

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH: A PERSPECTIVE

A paper submitted to the second Anglican-Roman Catholic

International Commission, 1984

by Henry Chadwick

The following paper was written at the command of the Commission and is designed to try to trace a path through a mass of material which can easily look like an impossible jungle. Inevitably much has had to be left on one side, important authors not mentioned, some issues relevant to the subject not considered. Nevertheless, I hope that by concentrating on the central issues these may in some degree be clarified.

The structure of the paper, in numbered paragraphs, is as follows:

- 1 Introduction: the issue at Trent in 1546
- 2-9 Luther
- 10 Luther's impact on Trent
- 11-12 Double Justice?
- 13-20 The final form of the decree of Trent on justification
- 21-31 Anglicanism
- 32-38 Concluding Reflections

1. When the Council of Trent began, on 21 June 1546, its six and a half months of consideration of the doctrine of justification, the second papal legate Marcello Cervini (a man of deep humanist culture, later all too briefly Pope Marcellus II in memory of whom Palestrina wrote a famous mass, and in the cool view of Paolo Sarpi the only pope of the time to grasp that the Reformation was not a revolt to overthrow Christianity) opened the debate by observing the difficulty of the subject. It was not only intricate, but had not previously been a matter of controversy. In dealing with the authority and canon of scripture and with original sin, the fathers at Trent had not had to think everything out from the beginning; for there were precedents in rulings by earlier councils. But with justification the Council was launched into open seas, drawing such help as it could from the Catholic critics of Luther during the previous twenty five years. Cervini himself stated the question before the Council to be 'how we may preserve the grace we received in baptism and be justified before God' (Concilium Tridentinum [CT] V 257). He was followed by Cardinal Pole, the third legate, also expressing apprehension of dangers ahead. A letter written by Pole on 28 August (CT X 631) betrays his anxieties: the sense of hostility and anger against the Lutherans, now in 1546 taking to arms against the Catholics in Germany, could produce a decree so unconciliatory to the Protestants that it might end by providing additional anti-Catholic ammunition for controversialists watching the Council for every slip. Pole feared that the drafters might wish to put so wide a distance between themselves and Luther that they would be unable even to admit language sanctioned by scripture because of a feeling that the Lutherans had appropriated it as their distinctive property. As for the fear of Luther, that was eloquently expressed on 17 June by an oration frankly identifying Luther with Lucifer as an angel of light

and suggesting that Protestantism threatened the death of the Church in Europe in much the way that Islam had expelled it from Africa (CT V 249).

LUTHER

2. In seeing the issue of Justification as new and unprecedented, Cervini's judgment coincided with that of Luther himself. Luther's blinding vision of St. Paul's meaning in Romans and Galatians convinced him that, with the partial exception of Augustine and sometimes Bernard, he was the first person to discern the authentic gospel.¹ This feeling may be partly explained by Luther's cool attitude to the schoolmen (to whom modern research has shown him to owe more than might easily appear), to the Nominalists, to the many commentators on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, to Thomas Aquinas. Bernard was at times congenial to Luther. But a great number of Luther's allusions to medieval predecessors show him both informed and unfriendly. He especially disliked Aquinas' discovery that Aristotle had said many things, particularly on ethics, which are either true or uncommonly plausible. Aquinas' acknowledgement of the independence of natural theology and the moral autonomy of man alarmed him even more than it had alarmed some of Aquinas' contemporaries. Among late medieval Augustinians like Bonaventure, a large debt to the writings of Aristotle is happily combined with expressions of caution. Some who felt that religion engages more than the logical faculty were ready to be critical. In his hostility to Aristotle Luther gives especially vehement form to an attitude that was not new with him. Luther's references to the schoolmen show that, while he did not think them invariably mistaken, he (more than Melancthon) tended to begin with the assumption that medieval theologians were likely to be wrong, and if and when they had got it right, they must somehow have been

¹ Table-Talk ii p.138 'Augustinus non recte intellegit articulum justificationis.'

conquered by the Holy Spirit against their will and natural instinct. Their grandest mistake Luther saw to be a failure to see that when scripture speaks of the justice of God, it does not mean distributive justice rewarding and condemning, 'giving each individual his due', but that righteousness of God 'by which he makes us just', qua nos iustos facit. This justifying act is by grace alone recognising no merit in what man does, and not even taking account of the moral qualities of a man's character. For all mankind is lost in original sin which, for Luther, is far from being abolished by baptism but remains a potent force within us and society until our dying day. Luther specially scorned the scholastic view, derived from Augustine's concessive clauses, that the sexual impulse in concupiscence is natural and, though all too liable to become a vehicle of sin, is not in itself sinful but implanted by the Creator. Talk of free will seemed to Luther unreal. In De servo arbitrio he takes over the many statements of Augustine which presuppose psychological determinism and sets aside the admittedly fewer qualifications in which Augustine protested, not always convincingly, that he had not abolished free will and moral responsibility. In 1525 in the controversy with Erasmus (for whose elegant liberal humanism he writes with crushing irony and contempt), Luther advances a full-blooded doctrine of the total incapacity of the human will to move itself in any degree towards the good, and therefore of man's absolute need for a sovereign and irresistible grace to which he can only surrender himself as clay in the hands of a potter. The human will is not perhaps a merely inanimate clod, but the best that can be said for man is that he is like a beast of burden: when God is riding it, it goes his way; when Satan is riding, it goes the other way; the two riders contend for the saddle. Admittedly, man has the illusion that in what he does he is acting freely; in reality our will is so mutable, never continuing in one stay, that any good is the

product of the grace of the immutable will of God. Only this doctrine of the utter humiliation and abasement of man allows proper recognition of the all-powerful majesty of the Redeemer and Mediator. 'Those who assert free will simply deny Christ'. There is no such thing as a neutral mediating power in the soul called the freedom of the will. Salvation is therefore by a pre-cosmic divine decree of predestination, and, before the coming of healing and converting grace to the soul, man can only be purely passive and receptive. Therein lies the supernatural character of the gospel in casting down every human expectation and source of pride; for the natural man takes it for granted that he can and must do something. 'Human nature blinded by sin cannot conceive any justification except by works' (Dispute on Justification, 10 October 1536: WA 39/1, 82-126; transl. in Works 34, 1960). The surrender of faith issues in obedience and is accompanied by penitence or contrition; obedience, penitence, or contrition, are all 'necessary' but not in any casual sense something that brings salvation to us for they are human acts. To the awkward question, Is not faith a human act, a 'work', Luther replies that such language 'is tolerable but is not the usage of scripture.' Good works are a necessary fruit of a tree that grace had made good, not necessary in the sense that they evoke grace or become a ground of eternal reward in heaven. Because sin continues in our nature till death, we are 'daily justified by unmerited forgiveness of sins and by the justification of God's mercy'.

3. Luther disowned responsibility for the abuses of this doctrine of grace at the hands of some of the more radical groups on the far left of the Reformation. But in the course of the sixteenth century a number of teachers appeared within the Lutheran camp whose doctrines sounded uncomfortably antinomian. It has always been easy for men imbued with the high excitement of feeling that they are participating in a new movement of the Spirit, to end in

immorality: if the end is predetermined, why should the means be thought necessary? and why in the meanwhile should it matter if one lives in sin or in holiness, especially if the latter seems like the bondage of the law and a new dress for the monastic asceticism that Luther had mocked? The mature Luther came to feel some alarm before the dizzy consequences of speculation about the divine decree of predestination. It was bordering on curiositas, impertinently inquiring into matters God has not thought fit to reveal, and which he would no doubt have revealed had it been good for us to know. So Luther came to say we should not ask the reason why God gives irresistible grace to some, not to others, and be content to observe that scripture makes the fact certain. The fact belongs to revelation, the reasons lie hidden in the Deus Absconditus. Luther's reason for reserve was pastoral. His stress on the all-important role of faith in receiving justification led him, and equally Melanchthon, to define justifying faith as trust, confident trust, fiducia and therefore to slide into the undoubtedly awkward position of saying (or at least seeming to most of his hearers to say) that one has justifying faith if one is utterly and unhesitatingly confident on the matter. The mark, indeed the very essence, of justifying faith is certitude, a confidence in the promises of God that his grace will bring one to heaven and a realisation that no 'work' on the part of man, whether external (fasting, alms, pilgrimage, etc.) or internal (hope or charity), can in any way be thought to be a condition or qualification for admission to eternal salvation. For salvation is the gift of sovereign grace on the ground of the merit of the redeeming work of Christ. Nevertheless, not all men receive this grace, and curious investigations of predestination tend not to enhance certitude but to undermine it. To tell the individual that lack of doubts is a sure sign of being one of the elect will sooner or later conflict with the common, perhaps virtually universal human experience of experiencing doubts and

hesitations amplified by candid awareness of one's moral and spiritual inadequacies. God alone knows who the elect are; but the pastor has a problem on his hands if he has suggested that (at least so far as they themselves are concerned, if not others) the elect can somehow know too, and that if any do not feel sure on the point, that may indeed be a sign that they are not among the saved.

4. The shift to subjectivism was accelerated by Luther's ambivalent language about the sacraments as means of grace. One stream of language in Luther is emphatic about their 'necessity'; of the utter reality of the presence of Christ in, with and under the consecrated elements at the eucharist (did he not write Ein feste Burg in 1527 as a battle-song against Satan's latest emissary in the form of Zwingli's eucharistic doctrine?); of their role as sign and witness in the divine purpose. But another stream is very hostile to the traditional scholastic doctrine, going back to the fathers, that the sacraments are efficacious means of grace to those who place no obstacle in God's way provided that what God commanded to be done in these covenant signs has in fact been done; that the sacraments have their validity, that is, ex opere operato, not because of the holiness or standing of the minister of the sacrament (which is Christ's sacrament, not the minister's anyway). Both Luther and Melancthon cordially dislike the notion of the opus operatum, which they have come to interpret to mean (a) that by its administration of the sacraments the Church interposes its own activities between the believer and his God, and (b) that there is no need for any act or response of faith on the part of the recipient (para. 30, below). In the case of infant baptism, Luther declared that in infants too there is a seed of faith, and that on this foundation there is a conditional gift of regeneration. Bellarmine thought this doctrine a major departure from Catholic tradition. Within the Lutheran

tradition itself the doctrine did not pass without controversy and many divergent interpretations. The central problem in these controversies was whether the fruits of regeneration are shown by baptized persons, as they grow to maturity, in consequence of their exercise of free will, or whether in baptism God gives regeneration exclusively to the elect (Martin Bucer's opinion) - the call given to others being one they will not hear, and therefore becoming an additional ground for seeing unutterable justice in their rejection with the reprobate. The Calvinists felt that Luther and Melancthon had sacrificed something of high importance when they spoke of the sacraments as signs and witnesses but not as instruments for the communication of grace. To Calvin, Luther's language was too inclined to the obnoxious view of sacramental action. At this point Calvin stood much closer than Luther to Trent.

