolute necessity of being born again and repenting, as the fulfilment of conditions towards the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life. But this has been sweepingly and

flatly contradicted by the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation, inasmuch as that doctrine declares, articulately and exhaustively, of every subjective, spiritual, and moral principle and their fruits, though enjoined by express Divine commands, that they are not necessary either as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation; and that, consequently, they are as little necessary as conditions to the enjoyment of Eternal Life.

The disastrous collision between the second great doctrine of Christianity as it is set forth in the Westminster formularies, and the Divine commandments that enjoin righteousness and holiness, can be at once removed in the same way that the dislocation of elements, caused by making Justification or Salvation purely external or imputative, was seen to be removed in the last Section. Thus, let the subjective spiritual and moral elements of Christianity, be they called Repentance, or Regeneration, or Sanctification, or Righteousness of God, or Faith, be included, as well as Forgiveness of sins and the covering of them with the righteousness of Christ, under the conception and definition of Justification or Salvation, and complete harmony will be at once restored to the representation of Christianity. The collision between the principle of gratuitousness and the Divine commandments, which is caused by making God's great gift of Salvation a merely imputative thing, at once disappears with its whole train of tormenting paradoxes. Thereby the crooked places are made straight, and the rough places are made plain. Instead of being called on to con-

template the contradiction to the sanctions of the "commandments of God" presented in what professes to be "the Faith of Christ," a man is now called on to contemplate the fact that Christ was "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins"—that is, to give, in the fullest sense of the terms, Justification or Salvation. For, when rightly understood, all the other modes of describing Redemption have just the same plain and direct meaning expressed, in the quotation just made, by the words "repentance and remission of sins," and leave their hearers with minds equally unembarrassed, either to act directly in accordance with their dictates, so as to secure their temporal and eternal well-being, or to reject them at their own peril and to their own unspeakable loss. In short, the trumpet gives no uncertain, but a most certain, sound, when thus echoing the pure celestial notes of the Gospel. It is made clear that a man has just to pray with the earnestness and continuousness suitable to its inestimable value for the entire gift proclaimed to be ready for bestowal on all, and to commence living and acting in firm reliance on Divine aid and hope in Divine mercy, agreeably to the instructions given him in Holy Scripture. He may, indeed, have periods of darkness to pass through; he may have hard battles to fight with foes within his own heart and in the world without; he may have "sloughs of despond" to welter in, and shameful defeats to endure: but the longer he perseveres in his efforts, the stronger shall he find the reasons and the motives to become for

enduring to the end, and of one evil shall he be free,—even from the contemplation of tormenting paradoxes connected with the great practical concern of his soul. In testimony that I have not misnamed the state of mind excited in many conscientious persons by the collision that has been considered, let the following citation from the “*Institutes of Theology*” by Dr. Chalmers be attended to. “Ever since the period of the Reformation, when Protestants and Papists took their respective sides, and the doctrine of Salvation by faith was placed in array against the doctrine of Salvation by works—ever since then argumentations of a learned theology have multiplied on our hands; yet we are uncertain whether, instead of casting light upon the subject, they have not left a deeper haze upon it than before. Such, we doubt not, has been the effect on many a mind. There has been so much said on the danger of trusting to works, that men are positively afraid of meddling with them at all. They have been told that to believe is all in all; but often they have not been told, by a trumpet giving forth no uncertain sound on the subject—often have they not been told what that thing is which they have plainly and practically to go about. The minds of men, we greatly fear, are both bedimmed and benumbed upon the question, so that, in consequence, a stealthy and secret Antinomianism has been creeping over the Church, and is positively gaining ground amongst us. It would appear as if their very orthodoxy had spell-bound both the preachers and the hearers—the one at a loss what to say, and the other what to do, in the

matter. It is a miserable thing when men are thus left to strive so uncertainly, and to fight as one who beateth the air, instead of being set on a plain path, along which they might clearly and confidently go forward, with the delightful assurance that their labour is not in vain in the Lord; and that every footstep they take brings them so much nearer to the prize of a high calling." Well might the same author say respecting this state of things: "This is a sore evil."

The work from which the above remarkable passage is quoted, abounds in passages of an exactly similar spirit and scope. It is not to be wondered at that though Dr. Chalmers' own doctrine of "Salvation by faith" (the Westminster one) was intimately connected with the evil state of things deplored by him; he never on that account suspected, at least he never declared, anything to be wrong with that doctrine. It was in a special sense his own doctrine, adopted by him deliberately in preference to another, battled for by him in opposition to that other doctrine, and in which he instructed a very large number of young men, as I had the best opportunity of knowing. But I should wonder exceedingly, were I not now in some degree acquainted with the sheer ignorance, or utter obliviousness, or Machiavellian silence as to the real theological character of the Reformation of Scotland by Knox and his coadjutors,—but for that I should wonder exceedingly at the idea implied in the above passage, and in others, by Dr. Chalmers, that his doctrine of "Salvation by faith" was the reformed

doctrine of Scotland, inasmuch as a doctrine like it was the reformed doctrine in several countries. For, passing over the circumstance that Dr. Chalmers' doctrine (the Westminster doctrine) differed even from the Augsburg doctrine in the important respects pointed out in this Note, the former differs entirely both in principle and detail from the primitive reformed doctrine of Scotland. Knox and his coadjutors did the utmost they could do to ward off from Scotland that "sore evil" deplored by Dr. Chalmers, by giving no authorised place in the country to that form of doctrine in which the cause of this "sore evil" inheres ineradicably; but by rather securing for the country the preaching in it of the Gospel in its own divinely-implemented character of unblemished symmetry, convincing directness, and constraining persuasiveness. Knox's Confession, as it still stands in the Scottish Statute-Book, affords unanswerable evidence of this.

I esteem it matter of profound thankfulness that the unchallengeable testimony of the most radical and Protestant of the primitive and pure Reformers remains as to the fact, that even the germinal Lutheran dogma, not to mention its developments, is not an essential part of the system contended for in the sixteenth century. For were it really an essential part of it, a fearfully humiliating defeat must have awaited the entire Protestant Party, on the very ground that is deemed strongest by the least informed, but most noisy, and too often, alas! the most influential for certain purposes, of the supporters of that

great cause. But nothing of this kind need be feared, through the merciful foresight of the Head of the Church. For while, as I firmly believe, Luther was enabled to defend inexpugnably, though in a manner not to be copied except when absolutely necessary,—to defend, I say, in the very heart of Europe, the great truth as to the Freeness of Forgiveness in opposition to many superstitious practices upheld by the unbroken Papal power,—Knox, on the other hand, felt himself at liberty to set forth the Christian doctrine in Scotland freed from the Lutheran and Calvinistic peculiarities. In so far as Scotland is concerned, then, instead of forsaking the Protestant cause by departing from the dogmas that involve ineradicably and incurably the “sore evil” deplored by Dr. Chalmers, and in adopting a form of doctrine that is perfectly free from any such taint, she will only be returning to the correct form of Protestantism which was planned for her, under Providence, by her great primitive Reformer. At all events, it is thus only that the Antinomian evils complained of by Dr. Chalmers, as well as other evils already pointed out, or to be pointed out in the sequel, can be got quit of; for these are all ineradicably and incurably bound up with the fully developed Lutherano-Calvinism of the Westminster formularies, so that as long as these formularies remain in force, as long must the evils complained of remain unchecked and uncured.

II. The theoretical Antinomianism involved in the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation is ineradicable and incurable.

II. Inasmuch as it is the maintaining the Justification or Salvation described by St. Paul to be equivalent to Forgiveness, and consequently external, that produces the collision between that doctrine and the commandments of God, and also the accompanying Antinomianism so earnestly deplored by Dr. Chalmers, it follows that neither the Antinomianism nor the collision can be remedied so long as Justification or Salvation is maintained to be external. Only by modifying that principle, and by giving the subjective elements of Redemption their rightful place in Justification or Salvation, can the unquestionably "sore evil" we are touching be cured. But to do this must be to change entirely the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation:—nay, to speak what may be the painful, but what certainly is the full and the wholesome, truth, a totally different doctrine of Justification or Salvation must be substituted for the Westminster one; which, as it is a fully and articulately developed doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation through an "instrumental faith," is not only erroneous throughout and on system, but on a system that has shut up every way which might lead to the right exposition of the truth. Its Antinomianism is not only theoretically perfect, but is protected by a complete body of guards, and cannot be remedied or counteracted by any legitimate and effectual means whatever.

In proof of what has just been stated let it be

considered : first, that the negationary propositions of Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession, and similar propositions, in other parts of the Westminster formularies, expressly forbid the application of the direct and legitimate Scriptural means for removing or counteracting this Antinomianism. For they either articulately forbid the including^e of any of the subjective elements whatever of Christianity in Justification or Salvation ; or they as articulately deny that any such grace, or that any good work whatever, is necessary as a condition to the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life. They do this as declaring the results on one side of all the controversies in which it was attempted, within the confines of Protestantism, to prove that Evangelical graces and works, declared to be good by our Lord and His Apostles, are necessary as elements and conditions of Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life. And these negationary propositions do all this as a necessary and quite inevitable consequence of the principle that Justification or Salvation is not only gratuitous, but purely external or imputative. And most correctly, accordingly, did I say a little way back that the perfected Antinomianism of the Westminster formularies is protected by a complete body of guards ; for, while the negationary propositions now under consideration mark each successive step by which the Westminster doctrine was developed from its germ in the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession, they at the same time completely guard that developed form of doctrine by expressly debarring

all who owe allegiance by promise and oath to the Westminster formularies from ever daring, in terms of any possible or conceivable proposition, to enunciate the necessity of any Christian grace or work whatever as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation, and consequently as conditions of Eternal Life. But secondly: of two subjects on whose correct explanation and use must chiefly depend the legitimate and effectual cure of the evil in question, the one is expressly forbidden to be employed in any but the erroneous sense that supports the external and purely imputative doctrine of Justification or Salvation; and the other is actually employed as the principal means of perfecting that doctrine. The first of the two subjects just referred to is Faith. It is utterly impossible under the Westminster formularies to explain and apply that subject so as to remedy the evil, because, besides declaring and enacting that Justification or Salvation must be considered external, the Westminster formularies also declare and enact that Faith acts only as an "instrument" and not as an "organ" in receiving that benefit; and because they declare and enact, in addition, that Justification or Salvation does not depend on the "imputing," or reckoning, "of Faith itself, the act of believing, or any other Evangelical obedience," but on the "imputing," or reckoning, "the obedience and satisfaction of Christ." Any relief from this quarter is evidently hopeless. But there is as little hope to be derived from the state of the second subject referred to above, seeing that that subject is converted in the Westminster formu-

laries into the principal means of supporting the twofold division in the "one righteousness" of Christ, which is expressed in the phrases "the obedience and satisfaction," or "the obedience and death" of Christ. The subject thus employed is the all-important one, of "righteousness of God." When this subject, as treated by St. Paul at the commencement of the Epistle to the Romans, for example, is explained, as was done by Augustine and Chrysostom, in the ancient Church, and by Knox evidently in his Confession, with at least the tacit allowance of the Augsburg Confession; then does Justification or Salvation no longer appear purely external, and the principle of Antinomianism has no place. But the Westminster formularies do more than merely adopt and enjoin the external style of interpreting "righteousness of God," as treated of at the commencement of the Epistle to the Romans. As has been abundantly proved in previous parts of the Note, they found their twofold division of the "one righteousness" of Christ mainly on the following passage: "But God made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might become righteousness of God in Him." This use of the element "righteousness of God," is the most remarkable feature of the Westminster formularies, and shows how utterly hopeless is any legitimate and effective correction of the perfect theoretical Antinomianism involved in their Theology.

I employ the term legitimate in the last sentence, in the same sense as I employed it in the first part of the Note, namely, not forbidden by any law, and which

may therefore be lawfully employed by subscribers of the Westminster formularies. Accordingly, none of the scriptural means of remedying the Antinomianism of the Westminster formularies, that have been pointed out in this Note, can be legitimately used by persons bound by subscription and promise to adhere to these formularies; for the formularies expressly ban all such means. Moreover, in consequence of the arrangements expressly made for that purpose in the Westminster formularies, and solemnly subscribed and promised to be obeyed by all office-bearers of the Church of Scotland, it is quite illegitimate and unlawful for any office-bearer of that Church to use the modified correctives of Antinomianism that were legitimate under the Helvetic Confession, owing to the imperfect development of that Symbol: still less legitimate or lawful to them is the use of the comparatively more effective, though still inconsistent and unsatisfactory, correctives supplied by the purely germinal state of the external doctrine of Justification or Salvation in the Augsburg Confession; and for any party, bound by the Westminster formularies, to apply such correctives to their Antinomianism as were urged most legitimately and thoroughly by Henry More, Whichcote and Butler, under the Thirty-nine Articles, and almost as thoroughly by Bull, would be simply to maintain the exact contraries of those doctrines which he had solemnly sworn to adhere to and maintain. I say of Bull *almost as thoroughly*, because he adopted inconsistently, but with a wise policy for himself, that interpretation of the term justify which, if granted, must

either lead to the very conclusions which he so ably contended against, or must, to say the least, leave the grounds entire on which these conclusions rest ; where More and Whichcote maintained catholic truth in opposition to these errors, and Butler has with unequalled profundity defended it, and it alone, purged from whole mountains of dross. I am now only asserting more fully and explicitly what I asserted in the first part of this Note. But I have earned the right of thus at last reasserting it with confidence and boldness ; for, in the midst of indescribable troubles, I have gone through the horribly irksome task of laying, foot by foot, and yard by yard, the foundation on which rests my assertion made above, as to what is legitimate for the subscribers, in terms of the legalised formula and promises, of the Westminster formularies—what is legitimate for them, I say, either viewed absolutely or by comparison with the subscribers of other formularies. There is as little room for question as to an elementary proposition in proportion, as respecting what is alone legitimate in the way of doctrine under the Westminster formularies, now that I have established step by step the exact intention, meaning, and consequences of their doctrine of Justification or Salvation. My proof is now mathematically exact and certain to the effect that, though the theoretical Antinomianism of the Westminster formularies be thorough, these formularies articulately declare and enact that every scriptural corrective of that evil is illegitimate and unlawful.

But I remark farther, in reference to my use of the

term effective at the close of the last paragraph but one, that it is equally well warranted with my use of the term legitimate. In fact, what fully warrants in the circumstances my use of the one term, also fully warrants in the circumstances my use of the other term. For those means of correcting the theoretical Antinomianism of the Westminster formularies, which cannot be legitimately employed by parties owing obedience to these formularies, are precisely the means that can alone effectually remedy that Antinomianism. All other means by which it has been attempted, or can be attempted to disprove the Antinomianism of the doctrine of external Justification or Salvation, either in its germinal or fully developed state, must be futile inasmuch as they leave the cause of the Antinomianism intact, and must consequently leave also the Antinomianism itself intact. This appeared clearly in our remarks on the Augsburg Confession. Thus, for example, it was there shown that, to tell an avowed Antinomian that he does not believe because true belief leads to obedience to the commandments of God, does not dissipate the contradiction between the doctrine of the external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation of the sinner by faith only, and the sanctions that enforce obedience to the Divine commandments; nor does it at all impair the logical force of the proposition on which the Antinomian rests his confidence, namely, that the enjoyment of Eternal Life depends on a purely external or imputative and gratuitous Justification or Salvation received by an instrumental Faith only. And the Westminster Confession

entrenches him in this conviction by the exact separation which it makes of every moral and operative quality from the faith that justifies, or from Faith when viewed as justifying. Again, take the argument in support of the necessity of Good Works, which says, the faith that justifies must be itself justified by Good Works. Now, this argument makes the enjoyment of Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life depend in reality on obedience and Good Works; and accordingly it just illustrates the incurable contradictoriness of the doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation. But it is, in fact, quite superfluous thus to prove in detail how futile are all the attempts to remedy, or even to mask, the Antinomianism of the doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, especially in the case of its completed form set forth in the Westminster formularies. Because that doctrine in its germinal form asserts the Antinomian principle that no Evangelical Grace or Work whatever is necessary in any shape as a condition of Eternal Life, neither as an element nor condition of Justification or Salvation; and the doctrine of the Westminster formularies is just the full development of this principle or its articulate application to every possible case.

