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THEOLOGICAL DISPUTATION, CONCERNING The true difference between mortal and venial sin, and concerning the impossibility of fulfilling the law of God due to the daily incursion of venial sins.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED AN APPENDIX on the possibility of fulfilling the law considered according to the Evangelical Precepts.

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"Even the praiseworthy life of men, if you remove mercy and examine it closely, is found wanting." Augustine, Confessions, Book 9, Chapter 13.

"Even our very righteousness, though true because it aims at the true good, is nevertheless so imperfect in this life that it consists more in the remission of sins than in perfection of virtues." The same, City of God, Book 19, Chapter 27.

In Amsterdam,
At the press of Joannem Schulperoort,
In the year 1649.

To the Magnificent, most ample, most distinguished,

Eminent in the splendor of lineage, piety, authority,
prudence, and experience in affairs,

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED LORD,

LORD PAUL MENEZES

Most worthy prefect of Kynmundy:

AS WELL AS

The most illustrious men, the most learned and prudent Lords

THE MAGISTRATES,

And the other Governors of the REPUBLIC OF ABERDEEN.

Since true and Christian humility, which faith requires and piety, is produced especially by two things, the knowledge of the law, and the recognition of sin which flows from it; it is the duty of a good and faithful Pastor to set before the people committed to his faith and care that highest perfection of righteousness which the law of GOD requires of us, and from it to detect and demonstrate the flaws of our obedience, and our innumerable defects. But the doctors of the Roman Church, as of old, so also today in the most clear light of the Gospel and learning, manifestly fail in this part of their office and duty, indeed they do not hesitate to obtrude a veil over the minds of Christians. For in order to lull the conscience of the justified man into a kind of slumber, lest anything remain of which he may accuse and condemn himself before GOD, they tenaciously retain, and defend as some kind of Palladium, that distinction of sin into mortal and venial, according to its nature. Namely, this is that which as long as that distinction shall stand, as they interpret it, this also shall stand, that we are able to fulfill the law by an obedience absolute in all respects, and consequently to merit eternal glory by our works as a condign desert. Which doctrine, how repugnant it is to the Sacred Scriptures, and to the consciences of the pious, all who are humbly and soberly pious acknowledge to such an extent, that not without groans and tears they profess their wretchedness in this vale of tears before God, and ingenuously testify. Since therefore the feeling of all the pious dictates that the Roman Church totters exceedingly in this respect, following the example of leaders experienced in warfare, I attack Rome and her walls where they threaten ruin, and can most easily be undermined and leveled. May the Most High God favor these feeble efforts of ours, and may your Ample, Most Illustrious, and Most Learned, support be with me, which as I daily experience, so I accept with a grateful mind. That I may make this known to our age, I present to you this disputation concerning the impossibility of fulfilling the law, as a most certain pledge of a mind most devoted to you: Farewell.

Given at ABERDEEN, in the year 1633.

June 17.

Most devoted to Your Amplitudes,
ROBERT BARONIUS

ADMONITION
TO THE
READER

Do not (kind Reader) impute this to me as a fault, that somewhere in this Treatise I call the lighter sins of the reprobate venial. When I set forth my opinion concerning them in Part 1, Section 3, §4, I openly profess that they are venial neither by their nature, nor by the event. Elsewhere, however, I sometimes call them venial, not because they are venial in that sense in which the lighter sins of the elect are called venial, but partly because these sins, as to the specific nature of the acts themselves, are of the same species with those sins which in the elect are venial through the grace of GOD and the Evangelical indulgence; and partly because, when I argue against the Pontificians from their own common tenets, I am forced to use those words which are customary and received in their Schools.

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Theological Disputation On The true difference between mortal and venial sin, and the impossibility of fulfilling the law of God due to the daily incursion of venial sins.

Part One, In which the opinion of the Evangelicals on the difference between mortal and venial sin is set forth, and explained and illustrated by various observations, distinctions, and determinations of questions.

Section I.

How useful this debate is for overturning the doctrine of the Pontificians on the perfection of human justice and merits.

How notable the use of this debate is in refuting that pernicious error of the Roman Church, concerning the perfect fulfillment of the law considered according to rigor, is clear from the fact that the Law of GOD prohibits all sins, even the slightest, which by an ancient term, but ineptly and impiously used by the adversaries, are called venial.

Since therefore no one by the ordinary powers of grace can avoid all sins, as Scripture most openly testifies, and the adversaries themselves willingly concede, it evidently follows that none of the just can perfectly fulfill the law of GOD.

2. Bellarmine, overcome by the force and efficacy of this argument, in book 4 on Justification, chapter 14, confesses that he and his fellow soldiers cannot defend that dogma on the perfect fulfillment of the law, unless by denying that those slighter sins, which are called venial, are against the law of God. Whence he not obscurely criticizes Andreas de Vega and others who taught with him that venial sins are properly against the law, and burdens their opinion with this difficulty, that they are forced to say that the fulfillment of the law is possible, not because the whole can be kept at once but because the greater part of it can be kept, and the denomination is made from the better part. And, that they may know this difficulty to be of some moment, he adds that they must see what they answer to the Apostle James, saying, "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it."

3. But Vasquez in the first part of the second part, volume 1, disputation 143, chapter 4, number 8, and Alphonsus Curiel on the same part of Thomas, question 88, article 1, doubt 3, §1, who seem to think against Bellarmine with Vega, so that they may show their opinion is not liable to this difficulty, flee to another miserable escape, full of desperation. For they say that those slighter sins, without which none of the just can live, although they are truly and properly against some precept of the law, yet do not prevent the law of God from being fulfilled by the just, and this because that precept, against which some venial sin is committed, is not properly, perfectly, and rigorously a law, or a precept of the law. And they offer this reason for this paradox, because the observance of a precept of this kind is not necessary for the attainment of eternal life; and because the transgression of it is not repugnant to the charity which is the end of the law. Bellarmine himself also seems to incline to this opinion elsewhere, viz. in book 2 on the loss of grace, chapter 11, §. Finally sin, where he says that all venial sins are either not perfectly voluntary, or not perfectly against the law, which perfectly and rigorously is law.

Behold the immense and most presumptuous audacity of the Jesuits, who extenuate their sins and almost annihilate them, so that they may glory in their own justice, even before God: and lest they seem to be mad without reason, they do not fear to elevate the very laws of God and derogate from them.

4. Similarly, how great the use of this disputation is in refuting the doctrine of the adversaries on merit from condignity by reason of the work itself, is clear from the fact that the guilt of eternal death and the merit of eternal glory from condignity cannot consist together in the same person. Whence Bellarmine, in book 5 on Justification, chapter 12, says: "To merit at the same time eternal life and eternal death involves a contradiction: and therefore one who was such ought to live forever, and not live forever, to die forever and not die forever." And Suarez, in book 12 on divine grace, chapter 14, §5 and 6, says: "The sinner, from his own merit, is worthy to be deprived of eternal life. Therefore it cannot be that he at the same time acquires a right of justice to eternal life." This being posited, we argue thus: He who merits eternal death cannot merit eternal life. But the just or faithful, on account of the sins of daily incursion, which are called venial, merit eternal death: therefore they cannot merit eternal life. The major is conceded by the Adversaries. The minor will be proved below at length against all the evasions of the adversaries: and therefore the conclusion is certain and infallible.

5. Therefore, that we may overturn the doctrine of the adversaries on the perfect fulfillment of the law, and the meritorious causality of our supernatural acts, by a brief and compendious, but efficacious way, we will strive to demonstrate that venial sins from themselves and their own nature merit eternal death, also that they are truly and properly against the end of the law, that is, against charity, not only from Scripture and reason, but also from the very principles and common views of the Adversaries themselves.

Section II.

Whether, and in what sense, the Evangelicals admit the partition of sin into mortal and venial.

We have no controversy with the Pontificians about the inequality of sins. For they condemn with us the error of the Stoics on the equality of all sins, which Jovinian the Heresiarch interpolated in the fourth century of the Christian Church, and condemned many centuries ago, except that Conrad, a celebrated interpreter of St. Thomas, writing on the first part of the second part, question 73, article 2, seems to have taught something akin to this error. For he says that all sins, which are evil only because they are prohibited, or to speak more plainly, all those sins which are transgressions of positive laws, are equal among themselves. In which error also other Scholastic Theologians were, especially Thomas himself in book 3 against the Gentiles, chapter 139, and Ferrariensis there, Vasquez boldly affirms in the first part of the second part, disputation 99, chapters 2 and 5. Yet none of our writers hence takes occasion to accuse the Roman Church of this error, as if it were commonly received in it. For we know that it is condemned and rejected by all the more recent interpreters of Lombard and St. Thomas. See Vasquez, in the place cited, Curiel on the first part of the second part, question 72, article 2, §3, and Francisco de Herrera, in the second book of sentences, disputation 32, question 1.

2. The Adversaries do not employ equal candor, when they set forth the doctrine of our Theologians on this question. For Edmund Campion the Jesuit, in Reason 8, tries to ascribe that error of the Stoics and Jovinian also to Luther and Calvin. But Bellarmine refutes this slanderous lie of the proud Jesuit, in book 3 on Justification, chapter 16, at the beginning. "The Lutherans," he says, "do not say, as far as I know, that the virtues are equal, or that sins are equal, nor do they deny that man can grow in hope, love, and other virtues." But, says Duræus in book 8 against Whitaker, "Calvin made sins equal in this, that he judged all to be mortal and worthy of eternal punishments." Whitaker himself dispels this inept cavil, in the Institutes, Book 3, Chapter 4, §28. "I know," he says, "how unjustly they calumniate this our doctrine. They say it is the paradox of the Stoics on the equality of sins: but they will be convinced by their own mouth without any trouble. For why do they not acknowledge that among those very sins, which they confess to be mortal, one is less than another? Therefore it does not immediately follow that sins are equal, which are at the same time mortal."

3. The Evangelicals not only acknowledge that some sins are less or lighter than others, but also confess that the very division of sin into venial and mortal, if understood in a sound way, is tolerable. But there is some disagreement among them about the way in which this distinction is to be conceived and explained, so that it can be tolerated; which, that it may be understood, it must be held that this distinction can be conceived in four ways. First, with respect to the event, or to the future punishment or remission of these sins. Second, with respect to the sentence of the divine law considered according to its rigor. Third, with respect partly to the sentence of the law considered according to its rigor, partly to the event. Fourth, with respect to the economy, or the administration of divine providence under the Gospel in punishing the sins of those with whom God has entered into that gracious covenant.

4. With respect to the event, this distinction can be conceived in three ways. For mortal sin, and consequently venial sin also, can be said to be such from the event in three ways: viz. either from the event simply, or from the necessity or contingency of the event, or from the easiness or difficulty of the event.

5. From the event simply, those sins can be called mortal, which are in fact punished with eternal death, but those venial which, although they merit eternal death from themselves, yet are not punished by it but are graciously forgiven on account of the merit of Christ. In this way Zanchi, in volume 4, book 1, chapter 8, thesis 2, says that all the sins of the elect are venial; but all the sins of the reprobate are mortal. The distinction of venial and mortal sin thus conceived contains nothing false in itself, but is too general. For the more serious and lighter sins of the elect, although both are venial from the event, yet have different effects in kind, on account of which the former can be called mortal, but the latter venial, as will be clear below.

6. From the necessity of the event, or from the necessity of future punishment, the sin against the Holy Spirit can be called mortal, because it is necessarily and infallibly punished with eternal death: but all the rest can be called venial from the contrary possibility of future remission, because viz. they can, or could, be forgiven. This way of explaining that distinction, which Gomarus brings in the collection of Leiden disputations, Disputation 13, thesis 10, and Piscator, in the first volume of Theological theses, Place 7, Disputation 2, thesis 64, is much more general than the preceding, and consequently less to be approved. For according to it, all sins, not only of the elect, but also of the reprobate, except the sin against the Holy Spirit, are venial, because viz. they are remissible, if they are considered in themselves, and apart from the respect of final impenitence.

7. From the easiness of the event, or from the greater easiness of future remission, those sins can be called venial, which are forgiven under the condition of easier repentance: but from the contrary difficulty of remission, those can be called mortal, which are not forgiven, but punished with eternal death, unless a more difficult and troublesome repentance takes place. This way also, unless it is explained and polished by some limitation, must be condemned on account of its generality and ambiguity. For in this sense, not only those lighter sins, which are called of daily incursion by Tertullian, but also any most serious and horrible sins can be called venial, because viz. some of them are forgiven more easily than others. However, if this way of explaining that distinction is proposed as it is proposed by Spalatensis in book 5 on the Republic of the Church, chapter 7, §66, it can be admitted, as will be clear from Section 4.

8. Second, the distinction or division of sin into venial and mortal can be conceived and explained with respect to the sentence of the law considered according to its rigor, by saying that certain sins are so serious, that according to the rigor of the law they merit eternal death, but others are so light, that they cannot justly be punished with eternal death even according to the rigor of the law. The Pontificians alone hand down and defend this explanation of the aforesaid distinction. For all our Theologians agree in this, which is the head of the matter here,

viz. that all sins, even the slightest, can justly be punished with eternal death according to the rigor of the law.

9. Third, this distinction is conceived with respect partly to the sentence of the law, partly to the event, by Pareus in book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 2, page 18, and Gomarus in the place cited above, where they say that every sin, or every kind of sin, is mortal per se, and according to the sentence of the law, because it renders the sinner liable to the curse of the law, which is set forth in Deuteronomy 27:26, and on the contrary every kind of sin (understand, except the sin against the Holy Spirit) is venial by accident, insofar as forgiveness is granted to those repenting on account of the ransom of Christ. Although this way of explaining that distinction contains a most true doctrine, it by no means satisfies, because it is too general, and does not distinguish the more serious sins of the regenerate from their lighter sins. For in this sense all the sins of the regenerate are venial, indeed each one of them is both mortal and venial. But according to sacred Scripture, as will soon be clear, the more serious sins of the regenerate have different effects in kind from their lighter sins, on account of which the former can be called mortal, but the latter venial.

10. Fourth, this distinction can be explained with respect to the administration of divine providence under the covenant of grace in punishing the sins of the regenerate, who belong to this covenant of grace and the Church of God by act, it can, I say, be explained by saying that the more serious and atrocious sins of the regenerate are mortal, but the lighter and daily incursion offenses of the same are venial, because God denounces anger and indignation against them on account of the former, indeed threatens them with exclusion from heaven and eternal death: but on account of the latter he does not strike them with the fear of condemnation or eternal death, indeed he does not take away from them the sense of his favor, or confidence in the remission of sins.

11. The most learned and eternally praiseworthy Theologians of Great Britain delegated to the Synod of Dort have most clearly handed down this explanation of that distinction, which must undoubtedly be preferred to the rest, in their judgment on the perseverance of the saints, part 2 (which is on the perseverance with respect to the elect themselves), in the explication of the second thesis, where they write thus: "Indeed, from the rigor of the law, any sin, even the slightest, is deadly, and excludes the sinner from the favor of God and the kingdom of heaven. But with the sons already adopted and justified with Christ, God never deals with strict right. There are indeed some sins on account of which God denounces anger and indignation to these his sons, indeed threatens exclusion from heaven and eternal death. What sort they are can be seen in 1 Corinthians 6:10, Galatians 5:21, Colossians 3:6, about which more will be said in the following theses. But there are also certain other sins, on account of which the merciful God is not accustomed to deprive his sons even for a time of the light of his countenance, nor to strike them with the fear of condemnation or death. Of this sort are the rebellious motions of concupiscence, about which the Apostle complains in Romans 7. Likewise the defects and blemishes which adhere even to the best works of the regenerate. Finally, those daily offenses of human infirmity, which are committed without any certain purpose of committing, and are forgiven by the daily petition for remission. Concerning these, James 3:2,

'For we all stumble in many ways.' And 1 John 1:8, 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' These sins notwithstanding, any of the faithful may rightly say: 'There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.' Indeed, in the midst of these infirmities, to whomever justified God says what he said to the Apostle, 'My grace is sufficient for you. For my power is made perfect in weakness.'"

12. The excellent and most worthy Doctors of Sacred Theology, Richard Field in book 3 on the Church, chapter 32, also in the appendix added to that book, chapter 9, Francis White in the book which is entitled The Orthodox Faith and Way to the Church, chapter 2, section 2, §1, article 13, and Davenant on actual justice, chapter 35, page 431, have also handed down the same explanation as to substance.

Section III.

Various assertions on the difference between mortal and venial sin are set forth and confirmed.

For the true doctrine on the difference between mortal and venial sin to be understood, the following assertions must be diligently considered and held.

2. First assertion. Every sin from itself is mortal, and none is venial except by accident, or through the mercy of GOD, and on account of the condition of the subject in which it is. The prior part of the assertion is proven, first, because Scripture generally pronounces about every sin that its wages are death, Romans 6:23, that the sting of death is sin, 1 Corinthians 15:56, and that the end or fruit of sins is death, Romans 6:21. Second, because every sin, as will be proved below, is against the law of God, the violation of which, whatever it may be, merits a curse, Galatians 3:10 and Deuteronomy 27:26. Third, every sin leaves behind it in the soul a stain and deformity, which from itself, and apart from the mercy of God, who removes that stain by undeserved favor, would exclude the sinner from the heavenly kingdom forever. For nothing defiled can enter it, Revelation 21:27. Therefore every sin from itself is mortal. Fourth, every sin of the reprobate, even the slightest, will be punished with eternal punishment on the day of judgment, as the adversaries themselves confess. Therefore the slightest sins of the reprobate merit eternal punishment. Fifth, God forgives venial sins by grace. Therefore he can never forgive them, and consequently punish them eternally. All these things will be proved more fully below.