5. Luther's exclusion of human works from the causes of justification found a biblical foundation in St. Paul's language (a) that salvation is of grace, not of works, and (b) that, as in the case of Abraham (Rom. 4 from Genesis), faith is 'reckoned' to be for righteousness. Luther interpreted these texts to mean that the sole ground of our salvation lies in the imputation to believers of the righteousness or merits of Christ and never in the good works that, on account of the merits of Christ and in union with him, the grace of God enables us to perform in this life. In his translation of Romans 3,28 Luther went so far as to interpolate the word 'only'. He strenuously and repeatedly denied that our eternal salvation is in any sense dependent on acts or intentions which result from the pouring of the Holy Spirit of divine love into the hearts of believers (so becoming one with their wills as to produce an imparted or 'inherent' righteousness by the formation of a habit, not merely by a jerky succession of unconnected acts of trust and aspiration).

6. A series of awkward questions was raised by this position, apart from the explosive, indeed volcanic force with which Luther proclaimed these things - in language of incomparable vigour charged with vehement paradox such as made even his sternest critics acknowledge the titanic and heroic power of this extraordinary man. Very sympathetic readers of Luther wished he had not spoken and written with so little consideration for the consequences.

7. The Lutheran definition of justifying faith as confident trust confuses faith with assurance which is one of its consequences, not the essence of faith itself. Moreover, assurance is an effect and consequence not only of faith but also of faith-and-love. It seems possible to speak with Luther of an absolute certitude as a trust in the immutable promises of God only if one has no awkward anxiety that human sinfulness, resistance to the divine grace, or even the Devil, may have the capacity to hinder in some way the full realisation of the divine purpose. As we have seen, Luther's language about predestination was soon discovered by its author to have a pastorally adverse effect, generating fearful scruples and even the sense of being in an endless whirlpool of agonising speculation about unknowable matters. Augustine believed perseverance to the end of life and at least final adherence to the Catholic Church to be among the essential signs of election (or at least a failure so to persevere to be one mark of being reprobate, a wolf in the sheepfold). He did not believe that a baptized believer can be utterly certain of his salvation unless he is granted a special revelation (City of God 11, 12), an opinion given formal canonical status by Trent (VI canon 16). Augustine (ep.167,15) had written to Jerome of the forgiveness we need for the imperfection of righteous works done by grace in this life. The Catholic tradition was against the stimulation of overscrupulous anxieties, and had long taught that a believer should think and act with the aid of grace and trust in the

promises of God. 'On account of the uncertainty of the righteousness of our own deeds and the danger of vainglory, it is safer to rest our whole confidence exclusively upon the mercy and loving-kindness of God.' The sentence is not from Melanchthon but Bellarmine (De Justif. 5,7). There was of course a rival Catholic view, powerfully formulated by Vazquez (1549-1604), that such language might imply that good works are needless because, if no hope is to be placed in them, that will sooner or later end in antinomianism and loss to souls. Is it not certain on the authority of scripture that God will 'reward every man according to his works' (Rom. 2,6 cf. 2 Cor. 5,10)? To think that good works do not count defies both scriptural authority and all common reasoning about divine justice and fair dealing. Nevertheless in Stapleton, prince of Counter-reformation apologists, we find that no rightly instructed Catholic puts trust in his own merits: sins may supervene; none can be sure of his own justice; and he will seem to glory in himself rather than in the Lord. Stapleton is not explicit that a sinful element enters into our righteous acts. That might seem close to Luther on man's incapacity to do good works under grace, with the inherent love poured in by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, without discovering in himself some whimper of self-satisfaction - a pride which Luther abrasively dismisses as mortal sin! Even to admit an element of venial sin seemed to Trent worthy of anathema (VI canon 25). Luther made it impossible to speak of good works at all.

8. Further awkward questions arise from the sola fide formula. There is the difficulty that the epistle of St. James 2,24 expressly denies that man is justified by faith alone, so that there is on the face of it a sharp tension between sola fide and recognition of the supreme authority of canonical scripture. But most adherents of sola fide have found ways round this obstacle, often by

suggesting that Paul and James use 'faith' in different senses. The patristic tradition, especially in Augustine who is repetitious on the subject, understood justifying faith not to be bare assent, not a fides informis (defined by Peter Lombard. Sent. III 23,5, as 'that unformed quality of faith by which a bad Christian believes everything a good one does') but a fides caritate formata in accordance with Galatians 5,6. In other words, justifying faith is not devoid of moral content, but merges, with no clear dividing lines, into hope and love and directs the soul towards righteousness. Moreover, the turning to God in faith is accompanied by a penitence which holds sin in odium, and such a penitence is also strong in ethical content. A faith into which both penitence and love enter is more than the total passivity of which some of Luther's utterances speak. In St. Paul the faith which is the (or an) instrumental cause of justification is contrasted not with love but with 'the works of the law'. There is a touch of defiance in Melanchthon's Apology for the Augsburg Confession when he determinedly classifies 'love' under the heading 'law', apparently without feeling that the paradoxical classification requires explanation and defence. Between Protestant and Catholic there was no disagreement that works done before conversion, justification, and regeneration are indeed efficient causes (in the sense that through them the Holy Spirit ab extra prepares our hearts and minds), not meritorious causes (in the sense that the gift of justifying grace is made in reward of works done by pure free will without the assistance or illumination or pressure of divine grace). Everyone agreed on that. The disagreement began when Luther and the Protestants spoke of good works done after justification by divine grace, with the indwelling Spirit pouring love into the heart of the believer, as having no better standing before God than works done apart from grace prior to justification. The Protestants who spoke in this way were forced to interpret Philipians 3,7-9 as

referring to works done subsequent to justification as well as prior to it, an interpretation which looked temerarious. It was deeply felt by the Protestants to be a basic principle that man, even justified man 'after faith' (post fidem), can and should do nothing, no intention or act that might at any stage be thought to constitute a claim upon God for reward. The stress on the inwardness of faith in the mercy and grace of God as the sole acceptable motive for good works quickly produced a negative or at least a reserved attitude towards all external or visible religious exercises, such as fasting, almsgiving, or pilgrimage, or other ascetic acts of self-discipline. That was not new, for it was a commonplace of medieval Catholic moral theology that the ethical value of an action depends on its motive and circumstances. An apparently highly virtuous act when done for purposes of self-advertisement will not get one to heaven. And there can be extreme and very rare circumstances in which an act of which society normally and rightly disapproves can be done for motives so noble that the risk of scandal and obloquy actually add to the meritoriousness of the motives with which it is performed. In this stress on the inward roots of moral action within the soul the Protestants were not breaking with the Catholic tradition.

9. The Pauline term 'reckoned' or 'imputed' (Romans 4) led Luther to insist that the justified believer's good works, performed by inherent or imparted grace through the poured-in love of the Spirit in his heart, constitute no ground for eternal reward and form no condition of salvation. Salvation, he said, depends wholly and exclusively and necessarily upon the imputation to believers of the righteousness of Christ. This righteousness of Christ is 'outside' us, 'alien to us', and is therefore untainted by the self-satisfaction that haunts even our just works. In the course of the sixteenth century some Lutheran theologians went to extremes in stressing the purely forensic

nature of the divine acquittal on the ground of Christ's merits, as a decree (like predestination) wholly independent of anything said, thought, or done by the incipient believer. The strongly impersonal language used by the advocates of the purely forensic view provoked reaction in the Protestants themselves, and the controversy was a contributory element in the sharp disputes among the different Lutheran schools in the second half of the sixteenth century.

It is not necessary to interpret 'imputed' in so drastic a sense, since the Greek word may mean in effect 'communicated' or 'attributed'. (Modern students of St. Paul have perhaps learnt since Schweitzer that between the forensic language of justification and the language of participation equally prominent in Paul there is not, for the apostle, the dichotomy that older exegetes tended to find.) Moreover, it was already in the sixteenth century a major hurdle for the exclusively forensic interpretation of Romans and Galatians that there is a row of New Testament texts where 'justification' is used by the apostle in a sense implying renewal to new life, not merely a non-imputation of past sins. A substantial body of Protestant exegetes of good learning freely conceded that in scripture the verb 'justified' often means 'having the gift of righteousness communicated' to one. In other words, although the Protestants liked to schematise justification as distinct from sanctification, the apostle himself was a lot less careful to observe the distinction (e.g. Rom. 4,25 'raised for our justification'; 5, 17 and 19; 8, 30; 1 Cor.6,11; Titus 3, 5-7). Curiously, it turned out to be easier for the Protestants to concede that in St. Paul 'justification' often included what they wanted to distinguish as 'sanctification', than for Catholic controversialists to come to terms with the language of imputation. This contrast is not at all what one would expect. Augustine (de Pecc. Mer. 1, 18) makes a sharp distinction: in sanctification believers imitate Christ, but the act whereby Christ justifies the ungodly is not for imitation. He alone can do this.

Augustine also distinguishes the act of baptism giving remission of sins from the long daily process of renewal and growth under grace (e.g. De Trin. 14,17,23), in which the 'righteousness' of true saints is shown by their awareness of imperfection (c.du.eppPelag. 3, 19).