It is not merely for the purpose of stating, as strongly and clearly as possible, conclusions fully warranted and borne out by the historico-critical details of the Note, that I now insist on the impossibility of curing the Antinomianism of the Westminster formularies since it is not legitimate, that is, it is not lawful,

according to them, to employ in any degree or shape the only effectual remedy. While I insist on these points because I have reached the proper place for drawing them as conclusions from my arguments, I also insist on them with a special view to the tenets and statements promulgated in the Lectures in Divinity of the late Principal Hill—still more, however, with a view to what alone emboldened the Principal thus to write, namely, the Acts of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland, passed in the years 1720 and 1722. The following passage will in some degree illustrate the tenets and statements as to Justification or Salvation put forth in the work of Principal Hill. The passage forms one of a series of conclusions drawn from certain statements on the “connection between Justification and Sanctification,” and it proceeds thus: “We observe that the soundest Calvinist may say, without hesitation, that good works are necessary to Salvation. The first reformers, whose great object was to establish, in opposition to the Church of Rome, the doctrine of justification by faith, were afraid to adopt an expression which might seem to give countenance to the Popish doctrine of the merit of good works. Melancthon, indeed, maintained that they were necessary: but as he was known to have departed in various points from the doctrine held by Luther, this expression gave offence to many who adhered to that doctrine. In the year 1552, Amsdorf went so far as to declare that good works were an impediment to salvation. Few are disposed to follow Amsdorf; but amongst unlearned

people, who have been educated with rigid ideas of Calvinism, there exists a general prejudice against saying that good works are necessary. It is proper, therefore, to understand clearly that, while this expression may be misinterpreted, as if it implied that some good dispositions and good actions are required previous to justification, and are the cause of our being justified, there is a sound sense in which the whole strain of Scripture and the amount of the principles of Calvinism warrant us to say, that good works are essential to salvation; for none can be saved who have not that character which is produced by the Spirit of God in all that are justified, and none have that character in whom these unequivocal fruits of it do not appear." Now, taking for granted, since this passage was written by the successor of Principal Robertson in what is popularly called the Leadership of the Church of Scotland, that it purported to convey to the minds of young men, the future ministers of that Church, the gist of what is authorised by the Westminster formularies, it presents an extraordinary contrast or rather contradiction to what I have advanced in this section. It is very remarkable, too, how it directly contradicts the statements and sentiments uttered by Dr. Chalmers, a pupil of Dr. Hill's, in the passage quoted a little way back from Dr. Chalmers' Institutes of Theology. While the one talked of "Salvation by faith" as being the true reformed doctrine held in opposition to the doctrine of "Salvation by works," the other tells his pupils that they may preach the necessity of Good Works unto

Salvation without scruple, as being quite consistent even with Calvinism. Moreover, while Principal Hill of course held that, whatever might be the case with the unlearned and prejudiced vulgar, neither Calvinism proper nor the Calvinism of the Westminster formularies contained for the learned and polished such difficulties as I have pointed out; Dr. Chalmers held, on the other hand, that "their very orthodoxy had spell-bound both the preachers and the hearers (of this Calvinism), the one at a loss what to say, and the other what to do, in the matter." That in this case of palpable disagreement it was Dr. Chalmers who really maintained in their integrity, and irrespective of their consequences, the Lutherano-Calvinistic tenets of the Church of Scotland, there is not room now for a moment's doubt, after his statement has been compared with what I have demonstrated in this Note to be the Lutherano-Calvinism of the Westminster formularies. And it is, when viewed in relation to the tenets supported and promulgated by Dr. Hill, that the power and value of that demonstration appear. It affords relief from an evil as great in every respect as that "sore evil" of Antinomianism deplored by Dr. Chalmers, namely, the intolerable evil of being obliged, without the power of effective reply, to hear it argued that the meaning of not only the simplest primitive Calvinism, but of the completed Lutherano-Calvinism or Fæderalism of the Westminster formularies, is the exact opposite of both its undoubted verbal and undoubted historical meaning. To show properly, however, how such relief is

most effectually supplied by means of my entire argument and the conclusions supported by it, a distinct Section is required in order that the interpretation put upon the Westminster formularies by the Acts of Assembly, 1720 and 1722, and the results of these Acts, such as the Lectures of Principal Hill, may be adequately explained and proved to be directly contradictory to the authorised standards of the Established Church.

But another subject must be treated of in an intermediate Section before the Acts in question can be rightly considered, especially in their consequences. I thought it right, however, to indicate in the mean time, as has been done, my acquaintance with the tenets propounded by so high an authority, with many in Scotland, as Dr. Hill—tenets so flatly opposed to those advocated by another as high authority with many in Scotland, Dr. Chalmers—tenets so flatly opposed to what must be deemed, on the combined authority of the Westminster formularies and other Lutheran or Lutherano-Calvinistic Symbols, the real authorised tenets of the Church of Scotland ever since 1691, nay, ever since the meeting of the Westminster Assembly of Divines.

SECTION IV.

ON THE CONTROL EXERCISED

BY THE

WESTMINSTER FORMULARIES

OVER THE

INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE;

AND ON THE

CONSEQUENT ANTIZOIC AND ANTINOMIAN INFLUENCE
EXERTED BY THEM.

I AM now quite prepared to establish conclusively what was merely affirmed, or proved only in an *à priori* manner, in the Introduction and First Part of this Note as to the extraordinary control over the interpretation of the Scriptures exerted by the Westminster formularies. The point at which this can be done most advantageously has now been reached. I shall be materially aided in doing it both by the historical and critical contents of the last part of the Note, and by the conclusions set down in the three preceding sections of this part. By these means I can now exhibit clearly and conclusively the precise manner in which, and the exact extent to which, the interpretation of Scripture is controlled (erroneously, as I contend) by the enactments of the Westminster

formularies as to Justification or Salvation, as well as the true nature of the influences brought by that controlling power to bear adversely against the correct unfolding of Christian truth. This prohibitive influence of the formularies presents as important a subject of contemplation as any that has come under notice in this Note. For, since in Scripture are the sources of the truth, through which (under the power of the Holy Ghost) the life which shall be eternal is produced in man, any influence that blocks up these sources and prevents the pure truth from flowing freely deserves to be distinctly pointed out and correctly characterised with a view to its removal. I had in view this prohibitive influence exerted by the Westminster formularies when I spoke in the Introduction of the "wells of Salvation" being closed; and I have characterised it in the title of this Section by the term Antizoic, which, though novel, is both quite descriptive of the thing it is applied to and in keeping with the commonly employed term—Antinomian.

The characters and extent of the control over Scripture exerted by the Westminster formularies.

I. I argued, in the third and fourth sections of the first part of this Note, that the appending of one or more of the *loci classici* of the Bible as proofs of every statement of the Westminster formularies gave these documents extraordinary control over the interpretation of Scripture; and that the allegation that these proofs were not appended by authority, even though it were quite true, could in no possible way relieve the Bible from that injurious

control. Everything that was then advanced (but advanced in a manner that was necessarily provisional to a certain extent) can be now amply confirmed by what has been ascertained in the preceding portion of the Note and in the conclusions already reached touching the Westminster formularies.

The Scriptural proofs of the statements made in the Westminster formularies are not introduced into the text, as they may be needed to support or to illustrate it, in the manner adopted by the framers of the earlier and simpler Confessions, as has appeared in the quotations made from these in the preceding pages. True to their character of formularies, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms (and especially the Confession) enunciate all their propositions in a purely unreasoned and merely authoritative manner; and the proofs are left to be appended in the form of notes, except when, as sometimes happens, a proposition is stated wholly or partly in the words of Scripture. The proofs thus stand apart from the text of the Westminster formularies, and the latter can be set forth by itself, a thing impossible in the case of symbols like the Augsburg Confession or the Confession of Knox. This circumstance certainly appears to countenance the statement made some way back,* that the proofs given in the printed copies of the formularies are not authoritative, that is, the proofs, unlike the text, having been selected and appended by private instead of public and authoritative parties, may be adopted or not as *the* proofs; and may, accordingly, be explained or not in accord-

* See Part First, Section IV.

ance with the meaning of the text to which they are appended. It is also implied as a matter of course, when the above statement is made, that, supposing the actual appended proofs not to be adopted, or to possess in reality a meaning quite different from that which they must bear in order to prove the text, other proofs capable of supporting the text exist in the Bible and can be adduced from it.

But I shall still treat as a moot point the question whether the proofs have been appended authoritatively to the Westminster formularies. I shall do so because it can be shown more conclusively now than in the first part of the Note that the allegation as to their not being authoritative, whether correct or erroneous, has no force and can be of no use, since these proofs may now be shown to be the real and correct proofs, than which there can be no others, and since, whatever be their real sense, or whether they were ever appended to the formularies or not, they must still be interpreted according to the meaning of the formularies by all bound by these documents.

The proofs appended to the Westminster formularies are to a considerable extent just the same passages that have come under notice in the preceding pages, from their occurring in the quotations made from the different Confessions, or from their having been suggested by these quotations. A considerable number of passages have come in this way under notice in the preceding pages, and all of them have a place among the proofs cited in the Westminster formularies. And it was quite a matter of course that

this should be the case, since these passages are just the *loci classici* in the teaching of Holy Scripture as to Justification or Salvation ; and supposing the proofs to have been taken directly from the Bible by the parties who appended them, they could not fail to be just what they are—that is, they could not fail to be the most marked and striking declarations of Holy Writ touching Justification or Salvation. And from this circumstance it appears plainly absurd to imagine or insinuate that there could remain in Scripture any other proofs of the peculiar doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation set forth in the Westminster formularies, should the proofs actually appended turn out to be insufficient because bearing in reality a different meaning from that of the text of the formularies. Where can such proofs be found, if the portions of Scripture that treat most expressly of the subject do not declare and support the very statements made in the formularies, but declare and support something quite different ?

But the point at present demanding attention is, not what these proofs really mean, but this :—That, whatever be their real meaning, they must be understood and explained by all subjected to the authority of the Westminster formularies in the sense that belongs to these formularies. It would obviously be as absurd to imagine or affirm anything else, as to suppose or assert that no change in a proposition must follow from a change of its premises. For the statements of Scripture, understood as the Westminster Divines understood them, are just the

premises on which those Theologians founded the propositions that compose their doctrine of Justification or Salvation; and, consequently, as long as that doctrine is accepted as correct, so long must the statements of Scripture be understood and explained in accordance with it. That is, Scripture must be understood to teach, not only in the passages appended as proofs to the Westminster formularies, but throughout its entire body, the doctrine of an absolutely external and substitutive as well as gratuitous and free Justification or Salvation, forming the only ground or title for the enjoyment of Eternal Life. To do this is, in reality, a matter of intellectual necessity to every honest and truly scientific mind that remains bound by the Westminster formularies—to such a mind, for example, as that of Dr. Chalmers. This kind of necessity, constraining a man to hold certain tenets and, as a matter of course, to hold also the principles on which alone these tenets can be founded, is clearly distinguishable from that other kind of necessity which originates only in a promise to maintain certain tenets with their alleged grounds. Each of them is a necessity to which every honestly constituted mind and heart must feel constrained to yield an unmurmuring obedience; for the intellect must feel it to be a suicidal act to resist the one kind, and the conscience must at once condemn the infraction of the other. A collision between the two kinds of obligation ought accordingly to cause the utmost uneasiness, and to prompt the most strenuous exertions to remedy it in a legitimate manner. Because no situation can be more

painful or more provocative of strenuous exertions to escape from it than when conviction commands a person to maintain one set of opinions while a solemn promise binds him to maintain their contradictories. Fortunately the way of escape from such a dilemma is generally conspicuous and open to most men, though the self-denial may be great that is needed to take it. And when the open straightforward road is not taken, the consequence cannot but be painful and disastrous, however they may be concealed and palliated.

It is to be observed, further, that the thoroughness of the control exerted over the Scriptures by the enactments of the Westminster formularies touching Justification or Salvation, compared with that exerted by other Protestant formularies of the same class, is rendered quite manifest in two respects. First, this is shown by the history given in the preceding pages of the gradual reduction of the statements of Scripture on that subject to the purely external sense, effected by the out-and-out advocates of that view; and, secondly, by the character of the doctrine itself contained in the Westminster formularies. Let it be observed, for example, in reference to the first of these two points, that in the second class of formularies examined by me the formula "righteousness of God" is rigorously subjected to the external or imputative sense, instead of being left open, as in the Augsburg Confession, to be interpreted wholly or partially as may seem right to the adherents of that creed in the sense of "spiritual righteousness." Thus, the second class of symbols reduced dogmatically to the external

sense formulas which the first class of symbols left free for interpretation in another sense; while they also, of course, tied down to the same external sense the primary and central formulas that had been originally employed in this external sense by the first class of symbols. The above example is of such paramount importance that it may well suffice, even by itself, to illustrate and conclusively confirm my statements as to a process terminating in a complete subjection to the external or imputative sense, of the Scriptural formulas touching Justification or Salvation. And I am fully justified in speaking of a reduction or subjection of these formulas to bear that sense alone, by the circumstance that, quite irrespectively of the conclusive exegetical reasons that prove such a sense a forced one, it was, besides being refrained from in the Augsburg Confession, avoided in favour of the opposite sense by Knox in his Confession, with which the Articles of the Church of England agree. But, secondly, the character of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation at once presents in itself, as that character has been fully made out in the preceding pages, a proof of the completeness with which it had, as compared with other Protestant symbols, reduced the declarations of Scripture to a sense like its own. For inasmuch as that is not a simple and germinal doctrine of external or imputative Justification or Salvation like that of the Augsburg Confession, but a fully developed and articulately enunciated doctrine, based *ex professo* in every statement, negative or positive, on the word of

God, and holding forth accordingly that the sense of that word is identical throughout with its own sense, it must evidently bind all who have solemnly avowed their belief in it and promised to maintain it to explain the Bible in accordance with it, though the Bible may be thus forced flatly to contradict itself.

It clearly appears from the preceding remarks that, in addition to the injurious relations of the Westminster formularies to Holy Scripture and the saving truth revealed in it, considered in the several conclusions already set forth in this part of my work, there remains for consideration another relation which very readily and palpably manifests itself as equally antagonistic and hurtful to the interests of the Gospel. This appears in the circumstance that these formularies, being authoritative, utterly prevent the unfolding of the correct view of the Gospel, and so present a most serious obstacle to the exercise of the life-giving power of the Gospel, in addition to their presenting in themselves a confused, dislocated, and hurtful view of revealed truth. I shall devote the remainder of this section to the consideration of the result of this peculiar relation of the Westminster formularies to Holy Scripture and the truth therein revealed, which I have already designated as their Antizoid influence—an influence as injurious to the best interests of man as that Antinomian one already discussed.

II. The Antizoic influence of the control exerted by the Westminster formularies over the Scriptures.

II. By the term Antizoic I mean opposed to or counteractive of, either the production or the right development and operation of the new and spiritual life designed to be implanted and educed in man by means of the New Testament Revelation. There are many modes and degrees in which a system professing to be identical with the Gospel may, nevertheless, be thus really antagonistic to Christianity, or quite subversive of the ends intended to be subserved by Christianity. Thus, a system professing to be identical, or in exact harmony, with the Gospel, may yet be in reality so false and erroneous as either utterly to repel from Christianity, by an utter abhorrence of its false representation, minds that are secularly but not religiously enlightened; or to be adopted by other minds with so blind a trust and so bigoted a zeal as, through their instrumentality, to make error instead of truth supreme; or to do grievous injury to the good and really spiritual, by the confusion or dangerous prejudices or errors introduced into their minds along with the truth by its means.

Now, I maintain that the Westminster formularies, as they rule at present and as they have ruled for at least one hundred and seventy years in Scotland, are Antizoic in all the respects just pointed out, and that too in a high degree. I maintain besides that no proper remedy ever has been applied either to this or to the other evils with which these formularies are chargeable, however it may be insinuated or tacitly

taken for granted, or in conversation asserted, that such remedies have been applied—as, for example, by the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722. But, leaving this latter point for consideration in the next Section, where the once notorious and still most influential Acts just referred to shall be specially examined, I will now substantiate and illustrate the evil influences of the Westminster formularies that have been referred to and characterised as Antizoic.

The Antizoic influence of the Westminster formularies resides in and operates through three of their characteristic qualities that have been ascertained and exhibited in the preceding sections. The things referred to are the confusions and contradictions involved in the Westminster formularies; the thorough-going principle of Antinomianism couched in them; and the overpowering influence which they have always brought to bear against every attempt to unfold and apply the correct form of doctrine. To these three points I shall now briefly advert.

The fact that confusion and contradiction exist in the representation of Christianity made in the Westminster formularies has been already established; and the special causes of this confusion and contradiction have been pointed out. One would be fully justified by this fact in affirming even *à priori* that a certain Antizoic influence cleaves to the Westminster formularies, that is, that Christianity does not and cannot act with its full and legitimate force on the minds of such as adopt the Westminster system, owing to the confused and contradictory account which it gives of

the central and practical doctrines of the Gospel. But I am glad that, instead of being obliged to rely on *à priori* argument of the kind just alluded to, the dictates of experience respecting the points can be adduced in a very pointed form and from a most unexceptionable quarter. I refer to Dr. Chalmers, a strenuous advocate of the doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation and the style of Scriptural interpretation it is founded on, from whose 'Institutes of Theology' a quotation illustrating remarkably one point in our discussion has been already made, and from whose work just named we shall now make another quotation not less strikingly illustrative and confirmatory of the point now under consideration. "We now proceed," says Dr. Chalmers, "to the other check which a misconceived or misapplied orthodoxy lays upon instant obedience; and that is, the dread of legality which it has inspired. Men have been so much told of the danger of self-righteousness, that, lest they should incur it, they are fearful of putting their hand to any work of righteousness at all. This, perhaps, is one of the worst effects that has resulted from the controversy of Protestants with the Church of Rome. In their opposition to the doctrine of merit, they have been led to look suspiciously and hardly at every one thing wherewith merit might be associated; and they have communicated this jealousy far and wide, so as deeply to have impregnated the popular mind with it. Men have been told so strenuously that to seek justification by works is the high road to perdition, that they are

positively afraid of works altogether. The direct authority of Christ and his Apostles in their favour is overborne by the deadweight of these representations against them. Men are afraid to meddle with what theologians of great name and authority in the Church have so stickled at. There is at least a conflict in their minds between the direct urgency of Scripture on the one hand, and, on the other, the discouragements and caveats of orthodoxy. Amidst these counteractive forces the man is brought to a dead stand; and, instead of entering with confidence and alacrity on the activities of the Christian life, we find all his energy expended on the right adjustment of the doctrines—leaving to duties a very subordinate place, perhaps an insignificance or even a nullity in the system of his religious contemplations.”