3. The latter part of the assertion necessarily follows from the former. For if every sin is mortal from itself, without doubt those which are venial, are such by accident: viz. because they are in a regenerate man, with whom God wants to deal not with strict right but graciously and mercifully. What Cajetan says on the first part of the second part, on question 87, article 5, does not much differ from this part of our assertion. "Remissibility," he says, "and irremissibility, both of guilt and of punishment, positively taken, are considered according to the state of the subject, namely to be in a state of grace or not, and are not considered universally according to the sins

themselves: and many have been deceived by not noticing this." And below: "But speaking with respect to guilt, no guilt is remissible from itself positively, because no guilt claims for itself remission or pardon, etc." But what he adds there, that some guilt is from itself venial or remissible negatively, will be refuted below.

4. Second assertion: All the sins of the reprobate are mortal. The reason for the assertion is because no sin is venial from itself, but only from the singular grace and mercy of God. But this grace does not extend to the reprobate. Therefore all their sins, even the slightest, are mortal; and this not only from merit, which has already been proven, but also from the event, because viz. they are actually punished with eternal death. This latter point, that viz. the slightest sins of the reprobate are mortal from the event, or are punished with eternal death, is conceded by the adversaries themselves, who nevertheless obstinately deny the former about their merit or rather demerit. For thus teaches Thomas in the first part of the second part, question 87, article 5, to the 3rd objection, in the third part, question 87, article 4, question 7 on evil, article 10, and in the 4th book of Sentences, distinction 21, question 1, article 2. Thus also teach almost all the more recent authors. But they do not notice that which will be proved below, that no sin can be mortal from the event, unless it is also mortal from merit: for otherwise it will follow that God punishes sins with a more serious punishment than they deserve.

5. Third assertion: Although all the sins of the reprobate are mortal, yet on the contrary it must not be said that all the sins of the elect are venial: For their atrocious sins which lay waste the conscience not only merit exclusion from the favor of GOD, and from the heavenly kingdom, but also actually exclude them from that degree of favor by which they were previously loved by GOD, and if they persevered in them, they would exclude them from the heavenly kingdom forever. Therefore the atrocious sins of the elect must be said to be mortal. The antecedent is proven, because Scripture expressly writes about sins of this kind, that whoever does them (supply and perseveres in them), cannot be a partaker of the heavenly kingdom and eternal life, 1 Corinthians 6, verses 9 and 10, and Galatians 5:21, Ephesians 5:5. Likewise Scripture says, that tribulation and anguish are upon every soul of man who does evil, Romans 2:9, that those who live according to the flesh will die, Romans 8:13, that on account of atrocious sins, the wrath of God comes upon the disobedient, Colossians 3:6, and that God hates and abominates those who do such things, Proverbs 6:16, 12:22, 17:15.

6. Fourth assertion: Certain sins of the regenerate are rightly called venial, because according to the gracious covenant of GOD and paternal kindness, they do not exclude them from the hope of the heavenly kingdom, or from that degree of favor by which they were previously loved by GOD. Of this sort are the rebellious and involuntary motions of concupiscence, likewise the defects and blemishes which adhere to the good works of the regenerate, finally those which are called venial from the smallness of the matter, because viz. they are committed in a light or less important matter. Scripture speaks about these sins in James 3:2: "For we all stumble in many ways," 1 John 1:8, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," and Ecclesiastes 7:20, "Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins." But that sins of daily incursion of this kind do not exclude the faithful from the favor of GOD, and from the hope of the heavenly kingdom, is clear, because notwithstanding these

sins the faithful are said to walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. But there is no condemnation for those who so walk, Romans 8:1.

7. Fifth assertion. That sins of this kind of the regenerate do not exclude them from the favor of GOD, and from the hope of the heavenly kingdom, they have this simply and absolutely, not from their own nature, but from the mercy of GOD. The truth of this assertion is clear from those things which have been said in the explication of the first assertion. For if every sin from itself merits exclusion from the favor of GOD, and from the heavenly kingdom, it necessarily follows that those sins which do not exclude the regenerate from the favor of GOD, have this not from themselves and their own nature, but from the mercy of GOD. But let the reader note that this our doctrine on the lighter sins of the regenerate, that viz. they are venial not from their own nature, but from the mercy of GOD, was once handed down and defended in the Roman Church itself by Gerson and James Almain, whom Rochester later followed writing against Luther, as the adversaries themselves testify, viz. Bellarmine in book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 4, Vasquez in the first part of the second part, Disputation 142, Chapter 1, Curiel on the same part of Thomas, question 88, article 1, doubt 2, and many others.

8. Sixth assertion: If, however, the lighter sins of the regenerate are considered comparatively (that is, if they are compared with their more serious sins), and if it is asked why the former rather than the latter are venial, and do not exclude from the favor of GOD? it must be said that they have this from themselves and their own nature. For although, speaking absolutely, these sins are serious, yet comparatively they are light: and this comparative lightness of them, which is founded in their own nature, is undoubtedly the reason why GOD wanted to punish them more mercifully under the covenant of grace than atrocious sins which lay waste the conscience.

9. Seventh assertion: There is no kind of venial sin, which cannot become mortal by multiplication of acts, understand, deliberate and licentious, e.g. if someone despises, neglects, and from deliberate counsel multiplies and reiterates the sins of foolish or vain speech, which Bernard numbers among the lighter and venial sins in the book on Precept and Dispensation, chapter 14, he will undoubtedly contract damnable guilt, and will provoke the wrath of GOD against himself in a marvelous way. This assertion is opposed to the doctrine of the Pontificians, who boldly affirm that venial sin does not become mortal by multiplication of acts, likewise, that someone can commit venial sins from contempt without the guilt of serious offense. We condemn this doctrine as false and impious. For first, these sins are venial only to those who detest them, and flee from them as far as they can, and who groan under their weight, and seriously deplore their misery and ugliness, which they contract from their stains and filth, according to the complaint of the Apostle, Romans 7:24. Second, multiplied venial sins dispose to mortal sin and open the way, as Thomas teaches in the first part of the second part, question 88, articles 3 and 4. Therefore to neglect them is to neglect mortal sin itself. Third, the neglect or contempt of any sin does not happen without remarkable injury and offense to GOD. For it is the very crime of disobedience or rebellion, about which see 1 Samuel 15:23. Whence Bernard in the place recently cited. "These," he says, "are reckoned venial not criminal, except when they are turned by contempt into use and custom": and below, "For the pride of the despiser, and the

obstinacy of the impenitent, makes the fault in even the smallest commandments not least; and turns the quite light blemish of simple transgression into the crime of serious rebellion." Finally, in what the crime of disobedience undoubtedly happens, notice in Samuel (1 Samuel 15:23). "For rebellion," he says, "is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

10. Alphonsus Curiel, on the first part of the second part, question 88, article 4, §2, in order to show that venial sin can be despised without remarkable injury to God, distinguishes the contempt of sin into formal or universal contempt of sin in general, and particular contempt of venial sin as such. The former, which he calls contempt of the legislator and the law, he says consists in this, that it is absolutely to be unwilling to be subject to God, and to be unwilling to avoid sins, and he confesses it to be a serious and mortal sin. But the latter, which consists in this, that it is to despise venial sins, as such, on account of their lightness, he denies to be a serious offense or injury. But certainly to despise venial sin in species as such, is to despise the precepts of the divine law, indeed the legislator himself, insofar as he prohibits venial sins through those precepts. Nor does what Curiel brings in confirmation of this evasion satisfy, when he says that those precepts by which venial sins are prohibited, are not absolutely precepts, since their observance is not absolutely necessary for salvation. For according to the rigor of the law, the observance of any precept of the divine law is absolutely necessary for salvation: which will be clear from the things to be said below: for we will show that God in the covenant of works prohibited all sins and consequently the transgression of any legal precept, under the penalty of eternal death.

Section IV.

On the fivefold difference between mortal and venial sin.

MORTAL sins differ from those which are called venial in five ways, viz. 1. by reason of avoidability: 2. by reason of the obligation by which we are bound to avoid them. 3. by reason of the acts themselves. 4. by reason of the effects which follow these acts. 5. by reason of the repentance required for their remission.

2. Therefore, first, mortal sins differ from those which are called venial by reason of avoidability, that is, by reason of the powers which we have through the grace of God to avoid them. For the regenerate man by the power and help of grace, partly internal or inherent, which is called habitual, partly external or assisting, which they call the grace of special aid, can, I say, avoid those manifest works of the flesh, those atrocious sins, which are enumerated in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and Galatians 5:19-21; whence we condemn the most rigid and insulting to God opinion of some, who say that man cannot do more good than he does, nor omit more evil than he omits. For this is false, whether it is understood of the unregenerate and natural man, or of the regenerate and supported by sanctifying grace, as the Theologians of Great Britain well observe in their judgment on the Perseverance of the Saints exhibited to the Synod of Dort, in the last part, which is about the heterodox theses, thesis 4.

3. But those lighter sins, which are called venial, none of the Saints can long avoid by that measure of grace which GOD is accustomed to allot them in this life, much less for the whole time of their life, as is clear from Ecclesiastes 7:20, 1 Kings 8:46, James 3:2, 1 John 1:8 and 10. And this is now certain and undoubted among all. For although the opinions of the fathers were discordant about the possibility of avoiding those lighter sins; for Jerome and Orosius condemned the dogma of Pelagius, by which he asserted that we can be without sin through the grace of GOD, as a crass and absurd error: the five African Bishops, in the Epistle sent to Pope Innocent, which is the 95th among Augustine's Epistles, said that that dogma conceived in the way in which it was conceived by some Catholics (for Pelagius deceived the more simple by the ambiguous term of grace), was an error, but human and tolerable: but Augustine, who was also one of those five Bishops, often writes about this dogma as if he did not hold it for a certain and manifest error, see his book 2 on the merits and remission of sins, chapter 6, and the book on nature and grace, chapters 42 and 60.) yet there is no controversy between us and the adversaries on this matter. For the Council of Trent, Session 6, canon 23, expressly defined that no one in the whole mortal life can avoid all sins, even venial ones, except by a special and extraordinary privilege. Vega indeed says, in book 14 on Justification, chapter 21, that the Just can, through the grace of GOD, avoid all venial sins even for their whole life; but first, that potency of living without sin, which he calls Logical or Metaphysical, is a mere chimera. For he himself, in the preceding chapter, says that it is morally impossible to avoid all venial sins for the whole time of life: and explaining this moral impossibility, he says that none from the whole multitude of men conspicuous for wisdom and sanctity, who in so many ages having passed have tried with the highest zeal and with their whole strength and effort to live without sin, have avoided, or been morally able to avoid, all venial sins. Second, this opinion of his is condemned and rejected by all the more recent authors. See Suarez, book 9 on divine grace, chapter 8, §13 and following. See also Vasquez on the first part of the second part, disputation 189, chapter 16, number 147, and disputation 212, chapter 8, numbers 15, 16 and 17.

4. Second, they differ by reason of the obligation by which we are bound to avoid them: Which difference, that it may be understood, it must be held, First, that the covenant of works obliges to all and each of the precepts of the law to be kept perfectly as to all the parts, conditions, and circumstances of exact obedience, and consequently to avoiding all sins, even the slightest, and this strictly and precisely under the peril and punishment of eternal damnation. All the Evangelicals think this against the Pontificians, whose delirium about the obligation of the law to avoid venial sins under the peril of temporal punishment alone, we will refute below, God helping.

5. Second, it must be held that the covenant of grace does not remove the obligation of the law, by which it obliges us to render all the degrees, conditions and circumstances of perfect obedience, and consequently to shun all sins, even the slightest. From this assertion Spalatensis seems to dissent in book 7 on the Republic of the Church, chapter 11, §135, 136, 139 and 149, where he says that those conditions, parts and circumstances of perfect obedience, which are impossible to human weakness aided by grace, are now not under precept. Likewise, that a sufficient fulfillment of the moral law, as to those things which fall under precept, is possible. But this can be conceived in two ways. For either he understands that

those degrees of obedience prescribed by law, which are impossible to our infirmity, are not under a precept obliging strictly and precisely under the penalty of damnation; or he understands that they are in no way under precept. If his opinion is conceived in the former way, it is most true, as will soon be clear. But if it is understood in the latter way, it can hardly be defended. For first, if those inevitable blemishes and defects of our obedience are not now prohibited by divine law, they are not sins, and consequently it is not necessary that on account of them we acknowledge our misery and guilt before God. But this is repugnant to the practice of the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:24, and, as I think, of all the pious. Second, all, both Evangelicals and Pontificians, deny that Christ has freed us from the observance of the law: Indeed, Christ himself denies it in Matthew 5:17, and Paul, following Christ, in Romans 3:31. Third, the covenant of grace sets before us the whole perfection of justice as to be affected and followed according to our powers, Matthew 5:48, 1 Peter 1:16, and from those who do not attain it, it requires sorrow and humble acknowledgment of guilt. Therefore it does not simply remove the obligation by which we are bound to observe any part of the law. Fourth, if GOD in anything removes the obligation of the moral law to obedience under the covenant of grace, then he dispenses in the moral law. For to dispense in a law or in some precept of the law is nothing other than to remove the obligation from the matter of the precept considered according to all the conditions which are required or prescribed in it, as Valentia well warns in volume 2, disputation 7, question 4, point 6. But GOD does not dispense in the moral or natural law, as is taught not only by the Evangelicals, but also by the greater and better part of the Pontifical Theologians. See Cajetan on the first part of the second part, on question 100, article 8, Vasquez on the first part of the second part, volume 2, disputation 179, chapter 2, Valentia, in the place cited, and Becanus, in part 2 of the Theological Summa, treatise 3, chapter 3, question 4. For they follow the opinion of Thomas and Richard on the indispensability of the precepts of the decalogue against Gerson and Almain.

6. Third, finally, it must be held that although the covenant of grace does not remove the obligation of the law, yet it removes the rigor, or severity and terribleness of that obligation. For although it sets before our eyes the whole perfection of justice as to be affected and pursued according to our powers, yet it does not strictly and precisely under the peril and punishment of eternal damnation demand it. For to a certain measure of obedience, which viz. is possible through ordinary grace, it obliges strictly and precisely, that is, under the peril of eternal damnation, demanding that we actually have it. But to a further measure, which we cannot attain by the ordinary powers of grace, it obliges less strictly, viz. demanding that we have it at least in wish and endeavor. For example, it obliges precisely to the perfection of the parts, as they call it. For it promises eternal life on no other condition than that we actually have it. But to the perfection which is called of degrees, it does not so strictly and precisely oblige: but only demands that we strive and endeavor to attain it according to the powers of grace granted to us.

7. Hence it is clear that the faithful, even according to the Evangelical law, are strictly and precisely under the peril of eternal death obliged to live without all those sins which are called mortal. For it pertains to the perfection of the parts that we not only repent of those more serious sins, but also that we abstain from them all, that is, that we do not commit them henceforth, according to that of Christ in John 5:14, "Behold, you have been made well; do not sin

anymore," etc. But they are not so obliged to live henceforth without any sin, even the slightest. For to live without those lighter sins, which are called venial, pertains to the perfection of degrees, which excludes all the blemishes and defects of human obedience. For from the things said above it is clear that these blemishes and defects are numbered among the lighter or venial sins.

8. Third, mortal and venial sin differ by reason of the acts themselves: for the ugliness or deformity which is found in lighter sins is much less than that which is in mortal sins. For in every venial sin there is something which extenuates the offense committed through it, and in a certain way excuses it before the gracious judge. This is clear from those three species of venial sin which are usually mentioned by the Scholastics. For the first of them, that is, venial sin from its genus, is excused before God judging graciously and according to the multitude of his mercies, by the lightness of the offense (I speak of comparative lightness, for no sin is absolutely light) which it has from the very specific nature of the act considered in itself, apart from respect to the mode of acting, or to the particular matter in which it is committed: as e.g. in an idle word, excessive laughter, etc. But the second species of venial sin, that is, sin from subreption, is excused by the lightness of the offense which it has, not from the specific nature of the act considered in itself, but from the way in which that act proceeds from the agent, because viz. the agent has not fully and sufficiently deliberated, as e.g. in a sudden appetite for vengeance or lust. For the appetite for vengeance from its specific nature is not a light sin, but is light per accidens, because it happens from indeliberation. But the third species of it, that is, venial sin from parvity of matter, is excused by the lightness of the offense which it has not from the specific nature of the act, but from its limitation to a particular matter, as in the theft of one obol. For theft from its specific nature is not a light sin, but from accident, because it is committed in a matter of minor moment.

9. Fourth, they differ by reason of the effects which follow these acts: that is, by reason of the detriment which they bring to the sinners. For the calamities and damages which happen to the faithful from mortal sins are much more serious and sad than those which follow lighter or venial sins, as will be clear from the following section.

10. Fifth, they differ by reason of the repentance required for their remission. For first, just as mortal sins themselves are serious, horrible, and rare and extraordinary in the course of the Christian life, so the repentance which is necessarily required to purge them must be singular, more accurate, and extraordinary, Psalm 51, Matthew 26:75, Luke 7:38, 2 Corinthians 7:11. But the ordinary and daily exercise of repentance, according to the opinion of the Pontificians, suffices condignly, but according to ours is graciously accepted by GOD, and held as sufficient to purge venial sins. Whence Augustine, in the book on the Creed to the Catechumens, book 1, chapter 7, and book 50, homily 28, chapter 6, says that on account of light sins, without which we cannot be, the Lord's Prayer was invented, and specifically that petition, "Forgive us our debts," which he calls there a daily medicine.

11. Second, to purge the guilt of mortal sins a special recognition of them is required, confession, also a special sorrow or contrition, Psalm 51:14. But for purging the greatest part of

venial sins a general, but humble, serious, and sorrowful recognition of our corruption is accepted, having joined to it that general deprecation, "Cleanse me from secret faults," Psalm 19:12. For those lighter offenses of daily incursion for the most part flee our knowledge. Meanwhile we freely confess that those sins of this kind which are observed by us must be specially recognized and deplored.