LUTHER'S IMPACT ON TRENT

10. One problem with the term 'imputation' for the Catholic theologians at Trent and afterwards was created by Protestant tendencies to interpret justification as wholly concerned with forgiveness, with the cancelling of the guilt and/or penalty of sin but not with the overthrow (or the creating of the possibility of the overthrow) of its present power. Trent had support in a number of texts from Augustine and Bernard to reinforce the doctrine that justification is more than the remission of sins but brings a gift of openness to the Spirit to make possible and indeed actual a life of righteousness and holiness. An Augustinian text (City of God 19, 27) concedes that 'in this life our righteousness consists more in the forgiveness of sins than in perfection of the virtues', a text that caused embarrassment to maintainers of the strong opinion that the justified believer's reward in heaven is given by a just Judge who rewards all goodness and justice in strict proportionality: i.e. from God we get exactly what we deserve, for good or ill. But the Augustinian text cut no ice against the weaker and far more widely held view that the reward given by our just judge does not need to be utterly precise but can take a not ungenerous overall view and then give such reward as may seem reasonably fitting. Salvation, on the second view, is no matter of meticulous calculation of exact merit or determined credit in heaven, but allows an element of paternal love and mercy and (though Augustine was in two minds on this point if one were speaking of the Last Judgment) forgiveness for what is venial. To refuse hope of reward to a believer who had suffered much for the Gospel and served the Church in loyalty and

self-sacrifice, even though he or she had made mistakes and perhaps stumbled gravely at times, would seem incongruous for God. Yet such a believer does not think to approach the Judgment with anything other than a cry for mercy; with an echo of the Canon of the Mass 'not weighing our merits but pardoning our offences'; with the psalmist's prayer 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.' In short the strict doctrine of 'condign merit' (that is, the doctrine that divine justice is meted out in strict proportionality and without rough approximations) cannot make room for a doctrine that good believers, at the judgment at death or hereafter, should trust that they may be accepted on the ground of their Redeemer's merit: 'O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood has redeemed us, save us and help us...'? But the weaker doctrine of 'merit of congruity' (that is the doctrine that divine justice grants rewards which are not unfitting), is close to the idea that the baptized believer, who has faithfully served his Lord who 'is not unrighteous to forget his work and labour of love' (Heb. 6,10) and has striven through bloody struggles to keep the right and good and his soul pure, nevertheless places no confidence in his works but rather in the purging love of the Redeemer and Mediator and the merit of his Saviour's Passion. So the wood, hay and stubble are burned away by the fire of the love of God. Augustine himself anticipated the difficulty here, that a reliance on the imputed righteousness of Christ may be taken to weaken the believer's sense of resolve to fight the good but very tough fight of faith, and to make at least some Christians think 'it will all be right in the end' so that excessive strenuousness is not required. In Tridentine terms, the doctrine was at odds with the requirement of satisfaction of divine justice, as something required of the believer in his moral course and

pilgrimage. The medieval penitential system spoke much of satisfactions (para. 14, below). 'Imputed justice' could be a threat to an entire way of thinking, and indeed Luther had drawn exactly that conclusion as he contemplated the way the penitential system operated. Moreover, the fathers at Trent had an additional source of worry. For the believer hereafter to trust wholly to God's mercy, not in any imaginable sense to the hope of heavenly reward for having preferred good to evil, also implied a question about purgatory. In the later Middle Ages a rising volume of criticism of the doctrine of purgatory had been reaching the West from the Orthodox East, to whom it sounded dangerously like Origenist universalism, and at the council of Florence (1438-45), as also earlier at Lyon (1274), there were exchanges on the subject. Admittedly the matter was not one on which the Latin West wished to say much beyond the statement that redeemed souls may be granted purification hereafter, and also that prayer for the departed, in accordance with very ancient Christian tradition (far more ancient than an accepted notion of purgatory), is not useless. Luther was not persuaded that purgatory was evidently taught in 1 Corinthians 3: and his doubts about this exegesis (which Augustine shared, City of God, 21, 21, though well aware of the Platonic argument that divine punishment should be remedial in intention, 21,13) came to be powerfully reinforced by his doctrine of justification through the imputed righteousness of Christ, and by his denial that the good works of the justified believer, though enacted by grace within and through him, have any bearing on his ultimate destiny. These considerations help to explain why the fathers in synod at Trent felt a certain paralysis on contemplating the notion of 'imputation'. To make any concession to the idea might make the Council an object of mockery (some felt): they would be accused of assembling to crush a heresy and of then accepting the heretics'

cardinal thesis. (CT V 535 and 542). 'Beware lest after the council the world groans to find itself Lutheran.' Those at the Council who wanted the definition on justification to assist in bringing peace to Germany, as desired by the Council's prime mover, the emperor Charles V, were only a relatively small minority. Pole had to resign office as legate and leave Trent in the autumn of 1546 on the grounds of poor health, and his departure removed the most powerful figure to feel real sympathy with the Lutheran position on justification. The Spanish bishops and theologians manifested least sympathy for Luther. One bishop sharply observed that "the Council should not be bland with heretics who have now vexed the Church for thirty years and have attacked Catholics with arms and war." (CT V 496,10). In these circumstances the reader of the doctrine and canons on justification at the sixth session of the Council of Trent is likely to be astonished at the degree to which counsels of moderation prevailed.

DOUBLE JUSTICE?

11. At Trent, however, one possible route to convergence was not followed, despite its eloquent advocacy by the General of the Augustinians, Seripando. This convergence in justification was the doctrine of 'double justice'. That is to say: we may hope to get to heaven only if as baptized believers we strive for what is right and good, if we put ourselves in the way of attending to the means of grace, if we pray, study scripture, give alms, etc.: even the very best of our goodness is simply God's gift to us; for, as Augustine says (Tr. in Joh. 3, 10; Sermo 170, 10; ep. 194, 19) 'when God crowns our merits he crowns his own gifts'. Moreover, because of human infirmity we have to confess that we have abused God's

grace or failed to use it as we should; and therefore there is a large element of 'imperfection', to say the maximum in our favour. Before God's tribunal, therefore, we do not need only to bring the righteous works done by inhering grace poured in by the love of the Spirit, but also have to beg for mercy, for an imputation of the righteousness of Christ to supplement the incompleteness of that righteousness which is both Christ's and ours but which because it is also ours is less than his. In short, both inherent and imputed righteousness are required if we are to have a true hope of heaven.

12. This doctrine of 'double justice' is first attested in embryonic form in a sermon by Luther himself and printed in 1519, 'De duplici iustitia' (WA 2, 143-152), but the notion is only half-developed there. In a disputation of 1536 he makes another reference to the idea (WA 39, 1, p.93, 1-16), and is able to suggest that all 'iustitia operum' or works-righteousness will be imperfect, while perfect righteousness will be the 'perfecta imputativa iustitia' of Christ (WA 39 i p.241, 25 and 96, 6). The first theologian to see high possibilities in the idea was the Thomist canon of Cologne, Johann Gropper, who wrote in 1537 an Enchiridion, or handbook, to combat but also to conciliate moderate Lutherans. Possibly (it cannot be proved) he had read Luther's sermon of 1519. The notion was further taken up by another Catholic theologian Pighius, and soon succeeded in winning the advocacy of the influential Cardinal Contarini. Under Contarini at the colloquy between Catholic and Protestant theologians at Regensburg (Ratisbon) in 1541, the doctrine became the basis of an ecumenical agreed statement. An initial draft by Gropper, though rejected by Melancthon, constructed a notable article on Justification out of scripture and Augustine whose tract 'on the Spirit and the Letter' was known to be

much admired by Luther. But the text was revised to meet the Protestants, incorporating a piece from Bucer's commentary on Romans and some excerpts from Melancthon's 'Commonplaces'. Gropper's ecumenism greatly alarmed his militant colleague Eck. Though Bucer was willing to reach agreement, Melancthon hung back, knowing that Luther distrusted the enterprise. Luther had already come to a confident judgment that the Papacy was Antichrist, and with the agents of such a personage one could hardly sup with too long a spoon. (Eck's estimate of Luther was not much more cheerful.) Luther characteristically expressed his apprehensions in the terse phrase that the negotiators were getting 'peace without God' (WA Br. 9, 350, 20).

Contarini regarded the agreed article on justification as a triumph, though he soon found that the response of Catholic friends to whom he sent copies was less than enthusiastic. Above all, Pope Paul III and Luther were unanimous in thinking the agreement insufficient if the other side had not recanted their errors; so long as that was so, the agreement however acceptable as a set of affirmations must represent a false compromise. So even Contarini came to lose confidence that the agreement over which he had presided was any more than a clever compromise formula without real engagement of the heart and will to come together. The collapse of the discussions followed quickly when it was realised that even if a path to convergence on justification had been found, the parties were far from agreement on eucharistic presence, on the priestliness of the Christian ministry, and on authority, matters to which much less attention had as yet been paid because justification by faith and the question of imputed righteousness had been assumed to be the crucial divisive issue, the root problem at the foundation of the entire Reformation debate. The Regensburg colloquy of 1541 is a classic illustration of a fearful truth for which Roman

Catholic/Orthodox negotiations over a millennium provide plentiful examples, namely that an ecumenical agreement not only has to go deep in dogmatic matters but must also command the sustained heart and will of the parties to the conversation. If it does not do so, the parties end further apart, and rather angrier with each other, than they were before. Two years after the Regensburg conversations of 1541, the personal friendship struck between Gropper and Bucer had cooled. When a second conference met at Regensburg in 1546, no progress at all was made towards prospects of reconciliation. The atmosphere of mutual regard and confidence had been dispelled. It was in this atmosphere in the same year 1546 that the fathers of Trent began their long debate on justification. The recent attempts at uncovering agreement had done little to encourage the council to think the road of 'double justice' might be viable. Seripando's indefatigable attempts to persuade the Council to write the doctrine into their formula met long speeches of opposition, especially from the Spanish Jesuit Laynez. Laynez contended that, though the life lived by the justified is imperfect, no guilt attaches to the imperfection because it is 'inevitable'. Any admission of imputed righteousness overthrows the notion of heavenly reward appropriate to the different levels of sanctity, making many mansions needless, and cannot be reconciled with purgatory. Seripando received clear-headed support from the Servite theologian Lorenzo Mazochi (CT V 581-90). But Mazochi was one of four theologians whose orthodoxy was already suspect because they advocated the view that in receiving grace the human will is passive: 'non videntur satis catholice locuti' was the tart comment (CT V 280, 13). The criticism presupposes that faith is an active, instrumental and efficient cause through which grace is made effective, not just the means by which it is accepted. By 26 November