This passage describes the consequences resulting from the confusion and contradictions characteristic of the purely external or imputative Justification or Salvation, as graphically as the Antinomian tendency of the same doctrine is described in the passage quoted a little way back from the same work by Dr. Chalmers. In the passage now quoted, indeed, Dr. Chalmers attributes the consequences spoken of in it to “a misunderstood and misapplied orthodoxy,” and not to an ineradicable quality of the doctrine itself. This was to be expected as a matter of course from one who had maintained the doctrine of external and imputative Justification or Salvation as the only orthodox one. But Dr. Chalmers’ apology for that doctrine could only be admitted as valid after he had distinctly

showed that the difficulty of adjusting the doctrines of Christianity, as also the Antinomian tendency complained of by him are in reality caused by a "misunderstanding and misapplication" of an absolutely external and unconditioned Justification or Salvation, and not by the inherent character of that doctrine. But this he had failed to do as completely as all others who ever attempted it; for to do it is flatly impossible. But perhaps no attempt ever made at such a reconciliation failed more signally than Dr. Chalmers' own; for while, as was shown in the last section, he failed as completely as Dr. Hill had done in explaining without prejudice to the main doctrine how an "instrumental faith" necessarily results in Sanctification, he confessed in express terms, in his elaborate disquisition on Faith in his 'Institutes of Theology,' that his own explanation of the difficulty was provisional only, and that he knew of no perfect solution of the difficulty. Thus, he says in the chapter entitled, Of the Faith by, or through which Sinners are Justified, "I am unwilling to quit the subject without some such deliverance as might let you know how far the lights of Scripture and the mental philosophy have carried forward my own views on the question at issue. There is such a thing as being carried forward a certain way among the difficulties of an inquiry without being carried over them. Still, it is good, though we should not be able to reach the end of the question, or, as we may say, to consummate the solution of it—it is good if we can define to what extent we can confidently go in it. Next to a determinate and full

solution of the question, it is of importance, failing the possibility of this, to assign the limit of our discoveries thereupon, and so trace, as it were, the marches of separation between the certainties and uncertainties which belong to it."

I shall not dwell longer on this subject than to reiterate a remark previously made, but which may be made again with advantage at this point. The remark is: That no such questions as that referred to by Dr. Chalmers present themselves in the Scriptural doctrine of Justification or Salvation; but that these difficulties, as well as their cause, namely, the doctrine of a Justification or Salvation that is external as well as gratuitous, are factitious and capable of removal. They do not exist in the Thirty-nine Articles when these are interpreted in accordance with the Prayer Book; and they have not even the appearance of being countenanced by the Confession of Knox. The exact mode in which the doctrine that gives rise to these difficulties came to be formed and elaborated has been indicated in this Note; and can be, as it has been, still more fundamentally and precisely exhibited; so that both itself and its mischievous consequences may be seen to be clearly separable from the truth of the Gospel, with which they had come to be mingled. There is thus no analogy whatever between the doctrine in question with its contradictions and difficulties, and such a subject as the Divine foreknowledge viewed in connection with human freedom, and the apparently quite insoluble contradictions or antinomies that are inextricably bound up with the consideration of that theory.

The second Antizoiic influence noticed above is that exerted by the Antinomian principle of the Westminster formularies. The Antizoiic effect of this principle, as the principle is developed in these formularies, is theoretically complete. I say complete theoretically, because I have an eye to the influences by which the poison of this Antinomianism has been diluted, and so modified in practice, and shall treat of them in due course. But it is to be observed in the mean time that the Antizoiic effects of the doctrine of external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, as set forth in the Westminster formularies, is as complete theoretically as can be. For let it be borne in mind what, according to the results reached in the preceding parts of this Note, is the exact, explicit, and full import of that doctrine. For Justification or Salvation, besides being declared by these formularies to be gratuitous and to embrace the forgiveness of sins on account of the one offering of Himself made by the Lord Jesus Christ, is also declared to be purely external or imputative, embracing in it as well the imputation of Christ's righteousness as the forgiveness of sins, and excluding equally all internal spiritual and moral elements, and all Christian works. And this exclusory or negationary part of the doctrine is not merely a matter of implication, as is the case to a great extent with the Augsburg, the Helvetic, and all the earlier Lutheran and Lutherano-Calvinistic symbols, but it is explicit and precise in the highest degree. On this account, as has been seen, it comes into direct collision with all the commandments of God and the sanctions of these

commandments, such as the truths that men are to be dealt with in another state of being according to their deeds, and that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Now, the Antizoic effects of this collision are theoretically complete in the case of the Westminster Formularies. That is, absolutely every reason and motive proving the necessity for entering on a new life and living in obedience to the commandments of the Lord, is flatly contradicted by the explicit statement of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth authoritatively in the Westminster Confession of Faith. Anything more completely Antizoic in theory than this cannot be imagined.

I have been careful to say, let it be observed, that the Antizoism of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation is perfect *theoretically*. I have done this because in practice many things co-operate in counteracting, more or less perfectly as may happen, this Antizoic tendency. Several of these things have been already pointed out in previous parts of this Note. Thus the known and undeniable fact that God our Saviour does require Repentance and “new Obedience,” that condemnation may be avoided and eternal life reached, has always had effect on candid minds in spite of the flat contradiction given to it by the doctrine in question. And again, as shall be shown in the next section, the influence of the Westminster doctrine has been indefinitely diminished ever since the passing of the Acts 1720 and 1722, which declared that “good works are necessary to everlasting salvation.” Not only did these Acts, by this declaration and other characteristics

issue in a complete modification of the authorised doctrine, but they thereby allowed all the moral and spiritual elements of Revealed Truth to be insisted on in a freer and more advantageous manner. But, as has been already pointed out and cannot be too strongly pressed on attention, the irresistible logical force residing in the affirmation that Justification or Salvation is not only gratuitous but also purely imputative or external is ever making itself felt where that affirmation is assented to, or cannot be denied, and, if it does nothing worse, it invariably gives the appearance of futility, because of its contradictoriness, to every argument that is fitted in itself to establish the necessity of Repentance, obedience, and good works.

III. How different classes feel restrained in interpreting Scripture by the standards.

III. But to what has been already said must be added the mode in which, in accordance with what was proved in the first part of this Section, the Westminster formularies directly uphold these disastrous Antimonian and Antizoic influences, by rendering it impossible to unfold the true form of doctrine. They do this with almost equal force in the cases both of those who are bound by them and adhere to them, and of those who while bound by them endeavour to explain them in accordance with the truth.

The influence exerted by the formularies over those who are bound by them and fully adhere to them is too obvious and undeniable to need any illustration

or enforcement. It may be well, however, to consider how such an adherence, so wide as it is and has been, comes to be secured and confirmed.

One of the chief influences that give a system of dogmas like the Westminster Confession of Faith overpowering influence over an indefinite number of minds, is instruction in the system from the first dawning of thought onwards, as in the unquestionable system of revealed Truth. For few or none when thus instructed ever think of questioning anything in the Creed thus impressed on them. Its influence even over the minds of those whose activity of thought, or whose professional familiarity with the Formulary, might induce questioning or examination, has been in all likelihood effectually secured by their teachers having shaded or explained difficulties plausibly, having set in the most favourable light all that is really or apparently true in it, and having besides contrasted it with the real or apparent errors of antagonistic systems. In such circumstances the system is very likely to acquire an influence and control strong in proportion to the power, conscientiousness, and enthusiasm of the minds subjected to it. This is almost certain to take place to an extent proportioned to the success with which the difficulties in the system are smoothed over, the sources of its errors and misstatements are hid from view, the zeal with which its tenets are enforced and illustrated, and the odium towards antagonistic systems which has been instilled.

But several noteworthy circumstances combine in giving to the formularies of the Established Church of

Scotland, as a general rule, an extreme and almost irresistible influence.

Let it be observed, then, that the formularies embody an extreme form of the entire Theologico-philosophical system of Lutherano-Calvinism as it has been developed in direct and thoroughgoing antagonism not only to Romanism but to everything in Protestantism that seemed to countenance anything Romish. This very completeness and thoroughness of "the system" gives it a charm in the eyes of those who can grasp it more or less completely, and makes them surrender themselves willingly to its sway. And besides those whose character and circumstances might preclude them from either adopting or rejecting "the system" in consequence of their own inquiries and reflection, and who therefore acquiesce in it as a matter of course; there have always been many men, fully capable of inquiring and judging for themselves, who yet submit to this "system" with the same passiveness as we all conform to the system of external nature: and that this should be so largely the case is little to be wondered at. For to understand this system even to the average extent compassed by those who are to teach it to others calls for a considerable amount of labour and study. And these must be indefinitely increased in their scope and duration, if anything is aimed at like a thorough historical, critical, exegetical, and truly scientific or philosophical comprehension of the system. And then supposing that in the course of such investigation the true causes of error, whatever they be (whether critical, exegetical,

or logical) have been detected in their lurking-places (and many a quick eye they may have escaped); even after this has been done, let it be considered what almost overwhelming difficulties lie in the way of the endeavour to make these errors known and to rectify them. There is not only the actual labour connected with this work, which increases as the student advances: for an error radical and obviously palpable (when discovered) may necessitate the recasting of an entire department of the system; and this again may in its turn demand the modification of other departments. And supposing the full extent of all this work only to become known as it is carried on, then comes in on its completion that most serious of all difficulties to many minds. The labourer must then encounter strife with the established system, and that without being able to fight with clean hands; for, if a minister or other office-bearer, the burden of a solemn obligation come under before God and man is on him, binding him to maintain, as the very truth of God, the system he is engaged in altering. Nay, more: his hands not only cannot be clean in these circumstances, they cannot even be free; turn as he likes, he cannot slip out of the inevitable fetters he has voluntarily assumed; and his hands are powerless to effect the work needed to remedy the evil. A most memorable exemplification of this will present itself in the next Section, when we consider the result of the effort made by the authors of the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722, to liberate themselves from the trammels of the Standards. The occasion that will present itself, when

we come to consider these Acts, of contemplating as in a special example the completeness of the bondage imposed by the Standards on their subscribers, whether these continue adherents *ex animo* or in mere form, renders it unnecessary to say more on the subject at this point.

SECTION V.
A COROLLARY.

THE ACTS

OF

THE ASSEMBLIES 1720 AND 1722 OF THE
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

WERE CONTRADICTORY TO AND SUBVERSIVE OF THE
LEGALISED CHURCH DOCTRINE.

NOTHING now remains to be done but to show the true character of those Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, passed in the years 1720 and 1722, to which reference has been frequently made in the preceding pages. Fortunately it will be neither a difficult nor tedious thing, after what has been already accomplished in this Note, to manifest both the true character of these Acts and their real bearing as well on the Formularies of Presbyterianism as on the Scriptures. The importance of exhibiting all this, and of exhibiting it on an impregnable and conspicuous ground, will be most easily shown after the examination of the Acts has been made.

I. A brief account of the circumstances in which the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722 originated.

I. A few remarks must be premised respecting the circumstances in which the Acts of Assembly now to be in part examined were passed. This is necessary in order that the real width and importance of their bearing on the authorised formularies may be seen.

It is to be observed, then, that a most imperfect conception of the bearing and influence of these Acts must be formed, if they are viewed only in connection with their ostensible and immediate cause. This was the republication and dissemination in the Church and country of "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," by parties who desired to restore that respect for the extreme Lutherano-Calvinism of the Westminster Confession, which some very powerful influences had been diminishing. Such was the immediate occasion of the Acts. They were passed, as their tenor in part clearly shows, to destroy the power of the Lutherano-Calvinistic book just named by a condemnation passed upon it, which, however merited and just in itself, was an act as unscrupulous as high-handed on the part of those who performed it. For in fact the Acts will be seen to have broken up and changed the Theology established by law under the pretence of affixing a stigma on a work which, however heretical, only taught in the words of a Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, the doctrines of Luther and Calvin; and with only one small exception, the doctrines of the Westminster Confession itself. And in this very thing is seen the true aim of the Acts. For that was

to set as many within the church as chose to act on them free, as by the authority of the Church itself, from the otherwise binding force of the system of Theology embodied in the formularies. The Acts were intended to free the clergy from this system (as far as men could be freed from a system to which they had previously bound themselves by the words of a solemn formula) by breaking the systematic Confession into mere Articles, and by boldly contradicting one of its most important fundamental principles. What there was to extenuate the policy that induced these Acts, and employed them as a means of governing the Church and country will appear, to a certain extent, immediately. The Acts were undoubtedly as well themselves the result of policy as the public inauguration of the line of policy by which the Church has been guided more or less ever since they were passed.

The several elements, then, that combined their force to resist, break through, and ultimately rule as far as the circumstances of the times would admit, the previously overmastering authority of the Westminster formularies ought to be distinctly enumerated at this point. First, then, comes to be mentioned the influence of the large body of ministers and people composed either of those who having passed over from Episcopacy to Presbytery at the Revolution yet survived; or who were descended from these conformists and had been educated under their merely nominal Presbyterianism; or who had conformed shortly before, or at the time of, the passing of the Acts: for the process of conforming went on far into the

eighteenth century.* This large body must have been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the habits of thought and belief prevalent amongst the Episcopalians, and ready consequently to alter the Westminster dogmas in favour at least of the Aberdeen Confession. Secondly, there was the standing party among the Presbyterians themselves, who were less enthusiastic and bigoted in their adherence to both the Theology and Polity of Presbytery than the opposing party of extreme Presbyterians; and who were at all events always more ready to yield or temporise in matters of doctrine and government than their opponents, to secure the more easy working of the machinery both in the Church by itself, and in its connection with the State. Thirdly: But one of the most important matters pressing on the Church at this time was just that of government and discipline in the department of doctrine. The alleged teaching of Arian and Pelagian doctrine by Professor Simson, of Glasgow, had now for several years caused much excitement in the west of Scotland, and had only been prevented by the adroit management of the most influential leaders of the Church from being brought before the Supreme Court. And when this bad state of matters became further complicated by a determined movement in the east of Scotland in favour of the fully developed Lutherano-Calvinism of the Standards, by the dissemination of such well-stated and highly-seasoned defences of it as "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," it was seen and felt that the time

* See Burton's "History of Scotland, (1687—1746)."

had come for determining on what principles doctrinal matters were to be henceforth treated. Men must have foreseen too what really happened under the management of Principal Robertson, namely, that the present and evidently growing state of opinion necessitated the enacting and enforcing, as the doctrinal law of the Church, some form of words which, however unsatisfactory in itself or as compared with the Standards, would render the general administration of affairs in the Church possible for a time at least, by quietly shelving the Standards in favour of the supposititious Creed. Fourthly : There still remains to be mentioned a class of influences whose power was great both directly and by consequence. I here refer to literary influences. Of these influences I can advert explicitly only to the portion that emanated from England, as being perhaps the most potent. And of this again only the part that tended directly to produce the state of things we are considering need be stated. Two schools of Theology, then, that were exercising much influence in England at this time, also extended their influence into Scotland, and aided in producing the changes under consideration. First, there was that Arian school represented by Whiston, who had honorably resigned his professorship at Cambridge ; and by Samuel Clark, who, however, clung to his position and emoluments in the Established Church. There was undoubtedly more than the mere relation of contemporaneousness between this English school and the Arian movement in the west of Scotland headed by Professor Simson. Again, there was

that orthodox School instituted by Bishop Bull and continued, with shades of difference, by writers like Tillotson and Secker. The influence of Tillotson is matter of notoriety. Fifthly, the influence of the thirty-nine Articles must not be omitted. Their character of sobriety and their reconcileableness with Catholic truth, continually presenting itself, owing to nearness, in contrast with the extravagance of the Westminster System, must, in times of peace, have told powerfully against the extreme advocates of that System; and must have countenanced as well as guided the framers of the Acts of Assembly that are in question. Indeed, the Acts themselves contain evidence of this; for they will be seen to enjoin in the Church of Scotland the doctrine set forth in Article XI, instead of that contained in Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession.

Now, the Acts of Assembly sided with the Standards and the sincere advocates of the Standards in discountenancing, and warning against the Arian movement. But on the other hand they condemned, in the case of "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," a form of the doctrine of Justification or Salvation even less perfectly developed than that set forth in the Standards, and advocated by Boston, the Scottish Editor of "The Marrow," and a long line of Scottish Theologians terminating with Dr. Chalmers. Moreover, the framers of these Acts and their successors continued to rule the Established Church in the spirit and strength of these Acts, to the subjection and even final ejection from the Church in successive swarms of

the sincere and honest adherents, among both clergy and people, of the Legal Creed. The first great Secession (or Secession that ultimately became great) took place soon after the passing of these Acts. It was a solemn protest against the illegal change introduced by the Acts, and enforced in the Church and on the country by the settlement in parishes, against reclaiming minorities in Presbyteries and sometimes against whole parishes, of the preachers who took full advantage of the new in opposition to the old and legal Creed. By this first Secession was formed the Original Seceder Body, which afterwards split into the Burghers and Antiburghers so well known at the beginning of the century. Some twenty years later another body of Dissenters, called the Relief Synod, separated from the Established Church for reasons essentially the same as those that influenced the Original Secession. And there can be no doubt that what chiefly gave interest and animation to the last great controversy which resulted in the unprecedented Secession of 1843, was just a final trial of strength between the theology and Church policy inaugurated by Haddow in the Acts 1720 and 1722, and upheld as moderatism by Robertson, Hill, and Cook, and the theology of the Standards or Evangelicalism, which had long been kept in abeyance, but had marvellously revived under the advocacy of men like Sir Henry Moncrieff, Dr. Thomson, and Dr. Chalmers. What gave non-intrusion its value in the estimation of its advocates was just the guarantee it held out that "moderate" preachers should not be settled in parishes contrary to

the wish of “evangelical,” or so-called “orthodox” parishioners and presbyters.

But enough has now been said to indicate the circumstances in which the Acts to be examined took their rise, and to show how important a part has been performed by them in the affairs of the Church of Scotland.

II. The authorised doctrine of Justification or Salvation was condemned by the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722.

II. I proceed now to point out the bearing of the Acts 1720 and 1722 on the Creed authorised by the Formularies. And it will be easily made to appear that the sentence of condemnation pronounced articulately by the originators of the moderate Party on “The Marrow of Modern Divinity” was just a condemnation of the authorised doctrine of Justification or Salvation. The following quotations from the Act 1720 will show this. The first quotation will be the first head of the condemnation, which is entitled “Concerning the Nature of Faith.” The references in the passages are to the “Marrow:” the passage runs thus :

Page 118 : “ *There is no more for him to do but only to know and believe that Christ hath done all for him.*”—Page 119 : “ *This then is perfect righteousness,—only to know and believe that Jesus Christ is now gone to the Father, and sitteth at His right hand, not as a Judge, but as made unto you of God Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption ; wherefore, as Paul and Silas said to the jailer, so say I unto you, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved ; that is, Be verily persuaded in your heart that Jesus Christ is your’s, and that you shall have life and salvation by Him, that whatsoever Christ did for the Redemption of mankind, He did*

it for you.”—Page 120: “*Forasmuch as the Holy Scripture speaketh to all in general, none of us ought to distrust himself, but believe that it doth belong particularly to himself.* The same is asserted pages 121, 122, 123, 124, 131, 136, 137, 173, 176, 177, and in many other places of the book. This notion of *saving faith* appears contrary to Scripture, Isa. 1, 10; Rom. viii, 16; 1 John v, 13; and to Confession Cap. xviii, §§ 1, 3, 4, and Larger Catechism, Quest. 81, 172—all which passages show that assurance is not of the essence of Faith, whereas the passages cited from the ‘*Marrow*,’ &c., appear to assert the contrary, making that *saving faith* commanded in the Gospel a man’s persuasion that Christ is his, and died for him, and that whoever hath not this persuasion or assurance hath not answered the Gospel call, nor is a true believer.”