12. Third, the repentance necessary for the remission of mortal sins and for the salvation of those who commit them, must be perfectly practical, that is, it must go out into a real and actual cessation from all sins of this kind, Proverbs 28:13, John 5:14, for if someone, having left one or another mortal sin, afterwards falls into others, he will be able to attain neither grace in this life, nor glory in the future life, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:21. But on the other hand, the repentance required for the remission of venial sins is not, nor can it be perfectly practical, as to sins of this kind. For as all confess, no one can live without sins of this kind: and consequently, the salvation of the pious is not endangered, even if before the end of life they cannot escape this kind of sin. See volume 1 of the works of Ursinus, in the book on Theological Topics, the topic on sin, question 2, response to doubt 5, on the second division of sin.

Section V.

On the first effect of Mortal sin, that is, on the exclusion of the sinner from the favor of GOD, and on the twofold distinction of Divine love.

Although all sins are from themselves most harmful and deadly, yet many, and those horrible and tremendous effects follow the mortal sins of the regenerate, which according to the dispensation of divine providence under the covenant of grace, the lighter sins committed by them do not follow. I cannot in this brief treatise specifically consider them all, and therefore I will bring forward only three principal and most well-known ones, to which all the rest can be referred in some way, and leave them to the reader to be considered more diligently.

2. The first loss which follows the commission of mortal sin is the exclusion of the sinner from that degree of divine favor by which he was previously loved by God. But that this may be rightly understood, it must be observed first that the special love of God, by which he pursues the elect in Christ, is distinguished into the love of beneficence and the love of complacence. The love of beneficence towards the elect includes respect to some benefit or gift to be conferred on them. For it is an act of the divine will, by which he wills to confer on them goods useful for eternal salvation. The love of complacence or the delight which God takes in them, per se, and as such, does not include respect to some gift to be conferred on them, but to some gift previously conferred on them. For God takes complacence or delight from the virtues of the elect and their pious actions which are his own gifts, as is clear from Psalm 45:7, Psalm 147:11, Canticles 2:14, Hebrews 13:16. Likewise, the special love of beneficence respects the elect, insofar as they are to be adorned with spiritual benefits, and elevated above the human condition to the participation of the divine nature. The love of complacence respects them insofar as they are already adorned with spiritual benefits, and elevated above the human condition and thus made

partakers of the divine nature, 2 Peter 1:4. On this distinction of divine love into the love of beneficence and complacency, see Suarez, book 7 on divine grace, chapter 1, §22.

3. It must be observed second that the love of beneficence in God is distinguished into the love of intention and the love of execution. Suarez explains this distinction thus in book 1 on predestination, chapter 11, §5. "There is," he says, "in God a true love preordaining man to some good, distinct in reason from that love which consists in the actual conferral of such a good: the former can be called the love of intention and purpose, but the latter of execution." These two twofold distinctions are reduced by the most illustrious Zanchi into one threefold and elegant and perspicuous one, in book 4 on the nature of God, chapter 3, question 1, number 2, where he says that the love of God does not signify affection or passion, as in us, but three altogether perfect things, viz. first, eternal good will or a purpose of doing good, second, actual beneficence or some execution of that purpose, third, complacency or delight in something. But because the love of execution, or actual beneficence, is less properly called love: for it is rather the effect of divine love; therefore I leave it to the prudent reader to judge, whether in its place another term should be substituted, viz. a readiness to do good, that is, the benevolence of God considered with respect to that state of man in which he is capable of such a benefit. For although God from himself is always ready to do good to that man whom he has elected, justified, and adopted as a son, yet often his sins divide between God and him, hide the face of God from him, lest he hear him, Isaiah 59:2. In which case the divine benevolence is as it were bound and impeded, lest it go out into act, and this on account of no change of it in itself, but on account of the incapacity of the subject, because viz. during that state, that is, as long as he perseveres in sins of this kind, and does not rise again through repentance, God cannot, his veracity and immutability of decree being preserved, by which he has decreed to forgive sins of this kind to no adult, unless extraordinary repentance precedes, he cannot, I say, forgive the sins into which he has fallen, and make him a partaker of the spiritual benefits which he is accustomed to confer on the justified walking according to the spirit: that is, he cannot for the time being confer on him an increase of inherent grace, joy of the spirit, peace and tranquility of conscience, and protection against the impulses of temptations, which the Scholastics by a barbarous term, but most apt for expressing the nature of the thing, and most agreeable to the phrase of Scripture, call divine maintenance. See Psalm 73:23-24.

4. Third, it must be observed that the love of God, by which he pursues the justified, encompasses in itself all these three acts. For first, he loves them with the love of intention or purpose, because he does not change his counsel and purpose of leading them to eternal glory, not even when they fall into the most serious crimes, Jeremiah 31:3, Hosea 2:19, Malachi 3:6, Romans 8:38-39 and 11:29. And consequently much less does he change it when they remain in their purpose of new obedience.

5. Second, he loves them with the love of execution, and is absolutely and simply ready and prepared to heap former benefits with later ones: that is, to increase in them grace, peace of conscience, and spiritual joy, likewise to forgive the blemishes and defects of the obedience which they render to him, and, if he then calls them out of this life, to glorify them. I say that he is simply or in every respect prepared to do these things, because the object of divine

benevolence, that is, elect men, are then capable of these benefits and consequently nothing impedes, either on the part of God or on the part of the elect, that those gifts be then conferred on them, which God knows to be useful to them for the time. Zanchi discusses this love of actual beneficence towards the elect at length in the cited place, questions 3 and 4, where by various testimonies both of Sacred Scripture and of reasons he proves that besides the love of intention or purpose there is another and further act of divine love towards the justified walking according to the spirit, by which he wills them then and during that state to be more and more partakers of his benefits. But the matter is clear from itself.

6. Third, he loves them with the love of complacency or delight; because the more they are adorned with spiritual virtues and their acts, the more like GOD, and consequently the more beautiful and lovable they become in his sight, as Zanchi excellently teaches in the cited place. This is also most manifestly clear from the testimonies of Scripture cited above, §2. For they show that GOD is delighted with pious men, and the victims of good works which they offer to him: likewise, that their voice is sweet with him, and their appearance is comely, not that these per se, and apart from the intuition of the merits of Christ, can make man pleasing to GOD, or that they can justify him or reconcile him to GOD; But first because from these results a certain spiritual beauty, and a certain image, likeness and participation of the divine nature, 2 Peter 1:4, which, if it is considered per se, and apart from respect to the blemishes adhering to it, cannot but be pleasing and delightful to GOD. Second, because the obedience of the pious, although it is imperfect, is nevertheless graciously accepted by GOD on account of Christ: for he has made us accepted in the Beloved, Ephesians 1:6.

7. These things being posited, it is easy to show that the regenerate, when they contract the guilt of mortal sins, are excluded from that degree of favor by which GOD previously pursued them. For although he always loves them with the love of intention or purpose, as I warned above, yet he does not always love them with the love of execution, and the love of delight. For when by their own fault they fall into atrocious sins, then the benevolence of GOD towards them is so bound and impeded through the offense which their sins place before him that he cannot, during that state, confer on them the remission of sins, or peace and joy of conscience, and much less that glory to which he has ordained them from eternity. This is clear from all those testimonies of Scripture which teach that those who do such things cannot be partakers of eternal life: likewise from those places in which it is asserted that the impious will perish unless they repent, and that GOD does not hear those who regard iniquity in their heart. See Psalm 66:18, Ezekiel 13:20-21; 24:26-27, Luke 13:3, John 9:31, 2 Timothy 2:19. Similarly, as to the love of complacency, just as Scripture testifies that God is delighted with the pious walking according to the Spirit, so it also testifies that God is not delighted with those who draw back, Hebrews 10:38, and that he hates all who work iniquity, Psalm 5:5. Likewise, that God abominates, or detests haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed blood, etc., Proverbs 6:16. For hence it manifestly follows that the regenerate themselves having fallen into these sins, as such, are objects of divine hatred, and the abomination of his soul. Moreover, Scripture testifies that those who commit atrocious sins of this kind so displease God that the very good works which they do during this state are in no way pleasing or acceptable to God, Isaiah 1:11-15.

8. But here let the Reader note that this hatred by which GOD pursues the regenerate mortally sinning is not a hostile hatred, or (as the Scholastics say) a hatred of enmity, but only a hatred of displeasure; for it is not conjoined with a purpose of damning, as the hatred by which he pursues the reprobate having fallen into such sins. Second, it must be noted that the regenerate, when they fall into atrocious sins, are not totally, but in great part excluded from divine love of execution and complacence. For the seed of God remains in them, as John testifies, 1 John 3:9, and consequently GOD, even during that state, in some way executes his purpose of saving them, because viz. he preserves that heavenly seed in their hearts, and takes some complacence and delight from it thus preserved. Third, it must be noted that this partial and temporary exclusion of the justified from divine love (I speak of the love of execution, and the love of complacence) happens without any real change of the divine will, as will be clear from the following section.

Section VI.

That God can love those whom he previously hated, and hate those whom he previously loved, without any change either physical or moral of his will, is explained in passing.

From the doctrine handed down in the preceding Section about the exclusion of the Justified for a certain time from that degree of divine favor by which they were previously loved, it by no means follows that GOD, or the will of GOD is changeable in itself, whether we speak of physical changeability or of moral changeability.

2. For as to divine love of execution, that GOD does not love the Justified involved in the guilt of mortal sin with the love of execution, is nothing other than that he does not confer on them those spiritual goods, or means of salvation, which he previously conferred on them. Therefore, there is no change here as to the immanent acts, which exist in GOD himself, but only as to the transient acts, which are outside GOD and are received in men, and consequently when they are changed GOD is not changed, but those in whom these acts and their effects are received. Someone will say: GOD not only does not confer those benefits on them, but also during that state does not will to confer them: but previously he willed to confer them; and consequently he is changed. I respond: He previously willed to communicate those benefits to them existing in another state, but to them existing in this state of impiety and impenitence, he neither now wills, nor ever willed, indeed from eternity he was unwilling to communicate these benefits. Therefore, although during this state the benevolence of GOD is as it were bound and impeded, as I warned above, yet it does not follow from this that it has been changed in itself: but only that its object has been changed, because viz. the object of it, that is, elect men, were previously capable of those benefits: but now they are not capable of them.

3. There is a greater and more serious difficulty about the love of complacence, and the hatred of displeasure opposed to it. For since these acts are immanent, that is, existing in God himself,

if they are changed God himself seems to be changed in himself. It is usually responded First, that these acts are not really changed and as to the thing itself; because both this act was in GOD from eternity, and will endure in him for eternity, with respect to the different states of that man, of which one succeeded the other in time. Thus Fonseca responds in volume 3 of the Metaphysics, book 7, chapter 8, question 5, section 7. "But if," he says, "someone objects that the same person can first be hated by GOD, if he is unjust, but afterwards loved, if he is just, and vice versa, without any change of the divine will, therefore nothing prevents the divine will in no way changed from passing from nolition to volition of the same thing, the solution is clear from what has been said. For GOD does not hate and love the same person for the same time, but for different times. Add, that even if justice succeeds sin, or sin succeeds justice in the same man, yet the hatred by which God pursues him as a sinner does not succeed the love by which he loves him as just, or the contrary; but each divine affection is eternal respecting the different states of man, of which one succeeds the other in time."

4. Second, I respond: Although we should concede that there is some change and succession in the immanent acts of divine love and hatred considered formally, insofar as they are distinguished by reason from the divine essence and among themselves, that is, although we should say that the act of love of complacency towards the elect in this case is no longer in God, and that the act of hatred of displeasure succeeds it, yet it would not follow from this that there is some real change in GOD himself. For the free acts of GOD add nothing to the divine will or essence, beyond respect or a relation of reason, or some extrinsic connotation, which nevertheless do not pertain to their real entity. For their whole real entity is the very essence of GOD, and they intrinsically include nothing beyond it. Therefore, although GOD should cease to love those whom he previously loved, he would not be changed by a real change, because he would lose nothing real, and if he should begin to love those whom he previously hated, he would not be changed, because nothing real would accede to him. But a real change is not made without some real addition or removal.

5. It is not necessary that I here prove that those acts add no real entity (whether it is called perfection, or extension of the divine act to objects) to the divine essence. For all the Evangelicals hold this unanimously: and as to the Pontificians, although Cajetan on the first part of Thomas, question 19, articles 2 and 3, Fonseca in volume 3 of the Metaphysics, book 7, chapter 8, question 5, section 4, and Salas on the first part of the second part, question 6, article 3, treatise 3, disputation 3, section 8, teach that the free acts of God, or his decrees, add to the divine essence a certain real entity, which from eternity could not have been in GOD, and which indeed would not have been in him, if from eternity he had decreed otherwise, and had not had these acts, yet the greater and better part of them is of the contrary opinion, viz. Suarez, volume 2 of the Metaphysics, disputation 35, section 9, and Vasquez on the first part of Thomas, disputation 80, chapters 1 and 2, Valentia, volume 3, disputation 1, question 19, point 4, Arrubal on the first part of Thomas, disputation 54, chapter 2 and following, Becanus in the Summa, Part 1, Treatise 1, chapter 11, question 4, Trigosus in the Theological Summa of Bonaventure, question 13, article 2, doubt 3, conclusion 1, Francisco Cumel, Various disputations, volume 1, in the disputation on the foreknowledge of God, doubt 3, page 57, etc. The opinion of these is undoubtedly truer than that other one, because if there is in GOD some real entity, which from

eternity could not have been in him, and thus could have been mere nothing, it necessarily follows that there is something in God which is not God.

6. Someone will say: if GOD is not really changed when the free acts are changed, he will be able, his immutability being preserved, to change his decrees about future things, and consequently he will be able to begin to will what he never before willed, or cease to will what he previously willed. For such a change of divine decrees is made without some real addition or removal. I respond: There is a twofold change, viz. Physical and Moral. A physical or real change is made through the addition or removal of some real entity. A moral change is a change of purpose and will, or also of cognition and knowledge; as if someone, what he previously thought was true, afterwards judges to be false, and what he previously had decreed to do, afterwards is unwilling to do, which certainly argues a great imperfection in him who is thus changed. See Vasquez on the first part of Thomas, on question 9, article 2. Therefore, when God is said to be absolutely immutable, this is understood no less of moral than of physical immutability. For a change of purpose and counsel which is called moral, argues inconstancy, imprudence, and imperfection of cognition, which are no less repugnant to the highest and absolute perfection of God than physical or real change, as Suarez well observes in volume 2 of the Metaphysics, disputation 30, section 9, number 58.

7. From these things it is clear that God, when he pursues with the hatred of displeasure the elect whom he previously loved with the love of complacency, is not changed, although perhaps the act of complacency, considered as it adds a respect of reason to such an object to the divine essence, is now by no means in him: For first, this act having been removed, GOD is not changed physically and really, because nothing departs from him except a mere respect of reason, as Suarez and Vasquez irrefragably demonstrate in the cited places. Second, nor is he changed morally, because he does not change his purpose, but on the contrary, remains in his purpose, or rather in his natural inclination, by which he was from eternity, now is, and always will be prone to love virtue, and to detest vices or sins. He also remains in his purpose of leading those whom he has elected and justified to eternal glory. For the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal, the Lord knows those who are his, 2 Timothy 2:19.

Section VII.

On the second and third effect of mortal sin, that is, on the privation of grace, and the loss of present aptitude for entering the kingdom of heaven.

The second effect of mortal sin is the loss of inherent grace, about which the Pontificians agree with us in some things, but dissent in others, partly from us, partly also among themselves.

2. We agree First in this, that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are partly lost or destroyed through mortal sins. Second, that the justified mortally sinning do not lose all the habitual gifts of grace. Third, specifically that mortal sins do not exclude or expel the habits of faith and hope. Thus the churches of our confession commonly teach, as is clear from the judgments of the Theologians,

both foreign and provincial, exhibited to the Synod of Dort on the perseverance of the Saints. The Pontifical writers also think this, as Suarez expressly testifies, book 11 on divine grace, chapter 5, also in the work on the threefold Theological virtue, disputation 7 on faith, section 3, and disputation 1 on hope, section 8, §2.

3. They dissent from us in three things: For first, they deny that the habit of charity and grace remains in him who has committed some mortal sin: that is, they think that mortal sins totally expel the habit of charity. Second, consequently they teach that the habits of faith and hope, which remain in the lapsed justified, altogether lose the nature of justice, and of sanctifying grace, and of making us pleasing to God: and therefore they call both the former and the latter unformed, because viz. they are separated from charity, which previously formed them, and imparted life and strength to them. Third, they affirm that the habits of faith and hope, although they are not cast out by other mortal sins, yet are cast out by sins contrary to their own acts: that is, the habit of faith is totally lost and expelled by any act of heresy, and the habit of hope by any act of desperation.

4. But our Theologians confess indeed that the habits of faith, hope and charity can be much weakened and diminished through mortal sins in the elect, and this not only extrinsically, as to the fervor and easiness or readiness of using these habits, but also intrinsically, as to their very entity. For these habits have a sufficient latitude of degrees, within which, just as they are in fact increased, so also they can be remitted through contrary acts. They also confess that the principal acts and operations of these habits can fail for a time, fail also not rarely and this not only according to more and less, but also totally, yet not finally, as is clear from the judgment of the Guelders Synod on the fifth disputed article, exhibited to the Synod of Dort.

5. And because faith does not justify as a habit, but as an act apprehending the merits of Christ, they consequently teach that faith as to that living act by which it justifies is interrupted in the regenerate mortally sinning, and suffers a loss, so that during that state it cannot justify them, or be called justifying faith. Whence Pareus, book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 7, near the end, thus writes: "Faith is then said to justify, when it can exercise and does exercise its proper act of receiving the remission of sins. But this act faith when sick, wounded, oppressed by the filth of the flesh, as it were bound by the fetters of sins, neither exercises nor can exercise." And below: "But to the justified lapsed God does not impute sins, namely to those repenting: certainly before repentance he imputes them by inflicting temporal punishments, and he would also impute them by inflicting eternal punishments, unless they repented." Finally, he thus concludes: "Therefore faith then only habitually remaining in the lapsed cannot properly be said to be justifying, or to justify them." See also the Animadversions of the venerable Bishop of Salisbury on Thomson's Diatribe on the intercision of justification, chapter 9, page 134.