Seripando had abandoned any hope of persuading the Council to canonise a doctrine that he had come to hold dear, and in an impassioned and deeply religious speech (CT V 666-676) he begged the Council not to condemn it. It is one of the most moving and human documents of the entire conciliar record. He had only a modicum of very ambiguous success in his plea. In chapter 16 of its doctrine, the Council affirmed that our salvation hangs on those good works wrought in the faithful in union with Christ himself through a grace which is antecedent, concomitant, and subsequent; that to the justified one must not believe that there is any deficiency or imperfection, since such good works constitute a satisfaction of God's law, inasmuch as they are done 'in God'. The inherent righteousness in us deserves heavenly reward, and therein the merits being rewarded are God's gifts, though it is his will that the merits be ours. This formula did not condemn Seripando's doctrine so much as cut away the presuppositions and considerations which led him to wish to hold it. Perhaps it went some little way towards him by insisting that there is no merit for the good work of the believer apart from the intimate union with Christ. The Council did not like Seripando's answer, but it had at least heard his question and seen that he had a point. Seripando's failure may be in part attributed to the comparative novelty of the idea he put forward, in part to his wish to get away from theology of the scholastic mould and to return through Augustine to the Bible - without its commentators. His hearers felt him to be talking an unfamiliar language, so antiquated as to sound strange. The fact that Seripando's doctrine did not suffer explicit rejection may have been assisted by his close relations with Cervini, whose interventions from the presidential chair were sympathetic to his questions.

13. The final form of the Tridentine decree on justification, 13 January 1547 (CT V 790: see H. Jedin's History of the Council, eng. tr. II 304 ff) begins with a doctrinal statement averting Pelagian exclusion of grace and Lutheran exclusion of man's cooperation as God's creation. By his own strength apart from grace, the sinner is incapable of saving himself. Through baptism (about election nothing is said) one must be regenerate in Christ, by faith in his blood and the merit of his passion transferred from being son of Adam to adoption as son of God. Justification is being made just. It is anticipated by prevenient grace through a process of preparation. The call of adults is not made in consequence of their merits, however. The will may reject or cooperate; were it not so, it could hardly be a will. God touches man's heart by the illumination of the Spirit, and man can respond, though unable without grace to bring himself to righteousness before God. Faith comes by hearing. As man is moved by the gospel to fear of divine justice and to consideration of God's mercy, he is moved to hate his sins and therefore to penitence. One who comes to baptism is asked if he repents, if he believes the Christian faith, and if he is resolved to lead a new life and to keep the divine commandments. Such dispositions show grace preparing one for the great grace of justification. This consists not merely in remission of sins but also in renewal of the inner man by a voluntary acceptance of grace. In a scholastic manner (which Melanchthon could deploy just as much as Trent) the causes of justification are classified: final - the glory of God and Christ and eternal life; efficient - the mercy of God; meritorious - Christ's passion; instrumental - baptism 'the sacrament of faith' (Aug. ep. 98, 9) without which justification never touched anyone; the unique formal cause is God's justice, being 'not that by which he is just but

that by which he makes us just' (Aug. De Trinit. 14, 12, 15). So we are renewed in the spirit of our minds (Eph. 4, 23) and are not only reputed but are truly called just and are so, each individual according to the degree of his cooperation. Not that anyone can be just unless the merits of Christ's passion are communicated to him. The impious are justified as the love of God is poured into their hearts and inheres in them. Therefore in justification, together with the remission of sins, man receives faith, hope and charity as Christ's gifts. Unless it is joined to hope and charity, the assent of faith does not unite to Christ nor make one a living member of his body; hence 'faith without works is dead'. Without hope and love faith does not bring one to eternal life. When St. Paul says that a man is justified by faith and gratis, this is to be 'understood in the sense in which the perpetual consensus of the catholic Church has held and expressed it', viz. that faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and the root of all justification, without which it is impossible to please God. This gift is gratis in the sense that none of the things that precede justification (either faith or works) merit the grace of justification. No sins are or ever have been remitted except gratis, by divine mercy for Christ's sake. Yet none may boast of his fiducia and certitude of the remission of sins; none may assert that sins are remitted only to the person who is calmly confident that this is the case. We should not say that the justified are exempt from all doubt as if diffidence were disbelief in God's promises. No-one who considers his weakness will think he can know with a certitude of faith not subject to the possibility of error that he has obtained the grace of God. But no pious person doubts God's mercy, Christ's merit, and the efficacy of the sacraments.

14. Moreover, (Trent continues) no justified person is free from a duty to keep the commandments. None may say God's precepts are impossible (here citing Augustine, *De natura et gratia* 43, 50). His yoke is easy, his burden light. If holy persons fall into venial sins, they do not thereby cease to be just, but pray 'Forgive us our debts...' (a frequent theme in Augustine). 'God by his grace does not desert those once justified unless first he is deserted by them' (Aug. *De natura et gratia* 26, 29 and elsewhere). Let no one flatter himself he will go to heaven by faith alone without troubling to suffer with Christ that he may be glorified with him; even Christ learnt obedience by suffering. In this life no-one can be sure of being in the number of the elect (as if the justified cannot further sin or can be confident of restoration if they do) except by special revelation (Aug. *De correptione et gratia* 15, 46; *City of God* 11, 12). Though all should place a firm hope in God, perseverance is a gift on which none should presume: let those who think they stand take heed lest they fall. If they fall, the power of the keys is there for restoration which we receive not merely by ceasing to sin or by contrition of heart but also by sacramental confession and absolution from the priest, by fasting, alms, prayers, offerings and other pious exercises. (An echo here of Augustine, ep. 265, 8, I think.) Penance, like baptism, removes guilt and eternal penalty but unlike baptism, not the temporal penalty: satisfactions are required.¹

¹ The word 'satisfactio' had vindictive associations; it could carry the suggestion of placating God. Unlike Cyprian who uses the word frequently, Augustine uses it very rarely (*Enchiridion* 65-66; *Sermo* 351) for the act of reparation which is a sign to the Church that one's penitence has been authentic. Anselm uses the Platonic principle that where sin has brought about a breach of order, God cannot tolerate the disharmony and order must be restored. Through Christ man pays the debt he owes, not to placate an irate and jealous God but to put back the 'rectus ordo'. By late scholastic doctrine God's grace and justice forgive sins, and reparations (Satisfactions) are not works by which we escape hell, but the acceptance of temporal penalties which signify a true making good. Not that our acts can be a simple equivalent or can meet the perfect requirement of divine justice; they are accepted by God in his loving-kindness, but he has already accepted the penitent back into fellowship through the keys entrusted to his Church.

15. Not only loss of faith but mortal sin robs one of the grace of being justified, but against the clever heretics, one must hold that even in mortal sin faith may survive leaving a way back by confession. On merit, Trent observes that the Bible is very clear that good works are rewarded. Our righteousness is not of ourselves, however, but of God, and that is why there is 'nothing lacking' to the justified. Good deeds done in God by inherent justice satisfy his law in this life and, provided one departs this life in grace, merit¹ eternal life. God forbid that a Christian should trust in himself and not in the Lord. So great is the goodness of God that he wishes the merits which are his gifts to belong to us men.

16. The thirty three canons with anathemas begin by a strong condemnation of Pelagianism but also of those who deny free will or reduce man to such passivity that he is indistinguishable from an inanimate object. Luther's declaration that after the fall 'free will is a mere name without the thing' is censured. None may say that all works done before justification are really sins, or that the more one tries to dispose oneself to grace, the worse one is sinning. Nor is it sin to turn to God out of fear of hell or in grief at one's sins. Justification by faith alone may not be taken to mean that no cooperation is required or that there are no preparatory dispositions of the will. Canon 10 condemns both those who say man can be justified without Christ's righteousness and those who say that through Christ's righteousness one is formally just. (The school term formaliter is unclear, an imprecision surprising in a conciliar anathema). Anathema is also put on the doctrine that we are justified by the sole imputation of Christ's righteousness or solely by the remission of sins when this means the exclusion of grace and love diffused in believers' hearts by the Spirit. Justifying faith is not

¹ Mereor in Latin does not have the strong force of 'deserve' unless the context makes that certain. It should normally be translated 'obtain', 'receive'.

mere confidence; nor to obtain remission is it necessary just to have no hesitation in believing that one's sins are forgiven. (This canon generated later controversy: did it mean that remission of sins is something one cannot be quite sure of?) Censure is pronounced on the view held by some radical Protestants (but opposed by many others) that the gospel of Christ has no precepts and that the Decalogue is a back number and does not apply to Christians. (Augustine, De spiritu et littera 14, 23, and elsewhere, observes that except for the command to keep the sabbath, which Christians keep entirely spiritually, the Decalogue is binding on Christians. To the Anglican Bishop William Forbes (died 1634) it seemed self-evident that on divorce and remarriage Christ had spoken legislatively, as also to Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester. Among the Lutherans some claimed that good works could not be called 'necessary': they were simply a spontaneous product of and sign of authentic faith, and the gospel contained no element of commandment. See the 'Solid Declaration' in the Formula of Concord, iv, 3. Augustine himself is not far from this in De Spiritu et littera 12, 20. At Trent Seripando twice pleaded with the Council not to speak of Christ as 'legislator': CT V 486, 8 October 1546; 666, 26 November).