I need scarcely say after having reached such conclusions in this work, that I entirely agree with the writers of this extract in holding the view of the belief or faith which saves, quoted in the extract from “*The Marrow*,” to be in important respects, implicitly referred to in this passage and explicitly stated in extracts yet to be given, grossly anti-scriptural. I entirely agree with them, too, in holding that tenet of “*Assurance of Faith*” taught in “*The Marrow*” as by Luther himself, to be contrary to the Westminster Confession: only I hold the Confession to be inconsistent in condemning this tenet of “*The Marrow*” and of Luther, while it at the same time maintains in its completely developed form that very doctrine of the attainment to Eternal Life by an external Justification or Salvation received by an instrumental faith only, from which Fisher and a host of others, following Luther, have legitimately deduced their tenet of the Assurance of Faith. This tenet follows with an inevi-

table logical necessity from its cognate doctrine of Salvation, as may be seen proved at length in an elaborate work on the subject, published about forty years ago, when the theological fermentation was brewing which issued in the great Disruption of 1843.* It may be added that Luther knew his own ground, such as it was, too well, and had too piercing an intellect to err grossly in a consequence flowing so directly from his own ground as did his tenet respecting the "Assurance of Faith."

Omitting a section of the Act, entitled "Of Universal Atonement and Pardon," as not bearing immediately on my special subject, I will now quote the next in order, or the third head of condemnation, which is entitled "Holiness not necessary to Salvation." It is as follows :

From page 150 to page 153 : "*And if the Law say good works must be done, and the commandment must be kept, if thou wilt obtain Salvation, then answer you and say, I am already saved before thou camest ; therefore I have no need of thy presence,—Christ is my Righteousness, my Treasure, and my Work. I confess, O Law ! that I am neither godly nor righteous, but this yet I am sure of, that He is godly and righteous for me.*" Page 185 : "*Good works may rather be called a believer's walking in the way of eternal happiness, than the way itself* This doctrine tends to slacken people's diligence in the study of holiness, contrary to Heb. xii, 14 ; 2 Thess. ii, 13 ; Eph. ii, 10 ; Isa. xxxv, 8 ; Jam. ii, 10 : Conf. cap. xiii, § 1 ; Larger Catechism, Quest. 32 ; Conf. cap. xv, § 2."

Now, I not only agree with the sentence passed by the General Assembly in this passage upon the doc-

* Thom. on "The Assurance of Faith," 2 vols., oct.

trine cited in it from "The Marrow," but think their sentence comes short of the truth as stated by themselves in the title of the passage. That title, "Holiness not necessary to Salvation," states exactly the nature of the doctrine in question, and surely means much more than the sentence of the Assembly, which is, That the doctrine cited from "The Marrow" tends to slacken the study of holiness. What zeal need there be for absolutely unnecessary things, such as this doctrine holds holiness and good works to be as a means to Justification or Salvation? For let it be carefully observed that, as the General Assembly themselves admitted, the matter concerned in the estimation of the writer of "The Marrow" in common with Luther, Calvin, and all true Lutherans and Calvinists is not merely Justification, but Salvation. Another passage to be cited immediately from the Act will place this matter beyond the possibility of being questioned, but it is clear enough from the present passage itself. Meanwhile, I content myself with merely pointing this out; what it results in will appear in due time.

Omitting another section of the Act (or the fifth head of condemnation), entitled "Fear of Punishment and Hope of Reward, not allowed to be motives of a Believer's Obedience," because it is somewhat similar to the one just examined (or the fourth head of condemnation), I shall now cite the section next in order, entitled "That the Believer is not under the Law, as a Rule of Life."

Page 150: "*As the Law is the Covenant of Works, you are*

wholly and altogether set free from it." And page 151, "*You are now set free both from the commanding and condemning power of the Covenant of Works.*" Page 216, "*You will yield obedience to the Law of Christ, not only without respect either to what the Law of Works either promiseth or threateneth, but also without having respect to what the Law of Christ either promiseth or threateneth—and this is to serve the Lord without fear of any penalty which either the Law of Works or the Law of Christ threateneth, Luke i, 74. See pages 5, 153, 180, 156, 157, 163, 199, 209, 210, contrary to Scripture, Exod. xx, 2; Mat. v, 17, &c.; Rom. iii, 21, and xiii, 9; Jam. i, 25, and ii, 8, 10, 11, 12, and Confess., cap. xxix, § 5, 6.*"

The first portion of the statement of "The Marrow" respecting Law contained in this passage is quite correct, for the Law, or Mosaic Dispensation, having been fulfilled and substantiated by the Gospel, is done away; so that Christians have nothing to do directly with any part of it. This is a truth, however, which most Lutherans and Calvinists cannot allow, because of the direct Antinomian results of their own doctrine of an external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation, as these may even here be seen in the second portion of the statement quoted from "The Marrow." This portion says, "but also without having respect to what the Law of Christ either promiseth or threateneth;" and so distinctly maintains that Justification or Salvation with its consequent Eternal Life is absolutely gratuitous—to the exclusion even of every condition and sanction of the Law of Christ. And the fact is, that this is just what Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession undeniably teaches in the most articulate and exhaustive manner. It is this state of matters

that has constrained most Lutherans and Calvinists to maintain that the Decalogue was not done away with the rest of the Law, and to employ it as a stopgap for the horrible breach made in the Divine system of law by their central practical doctrine. I have treated of this subject with some fulness elsewhere ;* and I refer to it now because the statement of “The Marrow” under consideration justifies completely the character I have given, in the same work, of the Lutheran-Calvinistic doctrine.

Again omitting a section of the Act whose subject, though the clause professes to condemn “six Antinomian Paradoxes” enunciated in “The Marrow,” is of very small and subordinate importance when compared with the mighty fundamental paradox that engages our attention ; I shall now give the concluding section of the condemnatory portion of the Acts. It is entitled “Expressions in The Marrow,” &c., and runs thus—

Page 192.—“*A Minister that dares not persuade sinners to believe their sins are pardoned, before he sees their lives are reformed, for fear they should take more liberty to sin, is ignorant of the mystery of faith.*” And page 27: “*Christ undertook to suffer under the penalty that lay upon man to have undergone.*” And page 117: “*The Covenant of Works was twice made—first with man, and the second time God was on both sides.*” Page 115: “*The Law practiseth his whole tyranny upon the Son of God, and because it did so horribly and cursedly sin against his God, it is cursed and arraigned, and as a thief and cursed murderer of the Son of God loseth all his might, and deserveth to be condemned ; the Law therefore is bound dead and crucified to me.*” Page 126: “*Whosoever is married to Christ, and so in Him by faith, he is as acceptable to God as Christ Himself.*” Page 144: “*And so shall the love and favour of God be*

* See “The Biblical and Patristic Doctrine of Salvation,” vol. i, ch. 2.

as deeply insinuated into you, as it is into Christ Himself." Page 144: "*Whence it must needs follow, that you cannot be damned, except Christ be damned with you, neither can Christ be saved except ye be saved with Him.*" Pages 145, 146: "*Say unto Christ with bold confidence, I give to Thee, my dear Husband, my unbelief, my mistrust, my pride, my arrogancy, my ambition, my wrath and anger, my envy, my covetousness, my evil thoughts, affections, and desires ; I make one bundle of these and all my other offences, and give them unto Thee, 2 Cor. v, 21. And thus was Christ made sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made righteousness of God in Him.*" Page 207: "*Nor yet as touching your Justification and eternal Salvation, will he love you ever a whit the less, though you commit ever so many or great sins.*"

"These are collected out of many other exceptionable passages contained in that book, which for brevity's sake are omitted."

Passing over other things contained in this passage or suggested by it, I wish it to be specially observed that the doctrine insisted on in it is not Justification only, but it is the doctrine of "Justification and Eternal Salvation," as it ought to be in accordance with Scriptural and Catholic verity. This is the doctrine maintained in common by "The Marrow" and the Westminster Formularies. According, too, to what has been established in this Note, the doctrine means the being put into possession of Eternal Life by an external or imputative and gratuitous Justification or Salvation received by an "instrumental" faith only. This doctrine is set forth in a more thorough manner in the Westminster Formularies than even in "The Marrow." And whatever be thought of the sentiments uttered in "The Marrow," and fully accepted by its advocates (and these sentiments cannot be condemned too strongly), they are still only the inevitable

and legitimate consequences of the main doctrine equally of "The Marrow," the Westminster Confession, and the Westminster Catechisms. For according to each and all of these, both Justification or Salvation and Eternal Life are bestowed irrespectively either of grossest sinfulness or most advanced sanctification, being received by faith, from which everything must be excluded except the unascertainable "instrumental function." And "The Marrow" only differs from the Westminster Formularies in following out and stating the consequences of this doctrine.

I will close this department of the subject by quoting the passage that states summarily the condemnation passed by the General Assembly on "The Marrow" and its advocates. The passage is the concluding paragraph of the fifth Act of the Assembly 1720, and runs thus :

"The General Assembly having had the said passages and several others read to them from the said book, and having compared them with the texts of Holy Scripture, Articles of our Confession of Faith, and of the Larger Catechism of this Church above cited : the General Assembly found that the said passages and quotations, which relate to the five several heads of doctrine above mentioned, are contrary to the Holy Scriptures, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and that the distinction of the Law, as it is the Law of Works, and as it is the Law of Christ, as the author applies it in order to sense and defend the six Antinomian paradoxes above-written is altogether groundless ; and that the other expressions above set down excepted out of the said Book, are exceeding harsh and offensive. And therefore the General Assembly do hereby strictly prohibit and discharge all the Ministers of this Church either by preaching, writing, or printing, to recommend the said Book, or in discourse to say

anything in favour of it; but on the contrary, they are hereby enjoined and required to warn and exhort their people, in whose hands the said book is, or may come, not to read or use the same."

The portion of this passage that bears on the doctrine of "The Marrow" is wonderfully moderate in its tone and contents, when compared with the sweeping denunciation of the book met with at the close of the passage, and with the expressed but still more the implied meaning of the several heads of the charge against the book. This moderation of tone becomes still more striking when the doctrine condemned by the Assembly is contrasted with the doctrine which shall be immediately seen to have been introduced into the Church by its Act. For these two doctrines are contradictories. The explanation of all this appears in the principle frequently asserted in this Note, that any attempt to modify the Lutherano-Calvinism of the Westminster formularies must always be from the necessity of the case surreptitious and tacit. For the express purpose of the Westminster formularies was to block up the openings that formed the Thirty-nine Articles into a *via media*, and to enact there should be no such thoroughfare as is formed by the Articles between an allowed germinal Lutheranism and the allowed Catholic opinion. According to the Westminster formularies, these two conflicting opinions were no longer to be allowed to dwell together under the limitations formed by the English ecclesiastical constitution, but extreme Lutherano-Calvinism was to be the law.

But we shall now proceed to examine how, notwithstanding this character of the Westminster formularies, the endeavour was made to make them harmonise with their contradictories. Though this was less possible to effect even in appearance than in the case of the Aberdeen Confession, still what we observed in the case of that Confession will prepare us both to understand more easily the tactics of the Assembly, and to show the futility of their tactics.

III. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation substituted by the Acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722 in room of the authorised doctrine.

III. The leading principle of the authorised doctrine of Justification or Salvation having been condemned by the General Assembly in their judgment on "The Marrow," it now comes to be considered, What doctrine did the Assembly substitute for the authorised one? The

answer to this question is at hand; for the eighth Act of the same Assembly 1720 that condemned "The Marrow" sets forth a form for preaching Justification or Salvation, which, taken in connection with the grounds for condemning "The Marrow," leaves no doubt respecting the character of the doctrine intended to be preached instead of that Lutherano-Calvinism set forth equally by "The Marrow" and the Westminster formularies, and contended for by the honest advocates of Lutherano-Calvinism. And if more proof of this were needed than that contained in the fifth and eighth Acts of the Assembly 1720, then is such additional proof abundantly supplied by the defence of these Acts pronounced by the Assembly 1722 in answer to

a “representation and petition signed by twelve ministers . . . craving that the fifth Act of the General Assembly of 1720 . . . might be repealed;” and condemning in language as emphatic as mine, not only that Act but the eighth Act also, as introducing a new doctrine.

I will commence this part of my subject by quoting the eighth Act of the Assembly 1720 just adverted to :

“The General Assembly, considering how much it may conduce unto the establishment of people in the Christian Faith, and to the promoting of piety in practice, that they be well instructed in the principles of our holy Religion; do therefore recommend to the several Ministers of this Church, punctually to observe the Acts of former General Assemblies for preaching catechetical doctrine; and that in these their catechetical sermons they more especially insist upon the great and fundamental truths, according to the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, such as that of the being and providence of God, and the Divine authority of the holy Scriptures, the necessary doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, in the Unity of the Godhead: particularly of the eternal Deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the satisfaction to Divine Justice made by Him, Who is our only propitiation, of regeneration by efficacious grace, of free Justification through our blessed Surety the Lord Jesus Christ received by faith alone, and of the necessity of a holy life, in order to the obtaining of everlasting happiness, and that they be earnest and instant in their prayers to God, that, through His blessing upon their labours, their flocks may be preserved from the infections of dangerous errors, and engaged to maintain a conversation that becomes the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who is God over all, blessed for ever.”

This Act evidently refers to the Arian and Pelagian tendencies described in the first division of this

section, as well as to the doctrines maintained by the advocates of "The Marrow." However, it is only the bearing of the Act on that book, and, through it, on the formularies of the Church that I am concerned with. Indeed, the character of the Act is so glaring when compared with the standards, as their exact and full import has been ascertained in this Note, that its bearing on the standards becomes the matter of primary importance. For the Act enjoins on the Ministers of the Church to preach the doctrine of Justification by faith in a form resembling closely the catholic view of the Thirty-nine Articles, but which comes short of Lutherano-Calvinism as seen even in the dogmatic aspect of the Augsburg Confession, and which, accordingly, is anything but the doctrine of completed Lutherano-Calvinism as symbolised in the Westminster formularies. Thus it first sets forth the grand catholic truth "of the Satisfaction to Divine Justice made by Him, Who is our only propitiation," in a form free from all heretical twistings,—simple, unadulterated, and unobjectionable. Then follows the statement of the primary and fundamental truth respecting "regeneration by efficacious grace." Next follows the all-important statement of a "free Justification through our blessed Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith alone;" which statement, if taken to describe only the forensic or external element of the Justification or Salvation of sinners, which is Forgiveness (and while nothing in the Act forbids this, everything points to it), then is this just pure, and faultless

catholic truth, as it was symbolised by Knox, and as it is notoriously allowed by the Thirty-nine Articles. And while, as already observed, nothing hitherto seen in the Act forbids our understanding it thus (except the general reference to the Standards which shall be noticed immediately), the remaining portion of the injunction points directly and emphatically to this mode of understanding it. For Ministers are enjoined faithfully to instruct their people as to “the necessity of a holy life, in order to the obtaining of Everlasting Life.” And, indeed, no other form of doctrine than this could be expected to emanate from an Ecclesiastical authority, which had condemned in substance and most sweepingly, by its sentence passed on “The Marrow of Modern Divinity,” the notorious Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine of Justification or Salvation taught in common by that book and the Westminster formularies.

I am thankful I do not stand alone in thus thinking that the founders of the Moderate party at once condemned the authorised doctrine of Justification or Salvation by the Acts of Assembly under consideration, and reintroduced into the Church by them that doctrine which, though the catholic doctrine and symbolised in the Confession of Knox, had been condemned by the Westminster Divines in favour of their own Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine. I am completely supported by the following statement, taken from the Remonstrance of the “evangelical” minority against the setting aside by the Moderates of the so-called “evangelical” or Lutherano-Calvinistical doctrine in

favour of the catholic doctrine of Knox. This portion of the Remonstrance, though cited from the Act 1722 in the words employed by the Moderate majority, not by its own authors, is as strong in my favour as I could desire. It runs thus :

“By the said fifth Act Gospel truth hath suffered. That in finding fault with this doctrine of ‘The Marrow,’ viz. *that the believer is not under the Law as a rule of life*, from several passages of the said book, the Assembly doth suppose, *that a man cannot be under the Law as a rule of life, unless he be under the Covenant of Works*. That the declaring that distinction of the Law, as it is the Law of Works, and as it is the law of Christ, to be groundless, as the Author senses and applies it, p. 198, 199, *is of dismal tendency; and that the Assembly seems to them to have buried divers truths in the ruins of that distinction*. That when the Assembly cites ‘The Marrow,’ from p. 150 to p. 153, to show the erroneous opinion of its Author, viz. that holiness is not necessary to Salvation, *they have thereby condemned, in cumulo, a bundle of sweet and pleasant Gospel truths, and cut off and condemned the believer’s plea in the case of Justification, in answer to the demands of the Law*. That by censuring ‘The Marrow’ for making a man’s persuasion, that Christ is his, and died for him, to be that saving Faith commanded in the Gospel, *the Assembly hath excluded from the nature of Faith its appropriating act, without which there can be no receiving and closing with Christ for Salvation; and thereby turned it into that general doubtful Faith, abjured in our National Covenant.** That by adducing that passage of ‘The Marrow’ concerning a deed of gift to all mankind, to prove that its author was for a universal atonement and pardon, *the Assembly hath encroached upon the Divine warrant unto all to receive Christ, and also upon Sovereign Grace: that this act of Assembly hath so opened the sluice unto the turning of Religion into mere morality, that, if remedy be not timely provided, this matter must terminate in a confounding of the Law and the Gospel: and that the Assembly,*

* Not the Confession of Knox, but that of 1581 and 1638.

in this act, hath showed too great concern for binding on the necks of believers in Christ the yoke of the Law as a Covenant of Works. That in the above-mentioned eighth Act, wherein the General Assembly directs Ministers in preaching Catechetical Sermons, to insist especially upon the necessary doctrine of Satisfaction to Divine Justice, made by Jesus Christ, who is our only Propitiation, and of free Justification through our blessed Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, received by Faith alone, the Assembly hath winded up the great doctrine of Justification in such terms as give shelter to the erroneous doctrine of Justification for something wrought in, or done by, the sinner, as his righteousness, or keeping the new and Gospel-Law. And that, in the same Act, the Assembly's directing Ministers to preach the necessity of a holy life, in order to the obtaining everlasting happiness, is of very dangerous consequence to the doctrine of free Grace."