6. But they deny First that they are utterly and totally deprived of the habit of charity. Second, they deny that faith and hope habitually remaining in the elect lapsed are unformed, dead, and unworthy of the name of inherent justice or sanctifying grace. For they believe that they are neither disjoined or separated from charity, nor formed or actuated by conjoined charity. Third, they deny that the habits of faith or hope are corrupted or totally destroyed by one or another

contrary act. But on the contrary they affirm that the spiritual life of the soul, with those fundamental gifts without which it cannot consist, is preserved in them, their demerit notwithstanding. For the seed of God remains in them, 1 John 3:9, and that fountain of water springing up into everlasting life never dries up or perishes, John 4:14, nor does that anointing of God remaining depart, 1 John 2:27. But on the contrary Scripture testifies that they are kept by the power of God through faith, 1 Peter 1:5, and are upheld by the perpetual intercession of Christ, lest their faith ever totally fail, John 17:20, Romans 8:34, finally in daily lapses, the Lord puts his hand under them lest they be dashed, Psalm 37:24. It also testifies that it is impossible for the elect to be deceived, Matthew 24:24, for the sheep of Christ to be snatched from his hands, John 10:28, or for the faithful to be separated from the love of God in Christ, Romans 8:35, 38-39. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, Romans 11:29. And the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: the Lord knows those who are his, 2 Timothy 2:19.

7. The Pontificians dissent both from us and among themselves about the way in which the one mortally sinning loses or expels grace from himself: whether viz. he expels it physically, that is, through true and real efficiency, or only morally and demeritoriously, because namely by sinning he merits the privation or removal of grace by God. Valentia, volume 3, disputation 3, question 2, point 4, and Vasquez, on the first part of the second part, disputation 91, think that grace is physically expelled by mortal sins: But on the other hand Suarez, book 11 on divine grace, chapter 4, and Alphonsus Curiel on the second part of the second part, question 113, article 2, doubt 3, and all others who do not acknowledge a physical repugnance between grace and mortal sin, assert that grace is expelled by mortal sin only demeritoriously.

8. Our Theologians embrace this latter opinion: but the former they condemn and reject. First, because a habit is a quality difficult to remove, and consequently cannot be expelled from one contrary act through Physical and real efficiency. Second, contraries, which mutually expel each other Physically and formally from the same subject, must be of the same genus, such as are either habits among themselves, or acts among themselves. For some act formally expels another act contrary to it: and some habit excludes another habit contrary to it from the subject in which it is, because there is a physical repugnance between them, on account of which they cannot be in the same subject at the same time. But on the other hand acts and habits, since they are not of the same genus, and thus are not properly contraries, cannot mutually and formally expel each other from the same subject. Since therefore charity, or grace, is a habit, but mortal sin is an act, it manifestly follows that the habit of charity is not Physically expelled by mortal sin.

9. The third effect of mortal sin is that the justified man, when he contracts its guilt, loses his present aptitude for entering the kingdom of heaven. For nothing defiled or causing abomination will enter that kingdom, Revelation 21:27, and that heavenly crown is not placed except on those who have fought the good fight and consummated their course in faith and holiness, 2 Timothy 4:8. Therefore, whoever still adheres to the works of impiety is inept for going to this crown and possessing this kingdom.

10. This present aptitude for entering the kingdom of heaven having been lost, necessarily also the sense of consolation and grace of GOD is lost for a time, and consequently the act of hope, which is the expectation of future blessedness, fails and is interrupted. For, as the Theologians of Great Britain well observe (to whom the Church of Christ owes very much in this argument) in their judgment on the perseverance of the Saints, "The persuasion which the justified have about their final perseverance and attainment of eternal glory cannot go out into act apart from the study of holiness and the use of means, and this because justification does not consist as a companion to sanctification outside the purpose of obedience. Which habitual purpose indeed, although interrupted by many lapses, suffices for the elect to keep the state of justification safe in itself; but for present consolatory confidence an actual purpose of this kind is necessarily required. Nor can anyone, from the testimony of the Spirit speaking to his heart, say, 'I now firmly believe that I will stand unalterably in a state of grace,' unless at the same time from a sincere zeal of heart he adds, 'I now firmly resolve to walk in the ways of the holy commandments of God.' Much less can a living act of this confidence be thought to stand with an actual direct purpose of sinning: since, as habit is opposed to habit, so act to act. Nor without a foolish contradiction will we imagine anyone so resolving, 'I fully trust that eternal life cannot be snatched from me. At the same time, however, it is decreed by me to serve enticing lusts.' These the Savior shows to be incompatible. 'No one can serve two masters,' Matthew 6:24."

11. Almost all the other Theologians delegated to the Synod of Dort have also confirmed the truth of this doctrine by their opinions and judgments. For the Palatine Theologians, in their judgment on the perseverance of the Saints, concede that the faithful having lapsed into more serious sins lose the sense of the grace of God for a time, likewise that atrocious sins, which are admitted willingly against conscience, hinder the act of faith, indeed also weaken and diminish the habit. The Bremen Theologians in their judgment on the same article affirm that the regenerate, when they offend God by sins of this kind, lose the joy of the Spirit and the sense of consolation. The Emden Theologians in their consideration of the same Article say: "We do not deny that faith, or actual confidence can be lost for a time, when a faithful man commits a serious sin. For the act of sin perpetrated from some consent cannot consist with actual confidence about the remission of sins." And the Guelders Synod in its judgment on the same Article: "We deny," they say, "that the habit, seed, root, spirit of faith can be lost, and that the union which we have received can fail to remain in us. But we concede that the act, confidence, consolation can fail, fail also not rarely, not only according to more and less, but also totally, yet not finally." But the matter itself is clear from innumerable testimonies of Scripture. For it testifies that our election and calling is made certain and firm to us through good works, 2 Peter 1:10. Likewise, that "Everyone who has this hope in Christ purifies himself, just as he is pure," 1 John 3:3, and that "by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments," 1 John 2:3, and that only those are freed from the condemnation of the law "who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit," Romans 8:1, 4.

12. The Pontificians think far otherwise about the act of hope. For they do not concede that either the habit or the act of hope is excluded or expelled by mortal sins. Whence Suarez in the places cited above, §2, disputes at length against us, and brings forward various arguments to prove that hope, as to act, is not lost by those who commit mortal sins. But First it is not to be

wondered at, that Suarez and the rest of the Pontifical writers so think about the act of hope. For the hope about which they speak is not Christian hope, that is, it is not certain, firm and solid, but on the contrary it is a doubtful, infirm, hypothetical and conjectural expectation of blessedness or heavenly glory, which undoubtedly can remain in men however impious. Second, that place which we have cited from 1 John 3:3 manifestly shows that true and properly so-called hope is found in those alone who purify themselves, or (as Beza interprets) keep themselves chaste. Third, this can be confirmed from Augustine, who in the preface to Psalm 31 thus writes: "For he hopes, who bears a good conscience; but he whom an evil conscience goads, draws back from hope, and does not hope for himself, except damnation. Therefore, that he may hope for the kingdom, let him have a good conscience, and that he may have a good conscience, let him believe and act. Likewise, as an evil conscience is totally in desperation, so a good conscience is totally in hope." This place makes so manifestly for us, that Suarez, book 11 on divine grace, chapter 5, §19, while trying to respond to it, frankly confesses that a man having lapsed into serious crimes cannot for that time, and during that state, expect eternal glory: "It can be said," he says, "that an evil conscience induces desperation not absolutely, and for future time, but according to present justice. For he who has an evil conscience consequently believes that according to his present state, if he should die in it, he will not be saved, and so despairs of salvation according to present justice. But he can and ought to hope that he can with divine grace change his conscience, and be saved. But because this hope, which is founded on future merits, or a change of life in the future, is perilous, and much less certain, therefore the said Fathers say that faith, that is living and perfect faith, ought to be founded on a good conscience."

13. From the things which have been said it is manifestly clear that there is a huge difference between the mortal and venial sins of the regenerate, as to those three effects which we have explained in this section and in sections 5 and 6. For first, because the regenerate having lapsed into atrocious sins laying waste the conscience cease to render that obedience which the covenant of grace demands from us as necessary to attain further gifts of grace in this life, and to obtain the beatific vision of GOD in the future life; and because they during this state are incapable of those benefits, not only from their own demerit, but also according to the sentence of the covenant of grace, therefore I said above that the benevolence of GOD towards them is so bound and impeded that it cannot, during that state, confer on them the remission of sins, or peace and joy of conscience, and much less that glory to which he has ordained them from eternity, until through a singular, extraordinary and perfectly practical repentance they return to GOD, and remove from before the eyes of God all such wickedness of their actions, Isaiah 1:16. Moreover, during this state, not only the sins committed by them displease God, but also their obedience, prayers, and giving of thanks: indeed nothing can proceed from them which for the time being is pleasing and acceptable to God, Psalm 50:16, Isaiah 1:14-15, Jeremiah 14:11-12. But when the elect justified commit those lighter sins from inadvertence or weakness, they do not cease to render that obedience which the covenant of grace demands as precisely necessary for salvation: but notwithstanding these they are said to walk according to the spirit, Romans 8:1, indeed also to follow God with the whole heart, 1 Kings 14:8, and to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly, Luke 1:6. Therefore, although the slightest sins from themselves and their own nature render us incapable and unworthy of the

gifts of divine grace, although also they in themselves not only displease GOD, but also could deservedly make it so that our whole obedience would be filthy in the eyes of the Lord, and utterly displease him, nevertheless GOD, who does not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see perversity in Israel, Numbers 23:21, notwithstanding these, accepts our imperfect obedience in Christ, and as it were averting his eyes from the blemishes adhering to it, graciously regards the sincerity and humility of the same, and takes complacency and delight from them. Second, as to the two remaining effects of mortal sin, although they follow even venial sins from the rigor of justice, yet according to the administration of divine providence under the covenant of grace, they by no means follow them at present: that is, the elect committing those lighter sins are neither deprived of the gifts of inherent grace, as all confess, nor do they lose their present aptitude for entering that heavenly kingdom. For first, GOD does not impute those sins to his sons believing in Christ and walking according to the Spirit unto the guilt of eternal death. Second, by the secret and efficacious motion of his holy spirit he then excites them to recognize and deplore the guilt contracted from them.

Theological Disputation On The true difference between mortal and venial sin, and the impossibility of fulfilling the law of God due to the daily incursion of venial sins.

Part Two, In which the two principal differences which the Pontificians assign between mortal and venial sin are considered and refuted.

Section I.

That the opinion of the Pontificians on venial sins rests on no solid foundation.

The Pontificians assign two general and principal differences between mortal and venial sin: of which the former is taken from the punishment of these sins; the latter from their remission. For when they discuss the penalty due to these sins according to the rigor of justice, they affirm that mortal sin merits eternal punishment, but venial sin from itself, and its own nature, merits only temporal punishment. Likewise when they speak about their remission, they teach that mortal sin is from itself, and its own nature irremissible, because it takes away the principle of

repentance and remission, that is, inherent or habitual grace: but venial sin is from itself and its own nature remissible, because it does not deprive the sinner of that inherent grace, which is necessary to do penance, and obtain remission. We reject and condemn both of these differences: and therefore we will examine and refute the former in this section, and in some of the following ones, but the latter in the last section of this part.

2. We reject that former difference, which the adversaries assign between mortal and venial sin, First, because it rests on no solid foundation. For the arguments, which the Adversaries gather from Scripture, the Fathers, and natural reason to establish it, are completely inept and weak.

3. From Scripture Bellarmine in book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 9, and Becanus in part 2 of the Summa, treatise 2, chapter 2, question 1, §4, bring forward first that saying of Christ, Matthew 5:22, in which three degrees of vicious anger are enumerated and only to the last is it attributed that it makes the sinner guilty of Gehenna, or eternal death. For to the first two are assigned temporal punishments, which are signified by the words, Judgment, and Council. But they waste their effort. For first, that they are mistaken in explaining the sense of this place, is taught by their own fellows, Maldonatus and Barradius in their Evangelical commentaries, and Estius in his annotations on Matthew 5:22. For they assert that by the words Judgment, Council, and Gehenna of fire, three degrees of one punishment in species, that is, of eternal death, are signified. Strabus Fuldensis, the author of the ordinary gloss, and Hugh the Cardinal were also of the same opinion writing on this very place. Second, Although this place should be explained, as Bellarmine says, yet it would not suffice to prove their thesis. For it is one thing for sin to be punished by temporal punishment alone, but another for it to have this from itself and its own nature, and not from the mercy of God, that it is punished by temporal punishment alone. This place, Bellarmine's gloss having been admitted, proves the former. But in no way does it prove the latter: and consequently it is not valid for weakening that opinion, against which it is brought forward, that is, for refuting the opinion of Gerson, Almain, and Rochester, who said with us, that every sin from itself merits eternal death, and it is from the mercy of God, that lighter sins are imputed to temporal punishment alone. But (says Bellarmine) Christ here does not discuss, what the divine mercy can or wills in punishing lighter sins. I respond, nor does he discuss which of these sins are venial, from themselves, and divine mercy having been set aside. And consequently from this text it cannot be infallibly gathered, what the adversaries assert, viz. that venial sins are from themselves, and divine mercy having been set aside, such that they cannot justly be punished with eternal punishment.

4. Second, they bring forward the testimony of James the Apostle who in chapter 1 of his Epistle, verses 14 and 15, distinguishes three motions of concupiscence, and says that only the last generates death: i.e. merits death. But Estius in his commentaries on the Epistles, explaining this very place of James interprets it far otherwise, indeed he so interprets it, that he snatches the argument founded on it from Bellarmine, and the other Pontifical writers. For first, he does not place with Bellarmine the bringing forth of sin in the imperfect consent of the will, and the consummation of sin in the perfect consent of the same, but on the contrary, the bringing forth of sin in the perfect consent of the will, and its consummation in the external work, or external act of sin, and in the custom of sinning, which the external act of sin is accustomed

to bring with it. And he says that the older Interpreters, that is, the holy Fathers are of this opinion. Second, in the gradation of the Apostle, he places not three, but five degrees, by far more probably. The first degree from his opinion is in the temptation of concupiscence, or in its first motion and is set forth in verse 14. The second is in the conception of sin through imperfect consent. The third in the bringing forth of sin through full and perfect consent. The fourth in the consummation of sin through external work, or, what is more probable, through the habit and custom of sinning. And the fifth and last is in the generation of death from that very sin. Third, he proposes this objection against the interpretation of this place brought forward by him: If sin only then generates death, after it has been consummated through external work, or through the custom of sinning, it will follow this absurdity, that by internal consent of the will alone no mortal sin, or sin worthy of eternal death, is committed. This objection almost coincides with the argument of Bellarmine, which he uses against us: because namely the generation of death is here attributed to the consummation of sin alone, he thence concludes that the conception and bringing forth of sin do not generate death. Let us see therefore how Estius meets this argument. "It is not said," he says, "that the consummation of sin generates death, because it makes man worthy of eternal death; for even the bringing forth of sin makes man worthy of eternal death: but because it in fact leads man to death, which is not equally true of sin not yet consummated. For after someone, having cast off the fear of God, by which he was deterred, has broken forth into the external work of sin, he is not content to have done it once, but having become bolder he immediately repeats it: whence he comes into the frequentation, and custom of sinning, by which it happens that at last he is led to death, unless God by some extraordinary grace calls him back through repentance: which does not so happen, if the sin conceived in the mind is suppressed, lest it go out into work." These things Estius. From whose opinion here it is said that consummated sin generates death, not because it alone merits eternal death, but because it exposes the sinner more to the peril of death, and carries him further in the way of damnation, than sin not consummated. Which interpretation having been admitted, the argument of Bellarmine founded on this place clearly collapses.

5. Nor does Estius alone so interpret this place. For Dionysius the Carthusian in his Commentaries on the Epistles preceded him in the way, "Everyone is tempted," he says, "DRAWN AWAY, that is, from the right path of salvation, and the true judgment of reason, AND ENTICED, that is, attracted to sin, THEN WHEN LUST HATH CONCEIVED, that is, has led to consent, IT BRINGS FORTH SIN, that is, makes one guilty. For then there is mortal sin interiorly, when full consent is present about something desired against the commandment. BUT WHEN SIN IS CONSUMMATED, that is, brought forth to effect exteriorly, so that from consent one goes into work, IT GENERATES DEATH because it induces to vicious custom and obstinacy; then to eternal damnation, which is a most grievous second death." In the same way also Nicholas of Lyra interprets these words of the Apostle James, in his notes on this place.

6. Meanwhile we do not deny that these three authors teach that the first two motions of concupiscence which are not perfectly voluntary are venial sins: but we do not mind this: for we do not cite their testimonies to prove that the Apostle in verse 14 and the beginning of verse 15 is not speaking about lighter sins, which are venial in the elect, but to show that to generate death, here is not to merit death: and consequently, that Bellarmine badly concludes that the

consummation of sin alone merits death, because to it alone is expressly attributed the generation of death. For from the opinion of Estius, the Carthusian, and Lyra, sin can merit death, although it does not generate death, in that sense in which the Apostle here takes the generation of death. For they say that the bringing forth of sin merits death and is mortal sin, although the Apostle here does not say that it generates death.

7. Third, they object those testimonies of Scripture in which some sins are compared to gnats, some to camels, Matthew 23:24, some to a mote, some to a beam, Luke 6:41, some to the last quadrans, or mite, Luke 12:59, and some to wood, hay, and stubble, which are by their own nature most light things, 1 Corinthians 3:12. But first, these testimonies prove nothing other than what we freely concede, viz. that some sins are much lighter than others. Second, although they proved that some sins are punished by God not with eternal, but with temporal punishment only, yet they would not suffice to determine the present controversy. For it is asked whether some sins are from themselves, and divine mercy having been set aside, so light, that they cannot justly be punished with eternal punishment? But in the places cited nothing is determined about this question. For it can happen, that some sins are venial, and thus similar to most light things, not because they are such from themselves and their own nature, but because God in appointing punishment itself mindful of his mercy, has decreed not to impute them to eternal death, and thus to punish them below their demerit, as some Pontifical Theologians cited above taught.