17. The predestinarian language of Luther made him cold to the notion that predestination brings one under the sound of the gospel, to baptism and conversion, but thereafter it depends on our response to grace whether or not we get to heaven. Such a grace must seem altogether insufficient. Trent (canon 22) hates the doctrine that once a man is justified, he does not need to worry whether or not he will persevere to the end. Perseverance, in the teaching of the Council, is a special and distinct help of grace. The Lutherans departed from Augustine when they spoke of our justification as a lightning-flash act

of God rather than as a process by which, after an embryonic growth which is also an operation of grace (Augustine, Div. Qu. to Simplician 1, 2 2), faith comes to birth and, under God's further healing grace, our will is gradually conformed to his; in other words in Augustinian theology our being made righteous is a matter of growth; in Lutheran theology justification is spoken of as a once-for-all act to which nothing can be added even by God himself. Trent (canon 24) does not pick up the point that the term 'justification' is being used in different senses, and places under anathema the view that through good works done by grace righteousness cannot be preserved and grow before God, or that good works are merely the fruit and sign of an already completed justification. Behind this harsh exchange there lies more than a terminological disagreement. The central point is whether all our actions are determined by our character, or if there is also truth in saying that our character is, at least in part, the consequence of our actions, habits, and patterns of behaviour. Habit is second nature, but nature is first habit. Luther declared that a man is first declared just and then proceeds to act justly. Trent surely attributes much to the initial grace of God declared and communicated in baptism. But thereafter the baptized believer is granted grace to become more just by the very process of doing justly, and his actions themselves shape his character, they are not merely a determinate expression of what either his genes and chromosomes or even irresistible grace may have programmed him to do. The Trent canon is therefore an expression of reserve before the implicit psychological determinism and hyper-Augustinianism in the doctrine of grace which it perceives in the Lutheran contention. This canon of Trent is directly attacked on the 'Solid Declaration' of the Lutheran Formula of Concord (iv, 35, transl. Tappert p.557). It is difficult not to see these mutual condemnations as a dialogue of the deaf.

18. Trent's canon 32 repeats the Augustinian thesis that the good works of the justified person are God's gifts, but then places under anathema the Lutheran opinion that the justified person does not truly merit increase of grace by the good works which are done by the grace of God and the merit of Jesus Christ, whose living member the person is. 'Truly merit' could naturally suggest condignity more than congruity; but these terms are not mentioned, and either interpretation is left open. The mere word 'merit' was enough to confirm the worst anxieties of the Lutherans, not because they did not use the word themselves (it occurs in the Apology for the Augusburg Confession, the Württemberg Confession, and in a number of Lutheran writings of the age), but because the Lutherans heard Trent's language to be implying that the just have a right to salvation. The Lutherans, such as Chemnitz (Examen X 4), were content to understand 'merit' to mean that God rewards good works, but deeply felt that to attribute anything to the action of man in winning salvation must "take away from Christ the glory of propitiation for sins, of salvation and eternal life, which is owed to the obedience and merit of Christ." Yet canon 32 of Trent insisted that it is by Christ's merits that the justified come to have merits. Sadly Chemnitz simply felt that this was an ingenious formula of whose good faith he took leave (grossly, as we would now judge) to doubt. The ultimate reason for this scepticism may no doubt be sought in the Protestant assumption that the Catholic Council was committed to the scholastic view, also to be found formulated by Julian of Eclanum in his polemic against Augustine, that in principle God's justice is a fair distribution to each individual of what is his due. Not a position readily reconciled with either grace or original sin. The final canon roundly rebuts the contention that the Council's doctrine derogates from the glory of God or the merits of Christ.

19. A retrospect on the doctrine and canons of the sixth session of Trent calls for the salute of admiration accorded by the liberal protestant historian of dogma, Adolf Harnack, who thought the Reformation could not have happened had this come earlier. It cannot be claimed that everything was left unambiguous, or that a large variety of interpretation was excluded. A remarkable silence appears in dealing with the Augustinian doctrine of predestination which provided the dynamo of Luther's main thesis. In the following year (1548) the Dominican Domingo Soto and the Franciscan Andreas Vega published explanations of the Council's doctrine of justification which were not at all points in agreement. Canon 13, condemning assurance in regard to the remission of sins, offered hostages to the critics, and twenty two years later received an elaborate defence running to 634 pages to show that the Council had not plunged everyone into a maze of doubt. This was by Martin Eisengrein (*De certitudine gratiae Tractatus Apologeticus pro vero ac germano intellectu canonis xiii sessionis VI S.Oecumenici Concilii Tridentini: Cologne, 1569*). The author himself realised that his exegesis reduced to minuscule proportions any difference between his Catholic understanding of the matter and that of moderate Protestants. (As this was not what all his fellow-Catholics wanted to be told, he generated some friction.) To cut a long story short, the Council's decision on justification, as on most other matters, came to receive a wide diversity of exegesis from its defenders. Among modern scholars there has been lively disagreement about Seripando's doctrine. Did the Council actually reject it as uncatholic? Did it by studied ambiguity discourage his view without actually censuring it (the opinion to which the present writer would veer)? or did it avoid the issue directly, and endeavour to deal with the real question raised along quite different lines?

20. The record of the debate printed in CT volume V shows how most of the Council fathers felt they had two bogies to fear: imputed righteousness and unqualified assurance beyond possibility of error. The second was vastly less controversial than the first, since, although Luther had talked vehemently about faith being confident trust, a very substantial body of moderate Protestant opinion would have agreed with Trent that it was a mistake to confuse faith with assurance, and that to speak about a total absence of hesitation without the remotest possibility of error was to make assurance indistinguishable from arrogant presumption on the grace of God. Among the Anglicans no sleep was lost on this matter. Much more difficult was the question of imputed righteousness. In the discussion at Trent the point was tellingly made by Mazochi, against whom there was prejudice, that 'imputed righteousness happens to be the language of the Holy Spirit' (Romans 4, 3 and 23 being cited). (CT V 584, 6). Seripando quotes one of his critics as having said that his view was indistinguishable from that of the Lutherans, and therefore deserved to be condemned with them (CT V 674). He replied that he did not wish to leave the Lutherans in triumphant possession of the apostle's language on this point. In the end, as we have seen, the canon (11) censures the view that 'justification' (which for Trent includes sanctification) is exclusively by the sole imputation of the righteousness of Christ, or consists only in the remission of sins to the exclusion of sanctifying grace and love. One must not deny that there is such a thing as inherent righteousness which is the work of the Holy Spirit within the believer. Luther and Melancthon made no such denial. But they could not really bring themselves to qualify their essential convictions that (though contrition is a sine qua non of justification) if ultimately salvation depends on what man does, then we are all lost, and if we are saved, it is by the mercy of God. The debates at Trent over the right understanding of 'imputed

righteousness' show the Council fathers not so much interpreting this alien idea positively as saying 'Whatever it may mean, it cannot mean that no consent and cooperation in the moral struggles of the Christian life are required of the baptized, justified believer.' But then most Protestants were not saying it did mean that.

ANGLICANISM

21. The Anglicans of the sixteenth and seventeenth century offer a broad spectrum of views on the questions at issue in the preceding pages. It seems right to start with the Thirty Nine Articles since, although they no longer have formal authority, there remain Anglicans who hold them in respect today; and while the Articles have been far less influential on the formation of doctrine than the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer (being known to and at one time required of the clergy but hardly known to the laity, even since the early eighteenth century when they began to be bound up with the Prayer Book), nevertheless they have enjoyed a standing and a generally shaping influence on some aspects of Anglican theological tradition. Three articles deal with our problems:

Article 11, Of the Justification of Man

We are accounted righteous before God only for (propter) the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by (per) 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.

Article 12, Of Good Works

Albeit that good works which are the fruits of faith and follow after justification cannot put away our

sins and endure the severity of God's judgment: yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, in so much that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by its fruit.

Article 13, Of Works before Justification

Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of the Spirit are not pleasant 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 authors 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 but they have the nature of sin.

22. Article 11 took its present form in the revision of 1563, at the time when the more Protestant party wanted the version of 1553 strengthened and when they suffered an alarming defeat over article 28, rewritten by Bishop Guest to protect the real presence in the eucharist in language that caused agony to the Zwinglians. Hooper especially pressed for Article 11 to deny justification by merit in set terms. The 1563 version borrowed language from the Lutheran confessions of Augusburg and Württemberg, but without taking over the thesis that one is justified if one believes one is justified. The article speaks of our being 'reputed' (reputamur) or reckoned just before God on the ground of Christ's merit through faith, 'not by the merits of our works and deservings. So the meritorious cause of justification is the merit of Christ - a doctrine which does not differ from that of Trent. The instrumental cause is 'per fidem'. Faith is not defined, and there is no

suggestion that it is other than the apostle's 'faith working by love', a trust in the promises of God which motivates the justified person to do what is good and right. Nor does the article seek to impose the view that salvation is solely by an imputation of Christ's righteousness to us and of our sins to him (a view that distressed Bishop William Forbes one generation later as an inherently problematic idea going substantially beyond scripture). The 'Homily on Salvation' is found in the first book of Homilies (1542, issued in 1547) and expressly lays down 'Faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified; but it shutteth them out from the office of justifying... Nor that faith also doth not shut out the justice of our good works, necessarily to be done afterwards of duty towards God... but it excludeth them so that we may not do them to this intent, to be made good by doing of them. For all the good works that we can do be unperfect, and therefore not able to deserve our justification; but our justification doth come freely by the mere mercy of God... This sentence that we can be justified by faith only is not so meant of them (i.e. church fathers who use this language) that the said justifying faith is alone in man, without true repentance, hope, charity, dread, and fear of God... This saying that we be justified by faith only, freely, and without works, is spoken for to take away clearly all merit of our works, as being unable to deserve our justification at God's hands; and therefore to express most plainly the weakness of man and the goodness of God, the imperfectness of our own works, and the most abundant grace of our Saviour Christ; and thereby wholly for to ascribe the merit and deserving of our justification unto Christ only and his most precious bloodshedding.' The homily goes on to explain that the faith which justifies is not our own and that it is not our faith which justifies us or deserves justification. (That is, the homily denies faith to be the formal cause of justification!)

The doctrine means simply that we must renounce the merit of our virtues of faith, hope, charity and all other good deeds as things too weak and insufficient and imperfect to deserve remission of sins and justification. We must trust only in God's mercy and in that sacrifice which our high priest and Saviour Christ once offered for us upon the Cross, to obtain thereby God's grace and remission as well as our original sin in baptism as of all actual sin committed by us after our baptism if we truly repent.