The Moderate majority of the Assembly indeed denied that they ever intended the Acts of 1720 to have this alleged effect on the authorised doctrine, or that the Acts really had any such effect. They said, respecting the accusations of their opponents summarised in the quotation just made: "All which the General Assembly cannot but look upon to be injurious and undutiful aspersions cast upon the supreme Judicatory of the Church, who, in these two quarrelled Acts, have given an open and evident proof of their true zeal for maintaining the received Gospel truths, and of their sincere concern for preserving this Church from the infection of the opposite errors. And the General Assembly finds, That the said Assembly 1720, in these Acts, had no design to recede from the received doctrine of this Church, nor by them have done injury to truth, nor given countenance to error as they are charged with." And they

go on after a few words I have omitted: "And, in vindication of the two Acts of Assembly, and for wiping off the above-mentioned injurious aspersions, and for preserving the purity of Gospel-truths received in this Church, and in opposition to the Antinomian errors, censured in that book called 'The Marrow of Modern Divinity' (the defence whereof is so keenly espoused by the subscribers of the Representation), the General Assembly have thought fit to declare that they own and maintain, agreeably to the Holy Scriptures, the received doctrine of this Church, contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, &c." Here follow a series of paragraphs expressed in literal quotations from the Confession and Catechisms, and setting forth what is, in fact, a new Creed, under such heads as "Concerning the Covenant of Works and Grace," &c.

Now while, as has just been pointed out, a series of propositions is set forth by the Assembly in their Act of the year 1722, stated in the very words of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, still, on the one hand, by one of these propositions thus stated a principle is enunciated completely subversive of the real doctrine of Salvation contained in the formularies, while, on the other hand, under other of the propositions the statements of the formularies ("our Articles" as they are called) are so handled (in fact shuffled) as to appear to countenance the new and surreptitious doctrine. The proof of the first part of this statement, viz. that a doctrine contradictory to the authorised one was enunciated by the General

Assembly, stares one in the face in the following title of the sixth of the Propositions now under review. “Concerning the standing obligation of the Moral Law in the Dispensation of Grace, and the necessity of personal holiness and good works, in order to the obtaining the enjoyment of eternal Salvation.” This is an astounding proposition, even when taken just as it stands, for any one, who understands the Westminster formularies, to hear affirmed of as being taught dogmatically and systematically in them—I say, just as it stands: and I say so, because the language of this title has an ambuscading character that demands close scrutiny. It is language well-fitted by its plausible character to cloak the dishonest (I repeat the term deliberately, dishonest) reasoning the framers of this Act were indulging in.

It is to be observed, then, that the Title or Proposition we are now considering, speaks of “obtaining *the enjoyment* of Salvation,” and not simply of “obtaining Salvation and Eternal Life.” My experience in handling Ecclesiastical documents assures me it is no mistaken piece of tact that induces me to fasten on this word “enjoyment.” For the word obviously helps to neutralise the enormity of the misstatement of fact really meant to be conveyed, and actually conveyed, by the Act of Assembly in which the proposition under consideration occurs. It is useful too in the case of those who are either willing and ready to employ a subterfuge, or who lack the perspicacity to detect the sophistical use of language. For a host of such persons, echoing the

shout of its leaders, would at once be down on an unwary opponent, who, standing on the real ground of the Formularies, might charge this Title with contradicting the Standards,—with the shout, We say holiness and good works are necessary only for the *enjoyment* of Salvation. But can such quibbling reconcile the Moderate Doctrine with that of the Standards, and prove a substantial unanimity between the Moderates and Evangelicals? Far from it. The full and deliberate statement made by the Moderates in a subsequent part of the same Act 1722, in reply to their Evangelical opponents, demonstrates how vital the contention between them was; and that, in fact, the theology of the two parties was utterly contradictory. The statement referred to is one of a series of paragraphs following the new Creed, a chapter of which we are now examining; and in this additional series of paragraphs the Moderates answer their opponents' reply to the several heads of charge against "The Marrow" contained in Act V of the year 1720. This statement supports, in opposition to the Evangelical minority, the third charge against "The Marrow" quoted (page 544), and runs thus:

"With respect to the third paragraph of the Representation, it is to be observed that, in the third paragraph of the Act, the Assembly censured the false opinion, *that holiness is not necessary to Salvation*; and for fixing it upon 'The Marrow,' they cite page 150 to 153. They cite these pages for clearing the author's mind from the connexion of purposes; and particularly, that he is speaking of a person already justified; and then adduce the words from page 153, which plainly bear his rejecting of the Law, as it requires good works to be done, and the commandments to

be kept, in order to obtain Salvation. Which is further strengthened by the following words (the omitting whereof by the Assembly, is complained of in the Representation), viz. *for in Christ I have all things at once, neither need I anything more that is necessary unto Salvation.* Their personal holiness and good works, and perseverance in holy obedience to the Law of God, are not (in his opinion) necessary unto Salvation, and a man may have all things necessary to Salvation, though he be not yet a godly man: and therefore the Assembly have given no just ground of quarrel in this, nor for any who understand the Gospel to be offended; seeing, though good works be excluded from being the ground of Justification, yet they are necessary in the justified, in order to their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal Salvation: and this doth noway cut off or condemn the believer's only plea, in answer to the Law-demand of perfect obedience, for Justification and Title to eternal Life, as the Representation alleges."

It is evident from this passage that the exact question upon which the opinions of the two parties in the General Assembly diverged was, Are sinners justified or saved and made heirs to the possession and enjoyment of Eternal Life only on account of what Christ has done and suffered being imputed to them and accepted by Faith as an instrument? The party that advocated "The Marrow" and maintained at the same time (correctly, as I affirm) the dogmas of the Westminster formularies, answered this question unhesitatingly in the affirmative. They clearly maintained, too, the equivalence of Justification and Salvation, for they employed the latter term as it is employed in "The Marrow," instead of the term Justification, and to represent all that Justification means. And in doing this, however far they might err from the truth in other respects, they stood on

catholic ground, as is proved by the testimony of Scripture, of the Westminster formularies themselves, and of all formularies and creeds indeed, Catholic or Protestant, ancient or modern,—except the Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland we are now examining, if even they differ from the catholic truth in anything more than appearance. But the other party, the majority of the Assembly who passed the Acts, on the contrary, affirmed tacitly that holiness and good works are necessary substantially and actually for Justification or Salvation; while they affirm in express terms that they are necessary for Salvation, or at least for “the *enjoyment* of Salvation and Eternal Life.” The first portion of the twofold statement contained in the last sentence rests on these words occurring in the quotation just made, “though good works be excluded from being the ground of Justification, yet they are necessary *in the justified;*” and the second portion of the statement rests surely on these words, “in order to their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal salvation,” which immediately follow in the same quotation those previously cited. I think I need not now fear any ambuscader who may choose to attack me from behind the cover of the word “enjoyment,” and that I may confidently affirm, in company with Principal Hill,* that the General Assembly meant to teach expressly, that holiness and good works are necessary at least for Salvation.

* See p. 509.

IV. The doctrine announced by the Acts shown to be utterly subversive of the authorised doctrine, and to be in itself utterly inconsistent and unsatisfactory.

IV. Having now ascertained the exact question in dispute between the two parties, it will not be difficult, in view of the results reached with certainty in this Note, to decide as to the true character of the tenets maintained by the majority of the General Assembly in their Acts, in opposition to the advocates of "The Marrow" and the Westminster formularies in common. In forming and exhibiting this judgment I shall exhibit all the aspects of the Assembly's doctrine which have presented themselves in the preceding deduction of it from the appropriate documents. And I believe it will thus be seen that, however viewed, the Assembly's doctrine is utterly unsatisfactory and bad. Viewed as an expression of Scriptural and Catholic truth, it will be seen to contradict and subvert the Standards. Viewed as an attempt to reconcile, when challenged by the Evangelical party, the Standards and Catholic truth, it will be seen striving in vain to avoid contradicting both. In the result it will be seen to issue in a miserable system of equivocation.

Let the first view of the doctrine contained in the Acts be that one obviously suggested by the terms employed in Act VIII of the year 1720.* It has been already pointed out that, according to these terms,† the Acts may be understood to allow the preaching of the pure catholic doctrine of Justification or Salvation as set forth in the Confession of Knox, and as taught

* See p. 552.

† See p. 553—4.

long before by Augustine and Chrysostom. According to this form, repentance or regeneration and fruits meet for repentance, or good works, are necessary and essential elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation, the other essential elements being forgiveness of sins and acceptance with God through the righteousness and mediation of Jesus Christ. This is the view of the eighth Act which the language of the Remonstrants, as quoted by the authors of the Acts,* evidently took. But not only so: for the authors of the Acts, after endeavouring to rebut the charge of the Remonstrants as to their overthrowing the Standards, by stating their new creed in the very terms of the Standards, reassert in their special answers to the Remonstrants the very thing they are charged with; only the reassertion is more entangled and confused than the original statement as given in the eighth Act. Thus they say, "though good works be excluded from being the ground of Justification, yet they are necessary *in the justified*, in order to their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal Salvation." If language means anything, this language evidently means that good works are necessary as elements and conditions of Justification or Salvation. But this is the very doctrine which, however it might be taught by the early fathers and symbolised, as we have seen, by Knox, was contended against by Luther, Calvin, and the whole body of Lutherans and Calvinists until, after one hundred and thirty years of often mortal strife, its exact and thoroughly

* See p. 555.

developed opposite was proclaimed at Westminster, and adopted as the legal doctrine in Scotland.

Had they not been challenged, the leaders of the Moderate party would doubtless have left the eighth Act unencumbered, to authorise (as far as it could authorise) the catholic doctrine symbolised by Knox, but supplanted by the doctrine of Melville and his followers Henderson, Gillespie, and Baillie. The proof that they would have done so is at hand. It is seen in their attempt still to secure a footing for the catholic doctrine after it had been challenged by the Marrow-men, and after these had maintained that the doctrine of the eighth Act was contrary to and subversive of the authorised Lutherano-Calvinistic doctrine. And this very attempt of the Moderates demonstrates most clearly, by its failure, the utter impossibility of escaping in any rational and legitimate mode from the doctrinal trammels of the Standards. It leads us in its failure step by step to the conclusion that there is no legitimate *via media* under the Westminster formularies, just because, as we have already proved historically in this Note, these formularies consummated on the Lutherano-Calvinistic side the victory over all who had attempted to arrest or modify that form of doctrine. It is most important to have this point established, and I rejoice at being able now to proceed with its establishment at the same time with that of the other points now engaging our attention. It will come clearly into view as we now go on to examine how the Moderates vainly endeavoured at once to maintain their own doctrine as enunciated in

the eighth Act of the Assembly of 1720, and to show its consistency with those Westminster formularies they were solemnly obliged to maintain.

It was the challenge of the Remonstrants that induced the leaders of the Church to declare their faith in the very terms of the Formularies, but under heads or titles of their own composition. As has been already noted (and the point, though in appearance trivial, is in reality of deep significance), the Moderate leaders called the Formularies "Articles." They are not Articles, but most careful abstracts of the Lutherano-Calvinistic theology of the seventeenth century, when it now contained all that such Fœderalist theologians as Witsius afterwards embodied (with some trifling variation) in their works. The course of my argument now leads me to cite at large several of the most important of the chapters of this Moderate Creed. But let the reader remember that the persons who framed this new Creed out of the materials of the authorised one still professed to be maintaining the very doctrines authorised by the Formularies. I will begin with quoting the third chapter of this new Creed, entitled Concerning Free Justification, and running thus :

"That them whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous ; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them ; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them ;

they receiving and resting on Him, and his righteousness, by faith alone; which faith they have, not of themselves, it is the gift of God.—*Confess.*, Chap. II, § 2. Larger Cat., Quest. 70.”

I will next cite the eighth Chapter of the new Creed. It is entitled, Concerning the believer’s plea for acceptance with God, and title to Eternal Life, against the demands of the Law and Justice: and runs thus:

“That Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full Satisfaction to His Father’s Justice in their behalf.—*Confess.*, Chap. XI, § 3. And although Christ, by His obedience and death, did make a proper, real, and full Satisfaction to God’s Justice, in behalf of them that are justified; yet, inasmuch as God accepteth the Satisfaction from a Surety, which He might have demanded of them, and did provide this Surety, His own only Son, imputing His Righteousness to them, and requiring nothing of them, for their Justification, but Faith, which also is His gift, their Justification is to them of free Grace. That Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do always accompany it, or of good works that are the fruits of it; nor as if the grace of Faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification; but only as it is an instrument, by which he receiveth and applieth Christ and His Righteousness.—*Larger Cat.*, Quest. 71, 73. That Repentance is not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof.—*Confess.*, Chap. XV, § 3. That we can’t, by our best works, merit pardon of sin, or eternal Life, at the hand of God.—*Confess.*, Chap. XVI, § 5. They that are regenerated, and believe in Christ, are delivered from the Moral Law as a Covenant of Works, so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned.—*Larger Cat.*, Quest. 97; *Confess.*, Chap. XIX, § 6.”

Second: attention to the quotations made from the

formularies in these two chapters of the new Creed will quickly show the reasons that impelled the framers of this Creed to arrange for taking, if required, another view of the doctrine in dispute ; and will also show the nature of this second view. Thus these quotations are seen to embrace a large portion of the declarations touching Justification made by the Westminster Assembly ; and they show demonstrably even as they stand, and independently of our historical examination of them in the previous pages, that, according to the Westminster formularies, Justification (I say at present Justification, and not Justification or Salvation) is an absolutely imputative forensic and external thing, excluding from its conception every internal element and every condition whatsoever ; excluding even faith, except in so far as it is “an instrument,” and not an “organ.” According to this view, then, holiness and good works are not necessary as elements or conditions “in the justified,” in order to their attaining to eternal life. Nevertheless, judging from their declaration “That good works are necessary in the justified” (a declaration after they had been challenged by their opponents), the framers of the new Creed would obviously allow it to be maintained, tacitly indeed, but still most substantially, that good works are “necessary in the justified” both as an element and condition of Justification. And it was needful for them to do this if they wished to avoid the utter theological absurdity of making Justification and Salvation two distinct and different things, which must have been the case if they maintained that

respecting Salvation which they denied respecting Justification. While, as has just appeared, they were prevented by the very remarkable language of the Formularies from maintaining in express terms the necessity of good works as an element and condition of Justification, they maintained this in express terms in certain parts of their new Formulary respecting Salvation. Of this there can be now no question. They were enabled to do this without appearing at first sight to contradict the Standards, by the absence of the term Salvation from the portions of the Westminster formularies cited in the last quotations. [We have already sufficiently commented in the Preliminary Sketch of these Formularies, both on the fact of this omission and on the reasons of it.*] And it is the fact of their declaring good works to be necessary as elements and conditions of Salvation that makes me affirm confidently their *lucit* but most real intention to allow the maintenance of good works as necessary elements and conditions of Justification. For they were too able men and too good Theologians to plunge into the dilemma which stared them in the face if they expressed themselves as if maintaining Justification and Salvation to be utterly distinct and different things, which they must have done if making the one simple and unconditioned, the other complex and conditioned. As a necessity of their horribly awkward position, and as the only means at their disposal enabling them, in appearance at least, to vanquish their opponents, they maintained in express

* See Part II, Sect. 1, subsect. 3.

terms touching Salvation what they only implied touching Justification. But their confusion must be complete, and their immurement in the prison-house of heresy absolute, when it appears that the Standards no more allow Salvation to be mixed and conditioned than Justification. That the extreme Lutherano-Calvinistic Evangelicals were the lawful masters of the field must in this case also be evident.

Thirdly, according to the last view, then, the new Creed, in obedience to the trammels of the Westminster formularies, sets forth only tacitly, but still substantially, the Catholic truth that Justification involves good works both as an element and condition; while it states this truth in certain places expressly in reference to Salvation, because the Westminster formularies present an appearance of freedom in regard to Salvation. But this freedom is only apparent. It only appears to exist because the Westminster Divines did not expressly employ the term Salvation alternatively with the term Justification in Chapter XI of their Confession or Formula. But, as has been already pointed out in our preliminary sketch of the Westminster doctrine, the framers of the Formularies employed the term Salvation as the equivalent of Justification in their account of "Justifying Faith" in the Larger Catechism, so as to place beyond the possibility of being disputed their opinion as to the identity of Salvation and Justification. This passage has been already quoted, and will be met with again immediately in the very heart of the Chapter of the surreptitious Moderate Creed to be next cited.