8. From these things which have been said it is clearly evident that the Adversaries in vain seek protection for themselves, and their cause in this controversy from the sacred writings. And this is much more clear from the most manifest testimonies of Scripture, by which our Theologians demonstrate that all sins, even the slightest, involve those sinning in the guilt of eternal death. For they pronounce thus generally about every sin: "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law," Galatians 3:10. "The soul who sins shall die," Ezekiel 18:20. "The wages of sin is death," Romans 6:23. "Whoever fails in one point has become guilty of all," James 2:10. "Whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven," Matthew 5:19.

9. Nor are the arguments which the Pontificians here bring forward from the writings of the Fathers of greater moment. For (as Gerard well observes in volume 2 of his Theological Topics, treatise on actual sin, chapter 19, §101) what Bellarmine produces from the Council of Milevis, Origen, Chrysostom and Augustine, does not oppose our opinion. For they prove only this, that there are degrees of sins, that there are some venial sins, that the regenerate often fall into the slightest and sometimes incautious sins, through which they do not cease to be just, that this life of ours is not led without light and brief daily sins, etc., none of which is denied by us; but it was to be proven that some sins are venial and worthy of pardon by their own nature, which does not occur explicitly in their sayings.

10. Finally, as to the reasons taken from the nature of the thing, which they bring forward, to explain and confirm that former general difference between mortal and venial sin, which we set forth at the beginning of this Section, that is, to show why there is so great a discrepancy

between mortal and venial sins as to the guilt of punishment, which they bring with them, and to show that this discrepancy is founded not in the will of God, but in their own nature, the reasons, I say, which they artificially and subtly fabricate to establish this doctrine, are altogether doubtful and uncertain. Which is abundantly clear First from the various opinions of the Scholastics on this matter. For some with Thomas in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, to the 1st objection say that this difference between sins as to the guilt of punishment, which they effect in the sinner, comes from this, that some sins are against the law, and some only besides the law. Others with Scotus, Gabriel, and Bassolius, say that the reason for this thing is that some sins are against precepts and some against counsels. Others say that this difference between sins as to the gravity of the punishment which they merit, comes from this, that those sins which are called mortal, are concerned with the very ultimate end itself, but those, which are called venial, only with the means. Others finally, whose opinion today is most received and approved, teach that the reason for this difference is that mortal sin has, both on the part of the object, and on the part of the way in which it is committed, all that, which is required that it be a serious offense against God, and that it be repugnant to friendship and charity towards God; but venial sin on account of a defect in something of those is a light offense, and does not dissolve friendship with God. Thus speaks Alphonsus Curiel in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, doubt 3, §3, who among all the Pontificians seems to have treated this question most accurately. His words are a little more obscure: but he afterwards explaining himself, says that mortal sins merit eternal punishment, because they are repugnant to charity, and place aversion from God in the sinner. But he shows that this is true from the fact that sins of this kind are serious offenses committed against God, both on the part of the object, and on the part of the way in which they are committed. But on the other hand he says that venial sins do not merit eternal punishment, because they are not contrary to charity, nor do they avert the sinner from God: and he proves this, because sins of this kind are light offenses, either on account of the smallness of the matter or object, or because they are not committed from full deliberation: or as he himself speaks, on account of a defect in something of those, that is, because something is lacking to them of those two, which increase the deformity and guilt in mortal sins. On these dissensions of the Pontificians, see Curiel in the place cited: also Vasquez in the first part of the second part, volume 1, disputation 143, chapter 1 and following.

11. Second, this is also clear from the fact that that reason, or foundation of the aforesaid difference between mortal and venial sin, which they most approve, is altogether inefficacious and invalid. For from the fact that in mortal sin there is something, both on the part of the object, and on the part of the way in which it is committed, augmenting its deformity and guilt, which is not found in venial sin; it indeed follows that venial sin is comparatively light, that is, is lighter than mortal: But it does not follow that it is simply and absolutely speaking a light offense. Therefore, it is incumbent on the Adversaries to prove that venial sins are absolutely speaking light offenses, and so light, that they do not merit eternal punishment: which they have not yet proven, indeed they cannot prove. For we, God helping, will prove the contrary below.

12. Third, the way in which the adversaries proceed in explaining and confirming that difference between the guilt of mortal and venial sin is ridiculous and inept. For they say that mortal sin merits eternal punishment, and venial sin merits temporal punishment, because the former is

repugnant to charity, and averts the sinner from God to the creature: but the latter is neither repugnant to charity, nor averts the sinner from God. And they then prove this, because the former is a serious offense: but the latter a light offense.

13. But this is to prove the obscure through that which is equally obscure. For when they say this, they either understand that venial sin is an offense lighter than mortal sin; or they understand that venial sin is an offense absolutely and simply light. If they understand the former, this reason is vain and ridiculous, and this because one offense can be lighter than another, although it is serious in itself, and manifestly repugnant to charity. But if they understand the latter, First they gratuitously assert that venial sin is absolutely a light offense. For they have not yet proven this, as I recently warned. Second, they prove the obscure through that which is no less obscure, For this is most called into controversy here whether venial sin is simply and absolutely a light offense. For the principal sense of the question, which we treat here, is, whether venial sin is from itself an offense so light, either on account of the smallness of the matter, or by reason of the way in which it is committed, that it cannot justly be punished with eternal punishment. Third, here they manifestly commit a circle. For they prove that venial sin is an offense so light, that it does not merit eternal punishment because it is not repugnant to charity, nor does it avert the sinner from God. And again they prove this, because venial sin is a light offense, and consequently is neither repugnant to charity, nor averts from God. What is trifling or reasoning in a circle, if this is not?

14. They are accustomed to bring forward another reason no less ridiculous and inept, to establish that difference between the guilt of mortal and venial sin. For they prove that venial sins do not merit eternal punishment, because they do not involve aversion from God, and conversion to the creature: and they prove this, because they are not opposed to those precepts of the divine law, the observance of which is necessary for the attainment of blessedness, and because they are not repugnant to the divine will manifested through a serious precept. Thus Curiel reasons writing on that question of Thomas cited above so often, article 1, doubt 3, §3, and Vasquez hands down the same doctrine in the first part of the second part, disputation 143, chapter 4, numbers 8 and 9, for he says that venial sin does not merit eternal punishment, because it is not against a principal precept, that is one necessary for salvation.

15. But first, that distinction of divine precepts into serious and light is intolerable. God will weigh them in the scales of his judgment, and will come against those who hold the precepts of the law to be of so little weight. Second, when they say that there are some precepts about fleeing sins, the observance of which is not necessary for salvation, they understand that God cannot justly prohibit those sins under the peril of losing blessedness, or under the penalty of eternal death, as will be clear below: and consequently they again manifestly beg the question, and commit a circle. For they prove that lighter sins do not merit eternal death, and what amounts to the same thing, cannot be prohibited under the penalty of eternal death, because they do not avert from GOD, and they again prove this, because the observance of the precepts, by which they are prohibited, is not, nor ought to be necessary for salvation, that is, because they are neither prohibited, nor can they justly be prohibited under the penalty of eternal death. But we will speak more fully about all these things below, the Deity favoring. For we will show that the

slightest sins can justly be prohibited under the penalty of eternal death, likewise that the slightest sins are contrary to charity, and avert from GOD.

Section II.

On the stain of sin: and whether the stain, which venial sin leaves behind, can exclude the sinner from the kingdom of heaven.

In the previous Section we proved that the opinion of the Pontificians on the difference between mortal and venial sin must be condemned by an argument taken from the weakness of the foundations and reasons on which it rests. Now we will bring forward other arguments against this most absurd error, and those taken from the very nature of the thing about which we are treating, and we will vindicate them from the evasions and cavils of the Adversaries.

2. But because our first reason is taken from the stain, which even the slightest sins leave behind, therefore, it must be noted, First, that mortal sin leaves behind a stain in the sinner, from which he is accustomed to be denominated stained, unclean, filthy and defiled. This is clear First, because Scripture says that sin pollutes, or defiles man, Matthew 15:11 and 18. Second, Scripture says that sinners are filthy, Revelation 22:11. Third, the remission of sin is called a washing and purification: whence Scripture calls those whose sins have been forgiven washed and cleansed as in 1 Corinthians 6:11 and 2 Corinthians 7:1. Fourth, the very ugliness or deformity, which sin leaves behind, is expressly called a stain, Ephesians 5:27. Fifth, Christ, because he was immune from every stain of sin, even in the days of his flesh, is said to be unspotted, 1 Peter 1:19. Finally, Thomas illustrates this by an excellent comparison in the first part of the second part, question 86, article 1, the sense of which is this: just as some bright body is said to be stained, and to lose its luster, from the contact of another body, which is viler and filthier; so the soul of a just man, which is pure and bright, is stained by sinning, from the contact of corporeal, and worldly things which are vile, and as it were filthy. For sin is as it were a certain touch of the soul, by which it touches worldly things, and cleaves to them through love. Becanus also declares this by another similitude in part 2 of the Summa, Treatise 2, chapter 7, question 2, §1. For (he says) just as a member is considered ugly and filthy, which is so distorted, that it does not retain the natural position, and order with the rest of the members, so the rational soul is filthy, which does not retain the due order to God, to whom it was created as to the ultimate end.

3. Second, it must be noted that there are various opinions of the Scholastics about the thing in which the stain of sin consists. I, having omitted the opinions of Scotus and Durandus, because they are less probable, will bring forward the three more probable and more received opinions. The first is that of John Bassolius, whom Vasquez follows in the first part of the second part, disputation 139, chapter 5. For they say that the stain is the very past act of sin insofar as it has not yet been retracted through repentance, and forgiven by GOD. For to have sinned, and not yet to have repented is a remarkable stain or spot.

To this opinion is reduced another, which asserts that the stain of sin is a habitual, or permanent aversion from GOD. For the sinner is averted from God, and remains averted, not only when he actually sins; but also after he has sinned, indeed always until he returns to God through repentance. For since the sinner by an act of his will has willed to sin, and by sinning to avert himself from GOD, and convert himself to the creature, as long as he has not retracted this will, and returned to God through repentance, likewise as long as God has not received him into grace, for so long he is considered habitually and permanently averted from God.

Bellarmino illustrates this aptly enough by a similitude in book 5 on the loss of grace, chapter 17. For (he says) just as he who averts himself from the sun, remains averted in the darkness, until he again turns himself to the sun: and he who recedes from something, remains in that distance, until he again approaches: so also he who is averted from God through sin, and recedes, not only while he sins, but also after he has sinned remains averted from God, and far distant, until he is converted through repentance, and returns to GOD.

4. The second opinion is that the stain of sin is the privation of inherent grace or holiness, which is, as it were, the luster, splendor or ornament of the soul. For just as the stain of the body, properly is the privation of that luster which was previously in the body, so the spiritual stain, or the stain of the soul, is the privation of inherent grace or holiness, which as I have already warned, is the luster of the soul. For it renders the soul pleasing and acceptable to God and the Angels just as the luster of the body renders the body pleasant and pleasing to the eyes of men. This opinion is attributed by many to Thomas, and Scotus follows it in the 4th book of Sentences, distinction 15, question 1, article 2. Suarez also follows it in some part, book 7 on divine grace, chapter 20, §8, but on account of various difficulties to which it is exposed he restricts and limits it. For he says that the stain of mortal sin in man ordained to a supernatural end, per se, and necessarily includes the privation of grace with a moral relation to the sin committed, and not yet retracted, or forgiven.

5. The third opinion is that of Alphonsus Curiel in the first part of the second part, question 86, articles 1 and 2, doubt 2, §4, where he says, that the stain, which remains after the act of sin includes a twofold privation, viz. the privation of conformity with the law and the privation of grace. For (as he explains himself elsewhere) the sinner after the act of sin has passed, is not only destitute, and deprived of the gifts of grace, with which he was previously adorned, but also remains disconformed to the divine law, and averted from it. But he proves that this disconformity, or habitual discrepancy from the law, is truly a stain, because it stains and disfigures man before the eyes of GOD, and of those to whom God wills to manifest his guilt.

6. None of these opinions is to be simply rejected: none also is to be held per se, and the other two having been set aside. But rather it must be said that the stain, which mortal sin leaves behind is something aggregated from many things, or that I may say otherwise, mortal sin brings with it a multiple stain or blemish. For it leaves in the sinner 1st a moral respect to the past act not yet retracted and forgiven, 2nd the privation of grace, and 3rd the habitual privation of conformity with the law of God; For none of these three is falsely or ineptly called a stain, as is clear from the things said above.

7. Third, finally, it must be held that even venial sins leave behind a threefold stain. For First the very past act of venial sin itself, insofar as it is not yet retracted and forgiven, renders man filthy and defiled. Second, the habitual privation of conformity with the law of GOD which is truly and properly a stain, also accompanies the act of venial sin. For venial sin is prohibited by divine law: and consequently, he who has committed venial sin, and has not yet retracted it, truly and properly remains disconformed to the law. Third, although venial sin does not take away, or diminish inherent or habitual grace, yet in some way it impedes its acts, and diminishes the fervor and readiness to elicit them. Curiel explains this thus in the first part of the second part, question 89, article 1. "Since," he says, "from the acts of charity there results in the soul a certain beauty, and comeliness, which St. Thomas calls luster, and actual splendor: it is necessary that the removal of those acts be a certain stain: but that venial sin is the cause of the removal of those acts is proven, because, although it does not take them away altogether, yet it impedes lest they be elicited, not only by opposing, as much as is in itself, the impediments of depraved habits and insurgent passions: but also by rendering man unworthy, not indeed of grace, and charity, but of a certain familiarity, and most special aids, by which the fervor of charity is excited, and the powers are rendered fit, and ready for its acts."

8. Perhaps there will not be lacking those, who will deny that venial sin truly and properly leaves behind a stain in the sinner. For Thomas himself in the first part of the second part, question 89, article 1, seems to be of that opinion; "properly speaking," he says, "venial sin does not cause a stain in the soul." But Vasquez criticizes, and excellently refutes, the opinion of Thomas in the first part of the second part, disputation 139, chapter 4, number 17. "Although," he says, "Thomas says that from venial sin a stain is not properly derived in the soul, and although in reality this sin does not deprive us of grace, nor of any supernatural habit, yet it cannot be denied, that man truly remains in some way polluted from venial sin which he once committed, until he is justified from it. For he who is justified from venial sin, is truly said to be cleansed from it, and justified. Therefore by it he remained in some way polluted." This reason of Vasquez is most efficacious. For true and properly so-called cleansing presupposes a stain, or blemish, truly and properly so-called.

9. These things having been posited, our First reason against the opinion of the Adversaries is this: Those sins, which from themselves, and their own nature, exclude man from the kingdom of heaven, are from themselves, and their own nature, mortal, that is, worthy of eternal death. But the slightest sins, from themselves, and their own nature, exclude man from the heavenly kingdom. Therefore the slightest sins, from themselves, and their own nature, are mortal, or worthy of eternal death. The major is proven: because Scripture speaking about the most serious sins, which by the confession of all are mortal, attributes this to them, that they exclude man from the heavenly kingdom, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, likewise Galatians 5:21. Then the Adversaries themselves attribute this as proper and peculiar to mortal sins, that they exclude, and deprive men of the possession of the heavenly kingdom. See Bellarmine, book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 5, §Where the Apostle, and chapter 9, near the end. The minor is also proven: because the slightest sins from themselves, and their own nature, leave behind a stain in the sinner, and thus effect him stained and defiled, as is clear from the things said above. But nothing defiled enters into the kingdom of heaven, Revelation 21:27. Whence Bellarmine, in the

book already cited, chapter 12, response to objection 2, says, that it cannot happen, that someone enters into the kingdom of heaven with the filth of venial sins, and in book 4 on Justification, chapter 21, he says, that venial sins, if they are not mercifully forgiven, impede from the entrance of that kingdom into which nothing defiled can enter: Estius also in the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 42, §6, says, that no one however just, unless he has been cleansed even from venial sin by the blood of Christ the redeemer, can be admitted into the heavenly kingdom. And Suarez, book 2 against the errors of the Anglican sect, chapter 15, §11. "If," he says, "the embrace of the fatherland, of the beatific vision is understood, such an embrace can in no way be had, unless the deformity of venial sins is first removed."

10. You will say that the response to this argument can be gathered from these very authors in the places cited. For they teach that these lighter sins exclude from the kingdom of heaven, not simply, and for eternity, but only for a time, until viz. they have been purged and forgiven, either in this life, or in purgatory. But certainly this response does not obviate our argument. For that venial sins do not exclude for eternity, but for a time, from the kingdom of heaven, they do not have this from themselves, and their own nature, but from the mercy of God forgiving them, and not imputing them to his elect. This is clear, because God forgives them by grace, and consequently can not forgive them, as they themselves confess; but if he did this, they would exclude man forever from the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, that we may preclude this escape from the Adversaries, we propose our argument more efficaciously thus. That belongs to sin from itself, and its own nature, which belongs to it, the mercy of GOD, and his gracious forgiveness having been set aside, as Bellarmine teaches in the cited book, at the beginning of chapter 9, and as is clear per se. But venial sin, the mercy and grace of God having been set aside, excludes the sinner from the kingdom of God forever. Therefore this belongs to it per se and by its own nature.

Section III.

Whether the slightest sins of the reprobate are mortal, not only from the event, but also from merit.