23. The homily antedates the Tridentine decree by five years in the date of its composition, and it is evidently concerned to affirm sola fide but then to add crucial qualifications: e.g. that faith is not itself a work or ground of justification or merit, and that the necessity of using such language arises from the imperfection, on account of the persisting effects of original sin, or even our best virtues. Article 12, on the other hand, first appeared in the revised draft of the Articles proposed in 1563. Here good works are the fruits of living faith and manifest it; even those that 'follow after justification' have no claim sufficient to put away our sins before the severity of God's judgement. Yet despite their imperfections they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ ('Deo tamen grata sunt et accepta in Christo'). The last phrase is hardly distinguishable from what Trent intended to say by the use of the word 'merit', but among the Protestants 'merit' always tended to be heard as implying an independent act of man, by free will choosing to perform an external deed, such as almsgiving, which would constitute a ground for reward by a just Creator. Article 13 begins with the non-controversial proposition that works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of the Spirit are not pleasing to God, since they do not spring from faith in Christ. Since the article is apparently speaking of works done before justification, it is also non-controversial that such works should constitute no ground of

merit even in the weak, almost Pickwickian sense of 'merit by congruity' (as opposed to the strict proportionality of condign merit). The case of Cornelius (Acts 10) was often discussed in this context. His prayers and alms 'came up for a memorial before God'; was that what drew the grace of God to him? The Article regards congruous reward before justification (and possibly post fidem also, but that is not certain) as ruled out: it would be Pelagian to suggest that man takes an initiative which grace then rewards with further help, valuable indeed, but not in principle totally necessary. More toughminded is the proposition that the virtues of the good person who acts by free will but without grace are no more than sins. Augustine had indeed come within an ace of saying this: for he taught that without grace the will is free to do evil but never to do anything really good (contra II epp. Pelag. i,7). The good pagan who does by nature the moral law is not among the number of Christ's justified, only among those whose actions we are right to praise, yet if his motive is not love to God it is questionable (De Spiritu et Littera 48). The chastity of unbelievers has no merit before God (De Nupt. et Concupisc. 4 f.). It is remarkable that in a series of Articles so stamped with high Augustinianism, Article 16 (which caused pain to high Calvinists) declares that 'after we have received the Holy Spirit we may (possumus) depart from grace given and fall into sin.' The text is directed against Anabaptist perfectionism, but the Calvinist Puritans hated this clause and wanted the addition (after 'grace given'): 'yet neither totally nor finally'. Their request was never granted. Moreover, Article 17 on Predestination contains nothing that would not seem evident to a Thomist; it is very unsympathetic to the notion of a limited atonement. It is evidently possible to exaggerate the pervasiveness of Calvinist beliefs in the Elizabethan Church of England.

24. This discussion has treated the Articles as a historical witness to theological formulation in the Church of England at a highly controversial moment in its history.¹ The Articles were shaped during the decade when relations between Queen of England and Pope were rapidly deteriorating and tempers were rising fast on both sides. The Articles did not receive their final form and approval until after the Queen had been excommunicated and her subjects released from political allegiance to her (1570), and the 1571 version of the Articles contained problematic new matter such as article 29, which Bishop Guest could hardly bring himself to think consistent with his own article 28 and seemed much more angrily, aggressively Protestant than the moderate men wanted. Within emergent Anglicanism three broad patterns of interpretation of the Articles can be discerned: the first inherited the Erasmian tradition that has profoundly stamped Anglican spirituality and piety, seeing the articles as compromise formulae necessary for the sake of peace in church and commonwealth, but vastly less than a regula fidei, valued as a witness to truth against superstition and rationalism and therefore enshrining a liberal spirit. The second stream of interpreters tended to regret that the Articles gave an uncertain sound at various points where Calvinists would have liked tougher language; in principle they saw in them a charter of evangelical truth rooted in the supreme authority of Scripture - and the more emphatic one is about sola scriptura, the less authority must attach to a human confession of faith such as the Articles. The third

¹ There are provinces of the Anglican Communion where no mention is made of the Articles, and others (as in the United States, for example) where in a revised form they are printed as historical documents for ease of reference but no one is asked to assent to them. In the Church of England at ordination a candidate declares his assent to the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the Catholic Creeds and to which the historic formularies bear witness - the Prayer Book, the Ordinal, and the Thirty Nine Articles.

stream has been the broadly 'catholic' stream, conscious how much catholic substance lies embedded in the protestant rhetoric and how relatively simple it is (as Sancta Clara, i.e. Christopher Davenport, was serenely to demonstrate in 1634) to reduce the dividing lines between the Articles and the decrees of Trent virtually to vanishing point.

25. Sancta Clara regarded the whole controversy about justification, as between Rome and Canterbury at least, as a mere war of words. He welcomed denial in the 1542 Homily (above, para. 22) that human faith is the formal cause of justification, and thought the difference only one of emphasis in speaking of faith, which the Roman Catholics spoke of as that faith given by Christ by which we believe the promises of God, while Protestants laid greater stress on the subjective act of confidence in the divine promises. He noted that in the articles there is no specific definition of what is meant by faith, and that the text of the Thirty Nine Articles contains nothing in itself with which a Roman Catholic needs to quarrel so far as justification is concerned. Sancta Clara's book assumes that the Thirty Nine Articles are possessed of some standing for the Church of England of his time. He writes as a man aware that all such documents require a hermeneutic; that is, their meaning is not always as obvious as it seems to the careless reader and may indeed be other than what such a reader assumes. He uses no force on the text, but is clearly aware that Anglican writers of the 1630s like Richard Montague (a confused writer) were understanding their position in a sense even more Tridentine' than he himself found it natural to be.

26. A broad survey of Anglican writing on Justification in the late 16th and 17th centuries can hardly be attempted within the space of this paper. The more Protestant-sounding accounts of the matter are given by Richard Hooker, who has been brought up as a Calvinist (though he superimposed

on that foundation thick layers of Thomism and of Cyril of Alexandria), and by John Davenant, bishop of Salisbury, writing in 1631. Hooker found himself suspected of being unsound on justification and preached a lengthy sermon to vindicate his position against more Protestant critics. His thesis is, briefly summarised, that merit has to be excluded because while the righteousness of sanctification is by inherent grace and is not merely imputed, it is never perfect in this world. Righteousness which is both perfect and inherent is granted to us only in the next world. But the righteousness of Christ in justification is not inherent, and is perfect. Thus far there is a mental distinction made between justification and sanctification. They are distinct in re, but in time not so. It is a mistake to talk as if we start by being justified and then at some later time first begin to receive the grace of sanctification. They are inseparable and contemporaneous. The faith of believers cannot be divorced from hope and love, and faith is a part of sanctification, not something left behind as we grow in grace. Faith is rightly spoken of as the 'foundation' (and so Trent had said). The high Augustinian comes out in Hooker as he proclaims that justifying faith is indefectible, for although man is unstable, God's promises are immutable, and none of the elect will ultimately be lost. Hooker caused some consternation by proclaiming that the Roman church has not abandoned the authentic foundation; its fault in his eyes is to have erected too large a superstructure, not all of the right sort. 'Our fathers were saved in that Church', and there is no question of denying the continuity of the church catholic in history. Davenant is broadly similar in his thought to Hooker, stressing the perfection of imputed righteousness in justification, but refusing to separate the faith which is an instrumental cause of justification from hope and love. Davenant was happy to say good works are necessary for the justified, but feared to say they are a necessary cause of salvation; he would say they are a 'moving cause'.

27. The most learned and, in the proper sense, unprejudiced survey of Justification to appear in the entire Reformation age came from the pen of Bishop William Forbes of Edinburgh who died in 1634; his work appeared posthumously in 1658. The book, translated into English (1850), remains an education to read. Forbes saw that it must be impossible to speak of justification as consisting exclusively in the non-imputation of past sins; it must carry forward into life in the Spirit under grace. Scripture nowhere, either expressly or as a necessary consequence, attributes to faith alone the whole power of justifying, or, what is the same thing, asserts that faith is the only instrument or means of receiving and apprehending the grace of justification (p.38). Penitence is a condition of forgiveness and 'in some sense has the nature of a cause'. (That was a position that Melanchthon had had to maintain against other Lutheran criticism.) So the forgiveness of sins is never conferred without internal sanctification of the soul (p.216). To say that we are enabled by grace to receive both imputed and inherent righteousness does not produce two formal causes of justification since all is Christ's righteousness. Forbes smiles at the twists and turns of Suarez's exposition and defence of the Tridentine decree and its fear of speaking positively about imputed righteousness, and observes that even Suarez had to concede that in the justification of the sinner there coalesce together two converging effects of grace, the one positive and the other 'privative'. Forbes thought that was very Anglican language. (p.204). He felt as Gregory Nazianzen came to feel about the mixed blessings of Synods. The sixteenth century confessions of faith on either side all seemed to him inadequate partial, and therefore unreliable guides. The continental Protestant assemblies which had harassed theologians wanting to unite justification and sanctification seemed to him deplorable and oppressive. 'Who that has eyes to see does not see that in most of the synods assembled by either party in

this most deplorable age, scarcely anything else is attempted or done than to oppress and condemn the older and truer opinions...the majority of those who were present at these synods overcoming, as generally happens, the better part?' (p.196). Forbes's work is cast in the form of a critical commentary on Bellarmine's treatise on justification, his principal complaint against Bellarmine being that he treats all Protestants as antinomian libertines; otherwise on the positive side he thought Bellarmine merited much respect. Bellarmine had rejected condign merit (as had also Suarez - here against Vazquez). Forbes much liked the scholarly and impartial Catholic theologian Cassander (1513-66), a man whose writings had caused offence to partisan theologians on both sides by his observation that they were so often disagreed not about things but about words. Forbes found in Cassander the remark that 'merit' is not located in human acts but is a way of saying that there are works pleasing to God; all is derived from his grace and acceptance. (Forbes p.486).