And let me now request the reader, while perusing this chapter, to give earnest heed to the two following points observable in it. First, while professing to give in this chapter an account of "Justifying Faith," its writers place at its commencement the Westminster account of "Saving Faith." By doing this they in fact reintroduce in connection with Justification and Salvation all those elements and consequences of the full Christian faith, which the Westminster Divines had most scrupulously cut off and debarred in order to form their indefinable "instrumental faith." Second, let it be observed that when the account given in the Larger Catechism of Salvation as the equivalent of Justification, and as a thing therefore to be understood exactly as that Catechism and the Confession understand Justification, is read as it stands in the new Creed, it appears to bear a totally different meaning from that really assigned it by the formularies. For it comes immediately after the account of "Saving Faith," and so seems to embrace in it all the meaning of that Faith, instead of embracing like its equivalent in the formularies, viz. Justification, only the imputative and external elements of a forensic Redemption received by an "instrumental faith." I insist thus on these two points, because they demonstrate by means of the inner texture and structure of this new Creed, the charge which I bring, in common with Sir William Hamilton* (who, though dead, yet speaketh), but based on still stronger proof than his,—the charge, namely, that there has been introduced into the

* See 'Discussions on Philosophy,' p. 493.

Church of Scotland a doctrine antagonistic to and subversive of the authorised so-called Protestant doctrine. Lutherano-Calvinism was abolished by the Acts 1720—22 in favour of the old and catholic doctrine.

The chapter of the surreptitious Creed just referred to is entitled *Of Justifying Faith and its appropriating act*, and it runs thus :

“That the grace of Faith, whereby the Elect are enabled to believe, to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts. Its principal acts are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone, for Justification, Sanctification, and Eternal Life, by virtue of the Covenant of Grace.—*Confess.*, Chap. XIV, §§ 1, 2. That Justifying Faith is a saving grace wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he being convicted of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth unto the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and His righteousness therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of His person righteous in the sight of God for Salvation. That it is an instrument whereby he receiveth and applieth Christ and His righteousness.—*Larger Cat.*, Ques. 72, 73. That this Faith is different in degrees, weak or strong—growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ.—*Confess.*, Chap. XIV, § 3. That such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before Him, may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded on the truth of God’s promises, and by the Spirit enabling them to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made, and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured, that they are in a state of grace, and shall persevere therein unto Salvation; that this infallible assurance does not so belong to the essence of Faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties, before he be made partaker of it; and that

assurance of Grace and Salvation not being of the essence of Faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it. One who doubteth of his being in Christ may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured of it.—*Confess.*, Chap. XVIII, § 1, 3 ; *Larger Cat.*, Quest. 80, 81, 172.”

Now, as has been already sufficiently insisted on,* the description of Justifying Faith given in the Larger Catechism, as quoted in the middle of the passage just cited, clearly proves the identity of Salvation and Justification in the estimation of the Westminster Divines. The Salvation that forms the ground and title to Eternal Life comes, according to them, through a Justifying Faith, which receives instrumentally forgiveness and righteousness, the results by imputation of the “satisfaction and obedience” of Christ; and is thus the exact equivalent of Justification as defined by the same parties. Salvation as thus understood must be considered to be as absolutely exclusive of every internal element in the person saved, and of every spiritual or moral condition,—to be, in a word, as absolutely imputative, external, and gratuitous as Justification. The identity of Justification and Salvation is thus put by the Westminster Divines, in obedience to the requirements of Scripture, and of catholic Theology as founded on Scripture. And it is with my feet planted on this avowedly steadfast and unassailable ground—ground eternally secure and impregnable—of the identity of Salvation and Justification viewed as the title to Eternal Life, that I affirm the Acts 1720 and 1722 overthrew the authoritative

* See Part II, Sect. 1, subsect. 5.

and legalised doctrine which all office bearers of the Established Church are sworn to maintain, and introduced its antagonist in its room. This was undeniably done—history, as deduced from legal documents in this Note, proves undeniably it was done—by the authors of the Acts in question, when they maintained in express terms in these Acts that holiness and good works are necessary for Salvation. Maintaining this, then were they necessitated by the all-prevailing logic and method of catholic Theology to maintain at least tacitly but substantially, if not in express terms and with perfect articulateness, the very same thing respecting Justification. The latter part of this alternative they could not undertake, for to do so would have led into an express and fully developed antagonism to the legalised Creed. But then they could adopt and act on the first branch of the alternative, and they did this. For, as has been already seen, the entire structure of their new Creed is obviously such as to make it harmonise tacitly and substantially with the catholic doctrine, which declares that holiness and good works form elements and conditions of Justification not less than of Salvation.

It is only necessary now to examine one more of the eight Chapters forming this new Creed. This is the sixth chapter, and is entitled, “Concerning the standing obligation of the Moral Law in the Dispensation of Grace, and the necessity of personal holiness and good works, in order to the obtaining the enjoyment of eternal Salvation.” The title evinces that the chapter was intended to show the ground afforded by the

formularies for supporting the tenet that “good works are necessary for Salvation.” The chapter proceeds thus :

“That the Law, after man’s Fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness, and as such was delivered by God on Mount Sinai in the Ten Commandments. That the Moral Law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it; neither doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation.—*Confess.*, Chap. XIX, §§ 2, 5. That it is likewise of great use to the Regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin; and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve. The promises of it, in like manner, show them God’s approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof, although not as due to them by the Law as a Covenant of Works; so a man’s doing good and refraining from evil, because the Law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the Law, and not under Grace. Neither are the fore-mentioned uses of the Law contrary to the Grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it, *Ibid.*, §§ 6, 7. That they who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified really and personally, and more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, *without which no man shall see the Lord.*—*Confess.*, Chap. XIII, § 1. That God promiseth and giveth His Spirit to all the Elect, to enable them, to all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to Salvation.—*Larger Cat.*, Quest. 32. That good works, done in obedience to God’s commandments are the fruit and evidences of a true and lively faith, and by them believers manifest their thankfulness; that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal Life.—*Confess.*, Chap. XVI, § 2.”

It is most noteworthy that although in this chapter it is declared in the language of Scripture (language deservedly italicised by the framers of the new Creed), *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, still it is never said in express terms that holiness and good works are necessary for Salvation. On the contrary, the original authors of the fragments that form this chapter, knowing that according to their system holiness and good works are not necessary either as elements or conditions of Justification or Salvation, are careful to describe obedience to the Divine Law as being merely "the evidence" of the faith which justifies or saves "instrumentally," and as being in some indefinable or mystical mode "the way which God hath appointed unto Salvation." On this view of obedience, as has already appeared,* the Lutherano-Calvinistic minority of the Assembly insisted in their Representation. And it was this, the correct "systematic" view of obedience, according to the formularies, which, when taken in connection with the allowed "systematic" view of Justification or Salvation, which effectually hemmed in (and must always effectually hem in) the Moderates; made them feel they enjoyed no true *via media*; and showed them that, however they might make a rush at freedom in one direction, they must always at last obey the curb of "the system," and speak only in equivoques such as "obtaining the *enjoyment* of eternal Salvation." For I still maintain that this language is equivocal, it is meant both to leave room for maintaining the necessity

* See p. 555.

of holiness and good works as elements and conditions, tacitly as respects Justification, but expressly as respects Salvation, and to preserve, at the same time, the appearance of agreement with the Standards, inasmuch as they contrive to avoid contradicting them in terms even while formularising a type of doctrine which is demonstrably the contradictory of the legal one.

V. The attempt to introduce a pure and catholic creed utterly futile: it left the established Lutherano-Calvinism in full power, and the Bible in miserable bondage.

V. However, a substantially new Creed was introduced into the Established Church under the guise of the Acts of Assembly 1720—22. Henceforth, full liberty was enjoyed in the private and public maintenance of tenets, not only coming far short of the authorised ones, but in important respects contradicting them. This could be done with perfect impunity and, to a certain extent, even with worldly advantage, for the authors and abettors of the new Creed also governed the Church, so they who followed out the principles of the Creed would not only do so safely, but with the full favour of its authors as being of their party. And the Church and country were long governed systematically and successfully (with a false kind of success, however) in this manner. The policy of the Moderate leaders was successful, but with a success bought at a very great expense to the country. Incontrovertible evidences of this came into existence at the very time this policy began to succeed, and have become increasingly palpable and cogent ever since. This proof

is seen in the series of secessions from the Established Church which has taken place—secessions or disruptions always increasing in volume and in bitterness till they culminated in that of 1843.

One great and undeniable advantage, however, was secured to the Church and country under this so-called Moderate regime. Under it, an historical and philosophical literature that has become classical sprang up. Indeed, it may be truly affirmed that the literary activity which has prevailed more or less in Scotland for more than a century, has had a much more favorable opportunity formed for it by this regime than it could have otherwise enjoyed. And this is without question the case as respects the school of theology signalised by the sermons of Blair, Logan, Charteris, and the commentaries and essays of Macknight, Campbell, and the Gerrards. But while these things show clearly the inestimable value of liberty, they do not prove the exact state of things in which they appeared to be a sound and genuine liberty. Dr. Macknight, indeed, appears to have put out of mind and view entirely the Formularies to which he was subjected, or to have lived and worked in an entire unconsciousness of them, moving like a man quite at his ease. At least such is the conclusion his entire intellectual bearing leads one to. The case was far otherwise, however, with Principal Campbell and the Gerrards. The latent satire pervading the works of the former, and breaking out in his Lectures on Systematic Theology into a very decided protest against the thralldom of authoritative systems, shows how his

fetters galled him. As clear is this in the case of the Gerrards : and who will believe that Principal Robertson would have treated his great theme of the Reformation exactly as he did, had he written it as the member of a perfectly free Church, instead of being leader of the extreme Lutherano-Calvinistic Church of Scotland. Certainly, a curious insight into the real state of his mind respecting the legalised theology of the country is afforded by the declaration frequently repeated and generally believed as his, That there would ere long be a complete revolution in Ecclesiastical affairs. It has been frequently stated too, and never contradicted, that the importunities of the younger clergy of the day that he would undertake in earnest the inauguration of a change, hastened his early withdrawal from his position as the leader of the Church.

That galling of his fetters which resulted in the sensitive, witty, and powerful mind of Principal Campbell in an irony as clever as that of Voltaire himself, resulted in the case of less refined minds in more disastrous effects. The picture drawn by Dr. Wotherpoon in his "Characteristics" of the Moderate party, bears testimony to the evil effects presented to the eyes of a contemporary, when a set of men continue bound by solemn obligations to a system which the most intellectual amongst them have taught the rest to despise or loath. That witness, indeed, himself belonged to the so-called Evangelical party. But he was a man of good education, intelligent and refined. Besides, his book contains materials which speak for themselves in unmistakeable language. But I hasten

from such things to lay my finger again on the real evil and its cause. This was the existence of an utterly erroneous but legalised religious system which was always as clearly seen to give full protection in the ultimate result to its sincere advocates, as it was felt to tie the hands and gag the mouths of its opponents, in the last resort. During the earthquake of the Reformation, there had issued from the small opening of error formed by the germinal doctrine of Luther, a tenet which soon assumed gigantic proportion: this, having wielded a volcanic might, had disrupted at its heart the entire practical system of Christianity; and, after doing so, had solidified in its largest and most offensive mass over the country of Scotland. Campbell, the Gerrards, and Robertson were chained to this basalt-like mass of errors as completely as those who thought it to be the living rock of unmixed Divine truth. They dared not say and stand to it, except at a cost they were not prepared for, That is not God's pure truth, it is the half of Divine truth twisted into the substructure of a fearful mistake, an awful lie. Until this could not only be said, but proved demonstratively, there was no sure hope of remedy. Therefore will I sympathise with both parties more or less in that unhappy state of things, rather than unreservedly condemn either of them.

I believe the best apology for the conduct of the Moderate party is that, while they no more than their opponents saw the true solution of the difficulties of their professed Creed, they saw enough to convince them something was wrong, and to justify them in

their own minds in fighting for their existence against the otherwise overmastering power of the Established System and its adherents. They did not see enough to justify them in throwing off entirely all allegiance to that system, on the demonstrated ground of the utter erroneousness and incurable disorder of the system. If they saw this clearly, then was their conduct much more indefensible than I am inclined to hold it: though in this case "bad is the best," seeing that they did deliberately introduce a surreptitious formula of belief, embodying principles completely subversive of the Creed they were bound to maintain. But no opinion that can be maintained on this point will at all avail for defence of the Westminster Formularies. The complete arrest which they laid (and still lay) upon inquiry, at least on the free declaration of the result of inquiry beyond a certain point, is of itself enough to command their condemnation. For they thus blocked up (they still block up!) the very avenues whereby men must approach the strongholds of error (error turned into falsehood, by being clung to after conviction), to assail and overthrow them. The Devil's best allies in all ages have been the things and persons whose work is to stifle inquiry itself, or when that cannot be done to prevent the birth or destroy the life of its fruit.

CONCLUSION.

I BELIEVE I am fully justified in maintaining that the heads of impugment prefixed to this Note have been now abundantly established. Their truth as matter of history has been proved at length in the second part of the Note, on the basis of the Protestant ecclesiastical law of Europe; and as well by what is contained in that part as in the third part their truth as matter of theology has been established on the ground of argument. To particularise now even to the extent of one solitary point would justly incur the condemnation of being an intolerable iteration. Indeed I feel the extreme likelihood of my being charged with this sin as it is; and therefore I anticipate the charge with these words: "Iterations are commonly loss of time; but there is no such gain of time as to iterate often the state of the question, for it chaseth away many a frivolous speech."* I believe that in this will be found my valid defence for much, and especially for many oft-recurring expressions met with in this work. To those who on the ground of such things would still charge me with prolixness and redundancy, I would offer these two remarks: First, I have felt my work to be from first to last that of demonstrating; and that if I should fail

* Bacon's 'Essays.'

in proving, or in making manifest the proofs of any of my charges, I might, without more ado, cast my work into the fire. I hold then that much of what may appear to a careless reader or thinker redundant or prolix, is no more such than is the unflagging iteration of axioms in a geometrical proof redundant or prolix, seeing that every such iteration is necessary to bring the reader at last unfliningly to the wished-for *Quod erat demonstrandum*. Second, I know my subject, and I know my opponents. The former is full of ambages and holes of escape ready to be used by such as are so inclined. Truth, then, had no chance, as the conduct of its intentional or unintentional opponents learned from this history as well as from my own sad experience, convinced me, unless I should with conscientious care both clear away all those ambuscades, and close up all those ways of retreat. Nor was it enough to do this, as it were, once for all. In this intellectual even as in actual warfare, one must carry his weapons, and all needful warlike gear constantly with him, and, as the speediest way of closing unavoidable strife, apply them unfliningly, even on the bare suspicion of open or ambuscading attack, of interested sophistical and cowardly retreat.

Returning to God hearty and unfeigned thanks in the name of my Redeemer for sparing me to conclude what I now fearlessly avow before Him to be by His grace a piece of honest work ;—I commit its disposal and its effect to Him, in the firm conviction and tried knowledge that He can make his own instruments abundantly effective, even upon those proud ones who

most affect to condemn them : and I pray that He may yet spare me to accomplish in His service some of that good work which I know can be efficiently wrought in defence of His truth against those parties abroad as well as at home ; whose reasoning, though called scientific, is so styled falsely, because it is born of minds blinded in the inner, the nobler, the God-seeing eye, and so, in one sense blind entirely ; and this reasoning, though directed to the upturning of the foundation of the Faith, and tending to the utter negation of the Faith itself in the minds of its recipients, still can be shown to be thoroughly vitiated, and therefore quite futile in itself as respects every injurious consequence, by its ignoring and failing to disprove what is in these ages the most important element in reasonings respecting the truth of Revelation.

APPENDIX I.

UNTO THE KIRK-SESSION

OF THE

HIGH CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

THE PETITION

OF

JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR,

RESIDING IN EDINBURGH,

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—That your Petitioner is a member of the Congregation of the High Church, Edinburgh.

That your Petitioner was a Clergyman of the Church of Scotland till November 27th, 1850, when he resigned his charge unconditionally, and was declared not to be a Minister of the National Church, because he could no longer acknowledge as Scriptural “the form” in which certain important doctrines are authoritatively set forth in the Confession of Faith. Previous to his resignation he had stated the grounds on which he objected to the Confession; but these were not then, nor have they since been, tried and pronounced to be either right or wrong by the Church.*

That your Petitioner was living as a private member of the Church, when a Pastoral Letter was issued by the Commission of Assembly in November, 1851, which taught an ambiguous

* See ‘The Biblical and Patristic Doctrine of Salvation,’ vol. ii, Appendix.

doctrine of Justification or Salvation, inasmuch as, though harmonising so far with the Confession, it entirely omitted certain checks or "negative positions" contained in the Confession, and was consequently completely susceptible of being understood as well in the sense forbidden, as in the sense allowed, by the Formularies. Your Petitioner made publicly known his opinion on this character of the Pastoral; and the more so, because it was addressed to "Ministers and Office-bearers of the Church," though allowing what the Standards prohibited,—and through that prohibition had constrained the Petitioner to resign his charge. The Petitioner also took the necessary steps to bring what he had published under the notice of various influential parties in the Church.