Second, we prove by this reason that the slightest sins, from themselves, and their own nature, merit eternal death: The slightest sins will be punished with eternal punishment in the reprobate after the day of judgment, as is clear from Matthew 12:36-37, and the Adversaries themselves confess, viz. Bellarmine, book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 14, §But if in man, Valentia, volume 2, disputation 6, question 17, point 4, Vasquez, in the first part of the second part, disputation 141, chapter 2, Curiel, in the first part of the second part, question 87, article 5, §1. And before these many Scholastics, whom they cite for this their opinion, viz. Thomas, Richard of St. Victor, Bonaventure, Richard of Middleton, Capreolus, Cajetan, Adrian, Soto, Major and others, Therefore, the slightest sins merit eternal punishment, For otherwise this punishment which is inflicted for them, would not be just, and proportionate to their demerit. The Adversaries respond, that this happens per accidens, and on account of the condition of the subject, in which these light sins are, For as long as the guilt and its stain endures, that is as long as the

guilt is not remitted, for so long he, who has sinned, is worthy of punishment, as Vasquez teaches in the place recently cited. But (they say) venial guilt, although from itself it is remissible, or reparable through penance (as was said above at the beginning of section 1.) yet in the reprobate per accidens it is irreparable through penance, because it is conjoined with mortal sins which exclude that grace, which is necessary for doing penance: and consequently this guilt per accidens in them is eternal, or endures for eternity, because namely they cannot retract it through repentance. Therefore also the punishment of this guilt, is eternal in the reprobate, and this per accidens, because namely the guilt in them is eternal: for otherwise it would have been only temporal. This response does not satisfy,

2. For first, that guilt which per se is the cause of damnation to eternal punishment per se is punished with eternal punishment. But venial guilt per se will be the cause of damnation to eternal punishment on the day of judgment: for then there will be no damnation to temporal punishment. Therefore venial guilt per se is punished with eternal punishment. The assumption is proven from Matthew 12:36, where Christ says, that we will render an account for every idle word on the day of judgment, and in the following verse confirming this, he says, that we will either be justified or condemned from our words, by which words he indicates that those speeches about which he was speaking in verse 36 (that is, idle speeches which from the opinion of the Adversaries are venial sins) will be a sufficient cause of damnation to eternal punishment.

3. Second, it is more per accidens, that venial sins are not punished with eternal punishment in the elect, than that they are punished with eternal punishment in the reprobate: likewise, that in the former they are reparable through penance, than that in the latter they are irreparable through penance. For this latter belongs to venial sins on account of annexed mortal sins (as the Adversaries think) which if not in species, at least in genus agree with them. But that former belongs to them by the benefit of a thing entirely different in genus from them, viz. by the benefit of inherent habitual grace in the elect. For this grace is the principle and cause of the acts of penance, without which the elect cannot retract venial sins, and obtain their remission.

4. Third, God neither per se, nor per accidens, can do that which is unjust. Therefore, if it is unjust to punish venial sins with eternal punishment, as Bellarmine blasphemously speaks, book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 14, response to objection 1, GOD could not do that neither per se, nor per accidens. And it is confirmed because venial sin from the fact that it is in a reprobate man conjoined with mortal sin does not become a more serious sin or worthy of a greater punishment, but retains the same nature, which it previously had. Therefore, if from itself, and its own nature it does not merit eternal punishment, then in the reprobate it does not merit eternal punishment, and consequently in him it is not punished with eternal punishment; for otherwise it would be punished beyond condign merit. But God, as all teach, although he remunerates good works beyond condign merit, yet he does not punish sins beyond, but short of condign merit: because namely he is by his nature more prone to liberality and mercy, than to vindicatory justice.

5. To this third argument Thomas in the first part of the second part, question 87, article 5, to the 3rd objection, Cajetan on that place, Curiel on the same place in the only doubt, §1, and others respond: that venial sin from conjunction with mortal sin does not have greater gravity, or does not become more serious, but from that conjunction it has irremissibility, and eternal duration of the stain, which it leaves behind: because namely without penance, which does not fall on the reprobate, there is no remission of the slightest sins, no wiping away of the stain left by them. Therefore venial sin, although in the reprobate it is not more serious, yet it is more long-lasting, or more enduring on account of its conjunction with mortal sins, and therefore (says Curiel) to it, insofar as it is in the reprobate, there does not correspond a more intense punishment, but a more long-lasting one: because the intensity of punishment corresponds to the gravity of sin, and the eternity of punishment to its irremissibility.

6. But to the contrary First, the Adversaries teach that mortal sin on account of its gravity is punished with eternal punishment, and venial sin on account of its lightness is punished with temporal punishment. Therefore they contradict themselves, when they assert that the eternity of punishment does not correspond to the gravity of sin, but to its irremissibility. Second, every punishment, or degree of punishment, respects the gravity of guilt, that is, it is inflicted on account of the guilt itself, and its demerit. But the eternity of punishment is a degree, and remarkable increase of punishment, as is clear from Isaiah 66:24, Mark 9:44, 46, and 48, and Matthew 25:41. Therefore it respects the gravity of guilt, and corresponds to it. Third, venial sins in the reprobate, either are worthy of eternal punishment or they are not worthy: if they are not worthy, then they are punished beyond condign merit, which is absurd, as the Adversaries themselves confess, if they are worthy, and merit eternal punishment, then this merit, or rather demerit, is founded either in the gravity of the offense, or in the duration of the guilt and stain, which these venial sins leave behind. They will undoubtedly say that this demerit is founded not in the gravity of the venial sins themselves, but in their duration as to guilt and stain. But to the contrary: Scripture openly testifies that eternal punishment on the day of judgment is inflicted on account of those things which we have done in the body, 2 Corinthians 5:10. Therefore then eternal punishment is not inflicted on account of the mere duration of the stain after death. Besides, if it is in any way true that venial sins in the reprobate merit a more serious punishment, it will also necessarily follow that they are more serious in the reprobate than in the elect (which is absurd, as I warned in §4), for that which merits a more serious punishment, is a more serious sin. These things are most true as is clear from the ingenuous confession of Alphonsus Curiel, who although in the place cited he explains and urges that doctrine of Thomas at length, yet elsewhere viz. in the explication of article 3 of the same question, §3, page 479, with us asserts that the eternity of punishment does not correspond to the duration of guilt alone, but falls under the demerit of sin, or what amounts to the same thing, corresponds to the gravity of guilt, "It cannot be denied," he says, "that the eternity of punishment falls under the demerit of sin: because even eternity itself pertains to punishment, and consequently respects the demerit of guilt; thus we concede, that on account of mortal sin someone is worthy of eternal punishment, and not on account of venial sin; and to be worthy of punishment is to merit it; and in Matthew 25, sinners are condemned on account of their sins, not only to punishment absolutely, but also to eternal punishment, for it is said, go, you cursed, into eternal fire, and the reason is added, for I was hungry, and you did not give me to eat, etc., which reason would not

be sufficient, unless eternal punishment were due to sins of this kind." See also Francisco de Herrera in the 2nd book of Sentences, disputation 42, question 2, where he hands down not only the same doctrine, but also in almost the same words. For Curiel seems to have transcribed verbatim from him.

7. On account of these reasons Scotus in the 4th book of Sentences, distinction 21, question 1, taught that the punishment, by which the damned will be punished in hell on account of venial sins, will not be eternal, but temporal: and consequently that it will at some time have an end, while in the meantime the punishment, which will be inflicted on them on account of mortal sins, will endure for eternity. His opinion was afterwards embraced by Biel, Vega, Medina, Navarrus, and Almain, whom Curiel cites for this opinion in the first part of the second part, question 87, article 5, only doubt, §1. Perhaps there will not be lacking those who will go into this opinion, so that they may repel the force of the argument proposed above in §1, for easily according to this opinion, it can be responded to our argument, by denying that the reprobate are punished with eternal punishment on account of venial sins. But certainly this cannot be denied without great absurdity. For first, to the reprobate on the day of judgment on account of all their sins, both mortal and venial, it will be said, go, you cursed, into eternal fire, etc. Therefore the punishment, which will be inflicted on account of venial sins will be eternal. Second, Vasquez refutes the opinion of Scotus in the first part of the second part, disputation 141, chapter 2, by this argument: if (he says) the opinion of Scotus is true, it will follow that we can pray for those who are in hell, that they may be freed more quickly from the punishment due for those sins, if indeed it is at last to be remitted by God, after sufficient has been suffered. Third, the more recent Scotists condemn this opinion, and say that Scotus proposed it not assertively, but doubtfully. See Francisco de Herrera in the 2nd book of Sentences, Disputation 42, question 4.

Section IV.

Whether the slightest sins of the elect are mortal from their own nature?

Our third reason against the opinion of the Adversaries is this: What can never be remitted, that can be punished for eternity, and this justly. But venial sin committed by a just man can never be remitted. Therefore it can be punished for eternity. This argument proceeds about the lighter sins in a just man, just as the former proceeded about the lighter sins in a reprobate man: and it is easily confirmed part by part. For the reason for the major proposition is, because as long as guilt endures, that is, as long as it is not remitted, for so long the guilt of punishment endures: but as long as the guilt of punishment endures, for so long the punishment itself can justly endure, as the Adversaries teach.

2. The assumption is also proven, because God remits venial sins committed by the just and faithful by grace and mercy: for this is clear from the very name and nature of remission, as Estius observes in the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 42, §6. But whatever God does by grace and mercy he can not do, and consequently he can never remit venial sin.

3. Estius in the place already cited, and Vasquez in the first part of the second part, Disputation 142, chapter 2, respond that the state of a just man, and the good works done by him condignly demand, and thus merit *de condigno*, that grace and mercy by which venial sins are remitted; and this because it is unjust for anyone (these are the words of Estius) to be excluded forever from that which is owed to him by right. But to just men eternal life is owed by right: and consequently GOD is bound at some time to remit venial sins to them, lest viz. they be excluded forever from the heavenly kingdom.

4. This response is both absurd in itself, and full of foul arrogance. For first, if the remission of venial sins is owed by right to a justified man on account of his good works, it will follow that the pious or faithful, when they pray to God that he remit to them the daily sins of infirmity, or venial sins, can no less truly say, pay to us your debts than forgive us our debts. For God owes and is bound from justice to remit venial sins to the pious from the opinion of the Adversaries, lest otherwise he unjustly exclude them from the kingdom of heaven, which is owed to their merits. Second, all merit is founded on the gratuitous promise of God, as Bellarmine teaches in book 5 on Justification, chapter 14, and Suarez, book 12 on divine grace, chapter 18. But whatever God has promised by grace, he could have not promised, as is clear *per se*. Therefore, GOD could have not promised, and consequently never conferred on the pious the remission of venial sins on account of their good works: and consequently he could have punished them for eternity. For if they were never remitted, they would be punished for eternity, as the Adversaries themselves repeatedly inculcate. Third, this response rests on another absurd and crass error that viz. good works merit *de condigno* glory and the increase and conservation of grace, about which we will speak in its place, GOD favoring.

5. Bellarmine in book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 14, responds otherwise, but far more ineptly, to this argument. For he speaks only about the forgiveness of the punishment due to venial sins, but not about the remission of venial guilt itself, about which our argument principally proceeds. For he supposes, as is clear from the last words of that chapter, that venial guilt itself is remitted to a just man, and its stain is purged through an act of dilection, or charity, although the punishment due to it is not forgiven: "if grace," he says, "is taken for the liberal forgiveness of punishment, we confess that God can absolutely not forgive the punishment due to the venial sins of the just. For what he does by grace he can not do: but if God willed to not forgive, but to demand entirely the punishment of venial sin from him who had purged venial guilt itself through an act of dilection, he could demand only temporal, but not eternal punishment." These things Bellarmine.

6. But what if grace here is taken for the forgiveness of venial guilt itself, and the wiping away of the stain which it leaves behind: is it not similarly true that GOD can never remit venial guilt itself committed by a pious man? For he remits it by grace: but what he does by grace, he can not do, Bellarmine himself confessing. I suppose therefore that God never remits venial guilt to a pious man, who committed it (for nothing absurd will follow, a possible thing having been posited in act) and I ask whether in this case, the punishment, which ought to be inflicted on him on account of venial sin, will be eternal, or not?

7. Bellarmine in the place cited says that the punishment, which can be inflicted on a pious man on account of venial guilt, must necessarily be temporal, and not eternal. But First he does not say this in this case, about which we are speaking, but in another case entirely foreign to the purpose. For he supposes that venial sin has been remitted to the pious man as to guilt but not as to punishment, and in that case he says that eternal punishment cannot be inflicted on him on account of that sin. But we on the contrary speak about a pious man to whom venial sin has not yet been remitted as to guilt, and supposing that GOD never remits it as to guilt, we assert that its punishment will be eternal. Second, we do not assert this gratuitously, but we also manifestly prove it from the doctrine of the Adversaries: For they unanimously hold against Scotus that the punishment of that guilt which is never remitted, never ends, and consequently is eternal. Indeed Bellarmine himself in the place cited, says, that the deformity of sin ought not to remain for eternity without eternal punishment. Since therefore GOD can never remit the venial sins of the pious (for he remits them to them by unowed grace. And what he does by grace, as they themselves confess, he can not do) it is manifest that he can also punish them for eternity.

Section V.

Whether lighter sins, which are called venial, can be prohibited by God under the penalty of eternal death? And whether they were actually prohibited under that penalty in the covenant of works or legal covenant.

Fourth, that venial sins merit eternal death from themselves, is clear from this, that all, both Evangelicals and Pontificians, confess that GOD could and even now can prohibit all sins, even the slightest, under the penalty of eternal death, and consequently can punish those who commit them with eternal death. But God cannot do anything that is wicked or unjust. Therefore venial sins can be justly punished with eternal death: and consequently, the petulant and audacious assertion of Bellarmine, in book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 14, response to the 1st objection, in which he asserts that God cannot justly punish any sin, even venial, with the most serious punishment of eternal death, is false. Curiel responds in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, doubt 2, §2, that although GOD as he is the supreme Lord of the world, could appoint eternal punishment against venial sins, yet he could not do this, as he is Judge and Legislator, and this because eternal punishment is not proportionate to the demerit of venial guilt, but far exceeds it. Bellarmine in the place cited, and Francisco de Herrera in the 2nd book of Sentences, disputation 42, question 2, also seem to hint at the same thing. But this is falsely and ineptly said.

2. For first, the slightest sins committed against the infinite majesty of God, are in themselves serious and worthy of eternal punishment, as will be clear below. Therefore, God can prohibit them under the penalty of eternity.

3. Second, the very will of God prohibiting sins by his law under the penalty of eternal death, is a sufficient reason for the equity of that punishment, and makes it proportionate to the demerit of the guilt itself, as the Scholastics commonly teach, when they discuss the punishment of mortal sin. Herrera himself openly testifies to this in the place cited: "Second," he says, "the Scholastics say, it is enough that by the law and will of God eternal punishment is appointed against mortal sin, for a punishment of this kind to be proportionate to the demerit of the guilt itself, according to its whole self it has simply the nature of punishment. The reason for this saying is, because it is enough for us to say this about punishment appointed by human law, that such a law was made by a prudent and right Legislator. Therefore, a fortiori the same must be said about punishment appointed by God. The consequence is proved, because the law and will of God is just per se. It is confirmed, because we concede that eternal reward is proportionate, and according to its whole self has the nature of reward with respect to temporal merit, because by the will and law of God it is appointed, as the reward of such merit. Therefore, similarly it must be conceded, that eternal punishment is proportionate, and according to its whole self has the nature of punishment with respect to temporal sin, because by the will and law of God it is appointed for the punishment of such mortal sin." Curiel also teaches the same thing writing on the first part of the second part, question 87, article 3, §3. "It is enough," he says, "that by the law and will of God eternal punishment is appointed against mortal guilt, for a punishment of this kind to be proportionate to the demerit of the guilt itself, and according to its whole self it has simply the nature of punishment. It is proved, because it is enough, for us to say this about punishment appointed by human law, that such a law was made by a prudent and right Legislator. Therefore, a fortiori the same must be said about punishment appointed by the law of God. It is confirmed first, because the law and will of God is just per se. etc." These things Curiel transcribed verbatim from the book of Francisco de Herrera.

4. Third, God can prohibit, indeed actually prohibited by positive law under the peril and penalty of eternal death, things licit and indifferent in themselves, which viz. if considered in themselves, are not repugnant to right reason, as is clear from the precepts given to the Jewish Church about the distinction of clean and unclean foods and about abstaining from blood and fat. Therefore, much more can he prohibit venial sins under the penalty of eternal death. The reason for the consequence is, because many venial sins are against the law of nature, and are repugnant to right reason; and consequently are in themselves, and divine law having been set aside, evil, illicit, and detestable. If therefore the prohibition of God can effect, that a thing licit in itself and not detestable, be worthy of eternal punishment; why can it not also effect that a thing illicit and detestable from itself be worthy of eternal punishment?

5. Fourth, finally, God, as Judge and Legislator, in the covenant of works, which he made with Adam and Eve, and in their persons with the whole human race, actually prohibited all sins, even the slightest, under the penalty of eternity. Therefore, he can justly prohibit them under this penalty. I know that the adversaries will constantly deny the antecedent of this argument: but they will be easily convinced. For God in the covenant of works promised men eternal life on the condition of full and absolute obedience in all respects: and consequently in that state of integrity they could not have a right to eternal life, except by perfectly fulfilling the law of God. Hence it manifestly follows that the commission of any sin could render them liable to eternal

death. For he who does not fulfill the condition prescribed in the covenant, cannot attain the reward: but on the contrary, merits the punishment appointed by the legislator against the violators of the covenant. But if Adam had committed even the least sin against the law of God impressed or inscribed on his mind, he would not have fulfilled the condition prescribed in the covenant; that is, he would not have fulfilled the law perfectly. Therefore, he could not have attained the reward of eternal glory, but on the contrary would have merited to be deprived of it forever.

6. You will say that the condition, under which eternal life was promised in the covenant of works, was not the full and exact fulfillment of the law in all its precepts, but only in the more serious or principal ones, and consequently man could in that state attain eternal life by avoiding mortal sins, although he was not immune from the guilt of venial sins. But this escape lacks every appearance of probability.

7. For first, it is certain that God could have required from man before the fall the full and exact fulfillment of the law, as absolutely necessary for attaining eternal life. For he had given him sufficient powers to fulfill the whole law, and to avoid all sins, both venial and mortal, and this not for a short time, but in perpetuity, as Valentia teaches, volume 2, disputation 6, question 12, point 1, §10, column 659, doubt 2.