28. Forbes' long book first appeared twenty four years after his death. Already the main body of Anglican theology was in reaction against Calvinism, and shared Forbes' regrets at Luther's extravagant love of hyperbole. Seventeenth century Caroline divinity cordially disliked the indefensible disjunction of justification and sanctification. They were not afraid of the forensic or 'acquittal' sense of justification, and indeed it was no reluctant concession on their part to say that in St. Paul the most obvious sense of 'justification' is not making righteous, but treating man and dealing with him as righteous. But they shuddered to a standstill before the notion that the act of God in justification (whether in mercy or in justice) is unconditional on the submission of man to the terms of the covenant of grace, and therefore that justification sola fide is another

way of saying that the elect are predestinate by the operation of irresistible grace and do not need to concern themselves too much about moral lapses as they sit comfortably on the escalator carrying them securely to heaven. To Jeremy Taylor (1613-67; bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland, 1660) justification and sanctification are steps of progression along a single path; the distinction is notional, not actual. No one could read a bit of Jeremy Taylor without feeling that St. Augustine would have written severe reviews of his works. The most striking reassertion of Augustinianism came, among the Anglicans, in a very unexpected form in the Harmonia Apostolica (i.e. reconciliation of Paul and James) by George Bull (1634-1710), bishop of St. David's in Wales. Bull's mind was remarkably independent. His defence of the Nicene Creed (1685) included a massive critique of the immensely learned Jesuit Denys Petau whose work had left a deep impression of the precariousness of orthodoxy among the early church fathers of ante-Nicene times; and the book earned him an accolade unique for Anglican clergymen: a formal vote of gratitude to him was voted by the French clergy in synod in 1700. On justification also Bull wrote as if he were considering everything ab initio from first principles. His thesis was that sola fide must be checked by the text of 1 Cor. 13, 2: the apostle tells us that without love faith's value is zero. The apostle speaks of justification apart from works to show that we do not win merit by obedience; yet Bull thought, and was sure the apostle thought, that faith without obedience gets you nowhere. Bull's thesis provoked vehement criticism from both Roman and Reformed: he was trying to discover a via media, but (as often in such enterprises) seemed to end by making a confused juxtaposition of incompatibles. Bull's critics urged that if the apostle really meant that we are saved by faith and obedience (though St. Paul did not put it that way, in order to exclude merit), then the apostle was not actually excluding merit at all.

Bull was saying that our justification, which for him merges into sanctification, is not achieved without the cooperation of our will. The Reformed critics quoted back at him Rom. 3, 24: 'Where is boasting? It is excluded'. In their view Bull understood St. Paul not to have excluded it completely, even though one should not use the term merit. Roman Catholic critics likewise asked why Bull had to feel such reserve towards the word merit, if he could grant that some kind of assent and cooperation on the part of the human will is a sine qua non of the righteousness formed in the soul by inherent grace and the love of the Holy Spirit. Bull wanted to regard the good works of the justified as an indispensable condition, not a meritorious cause. His critics felt that the former must pass into becoming the latter. So his Roman critics liked his essentially Augustinian and Tridentine thesis, but were mildly critical of the consistency of his terminology. His Reformed critics thought him a disaster.

29. In the eighteenth century 'A summary view of the doctrine of Justification' came from the middle-of-the-road Anglican theologian, Daniel Waterland (1683-1740), Master of Magdalene College Cambridge. His essay (Works, ed. Van Mildert, vol. VI) affirms justification as God's act to be a judicial declaration by which man is offered discharge from the penalty but not the blame of his sins, and is a right and title to eternal life which is more than a bare acquittal; but Waterland did not want to follow Forbes in including the positive gift of the Spirit for the sanctification of the inner heart and soul, on the ground that the renewal of the innerman has no place in the baptism of infants. And justification (as Waterland emphatically asserts) is conveyed by baptism. The idea (once advanced by Bucer) that the first justification of adults is antecedent to baptism, Waterland dismisses as a gross confusion of the grace of justification with the first preparatory renewings wrought by the Holy Spirit.

30. In the 19th century the most important book by an Anglican on Justification is that of J.H. Newman (1838). The book belongs to the era when he was seeking to restate the Middle Way between Rome and Protestantism as the true path of Anglicanism, and this led him to portray both Tridentine Catholicism and what he called 'Lutheranism' (about which one must admit him to be ill informed, though he had read Gerhard and Chemnitz) in ways that might not be easily recognised by adherents of these positions. The target that he treats with the greatest severity is the Protestant, high Calvinist Evangelical language in which he himself had been brought up - mainly as formed by the teaching of Romaine. Newman thought it absurd that the seventeenth century Protestant schoolmen had ransacked the resources of human vocabulary to discover language capable of expressing their conviction that in the human act of faith there is no sort of moral quality, lest man should make his own achievement an initiating ground for the help of grace, and yet that this act of believing must somehow be a 'living' faith, not mere assent of the mind; a repentance which turns to God and is not remorse or mere shame at the mess of one's life. But above all, Newman sought to reaffirm baptism as the sacrament of justification and regeneration. The doctrine of the free, gratis character of divine grace, affirmed by Augustine and the Catholic tradition and supremely expressed in predestination, is given a quite radical slant if it is turned into a belief that grace somehow ceases to be 'free' when offered to the believer through the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, through the breaking of bread and the prayers, and through the sacraments of the gospel, assured to the faithful through a ministry of apostolic order in the visible communion of the historical church. In fact (as Melancthon's Apology for the Augsburg Confession protested) sola fide is not a denial of the communication of grace through the sacraments: 'We exclude merit, not the word or sacraments,

as our adversaries slanderously say'. 'But in the train of Luther there did come Protestants for whom sola fide should be understood with full-blooded subjectivity, and who did hold the position that Melanchthon disavowed. The Lutheran critique of 'ex opere operato' (condemned at Trent, VII De sacramentis in genere, canon 8: 3 March 1547) assumed the meaning to be that the sacraments work automatically without any movement in the recipient (sine bono motu cordis); an opinion startlingly akin to the view that Luther was attacked for holding, that in receiving grace man is utterly passive and cannot be said to 'do' anything. The Pietists inherited a mystical tradition of detachment from the visible institutions of the Church. Where the schoolmen had once granted that the grace of God is not tied to the sacraments, the Pietists tended to be surprised if they were found associated. They therefore made the Church a secondary consequence, an accidental gathering of believers who had as individuals been granted the experience of knowing themselves justified and regenerate. It was easy to move to the position that the normal order of the liturgical life of the Church, in the means of grace, ministry, word and sacrament, is to be set aside as a means of bargaining with God with the counter of human merit. Those who have thus experienced justifying faith and inward regeneration in their own souls by an unmediated experience of God's grace know themselves to be men and women of the Spirit and apart from the historic body, though they may find themselves able to use for edification some of the forms of that body. Within this way of thinking a tension soon emerges. On the one hand, the faith which is the instrumental cause of justification is asserted to have nothing to do with the moral state of the individual will and even less to do with the intellectual assent his mind makes, and depends on God's decision. On the other hand such emphasis is laid on the liberating inward psychological experience that 'justification' comes

to be used indifferently whether of God's decree or of the human act of trust which receives and rejoices at it. The crux of validity is found in the conversion experience of the believer. Add to this the heady wine of the doctrine of predestination in the maximal form of irresistible grace, and the individual believer will often be racked by anxiety whether his feelings (for he may trust neither intellectual assent nor moral will, and there is only feeling left) have really been a sign of regeneration or not. By contrast Newman affirms that the truth of justification is nowhere more apparent than in the sacrament of Baptism. This justification does not leave the soul as it found it.

31. Any generalisation about classical Anglican treatments of the doctrine of Justification is sure to have to carry some qualifying or exceptive clause. The seventeenth century Anglicans do not speak with a single voice. Hooker and Davenant at least sound more Protestant than Forbes, Herbert Thorndike, Hammond, Taylor, and Bull. But it is an illusion that the Anglicans are incoherent. Although the Thirty Nine Articles left them remarkably free, without prescribing on the subject in a manner that even the least Protestant of them would find it embarrassing to defend, there is a discernible shared point of view; namely that hyper-Augustinian doctrines of predestination and irresistible grace are not their natural air; that justifying faith ought not to be separated from hope and love; that one may speak of 'growth' in faith and indeed pray from the heart the Collect for Trinity XIV 'give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity...'; that (as in Hooker) sanctification is by inherent righteousness but in this life can only be imperfect; that baptism is the sacrament of justification and that, since no works prior to the grace of justification are meritorious, the grace conveyed in this sacrament is (most prominently) the non-imputation of sins on the ground of the merit of Christ, without excluding the moral ingredients of (a) contrition in adults (b) the resolve

to follow good and avoid evil (c) the enabling gift of the seal of the Spirit. Imputed righteousness, however, is not only operative in baptism, but daily in the Christian life as we pray 'Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them...' And at the divine tribunal even the works of righteousness that God's grace has enabled us to do will remain flawed by imperfection because of the resistance to God's will that we daily experience within ourselves. Whether this imperfection is rightly spoken of as meeting its answer in the mercy of God imputed to us by Christ's perfect righteousness or by the purging fire of love; or if we may suppose that these two ways of talking are different ways of saying much about the same thing, - these are matters on which a reverential awe in debate seems appropriate. By 1 Cor. 3 Scripture may seem to give more support to the latter way of talking.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

32. Although this paper is not (as ARCIC papers go) short, it will be obvious to all its readers that much has been left out. In particular the paper has not included an account of the Roman Catholic interpreters of the Trent decree, among whom some come very close indeed to the position occupied by the seventeenth century Anglicans of the Restoration period. Throughout this survey one common feature is recurrent, namely, the dream that one should be able to bring together Catholic and Protestant understandings of justification by admitting that we need Christ's righteousness for our salvation, both as inherent in the soul in sanctifying grace, and as imputed, whether in Baptism (because no preparatory dispositions and virtues can earn a reward of grace) or hereafter because of the imperfection of even the best cooperation of our wills with divine grace. Both the men of Trent and the moderate men of the Reformation (among whom the Anglicans tended to be easily the most moderate!) were convergent in wanting to affirm (1) that human moral

achievements, even under grace, do not constitute an entitlement conferring a right to salvation (2) that if grace does not have its effects in the actual transformation of the moral life, it has been received in vain. In the sixteenth century the language used on both sides was cast in the mould formed by the schoolmen. The Protestants who had begun by handing out discourteous kicks at the medieval schoolmen acquired, with amazing rapidity, a scholasticism of their own with a series of fissiparous disputes.