That your Petitioner so far from receiving any relief from the doubt he was thrown into by the Pastoral respecting the doctrine really held by the Church to be binding on the ground of Scripture, had his doubt increased by a sentence of approval pronounced by the General Assembly on the Pastoral, notwithstanding its character as pointed out by the Petitioner. In these circumstances, he presented a Petition to your Court in 1852, praying for your aid and counsel to enable him to understand how the XIth chapter of the Confession of Faith, entitled "Of Justification," is deducible from or reconcilable with the teaching of the Greek New Testament: for if taught how the Church does that, his mind would have been satisfied. But your Court found it incompetent to grant his prayer; and this judgment was confirmed after successive appeals by last General Assembly.*

That your Petitioner thereafter applied to his Ministers to point out to him how the aforesaid chapter of the Confession is "deducible from and therefore reconcilable with the Greek New Testament." He was led to do this by an offer of the Ministers made in 1852, but declined by him at that time, because he had already entered on the apparently more satisfactory course of applying through you to the Courts of the Church. But having

* See 'The Biblical and Patristic Doctrine of Salvation,' vol. ii, Appendix.

found this refusal of his to be urged most disastrously against him in the Courts, on the ground that he had refused to accept at the hands of his Ministers the very thing he was now asking from the Courts, he now on being rejected by the Courts applied to the Ministers to make good their offer. Subsequently to his request, the Rev. Mr. McLetchie asked him to present a definite statement of his "difficulties, or doubts and difficulties," in the form of propositions "in order that, taking them into account, he might be enabled to say whether they involved matter of profitable discussion and probable adjustment." But your Petitioner urged his claim to a direct answer, because by doing as Mr. McLetchie proposed he must become an objector to the Standards instead of one to be instructed, and would be tried (probably without a hearing), instead of being taught, by him. Mr. McLetchie, however, adhered to his conditions; and, on the matter being brought before the Presbytery by a Petition and Complaint, the Reverend Court summarily dismissed it. [The documents connected with these proceedings are handed in along with this Petition.]*

That your Petitioner having thus failed to obtain satisfaction on a subject at once important in itself, and now placed in a most peculiar position by the Pastoral, and the steps taken in consequence of it, has resolved to take the only course now left to him, namely, to make a formal doctrinal statement to your Court which may be tried. He will thus do to you as the legitimate Court, what he refused to do to an individual Minister; because to do it was contrary to the purpose of his application; and because it would be manifestly unjust to himself and his most important subject, were they to be submitted for trial (probably without a hearing) by one or more individuals, acting in entire freedom from all judicial responsibility.

That your Petitioner claims due consideration for his statements, because "the duty belongs to Kirk-sessions to inquire into the knowledge and spiritual condition of the members of the congregation, whom they are to admonish or encourage as they

* See Appendices II, III, IV.

see cause." And he confidently expects you will find no reason for disallowing your dealing with him, or handing him over to be dealt with by the superior Court, because he claims nothing at all peculiar in the mode of dealing with him. Thus, he agrees to the use of the authorised English version of the Bible, and desires only such a use of the Scriptures in the Original as the common practice of the Church warrants, and the following words of the Confession of Faith unquestionably allow: "The Scriptures in the Original Tongues are authentical, so as in all controversies of Religion the Church is finally to appeal to them."

That your Petitioner expects this matter will be referred to the Presbytery if you deem your Court practically unfit to deal with it; for it involves the articulate denial of the correctness of the Standards *in facie Ecclesie*—a step doubtless as painful to you as it certainly is to the Petitioner, and only taken by him out of necessity as being the only one left: but a step which you cannot overlook, whether as respects your duty to the Church or to the Petitioner. The former requires that the correctness of the Standards should be explained and vindicated, when it has been questioned or denied. The latter requires that the questioner or impugner shall be dealt with for his correction in the first place; but for his ultimate condemnation if he be found on legitimate grounds to be obstinate in adhering to error. Besides, a higher and more solemn duty than any enjoined by the Standards or the Church—but a duty recognised by both of these—requires that this matter be looked into, namely, the duty springing from the existence of a revealed will of God. This duty imperatively requires most earnest attention to this revealed will that its dictates may be discovered, and that all things should be ordered in the Church by these dictates when they have been discovered.

That your Petitioner confidently expects it will be admitted he has waited long and patiently, and persevered in the use of every constitutional means of instruction or correction, before taking the final step of questioning or denying the correctness of the Standards *in facie Ecclesie*. And that he feels completely justified

in taking this step at last, because he takes it in order to be corrected, if in error, by those who are not mere custodiers or appliers of the doctrine contained in the Standards, but bound to maintain it controversially or argumentatively when that is necessary; or, in other words, he takes this step to bring specially under the notice and consideration of the Church what may not be error but truth worthy to be accepted and given due influence to under the authority of the Church. Besides, the Petitioner feels imperatively urged to this with the view of determining the validness of those religious grounds on which he was ejected from his office, while a Pastoral authorised by the Church would appear to countenance others in maintaining these grounds.

That your Petitioner therefore begs leave to hand in along with this a summary Statement (with an appended Note), on the points he objects to in the Confession of Faith.

May it therefore please your Reverend and Honorable Court to take the premises into due consideration, and to grant your Petitioner an opportunity of speaking in support of his propositions in your presence; or, if that be not deemed an eligible procedure, to remit the matter to the Presbytery; and your Petitioner will, &c.

(Signed) JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

TRINITY BATHS, NEAR EDINBURGH;

August 1st, 1855.

* * * This Petition was never presented.

APPENDIX II.

COPY, PETITION, AND COMPLAINT
TO
THE PRESBYTERY OF EDINBURGH,
BY
JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

Copy, Petition and Complaint to the Presbytery
of Edinburgh, by JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

Unto the Reverend the Presbytery of Edinburgh.

The Petition and Complaint
of
JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR, residing in Edinburgh.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—That your Petitioner being a member of the congregation of the High Church and Parish, Edinburgh, respectfully requested by letter on June 6th, 1855, the Ministers of the aforesaid Congregation and Parish, to point out to him, how Chapter XI of the Confession of Faith, is deducible from and therefore reconcilable with the Greek New Testament, all as contained in the correspondence herewith produced.

That your Petitioner presented this request to his Ministers, because they had previously offered their assistance, at a time, when the Petitioner having followed what appeared to him a competent, constitutional and most advisable course had petitioned the Session of the High Church Congregation and Parish to remove his difficulty or to procure its removal in an equivalent manner; because, having failed to procure relief in that mode, his plain course appeared to be to accept thankfully the offer of his

Ministers ; and because that offer seemed to promise the removal of his difficulty by a direct answer to his question, when understood as interpreted by your Reverend Court and those who defended the judgment of the Session in his case with that court.

That he repeated his request to both his Ministers, June 20th, 1855 : no notice has been taken of his repeated applications by the Reverend Dr. Arnot ; but the Reverend Mr. McLetchie informed him by letter, June 22nd, 1855, “ Whatever statement you may have to make in respect of assistance, I shall be most glad to hear it in person, and after knowing definitely what you want, to consider whether I can meet your request.”

That your Petitioner in answer agreed to wait on the Reverend Mr. McLetchie at a specified time ; but in the same note reiterated the terms and form of his request, to show how precise it was, and that it only remained to him as the Minister of, and according to his offer to, the Petitioner, to point out how Chapter XI of the Confession of Faith entitled “ of Justification ” is deducible from and therefore reconcilable with the Greek New Testament.

That your Petitioner was informed in reply, The extreme generality of his request made necessary a statement on his part of specific difficulties, in order that taking them into account the Reverend Mr. McLetchie might be enabled to say whether they involved matter of profitable discussion and probable adjustment ; he was mistaken in supposing the offer previously made was a compliance with a request such as that now presented ; and no satisfactory result was to be expected from an interview, after the repetition of the form of his request ; all as set forth in the correspondence herewith produced.

That your Petitioner urged in reply, He had no other difficulty than that set forth in his request, whose matter was clear and definite, and whose form was quite unambiguous ; had he doubts and difficulties to state, and were he to state them in the manner and for the purpose proposed, his circumstances and relations must be completely altered, by his becoming certainly an impugner of the Standards, and probably a party in a discussion, instead

of a thankful, humble, and submissive recipient of instruction ; and the circumstance of your Reverend Court having said, in reference to the offer of the Ministers of the High Church, “ It is not easy to understand how, in his peculiar difficulty, the Appellant should have adopted such a method of having it removed. One would have imagined that his natural course would have been to apply to his Minister, whose services might have been attended with the best effects. These friendly offices were tendered, but were not accepted, and the Appellant declines all guidance in this matter, which does not proceed directly from the formal decision of a Church Court.” *

That your Petitioner accordingly felt himself warranted to expect the direct aid of his Ministers in removing his difficulty ; the more so as they had appeared throughout his case with the Session of the High Church to allow fully the correctness of the interpretation put upon their offer by your Reverend Court and others who defended or confirmed the judgment of the Session ; but the contrary was the case, for, while treated with neglect by one of his Ministers, the other refuses to grant him such direct aid as is indicated in those words of your Reverend Court already quoted and described in these that follow :—“ The Appellant it is to be presumed is acquainted with many learned and pious divines, who would esteem it a privilege to assist him in his inquiry after truth. They would state plainly and distinctly the grounds on which they believe the Confession of Faith to be in entire harmony with the word of God. This might not indeed be satisfactory to the Appellant, and if not, there would remain only one course for him to follow. But this certainly appears to be a more likely method of removing his difficulty than the deliberations and decision of any Kirk Session however distinguished.” † Refusing to do this for your Petitioner, his Minister proposed conditions, plainly not contemplated in the original offer as interpreted by the Presbytery and others, and which, if acceded to by the Petitioner, must substitute quite

* See Answers to the Petitioner’s Protest and Appeal against a Judgment pronounced by the Presbytery of date 29th December, 1852.

† Ibid.

another thing for that sought, must completely alter his circumstances and relations, and might possibly be most hurtful to him.

That your Petitioner has been deeply aggrieved by the unexpected course taken by his ministers, and he now ventures respectfully to approach your Reverend Court, in order to crave the redress to which, in the circumstances, he thinks himself entitled, and humbly prays—

That the Presbytery will be pleased to take the present application into consideration, and to find that the ministers of the High Church ought to have granted the petitioner's request unconditionally and fully, and to enjoin on them, accordingly, to do so without delay.

According to Justice, &c.

(Signed) JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

APPENDIX III.

COPY CORRESPONDENCE

BETWIXT

THE REVS. DR. ARNOT AND
MR. McLETCHE,

AND

MR. JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

INDEX.

	PAGE
1. Letter, Mr. Goodsir to Dr. Arnot, dated 6th June, 1855 .	597
2. Letter, Mr. Goodsir to Dr. Arnot, dated 20th June, 1855 .	598
3. Letter, the Rev. Mr. McLetchie to Mr. Goodsir, dated 22nd June, 1855	598
4. Letter, Mr. Goodsir to the Rev. Mr. McLetchie, dated 28th June, 1855	599
5. Letter, Mr. McLetchie to Mr. Goodsir, dated 28th June, 1855 .	600
6. Letter, Mr. Goodsir to the Rev. Mr. McLetchie, dated 30th June, 1855	602
7. Letter, the Rev. Mr. McLetchie to Mr. Goodsir, dated 2nd July, 1855	605
8. Letter, Mr. Goodsir to the Rev. Mr. McLetchie, dated 3rd July, 1855	606
9. Letter, the Rev. Mr. McLetchie to Mr. Goodsir, dated 4th July, 1855	608

COPY CORRESPONDENCE

betwixt

Mr. JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR,

and

The REVS. DR. ARNOT and MR. McLETCHE,

Ministers of the High Church, Edinburgh.

1.—*Copy Letter* Mr. GOODSIR to Dr. ARNOT.

ECKFORD'S LODGINGS, TRINITY ;

June 6th, 1855.

REV. DEAR SIR,

The Judgment pronounced by the General Assembly on my Petition to the Session of the High Church has left me in exactly the same condition I was in three years ago. I am still unable to understand how Chapter XI of the Confession of Faith entitled "Of Justification" is deducible from and therefore reconcilable with the Greek New Testament.

Availing myself thankfully of your offer as my Minister to point out to me the mode of deduction and reconciliation, I now beg that you will do this for me. I refused your offer when made in November, 1852, because, as I pointed out at the time, the offer was not a Sessional act, and because I had entered, before it was made, on a course appearing to me competent, constitutional, and every way preferable.

I make a similar request to your colleague, the Rev. Mr. McLetchie.

I am, Rev. dear Sir,

Yours most respectfully,

(Signed)

JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

THE REV. DR. ARNOT,

Minister of the High Church, Edinburgh.

NOTE.—A Copy of the above Letter was also sent to the Rev. Mr. McLetchie.

2.—*Copy Letter, Mr. GOODSIR to Dr. ARNOT.*

ECKFORD'S LODGINGS, TRINITY ;

June 20th, 1855.

REV. DEAR SIR,

Having received no acknowledgment of a letter I addressed to you on 6th inst., I now enclose a copy of that letter, and remain, dear Sir,

Yours, most respectfully,

(Signed)

JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

THE REV. DR. ARNOT,

Minister of the High Church, Edinburgh.

NOTE.—A copy of the above letter was also sent to the Rev. Mr. McLetchie.

3.—*Copy Letter, Rev. Mr. McLETCHE to Mr. GOODSIR.*

EDINBURGH: 6, REGENT TERRACE ;

22nd June, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your two notes, and declined answering them in expectation of seeing you personally. I hailed you to-day

while I was speaking to a friend in Princes Street, but as you made no response, I suppose you were unobservant of the signal. You need not put yourself to any further trouble in writing to me on the subject to which you refer. Whatever statement you may have to make in respect of assistance, I shall be most glad to hear it from you in person, and after knowing definitely what you want, to consider whether I can meet your request. I am going to Hawick to-morrow, but shall be home after the middle of next week, so that a call from you at your convenience after that will be most welcome.

Yours most truly,
(Signed) JAMES McLETCHE.

REV. J. T. GOODSIR,
Trinity.

4.—*Copy Letter, Mr. GOODSIR to Rev. Mr. McLETCHE.*

ECKFORD'S LODGINGS, TRINITY ;
June 28th, 1855.

REV. SIR,

Unless I previously learn from you that the hour is inconvenient, I shall wait on you on Tuesday next at 12 o'clock.

I think it necessary, however, in reference to the terms of your letter, to direct your attention to what a reperusal of my last two notes will satisfy you of, the very definite and precise form of my request. It is neither more nor less than that you would do for me now what you offered to do on a former occasion, and which it has always been urged on the Church courts, that I ought to have accepted, namely, to show me how Chapter XI of the Confession of Faith entitled "Of Justification" is held by the Church to be deducible from and therefore reconcilable with the Greek New Testament. It is my duty, of course, to accept this information, either in person or by letter, and I shall be only

too happy to receive it in the former manner, and at your entire convenience.

I must allude to another matter. I had an indistinct feeling that you made a movement to address me in Princes Street on Thursday last. I must state, however, that I would have felt bound to decline such a mode of communication, even if unmistakably offered to me. You appear to have quite overlooked the circumstance that I had already written to you on two occasions, but had not received that acknowledgment of my letters, which it is usually esteemed as well an act of courtesy as a Christian duty on the part of the person addressed to return. I certainly had a right to expect a simple acknowledgment of the receipt of a perfectly respectful communication. Beyond that I had, of course, no immediate imperative claim, but I ought not and cannot pass over the neglect of a plain duty on the part of any man holding the position of a minister of that Church which, from association and principle, I so deeply venerate.

I remain, Rev. Sir,

Yours most truly,

(Signed) JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

THE REV. MR. McLETCHE,

Minister of the High Church, Edinburgh.

5.—*Copy Letter, Rev. Mr. McLETCHE to Mr. GOODSIR.*

EDINBURGH: 6, REGENT TERRACE;

28th June, 1855.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your note of this day's date, and you will excuse me for expressing my surprise that you should deem it necessary to repeat the form of your request, as if I were not in full knowledge of its terms. It is because I know its terms and their extreme generality that I thought necessary to suggest

that you should be prepared to make a statement containing specific difficulties, in order that, after taking them into account, I should be able to say whether they involved matter that could be made the subject of profitable discussion and probable adjustment.

You are under a mistake when you affirm so decidedly that I offered, on a former occasion, to comply with your request, as made in the form you present. No such offer was ever made. It is true I had no personal communication with you on the subject, but my colleague, after consulting with me, agreed to make to you a statement to this effect—that if you would shape your doubts and difficulties into so many distinct propositions—we should take them into consideration, and be glad should the nature of the case, as submitted, warrant, to render you such assistance as we conveniently could. This you declined to do, stating moreover that the aid not of individuals, but of ecclesiastic courts, was what alone could meet your requirements. I rather think from the repetition of the form of your request, and your avoidance of any explicit and special statement in addition, and above all from the imperious and offensive tone assumed in the concluding portion of your note, that no satisfactory result is to be anticipated from any interview that may take place between us. It seems to me you have gone beyond your province, in charging one with “the neglect of a plain duty incumbent on a man holding the position of a minister of that Church which, from association and principle, you so deeply venerate.” I do not mean to consult you as to what constitutes “a Christian duty,” neither do I accept your views of right on the part of correspondents. I shall continue to act on my own estimate of right and of duty; and as to courtesy, permit me to tell you plainly that there were other reasons for delaying to answer your notes besides that which I alleged, and these, whatever you may surmise, were not expressed, simply from an anxiety to avoid all appearance of discourtesy.

I am, &c.,

(Signed)

JAMES McLETCHEE.

REV. JOSEPH GOODSIR,

Eckford's Lodgings, Trinity.

6.—*Copy Letter, Mr. GOODSIR to Rev. Mr. McLETCHE.*

ECKFORD'S LODGINGS, TRINITY;

June 30th, 1855.

REV. SIR,

I received your note of the 28th inst. last evening.

Allow me to state that your remarks on the form of my request have convinced me, more than anything yet said respecting it, how necessary it is to reiterate and explain it. It is, that you would, according to your offer, enable me to understand how Chapter XI of the Confession of Faith, entitled "Of Justification," is deducible from and therefore reconcileable with the Greek New Testament. The matter of this request is as clear and definite as important; its form cannot, so far as I can perceive, be made freer from ambiguity. I have no other difficulties to state than that whose removal I again respectfully crave, viz. the difficulty of understanding how the Church deduces the aforesaid Chapter of the Confession of Faith from the Greek New Testament, and therefore reconciles the former with the latter.

It appears very evident in reference to what you say of "doubts and difficulties," that if, on the supposition of my having these, I were to state them in the form of propositions. "in order that," to use your own words, "after taking them into account, you should be able to say whether they involved matter that could be made the subject of profitable discussion and probable adjustment;" then would this be to substitute an entirely different thing in the room of what I have asked, and just to enter on the course I have perseveringly sought to avoid. Because—First my supposed "doubts and difficulties" must, if judged by you worthy of consideration, be made the subject of discussion and adjustment, instead of my being directly and plainly taught how the Church, speaking through her ministers, makes out the deduction and reconciliation which are in question. Besides, in must place me on my trial as one impugning the Standards, and not in the position of one respectfully asking information. But second, it is not discussion of any character whatever, nor any

adjustment reached through discussion, that I seek now or have at any time sought by my question, but instruction to be received thankfully and humbly from the authorities constituted and ordained to convey such knowledge. I seek, as a constitutional right, to be instructed by the Church speaking either through her Courts or Ministers or other office-bearers, whose duty it is to teach. If I fail to obtain the constitutional right of every member of the Church—of every citizen, indeed—my trust shall be, with humble reliance on Divine Grace, on my own efforts after relief from my difficulty.