8. Second, hence also it is clear, that God required from unfallen man the full and perfect fulfillment of the law, as a condition absolutely necessary for attaining the promised reward. For now under the covenant of grace he requires from justified man, reconciled to himself, that he serve him, and fulfill the law by avoiding all mortal sins simply, and by striving to avoid also venial sins, and by doing ordinary penance for them, as often as he has observed that he has committed them (for sins of this kind simply and absolutely cannot be avoided by us in this state of infirmity) this, I say, he requires from him, as a condition absolutely necessary for attaining eternal glory. Therefore, he required more from unfallen man: and consequently he required from him the perfect fulfillment of the law, or immunity from all sin, both venial and mortal, as a condition absolutely necessary for attaining eternal life. The reason for the consequence is, because it is just, that more be required from him, who can do more: For to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they have committed much, of him they will ask the more, Luke 12:48.

9. Third, if the covenant of works did not oblige strictly and precisely (that is, under the peril of losing blessedness) to avoid venial sins, then it obliged strictly and precisely at least (as the covenant of grace now obliges) to revoke them, or retract them through repentance. For unless sins of this kind were retracted through repentance, they would never be remitted, as the Adversaries themselves teach: and consequently, they would be punished for eternity. But the latter is absurd. Therefore also the former. The assumption is proven, because where there is an obligation to repentance there is a promise of pardon, under the condition of repentance. But in the covenant of works there was no promise of pardon. Therefore, there was no obligation to repentance. The major is clear per se. The minor is proven, because the promise of pardon, or remission of sins, pertains to the covenant of grace, and not to the covenant of works: especially

since sins are not washed away, except by the blood and merits of Christ. See Bellarmine, book 4 on Justification, chapter 2, §Fourth it is proved, where he posits this, as a dogma conceded by all, that the promise of pardon pertains to the Gospel, but not to the law, or covenant of works.

Section VI.

Whether and in what way the malice in every sin, even venial, is infinite?
And whether infinite punishment corresponds to it?

Our fifth reason is taken from the infinite malice, which is found in venial sin no less than in mortal. For from it, it follows that infinite punishment is owed to it. But that this reason may be better understood, it must be noted first that the infinity of punishment corresponds to the infinity of guilt. For punishment ought to be proportionate to guilt, as Thomas warns in the first part of the second part, question 87, article 4.

2. Second, it must be noted that guilt is in some way infinite, and in some way finite: For first it is infinite objectively and extrinsically, insofar as it is committed against infinite good. Second it is infinite extensively, and by reason of duration, because viz. its blemish, or stain, endures for eternity as much as is on the part of the sinner (for he per se or by his own powers, can never purge it) and consequently from itself and divine mercy forgiving having been set aside, it would exclude the sinner from the heavenly kingdom for eternity, and subject him to infernal punishments. For nothing defiled can be admitted into that kingdom. Third, it is finite intensively, whether you consider the entity of the act itself, for an infinitely intense act cannot be elicited by a finite creature, or the privation annexed to the entity. For that is the privation of finite rectitude or conformity with the law. And it is confirmed, because if the malice of sin were infinite in quantity, or intension all sins would be equal, and none would be greater or less than another. For one infinite cannot be greater than another.

3. Third, it must be noted that the punishment due to sins, and to be suffered in hell, is also in some way finite, and in some way infinite. For first it is infinite objectively, because it deprives the sinner of infinite good, that is, GOD, according to that, Matthew 25:41, Depart from me. Second, it is infinite extensively, or by reason of duration, according to that which follows, into eternal fire. But why the punishment of the reprobate ought to be eternal, various reasons are brought forward by Theologians: I will bring forward here only one, and that taken from the eternity of guilt. For first, the stain contracted from mortal sins committed in this life endures in them for eternity: and consequently, the reprobate are for eternity filthy, and unworthy of the fellowship and friendship of GOD. Second, their habitual depravity and malice, and specifically their hatred towards God, endures for eternity. Therefore also their punishment ought to endure for eternity. For it is just, that he who never ceases to be evil, never cease to be miserable. Third, it is finite intensively, both as to the sadness by which they are affected on account of the loss of the highest good, which pertains to the punishment of loss, and as to the torments, which they suffer from infernal fire, which pertain to the punishment of sense. The reason is manifest, because a finite creature is not capable of infinite torments.

4. Here it can be asked, whether the punishment of the reprobate is infinite intensively by right (for it is certain that it is not infinite intensively in fact, as is clear from the things said) that is, whether their sins merit punishment infinitely intense? For some more recent Pontificians, as Vasquez testifies, in the first part of the second part on question 87, article 4, have taught that mortal sin from itself is owed punishment infinitely intense, if it could be inflicted, that is, if the sinner were capable of it. Yet the contrary must be held, and the proposed question must be responded to by two assertions. The former is; the reprobate are undoubtedly owed punishments much more serious and bitter than those which they actually suffer. For Theologians truly say that GOD, just as he remunerates the pious above condign merit, so also punishes the impious short of, or below condign merit. The latter is: yet punishments infinitely intense by the order of justice are not owed to them. For first, this punishment is not possible: for a finite creature is not capable of infinite torments, as I warned above. Second, if punishment infinitely intense were owed to sin, it would follow that GOD could not satisfy his justice by punishing the impious: because viz. this punishment cannot be inflicted on them, that is, they are not capable of such punishment. But it is absurd to say that some punishment is owed to sins by right which GOD cannot inflict. Third, hence it would follow that equal punishment by right is owed to all sins, or that all sins merit equal punishment: which is certainly absurd, and contrary to divine justice. This connection or inference is proved: for if infinite punishment is owed to the least sin, both extensively and intensively, certainly no greater punishment can be appointed, to the greatest and most horrible sins.

5. These things having been posited we argue thus; Infinite guilt by the order of justice merits infinite punishment. But venial guilt is no less infinite than mortal. Therefore it merits infinite punishment. The major proposition of this syllogism is manifest, and is conceded by all. The minor is proven, because venial guilt, no less than mortal, is infinite objectively: for it is committed against the infinite majesty of GOD the legislator. It is also infinite extensively or by reason of duration, because its stain from itself and divine mercy having been set aside endures for eternity. Therefore punishment both objective and extensive is owed to it.

6. To this argument Alphonsus Curiel in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, doubt 2, §2, responds with these words. "Although," he says, "mortal sin is said to be infinite evil objectively and extrinsically, on account of the infinity of GOD offended through it, it does not follow, that also in that way venial sin is said to be infinitely evil; the reason for the difference is, that mortal sin is so against GOD, that it altogether averts from him, and dissolves friendship with him: but venial sin neither averts from GOD, nor dissolves his friendship; and therefore the objective, or extrinsic infinity, which only belongs to sin by reason of aversion, is found simply, and absolutely in mortal sin, and not in venial, except very improperly, insofar as it is an offense, although light, against GOD."

7. This response in no way satisfies. For first, venial sin is also (as will be clear below) so against GOD, that it averts the sinner from him. Second, that venial sin does not dissolve the friendship, which intercedes between us and GOD, is not from its own nature, but from the grace and mercy of GOD. For from itself it merits eternal punishment, as is clear from the three

preceding arguments: and consequently it also merits exclusion from the favor and friendship of GOD.

Section VII.

Whether mortal and venial sin differ in this, that mortal is from itself irremissible through the removal of the principle of remission, that is, of inherent grace; but venial is from itself remissible through the non-removal of that principle?

In the preceding sections we considered the former difference, which the Adversaries assign between mortal and venial sin: viz. that, which is taken from the punishment of these sins. Now the latter difference taken from the remission of these sins must be considered, which when the adversaries assign, they say that mortal sin is from itself irremissible because it takes away the principle of repentance and remission, that is, habitual or inherent grace; but venial sin is from itself remissible, because it does not deprive the sinner of that inherent grace, which is necessary for doing penance, and consequently for obtaining remission. Wherefore two things here must be considered: viz. the difference, which the Pontificians assign between mortal and venial sin, and the foundation or reason for that difference. The difference is that mortal sin is from itself irremissible, but venial sin is from itself remissible. But the foundation of the difference is that mortal sin takes away the principle of repentance, or inherent grace, but venial sin does not take it away. Therefore, first I will speak about the foundation of this difference; then about the difference itself.

2. Concerning the foundation of this difference, insofar as in it, it is asserted, that inherent grace, and thus, the principle of repentance and remission is totally taken away through mortal sins, I say First that it is false and contrary to the very views of the Pontifical School. For first, although those sinning mortally cast off and lose many gifts of the Holy Spirit, yet they do not totally lose any of those three habits, (I understand faith, hope and charity) without which the spiritual life cannot consist, as is clear from the testimonies of Scripture cited in part 1, section 7, §6. Second, although it were true, what the Adversaries say, that inherent grace is utterly abolished through mortal sins, yet it would not follow from this that the principle of repentance and remission is taken away through mortal sins, provided that doctrine about the providence of grace concerning the impious, which the Adversaries commonly hand down in the Schools, is true.

3. For the principle of repentance and remission is not only inherent or habitual grace, but also assisting grace, or the grace of special aid, which consists not in some permanent habit, but in the motion or action of GOD, by which he knocks at the heart of man, and excites and moves him to good supernatural acts. It cannot be denied that this grace is the principle of repentance and remission, because in the first conversion of man or calling to salvation, which precedes justification, supernatural power and potency of believing, and doing penance is conferred on

him, not through the infusion of habitual grace (for this is not infused before justification, but at the same moment, in which justification happens) but through the assisting grace of special aid, or through the motion of GOD knocking at the heart of man, and exciting him, as the Pontificians commonly teach. If therefore mortal sin does not take away or exclude this assisting grace, it does not take away and exclude the principle of repentance and remission. But the former is true from the received and common doctrine of the Pontificians. Therefore, the latter is true.

4. The assumption is proven, because most Pontificians teach that any man using reason, however impious he may be, has sufficient grace or aid for pious and salutary actions, so that at any time he can convert himself to GOD through salutary repentance, and thus consequently obtain the remission of his sins. See Vega, book 13 on the Council of Trent, chapter 13, Molina in the Concord of Grace and Free Will, question 14, article 13, disputation 10, Likewise Valentia, volume 2, disputation 8, question 3, point 4, §1, proposition 2, where he defends this opinion as more common and more received in the Schools, and cites various Pontifical writers for it. But other Pontificians teach that this aid of assisting and sufficient grace for conversion and repentance, is given to men however impious, not indeed always, but for place and time. And specifically they say that this sufficient aid of assisting grace, is never lacking to man, at that time when he is bound to convert himself to GOD and do penance, or, as Bellarmine speaks, when he cannot avoid sin without conversion. See Bellarmine book 2 on grace, chapter 5, and chapter 8, response to objection 1, Becanus in the little work on the aids of grace, chapter 6, and Didacus Alvarez book 1 on the aids of grace, disputation 112, number 5, conclusion 2, see also Suarez's little work on the reviviscence of merits, disputation 1, section 3, §11, where he says that sinners having lapsed into mortal sins, are not immediately deprived of sufficient aids of grace, indeed not even of efficacious ones on account of sin committed. If these things are true, the doctrine of the Pontificians on the removal of the principle of repentance and remission through mortal sins clearly collapses. For who would say that those lack the principle of penance, to whom the aids of grace necessary and sufficient for doing penance, indeed also sometimes efficacious, are supplied.

5. You will say first that the Pontificians perhaps mean this, that mortal sin takes away the habitual and internal principle of penance: but not that it takes away every principle necessary and sufficient for penance. I respond: this does not satisfy our argument. For if someone can truly and properly do penance, and thus consequently obtain remission, by the power of any principle, whether habitual and inherent, or external and assisting, his sin cannot be said to be irremissible on account of the defect of the principle required for penance. Certainly it does not matter much through which principle someone can do penance, provided he can truly and properly do it.

6. Second, someone will say with Suarez, book 3 on the aids of grace, chapter 6, §4 and 5, that sinners having lapsed into mortal sins do not always when they are bound to convert themselves to GOD, actually have all, but only certain aids necessary for their conversion by way of principle; yet they are said to have sufficient aid, because through the aids which they actually have, it is in their power to do something, which if they do, they will obtain the other necessary aids. Whence Suarez in the place cited says that aid of this kind is not sufficient

absolutely, proximately, and in act, but remotely and in potency. I respond First: to certain sinners immediately after they have committed mortal sin, aid absolutely and proximately sufficient, indeed efficacious, is communicated, as Suarez teaches in the little work on the reviviscence of merits, disputation 1, section 3, §11. And it is clear from the example of Peter, whom CHRIST immediately after his third denial looked upon with eyes of mercy, and brought back into the way of justice through sincere repentance. Second, just as a lame or sick man who cannot walk except by leaning on a staff, is truly said to be able to walk, although he does not actually use the staff, because viz. he can take it up, and use it when he wills, so also those who do not actually have all the aids required for repentance, but can have them when and as often as they will, they are truly said to be able to do penance. And it is confirmed: because he who is guilty of mortal sin, when he is bound to do penance, either truly and properly can do penance, or cannot. If the Adversaries say that he truly and properly can do penance, we have our proposition: for it will follow that the principle of repentance and remission is not lacking to the sinner having lapsed into mortal sins: that is, the aids of grace necessary for doing penance. If they say that he truly and properly cannot, it will follow according to their doctrine that he is impenitent not freely but necessarily, and consequently his impenitence is not sin. For liberty or indifference to the opposite, from their opinion, is a necessary condition for a moral act, both good and evil.

7. I say second that this foundation does not suffice to establish this latter difference between mortal and venial sin, which the Pontificians assign, when they say that mortal sin is from itself irremissible, and venial sin is from itself remissible. For the sense of that difference is, that mortal sin from its own proper nature is irremissible and venial sin from its own proper nature is remissible. But for establishing this difference only that foundation can suffice, which is taken from the very nature of mortal and venial sin. But this foundation is not taken from the nature of these sins: but from a certain effect of them, which merely and absolutely, or at least principally, depends on the will of GOD. For that mortal sin excludes, or expels inherent grace, whether totally, or in part, but venial sin does not take it away, or exclude it, does not depend on the nature of these sins, but on the divine will.

8. This is proven First concerning mortal sin, because GOD can now according to his absolute power, conserve inherent grace, and specifically the habit of charity, together with mortal sin, and if it had thus seemed good to him, that is, if he had thus decreed from eternity, he could have always and ordinarily conserved it in sinners defiled by mortal sin. Thus Suarez teaches, book 7 on divine grace, chapter 19, §14 and following. Likewise, chapter 20, §8 and following. Thus also Alphonsus Curiel teaches writing on the first objection to the second objection of St. Thomas, question 113, article 2, doubt 3, §2 and 3, and many other more recent writers: and they confirm this by this reason, because the conservation of grace and charity in him who has sinned mortally, and has not yet retracted that sin, involves no contradiction or repugnance, either with respect to the power of God, or with respect to his goodness and wisdom, that is, that I may say it more plainly and briefly, just as it does not exceed the power of infinite divine potency, so also it in no way is repugnant to his wisdom and goodness, as they demonstrate at length in the places cited. Therefore, that mortal sin actually excludes, and takes away grace, is not from its own nature, but from the will and decree of GOD, who has decreed to take away

inherent or habitual grace, at least in part, from those who sin mortally. Therefore, God could have effected that mortal sin no less than venial, be remissible through the non-removal of inherent grace, or the internal and habitual principle required for repentance and consequently, that mortal sin now is irremissible through the removal of inherent grace, as the Adversaries want, is not from the very nature of mortal sin, but from the free will of GOD.

9. You will say that although mortal sin, from itself, and its own nature, does not exclude grace because it does not expel it physically, or through properly so-called, and true efficiency, yet it can be truly said to exclude it, from itself, and its own nature, because from itself, it excludes it morally, or demeritoriously: that is, it merits that he who has sinned, be deprived of inherent grace. I respond: First, meriting the privation of grace, is no less truly attributed to venial sin than to mortal, as will soon be clear. Therefore, mortal sin is not distinguished from venial through this. Second, for a sin to be said to be exclusive, or expulsive of grace, and charity, or irremissible through the expulsion of grace, it is not enough, that it merit the privation of grace and charity. For mortal sin also merits the privation, or removal of the habits of faith and hope, as all the Adversaries confess: and yet someone would ineptly say that mortal sin is exclusive of faith and hope, or is irremissible through the removal of those habits, and this because it does not actually and really expel them. For sinners having lapsed into mortal sins, although they lose grace and charity, from the opinion of the Pontificians, yet they do not lose faith and hope, See Suarez on divine grace, book 11, chapter 5.

10. Similarly, the same is proven concerning venial sin. For that venial sins do not exclude inherent grace, or that the privation of grace does not follow the commission of venial sin, is not from the nature of venial sin itself, but from the will and mercy of GOD, who deals with us graciously and mercifully, not rendering to us according to our sins, Psalm 103:10. This is proven First, because although venial sins do not now actually dissolve the friendship, which intercedes between us and GOD, yet from themselves, and according to the rigor of justice, they merit the dissolution of divine friendship. Therefore, they also merit the abstraction, or removal of inherent grace, which is the effect of divine favor and friendship. The consequence is clear per se: The antecedent is proven, because venial sins merit eternal death, as was proven in the preceding sections, and will be more clear from part 3 of this disputation. Therefore, they merit the dissolution of that friendship, which intercedes between man and GOD. Second, although they did not merit the dissolution of that friendship, which is between GOD and just men, yet they could merit the removal of habitual or inherent grace, and this because true friendship can be and be conserved between God and men although they lacked habitual or inherent grace, provided they have the aids of assisting grace sufficient and efficacious, so that they could live piously, and avoid more serious sins. This is so certain, that the most learned of the number of the Adversaries concede it: for although Aureolus, and certain others with him taught that no one can be pleasing to God, or a friend of God, without inherent habitual justice, yet most of the Pontificians who are considered more subtle, and who have treated this question more accurately think the contrary. See Suarez, book 7 on divine grace, chapter 3, and Alphonsus Curiel on the first part of the second part, question 113, article 2, doubt 2, §6.