33. The scholastic refinements in the debate about justification became so intricate that they contributed to generating a widespread feeling that the dispute was wearisome metaphysical subtlety, a mere game with words played by academic theologians providing the separated communions with a rationalisation for their separation. There is no doubt that Trent's stepfatherly treatment of the notion of 'imputation' aroused fear in Protestant hearts. Hooker was grieved to think Catholics supposed remission of sins to be applied, to those in venial sin, by holy water, an Ave Maria, a sign of the cross, etc., and to those in mortal sin by the sacrament of penance which not only cleanses the stain of guilt but can commute eternal punishment to temporal satisfaction in this life if time for amendment of life is granted; if it is not, then the hereafter must be terrifying unless lightened by requiems, fasts, pilgrimages, alms, and other acts of charity. But that was to say that his reservations were far more deeply concerned with devotional practice than with doctrine. On the actual nature of justification, on imputed and inherent righteousness, the gulf between Hooker and Trent is no sort of ravine.

34. Again, there is paradox in the embarrassment evident at Trent in the treatment of 'imputation', since at the very heart of Catholic piety lay, and lies, the mass and the doctrine of eucharistic sacrifice. That means to say

that there can be no ground on which we may worthily stand before God except in Christ who has done on our behalf what we could not and cannot do for ourselves. The merits of his perfect self-offering the Church remembers and pleads before the very throne of grace, thereby entering into the movement of the Lord's heavenly intercession. In the mass there is both the supreme divine gift and the supreme human offering; but the heart of the matter is that all human offering is flawed and imperfect unless offered in union with Christ. Translated into other terms, such language is in essential principle a proclamation of imputed righteousness. Hence the appeal of men like Seripando that the notion is implicit in the prayer of the canon of the mass, 'not weighing our merits but pardoning our offences' (taken over without alteration into the liturgy of the Anglican Prayer Book). The Anglican eucharistic hymn ('And now O Father...', has it:

Look Father, look on his anointed face
And only look on us as found in him...
For lo, between our sins and their reward
We set the Passion of thy Son our Lord.

35. On the Catholic side, by the seventeenth century it had come to look surprising to hear Protestant theologians of sense and judgment, not fanatics, freely conceding that although only faith justified, yet this faith is quite meaningless apart from its issue in good works done by grace and the indwelling of the Spirit. Had Protestants really the right to separate themselves from the Catholic Church on a distinction which required considerable academic and intellectual skill to state intelligibly and coherently and which then looked utterly tiny? Of all those who had been taken out of communion with Rome in the sixteenth century, the Anglicans often seemed to stand unfuriatingly close. Their separation had been predominantly determined by Crown

and Privy Council, by the political desire for national independence rather than by any instinctive uprising of lay protestant bible-reading piety, though the latter of course existed. Anglican theologians became particularly prominent in using language that was uncommonly akin to the Trent decree on justification of January 1547, even if that decree included sentences and a few anathemas that men like Bishop Forbes thought an excess of definition and an importation of school-distinctions into articles of faith which he was sad to see. Forbes candidly felt that at times Trent disclosed a greater anxiety to condemn Luther than to proclaim catholic truth of the great tradition. But on most of the essential points he was of course in sympathy with what the fathers of Trent were trying to say by way of positive affirmation. In this situation it might seem that in the last decades of the twentieth century, where theologians have ceased to have much confidence in anyone's capacity to produce precise dogmatic formula free of any element of approximation or historical conditioning, it ought to be a relatively simple task to state the doctrine of justification in a way that reconciles. It will not be as easy as the survey thus far may suggest, for reasons I must now try briefly to set out.

36. The medieval schoolmen declared (e.g. Thomas Aquinas, ST 3 69, 4) that baptism is not merely an engagement of heart and will on the part of the recipient, but is a sacrament appointed by Christ for conferring grace. Here 'grace' means not merely the abstract capacity to do right, but actual goodness. Grace is a transforming power within the soul, conforming the disposition to the will of God. Thereby man is made pleasing to God (*gratia gratum faciens*); for his soul is shaped thereby into a beauty analagous to that of physical loveliness. By the action of grace Aquinas sees the root or foundation of virtue implanted in the soul to produce a 'habit', i.e. something permanent, not merely sudden

and transient. The strength of this medieval doctrine lay in its doing full justice to the intimate link between baptism as sacrament of justification and regeneration. As soon as one is using the biblical language of regeneration, one must be speaking of new life and therefore of positive goodness. In the case of infant baptism what was, for the schoolmen, given was seminal rather than actual. There was therefore a difficulty in explaining how or why some baptized persons to whom these sublime gifts had been given wholly fail to grow up living lives of virtue or holiness. The medieval answer was to say that while there was indeed an implanted 'habit' of virtue, the exercise of the free will was necessary on each successive occasion when one would be required to make a moral choice. In some people, the habit will lie dormant. In others it is stirred to action in good works by the free choice of the will. We may leave on one side here the paradoxical use of the term 'habit' to describe patterns of behaviour which are acted out either not at all or in mere fits and starts. The doctrine of the continuance of concupiscence in the baptised was invoked to explain the frequent failure of human beings to act on the gifts given to them. But in principle medieval theology affirms there is a rock-bottom actual goodness in human nature as created by God and restored in baptism, with free choices and the interference of concupiscence to explain why things go wrong thereafter. The scholastic tradition is echoed in the language of Trent that 'in justification, together with remission of sin, faith, hope and charity are infused into us.' That is not merely to say that real goodness is a necessary condition of justification (which we find in the Anglicans Bull and Thorndike) but that it is the very content of the gift of grace. In short, in Catholic theology, as also in the Pietist evangelicals of the eighteenth century, there is no distinction drawn between justification and regeneration. By the new birth man becomes actually good. If it does not

always work out that way, one must seek the cause of the trouble in mistaken choices or the pressures of concupiscence.

37. Mainstream Anglican theology (Hooker, Thorndike et al.) regarded baptism as a covenant or pact. God on his part grants all grace necessary to eternal life, and yet he does not remove the freedom of the will and the individual can refuse to avail himself of what is thereby given to him. This position easily goes with an interpretation of the grace given in baptism as a potentiality rather than an actuality. The individual is brought to a status, and incorporation in the body of Christ, whereby he receives the possibility of attaining salvation. This mainstream Anglicanism was formulated in conscious reaction against high Calvinism. That is to say that there is an inherent and ineradicable conflict between the attribution of a role to free will and the full Augustinian doctrine. Under Augustine's scheme, all men and women are originally born as part of the undifferentiated sinful mass of the posterity of Adam and Eve, and by birth have inherited moral impotence with the corruption of their nature, reinforced by the social environment. Antecedent, however, to the being of any of us, God had predetermined that some, indeed a substantial minority, shall be rescued from the punishment a rebellious sinful world most certainly deserves. By a similar antecedent decision of God, the reprobate are given no grace to rescue them; and none may complain, for nothing could be more absolutely just. Condign merit applies precisely here. The elect are endowed with grace which, because of the certainty that man will get it wrong if he has to do anything on his own, has to be irresistible, and will also ensure that the divine purpose in predestination is not frustrated, by giving the further gift of final perseverance. So the elect are not merely enabled to act rightly and to persevere to the end of their lives to die in grace; they are also caused so to do. To those not elect these gifts are simply not conferred. They have no capacity, therefore, to attain salvation. Some

of them may indeed hear the call and offer themselves for baptism. But their baptism is, for Augustine, merely outward. The word does not speak within to their hearts, and does not come to transform their lives.

38. A vast proportion of the confusions of the sixteenth century debate may be attributed to the fact that the two systems of thinking, which lay side by side in the mind of Augustine in a glorious inconsistency, had in late medieval schools begun to drift apart, and in the Reformation separated out with a rending explosion. Luther's mind, well soaked in the anti-Pelagian writings of Augustine, reasserted the predestinarian side of Augustinian theology in the most vehement possible terms. Trent reacted by safeguarding free will and reaffirming the traditional pattern of medieval theology of baptismal justification. Within the Church of the Counter-Reformation even the decrees of Trent left many doors open; and hence the fiercely fought controversies first over Baius and Jansenius, then over Quesnel.¹ I shall not exhaust already

¹ Some of the propositions from Quesnel condemned in the Bull 'Unigenitus' (1713) sound very like the kind of high Augustinian/Calvinist doctrine that some Evangelicals feel a debt to. The doctrine of the Bull is of great intricacy. It is not normally reckoned, I think, among the papal utterances to which the tag 'infallible' or 'ex cathedra' is to be attached. But I take it that Roman Catholics are the proper judges of the magisterial status of their own ecclesiastical documents. I sometimes find myself puzzled when Roman Catholics want to tell me what the doctrine of the Anglican Church is, and feel sure that Anglicans ought to exercise care in telling Roman Catholics which papal statements carry the supreme status. Here I think it sufficient to say that the Bull Unigenitus and the outcome of the Jansenist controversy illustrate the general consensus that an extreme Augustinianism denying free will and asserting irresistible grace is not characteristic of the Roman Catholic Church any more than of the predominant theology found in the Anglican Communion.

weary readers with an account either of the Jansenist controversy or of the disputes among the Protestants between the Calvinists and the Arminians. In the Roman Catholic Church the authority of the Pope spoke for the preservation of the position of Trent, that is for the safeguarding of the freedom of the will and the cooperation of man with grace.¹ In the Anglican tradition the high Calvinist tradition, which since the days of the Elizabethan settlement had found the liturgy and articles of the Church of England a source of continual irritation, has always had isolated representatives but has never looked or sounded characteristically Anglican. There remain in 1984 Evangelical Anglicans whose hearts beat faster with sympathy as they read Calvin's Institutes. On the other hand, there are many Evangelical Anglicans who fully share the opinion to which John Wesley was resoundingly converted, namely that high Calvinism cannot be proclaimed without risks of moral disaster; that the preacher of the gospel is bound to place before his hearers the truth that in the gospel there is a real choice, and that the consequences of the choice affect one's eternal destiny.

H.C.

¹ The theme of cooperation with grace appears in some things I hear Roman Catholics saying about the place of the Blessed Virgin as model to the Church in faith, obedience, and holiness (on which ARCIC-I had something to say in its second Authority statement). I am not clear that there is inherent tension between Roman Catholic Marian dogmas and Anglican understanding of justification.