Allow me to state further that I referred in my former notes to the offer made by yourself and your colleague, Dr. Arnot, through the Session Clerk, Mr. Moffat, and that I understood that offer in the sense affixed to it by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in their answers to my reasons of Protest and Appeal, and by the parties who defended the judgment of the Session before the Synod and General Assembly. The Presbytery said, "It is not easy to understand how, in his peculiar difficulty, the Appellant should have adopted such a method of having it removed. One would have imagined that his natural course would have been to apply to his minister, whose services might have been attended with the best effects. These friendly offices were tendered but were not accepted, and the Appellant declines all guidance in this matter, which does not proceed directly from the formal decision of a Church Court." The equivalence of your offer to what I asked a Church Court to do, was also made to appear still more clearly by the pleadings before the Synod and General Assembly, and nothing was ever said to lessen the impression made by them. In reference to what occurred when Dr. Arnot called on me, I remark that, according to your own statement, he proposed the course described in the second paragraph of this letter, and that I declined to adopt his proposal as well for the reasons assigned in that paragraph as because I had already applied to a Church Court. And the occurrences since I addressed you as my minister have convinced me more and more that I was right in then adhering to my deliberately selected plan, and that plan, besides being legitimate and constitutional,

is also the best adapted morally and spiritually for reaching an end such as mine.

Hoping, however, that the real nature of my request may be yet further explained, and that you will see it to be right, as my minister, to accede to it, I beg to state respectfully my intention to call on you at the time mentioned in my last note, unless I learn from you that it is inconvenient.

But I must now point out that the remarks in the latter part of your note proceed from a mistake, as to what I disapproved with great plainness, and still disapprove of your conduct towards me. What I deemed myself justified in blaming was your not acknowledging the receipt of my notes—not your delaying to answer them. But that you understood me to mean the latter appears from your concluding words—“permit me to tell you plainly that there were other reasons for delaying to answer your notes besides that which I alleged, and these, whatever you may surmise, were not expressed, simply from an anxiety to avoid all appearance of discourtesy.” Now, while expressly stating in my note that I had no immediate imperative claim to an answer, I asserted, as I again assert, my claim to have received an acknowledgment of their receipt, and that I ought not to have been kept in doubt week after week till I might be “hailed” by chance in Princes Street. Her gracious Majesty, God bless her, accords that as a courtly and Christian duty on her part towards the humblest subject, who respectfully and rightfully offers his request, which I have asserted, and again assert my claim to expect from you. There is nothing imperious or offensive in the statement of a rule thus sanctioned, or in frankly expressing and decidedly acting on the opinion that those are wrong who transgress it. I speak and act for myself in the matter; at the same time I must say I have been invariably acted towards hitherto in accordance with that rule; by it, too, I shall continue to guide my conduct towards others; and I shall be ever as ready to take blame to myself as to blame another man in the case of its transgression.

In conclusion, as you say nothing in explanation of the

additional reasons for delaying to answer my notes, I am not called on to offer any remarks respecting them.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Yours most truly,

(Signed) JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

THE REV. MR. McLETCHE,

Minister of the High Church, Edinburgh.

7.—*Copy Letter, Rev. Mr. McLETCHE to Mr. GOODSIR.*

EDINBURGH: 6, REGENT TERRACE;

2nd July, 1855.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of 30th ult., and beg to say that, as no new light is thrown upon the subject, notwithstanding the long and elaborate statements it contains, I feel myself constrained strictly to adhere to the conditions on which my offer has been tendered. You are disposed, I perceive, to hold me bound by the precise words of the Session Clerk's note. From these I have no inclination to resile; but surely a moment's consideration should convince you, of not merely the propriety, but the justice of interpreting them, by the conversation previously held with you by my colleague, Dr. Arnot. But really, though there had been no such previous conversation, do you honestly mean to maintain that when parties met, the one would not have had a perfect right to state conditions by which the offer was to be ruled?

I adhere to the conditions specified by me in respect of the offer, and seeing that you refuse compliance with these, I must respectfully decline the interview as proposed for to-morrow. At the same time I shall be most happy to have a friendly call from you at any time.

Yours most truly,

(Signed) JAMES McLETCHE.

REV. J. T. GOODSIR.

S.—*Copy Letter*, Mr. GOODSIR to Rev. Mr. McLETCHE.

ECKFORD'S LODGINGS, TRINITY;

July 3rd, 1855.

REV. SIR,

In your note of the 2nd, it is said of me, "You are disposed, I perceive, to hold me bound by the precise words of the Session-Clerk's note." It is then added, "from these I have no inclination to resile." Now, allow me to remind you, that I do not hold you bound by the precise words referred to, but by the meaning and spirit of your offer, as they were set forth by the Presbytery whose words I quoted, and by the pleadings in the case between me and the Session. Your offer so set forth and interpreted, had a secondary but most real and weighty influence on the final judgment in that case. While, on the one hand, then, I see plainly you are not inclined to resile from the words of Mr. Moffat's note; on the other, I can see as plainly that you are bound to accept as your own the interpretation put on Mr. Moffat's note by the Presbytery. I see that more plainly in what is suggested by the following part of your note. It states, immediately after the words last quoted, "but surely a moment's reflection should convince you of not merely the propriety, but the justice of interpreting them (the words of the Session Clerk's note) by the conversation held with you by my colleague, Dr. Arnot." Allow me, then, to remind you that that conversation occurred after my Petition was sent in to the Session; and that its object was to offer another mode of procedure for my adoption. I declined the offer, because, instead of proposing the equivalent to what I sought and hoped to gain by my Petition, it proposed a thing palpably different. Had this difference been made distinctly apparent throughout my case with the Session, I could have said nothing. But the contrary to that took place; the offer was never described as having strange conditions annexed to it, it was represented as a full and exact equivalent to my Petition; and as the parties who made

it have said nothing in the mean time about the conditions, I do accordingly maintain the following to be the strict rule of justice in the circumstances. Either you and your colleague ought not to have allowed your offer to be argued from up to final settlement of my case with the Session, as if it were a full and exact equivalent to my Petition; or if you allowed and received the advantage of that use, you cannot now refuse me in fairness what you thus employed.

But you ask, "but really though there had been no such previous conversation, do you honestly maintain that when parties met, the one would not have had a perfect right to state conditions, by which the offer was to be ruled?" Regarding the point brought forward in this question, I do earnestly maintain it to be a substantial part of Justice, that when an apparently unconditional offer is made by one party to another, in the circumstances already described, and to induce him to take the offered in room of the petitioned boon; then if the offer be accepted and the parties meet, any conditions proposed must not substitute a quite different thing for that petitioned; they must not place the primarily interested party in totally altered circumstances and relations, they must not be calculated even probably to plunge him in the very evils he seeks to avoid.

Since you have declined the interview proposed to take place this day, and adhered to the conditions laid down in your note of the 28th ult., I can, of course, look for no assistance from you in the mean time towards the removal of my difficulty. It now therefore only remains for me to state my intention of bringing the matter under the notice of the Presbytery.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Yours most truly,

(Signed)

JOSEPH TAYLOR GOODSIR.

THE REV. MR. MCLETCHIE,

Minister of the High Church, Edinburgh.

9.—*Copy Letter*, Rev. Mr. McLETCHE to Mr. GOODSIR

EDINBURGH: 6, REGENT TERRACE;

4th July, 1855.

DEAR SIR,

I have this moment received yours of yesterday, in which you state your intention of bringing the matter under the notice of the Presbytery; of course you can do as you list. Your intention seems to me to throw a flood of light on the circumstance of your applying to Ministers individually, after so broadly declaring that Church Courts alone could serve your purpose.

Yours most truly,

(Signed)

JAMES McLETCHE.

REV. J. T. GOODSIR.

APPENDIX IV.

At Edinburgh, and within the Presbytery Hall there, the Twenty-fifth day of July, Eighteen hundred and Fifty-five years.

Which day the Presbytery of Edinburgh met and was duly constituted.

Inter Alia.—There was laid on the table a Petition and Complaint against the Ministers of the High Church by Mr. Joseph Taylor Goodsir, with copy of Correspondence between said Mr. Goodsir and the Rev. Dr. Arnot and Rev. Mr. McLetchie. The Presbytery having heard read the Petition and Complaint, unanimously dismissed the same.

Extracted, &c., by

HENRY DUFF, *P. Clerk.*

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	v
IMPUGNMENT OF THE WESTMINSTER FORMULARIES	xix

NOTE.

INTRODUCTION.

I. The object of the Note	1
II. The Symbols from which proof of the prefixed propositions is to be drawn	4
III. Remarks touching the origin of comprehensive formularies	9
IV. The proposed method of proof explained ; and shown to be correct, necessary, and conclusive	14
V. The order in which subjects must be treated	22

PART FIRST.

THE GENERAL CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH.

I. The ends proposed to be gained by the Westminster Confession of Faith disclosed in the history of its formation.	27
II. The peculiar theology of the Westminster Confession, and the mode of its expression	31
III. Sources of the influence exerted by the Westminster Confession over the Scriptures	35

	PAGE
IV. The Confession of Faith necessitates the style of interpretation, approved by its framers	39
V. The power of the Westminster formularies over Scripture distinguishes them from all earlier ones and makes them peculiar among the later ones	44
VI. The Westminster Confession and Catechisms are strictly formularies, constructed with much skill	47
VII. Portions of the Confession either fully accepted, or only questioned to a modified extent	53
1. Chapters I and XX of the Confession	54
2. Chapters II and VIII of the Confession	54
3. Chapters VI and IX of the Confession	55
4. Chapters III and X of the Confession	62
VIII. The department of the Westminster formularies primarily and principally objected to	68

PART SECOND.

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION CONTAINED
IN THE WESTMINSTER FORMULARIES, COMPARED WITH
THAT OF OTHER REFORMED AND PROTESTANT CREEDS.

SECTION I.

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION SET FORTH
IN THE WESTMINSTER FORMULARIES.

I. General statement of the Westminster Doctrine of Justification or Salvation	79
II. The ambiguity of the Confession in its doctrine of Justification or Salvation	85
III. Causes of the ambiguity of the Confession in its doctrine of Justification or Salvation	90

	PAGE
IV. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation as set forth in the Larger Catechism	94
V. The Westminster doctrine of Justification equivalent to that of Salvation	101
VI. The evidence of erroneusness exhibited by the formularies	106

SECTION II.

THE GERMINAL FORM OF THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION AS POTENTIALLY INVOLVED IN THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.

I. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Augsburg Confession	114
II. The teaching of the Augsburg Confession in reference to "Repentance and Good Works"	127
III. Melancthon's treatment of the formula "righteousness of God"	144
IV. Remarks on the dogmatic aspect of Melancthon's doctrine of Justification or Salvation	160
V. Remarks on the undogmatic aspect and the germinal character of Melancthon's doctrine.	175
VI. Two modes of procedure indicated by the state in which Melancthon left the doctrine of Justification or Salvation	192

SECTION III.

THE FIRST STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION.

I. The causes that led to the second form of the Lutheran doctrine of Justification or Salvation	202
II. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Saxon Confession	206

	PAGE
III. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation set forth in the Helvetic and Gallic Confessions	211
IV. How much of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation was formed at this stage	218

SECTION IV.

THE CONFESSION OF JOHN KNOX, AND THE ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

I. Knox's doctrine of Justification or Salvation exhibited in his own words	227
II. A digest of Knox's doctrine as to Justification or Salvation	243
III. Knox's mode of interpreting the Loci Classici of the New Testament which treat of Justification or Salvation	267
IV. Origin of the mistaken tenet that Forgiveness and other external elements of Justification or Salvation, precede Regeneration and Sanctification	285
V. The doctrine of Knox as to Justification or Salvation contrasted with that of the Continental, Lutheran, and Calvinistic symbols	298
VI. Remarks on the influences that guided Knox in the drawing up of his Confession	318
VII. The Articles of the Church of England contain a doctrine of Justification or Salvation identical with that of Knox's Confession	333

SECTION V.

SECOND STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION, AND THE CLOSING EFFORT TO PREVENT THE COMPLETION OF THAT FORM OF DOCTRINE.

I. The portion of the Aberdeen Confession parallel to the account of the two covenants in the Westminster Formularies	352
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	PAGE
II. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation symbolised by the framers of the Aberdeen Confession	361
III. The freedom allowed by the Aberdeen Confession in the interpretation of the Scriptures	379
IV. Remarks on the framers of the Aberdeen Confession, and on the phase of the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation observable in it	403

PART THIRD.

CONCLUSIONS AS TO THE REAL CHARACTER OF THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION DEDUCED FROM THE PRECEDING COMPARISON OF IT WITH THE SAME DOCTRINE IN OTHER PROTESTANT CREEDS.

SECTION I.

ON THE ABSOLUTELY EXTERNAL AND GRATUITOUS CHARACTER OF THE JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION SET FORTH IN THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION; AND ON ITS IDENTITY WITH THE JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION MAINTAINED BY THE FEDERALIST DIVINES.

I. The Westminster Formularies set forth a doctrine of absolutely external and gratuitous Justification or Salvation	428
II. The Westminster Doctrine of Justification or Salvation identical with that set forth in the so-called Fæderalist school of Theology	436
III. That Chapter XI of the Westminster Confession sets forth not only the Doctrine of Justification, but of that Salvation which secures Eternal Life	443

SECTION II.

ON THE UTTER DISLOCATION AND DISPLACEMENT OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRACTICAL ELEMENTS OF THE GOSPEL CAUSED BY MAKING JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION ABSOLUTELY EXTERNAL AS WELL AS ABSOLUTELY GRATUITOUS.

	PAGE
I. The dislocation of elements caused by making Justification or Salvation external, appears in the contradictoriness and uncertainty as to the place of Repentance and its parallels	453
II. The entanglement in which the subject of Faith is involved, when Justification or Salvation is understood to be absolutely external	461
III. On the causes of the dislocations and entanglements just considered, and on a result of them not yet noticed, viz., the production of two fictitious doctrines, Effectual Calling and Sanctification	473

SECTION III.

ON THE THOROUGHNESS OF THE COLLISION BETWEEN THE SUBJECTIVE AND EXTERNAL ELEMENTS OF REDEMPTION, IN THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION OR SALVATION; AND ON THE INERADICABLE THEORETICAL ANTINOMIANISM OF THAT DOCTRINE.

I. A thorough collision is caused between Justification or Salvation and the Divine commands enjoining righteousness and holiness, when the former is maintained to be absolutely external as well as absolutely gratuitous	488
II. The theoretical Antinomianism involved in the Westminster doctrine of Justification or Salvation is ineradicable and incurable	501

SECTION IV.

ON THE CONTROL EXERCISED BY THE WESTMINSTER FORMULARIES OVER THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE; AND ON THE CONSEQUENT ANTIZOIC AND ANTINOMIAN INFLUENCE EXERTED BY THEM.

	PAGE
I. The character and extent of the control over Scripture exerted by the Westminster Formularies	514
II. The Antizoic influence of the control exerted by the Westminster Formularies over the Scriptures	522
III. How different classes feel restrained in interpreting Scripture by the Standards	530

SECTION V.

A COROLLARY.

THE ACTS OF THE ASSEMBLIES 1720 AND 1722 OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND WERE CONTRADICTORY TO AND SUBVERSIVE OF THE LEGALISED CHURCH DOCTRINE.

I. A brief account of the circumstances in which the Acts of the Assemblies 1720 and 1722 originated	536
II. The authorised doctrine of Justification or Salvation was condemned by the Acts of the Assemblies 1720 and 1722	542
III. The doctrine of Justification or Salvation substituted by the Acts of the Assemblies 1720 and 1722 in room of the authorised doctrine	551
IV. The doctrine enounced by the Acts shown to be utterly subversive of the authorised doctrine, and to be in itself utterly inconsistent and unsatisfactory	562
V. The attempt to introduce a pure and catholic creed utterly futile: it left the established Lutherano-Calvinism in full power, and the Bible in miserable bondage	576
CONCLUSION	581
APPENDICES	585

ERRATA ET CORRIGENDA.

Page 100, line 5 from foot, *for* "18," *read* "8."

.. 176, .. 14 from top, *for* "cause," *read* "course."

.. 208, .. 13 from foot, *for* "tuto," *read* "toto."

.. 272, .. 1 at top, *for* "means," *read* "shows."

.. 277, .. 5 from foot, *delete* the *comma*, and *read* "of."

.. 319, .. 13 from top, *for* the *comma* put a *full-point*.

.. 335, .. 5 from top, *for* "XII," *read* "XIII."

.. 400, .. 2 from foot, *delete* "quite differently from Lutheran-

Calvinist Theologians."

Page 570. — My impression is that Sir William Hamilton somewhere based on the Acts of Assembly 1720—22 the same charge made at p. 193 of his "Discussions;" but I cannot at present find the passage.

By the same Author.

VOL. I.

THE BIBLICAL AND PATRISTIC DOCTRINE OF SALVATION,
A STATEMENT.

VOL. II.

1. DOGMATIC AND SYSTEMATIC STANDARDS CONSIDERED.
2. EXAMINATION OF A PASTORAL.
3. TWO SPEECHES ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF EVERY MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH OF SCOTLAND TO BE INSTRUCTED BY A CHURCH COURT, THROUGH THE DEDUCTION FROM THE ORIGINAL SCRIPTURES, OR THE RECONCILIATION WITH THESE SCRIPTURES, OF ANY DOCTRINE IN THE WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH.

APPENDICES.





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