11. You will say: Although it is possible for someone to be punished by the privation of inherent grace, and yet not be punished by exclusion from the favor and friendship of God, as the argument already brought forward proves, yet it does not follow from this that venial sin merits the privation of inherent grace. For the removal of so great a gift seems to be a more serious punishment, than the nature of venial sin demands. I respond: The arguments which the Adversaries bring forward for the lightness of the punishment due to venial sin, only prove that they do not merit exclusion from the favor of God in this life, and eternal death in the other world. Therefore, these arguments notwithstanding, we can say that venial sin merits that privation of inherent grace, which does not bring with it exclusion from divine favor, and does not pave the way to eternal death. Second, if God on account of venial sin took away inherent grace from a justified man, and yet did not exclude him from his favor, nor deprive him of the aids of assisting grace necessary for living piously, but only took away that habitual facility of acting well, he could not justly complain about the severity of God, especially since it is from his highest kindness that we are not consumed, as is had in Lamentations 3:22. Third, the reason which Suarez brings forward in book 11 on divine grace, chapter 8, §15, to prove that venial sin in no way merits the privation of grace, is false and inept. For he says that a man by sinning venially in no way averts himself from God, as from the ultimate end: and thence he concludes, that God cannot on account of venial sins avert himself from man, by taking away grace from him, either in whole, or in part. I say that this reason is false, because he who sins venially truly and properly averts himself from God, and converts himself to the creature, as will be clear below. I conclude therefore that venial sin can be justly punished by God with the privation of grace, and consequently not from itself, and its own nature, but from the will and decree of God, it has this that it does not exclude inherent grace. Certain even of the Adversaries have seen and acknowledged the truth of this conclusion: whence Filiucius the Jesuit, treatise 22 of his work, §277, "it would not be," he says, "against justice, if God willed that all charity be corrupted through venial sins."

12. Thus far we have spoken about the foundation of the latter difference, which the Adversaries assign between mortal and venial sin. Now we will briefly discuss the difference itself. The Adversaries say that venial sin is from itself remissible. We condemn that way of speaking as false and absurd, and on the contrary we assert that venial sin is not from itself, and its own nature, but per accidens remissible in those in whom it is venial, that is, in the elect justified. For that in them it is venial or remissible, it has this not from its own nature but per accidens, viz. on account of the condition of the subject, that is of the man who has sinned venially: namely because he is endowed with inherent grace, and because he is a son of GOD, a friend, and confederate, with whom GOD wants to deal not according to the rigor of justice but according to the multitude of his mercies. Meanwhile we confess that venial sin has this from itself and its own nature, that it is worthy of a lighter degree of eternal punishment than mortal sin. We confess also that GOD in some way respects the very nature of venial sins, and their respective lightness (for they are not absolutely but respectively and comparatively light, because viz. they are lighter than mortal sins) when on account of them he does not inflict those serious punishments, which he is accustomed to inflict on account of mortal sins; and when under the condition of easier repentance he forgives them. But in this we dissent from the Adversaries, that they say that the nature of venial sins per se, and divine mercy having been set aside, is

the total and adequate reason, why GOD does not inflict on account of venial sins those more serious punishments, and forgives them so easily. For we on the contrary assert that GOD, when he so acts towards the justified having lapsed into venial sins, chiefly respects his own mercy, and that gracious covenant which he has deigned to enter into with us in CHRIST.

13. Therefore, that some lighter sin, as e.g. an idle word is not from itself, and its own nature, venial or remissible, we demonstrate by this reason. If lighter sins are from themselves and their own nature remissible, they are also from themselves and their own nature revocable through repentance, or, as others speak, retractable. But the latter is false. Therefore also the former. The proposition is proven because if these sins, which are called venial, were never retracted through repentance, or through some other act of charity, then they would never be remitted: but if they were never remitted, they would always be punished: and thus their punishment would be eternal. Therefore it is the same thing to be from itself venial, or remissible, and to be from itself retractable, or revocable through repentance, or through some act of charity. Whence Bellarmine, book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 14, response to the 3rd objection, says that venial sin is by its nature remissible, because it leaves charity in man, from whose act it can be easily remitted. And Vasquez in the first part of the second part, disputation 142, chapter 2, at the end, says that venial sins are from themselves reparable through repentance, because they remain conjoined with the principle of life, that is with grace.

14. The assumption is also proven, First, because that does not belong to a thing from itself and its own nature, which belongs to it by the benefit of another thing entirely different in kind from it. But to be retractable through repentance belongs to venial sins by the benefit of charity or grace, which is a thing entirely different in kind from venial sins. For a justified man, who has committed venial sin has the power and potency of doing penance for venial sin, not from venial sin itself, but from inherent grace, which GOD mercifully, and from unowed favor conserves in him. Second, venial sins do not necessarily bring with them something, whence they can be revoked through repentance. Or, that I may say it more plainly, they are not from themselves necessarily conjoined with inherent grace, which is the principle of the acts of repentance and charity, by which venial sins are retracted. Therefore they are not from themselves and their own nature retractable through repentance. The antecedent is proven because those sins, which in the elect are venial, can be, and often are without inherent grace, that is, they can be and often are in a subject destitute of grace and charity, as is clear from the reprobate committing those sins. Therefore they are not from themselves and necessarily conjoined with inherent grace.

15. Someone will say First, that although venial sins from themselves, and their own nature, are not conjoined with grace, yet from themselves and their own nature they are not repugnant to grace, nor do they take it away: and this is enough for them to be said to be from themselves remissible, or reparable through repentance. I respond it is not enough: for although it were true, what they say, that venial sins from themselves and their own nature do not take away that inherent grace, which is necessary for obtaining their remission, yet it would still be true, that they from themselves do not posit that grace, and consequently they are not from their own nature revocable through repentance. For, as I warned above, those lighter sins are not

remissible and venial, except insofar as they are revocable through repentance, for repentance is always required for the remission of sin.

16. Second, someone will say with Cajetan in the first part of the second part on question 87, article 5, that although venial sin is not from itself remissible positively as the argument proves (because from itself it does not posit the principle of remission and repentance, that is, from itself and its own nature it is not conjoined with grace and charity) nevertheless it can be said to be from itself remissible negatively, that is, it can be said to be remissible through the non-removal of the principle of repentance and remission: because viz. it does not exclude or take away inherent grace, which is the principle of repentance and remission. I respond First that way of speaking is very abusive and improper. For just as someone would ineptly say that that, which per se, and from itself, is neither a cause of joy nor of sorrow (as e.g. to remove a mote, to rub the beard) is per se delightful or pleasant, because it does not bring sadness, and does not take away the cause of joy, so also they speak ineptly and absurdly who say that lighter sins are from themselves remissible, because they do not take away the principle or cause of repentance and remission. Second, that venial sin is remissible negatively through the non-removal of inherent grace, which is the principle of repentance and remission, that, I say, it is remissible in this way, is not from the nature of this sin, but from the will and decree of GOD. For venial sin merits the removal or privation of grace, as I warned above in §10 of this section, and consequently GOD could justly effect that one sinning venially lack habitual or inherent grace, through which venial sin, is remissible. Therefore Cajetan falsely says that venial sin is from itself and its own nature remissible negatively.

Theological Disputation On The true difference between mortal and venial sin, and the impossibility of fulfilling the law of God due to the daily incursion of venial sins.

Part Three, In which the fundamental differences which the Pontificians assign between mortal and venial sin are considered and refuted.

Section I.

Whether the Adversaries rightly teach that offenses committed in light matter do not merit the dissolution of friendship.

The differences which the Pontificians establish between mortal and venial sin can be distinguished into principal and subservient or fundamental. The principal differences are those which express the formal and specific reasons why certain sins are called mortal and certain venial in the Papistic Schools. For in the Schools of the Adversaries certain sins are called mortal because they merit death and exclude grace, and consequently are from themselves irremissible. But on the contrary, they teach that venial sins from themselves do not merit eternal punishment, nor exclude grace, and thus are from themselves remissible, because viz. they do not take away the principle of repentance and remission. The subservient or fundamental differences are the foundations and reasons which are brought forward by the Adversaries, to show that mortal sins merit eternal punishment and privation of grace, but venial sins do not merit these. We dealt with the former kind of differences, which the Pontificians assign between mortal and venial sins, in the preceding part of this disputation: and consequently in this third and last part we must deal with the latter kind of them.

2. The fundamental differences, which the Pontificians assign between mortal and venial sins, are various. For they say that venial sins do not merit eternal punishment, and privation of grace, but mortal sins do merit them

1. Because these are against the law, but those are not.
2. Because these are repugnant to charity, those are not repugnant.
3. Because these avert the sinner from God, as from the ultimate end, but those do not avert.
4. Because these both on the part of the object, and on the part of the way in which they are committed, are serious offenses, but those, either on the part of the object, or on the part of the way in which they are committed, are light offenses. I will make the beginning of this third part from this last difference between mortal and venial sin. For that having been removed the rest of the differences are more easily refuted. And because the Adversaries disputing about the lightness of venial sins, prove that they cannot or ought not dissolve the friendship, which intercedes between us and God, because light offenses are not accustomed to dissolve the friendship which is between men; therefore I will show first that the argument of the Adversaries taken from the analogy of human friendship is not firm and valid: then I will prove that venial sins, although they are much lighter than mortal sins, yet are not simply and absolutely light offenses.

3. As to the former, we boldly affirm that divine friendship, and the causes or reasons on account of which it is either conserved or dissolved are not to be measured by human friendship, and by the causes through which it is conserved or dissolved. And this First, because there are many kinds of offenses, which do not dissolve human friendship, and yet, from the very opinion of the Adversaries, they dissolve divine friendship and deservedly exclude men from his favor. Error e.g. and ignorance, even if they are vincible, very often so excuse and extenuate the offenses and injuries of friends, even serious ones, that they do not dissolve their

friendship. But yet it does not follow from this that serious offenses committed from vincible ignorance do not dissolve the friendship between GOD and men. For offenses of this kind are called mortal sins. Likewise when someone, from the purpose and intention of doing good, offends a friend in a matter of greater moment, thinking that he is doing a thing most pleasing and most useful to him, he is not on that account excluded from the friendship or favor of his friend. But he who from zeal and the intention of pleasing God sins in a serious matter, as e.g. Paul who thought that by persecuting the Church he was rendering obedience to God, he sins mortally, and consequently is considered to be excluded from the favor of God. Likewise good and prudent men are not accustomed, on account of one offense, even committed in a more serious matter, to exclude old, faithful, and best deserving friends from their favor and friendship. But one mortal sin committed by him, who for a long time before had persevered in a state of grace, and had been illustrious by many works of piety and charity, can and is accustomed, from the opinion of the Adversaries, to exclude him totally, indeed even finally, from divine favor. On account of this argument Gregory Martinez in the first part of the second part of St. Thomas, question 1, article 5, doubt 2, response to objection 2, confesses that the reason of divine and human friendship is unequal, because the former consists in indivisibility, but the latter has a certain latitude, and degrees: whence (he says) although human friendship is not lost through one act, yet divine is, (supply, through one act it can be lost) according to that of James. "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it."

4. Second, on account of light offenses a friend is not accustomed to inflict serious punishments on a friend, indeed not even a Lord on a servant or a Prince on a subject. But from the opinion of the Adversaries, God on account of venial sins, is accustomed to inflict the most serious and bitter punishments, viz. of Purgatory, of which the least is greater than the greatest punishment of this life, from the opinion of Thomas in the 4th book of Sentences, distinction 20, question 1, article 2.

5. Third, an evident reason can be brought forward why divine friendship, rather than human can be justly dissolved on account of offenses committed in light matter: For there are four things, which render offenses of this kind committed against men excusable and venial. viz. 1. That they are inevitable. 2. That they are mutual, and common among friends. 3. That they are not committed against the special admonition of the offended friend. 4. That they are not committed from full and perfect deliberation. But of these, the first three never, but the fourth not always, but only sometimes can excuse offenses committed against GOD.

6. First therefore in human friendship the inevitability or necessity of offenses committed in light matter excuses them. For we cannot require from our friends, that they please us in all things, and in no thing offend us: and this because this condition is simply impossible and surpasses their powers. But when GOD made a covenant of friendship with men before the fall, he could justly require this from them, and this because in that state we could most easily and without any trouble avoid all sins, even the slightest. Nor does it matter that now we cannot do this; for although we have lost the potency or powers of rendering perfect obedience, yet GOD has not lost his right of requiring perfect obedience from us, and consequently he could even now require it, if he willed to deal with us according to strict right.

7. Second, lighter offenses committed against men are held venial, because they are mutual, and common among friends, that is, because friends mutually offend each other by slight injuries of this kind. But mutual offenses require mutual pardon. But in divine friendship the matter is not so. For we offend our GOD by innumerable sins, but he never afflicts or offends us by even the slightest injury or offense. Whence in Jeremiah 2:5 GOD thus complains about the Israelite people-"What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me?" and in Lamentations 3:33 he testifies that when he punishes men on account of sins, he does not afflict from his heart, or grieve the children of men.

8. Third, lighter offenses of men committed against their friends ought to and can excuse the defect of admonition, or at least of such admonition, as GOD uses, when he admonishes us lest we commit sins, even the slightest. Certainly if a friend offended by a friend in a light or small matter not only admonished him, but also most diligently asked, exhorted and adjured him, not to offend him henceforth in that matter, and at the same time also signified that that thing, although otherwise light in itself, and of small moment, very greatly displeased him, and if the other friend thus admonished relapsed into the same offense every hour and moment of hours, certainly he by doing this would give the most just cause to the friend thus offended of excluding him from his favor. The matter plainly so holds here. For GOD, not only admonishes, and commands, but also asks us, exhorts, and through his ministers adjures us, to beware of all sin, indeed also in his word he openly declares that he pursues all iniquity with the highest hatred, as being most contrary to his nature. He therefore who after so many admonitions, exhortations, and adjurations commits sins, even the slightest, which so greatly displease GOD, he certainly deserves to be excluded from the favor of GOD.

9. Fourth, error, ignorance, inadvertence, and in a word, defect of full deliberation often excuse lighter offenses committed by men against their friends. For otherwise if someone knowingly, willingly, and from full deliberation offends a friend in some thing, which, although it be of lighter moment, he nevertheless understands to very greatly displease his friend, his offense is held for a remarkable injury and contempt: and consequently is judged to merit the dissolution of friendship. But often those sins, which are called light and venial, are perfectly voluntary, that is are committed from full deliberation by those, who well understand that they displease GOD, as all the Adversaries confess. For they hold for venial sins most deliberate or most voluntary in a matter of light moment. Therefore they must be held for a remarkable injury and contempt, and consequently must be judged to merit the dissolution of our friendship with GOD. See other responses to the argument of the Adversaries taken from the analogy of human friendship in Chamier, volume 3, book 6, chapter 10, §18 and 19, and in Pareus on book 1 of Bellarmine on the loss of grace, chapter 11, response to argument 4.

Section II.

Whether the sins, which are called venial, are simply and absolutely light offenses.

1. As to the latter, I say that venial sins, although they are much lighter than mortal sins, yet are not simply and absolutely light offenses.

2. For first, venial sin is committed against the divine excellence. For it is offended by any sin, even the slightest: and consequently venial sin is of a higher order, or is a more serious evil, than are all the evils of punishment, or offenses committed against men, as such, as Suarez expressly confesses, book 11 on divine grace, chapter 3, §17.

3. Second, a sin is so much more serious, by how much greater is the person, against whom it is committed, as e.g. to strike a prince is a much more serious sin, than to strike a private man. Therefore if the person against whom it is committed, be infinitely more excellent than any other person, sin committed against him will be infinitely greater than any other sin; and consequently will be infinite sin, or will have infinite malice. This illation is not ours, but of Granatensis, a pious and learned Pontifical writer, who in the book, which Michael ab Isselt collected from his various works, and entitled Flores Granatensis, part 3, chapter 5, thus writes: "It is certain," he says, "that by how much nobler is the person against whom it is committed, by so much is the sin greater, so that if the offended person be of infinite dignity, also the offense made against him will be of infinite gravity." Here Granatensis seems to speak about sin in general: but whether he speaks about it, or does not speak about it, it matters little. For the argument which he uses can well be accommodated to every sin. For if it well follows that mortal sin is of infinite gravity, because it is committed against infinite majesty, it also well follows that venial sin is of infinite gravity, because it also is committed against the infinite majesty of GOD, as is clear per se. Curiel responds in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, doubt 2, §2, that the reason of venial and mortal sin is unequal, because mortal sin is so against the infinite majesty of GOD, that it averts the sinner from GOD, insofar as he is the ultimate end, which cannot be said of venial sin. But this escape we will refute below and we will show that through venial sin, no less truly and properly than through mortal sin man is averted from GOD, insofar as he is the ultimate end of human life.

4. Third, if we consider all the circumstances of venial sin, we will see that it is badly compared to light offenses, or to the more minute negligences of men in their obedience towards friends. For, as I warned above, an offense even committed in light matter against a man, is judged to be serious, and to merit the dissolution of friendship, if it is committed after various admonitions, exhortations, and adjurations to the contrary of the offended person, and if the offended person has often before declared that he very greatly detests that thing, in which the offense is committed. But venial sin is committed in this way against the glorious and infinite majesty of God, as is clear from the things which have been said in the preceding section. To which this also must be added, that the hatred, by which God testifies in his word that he pursues any sin, is far greater than that hatred, by which we detest things most troublesome and harmful to us.

For since pious men and burning with the love of God detest all sins, even the slightest, certainly God himself must detest them much more. Whence Granatensis in the place recently cited, chapter 7, says, that the hatred, by which GOD pursues sin, is so great that no intellect comprehends it: and he confirms this by this reason, "By how much," he says, "someone is better, by so much more he loves goodness, and hates malice or iniquity, since therefore GOD is good, and not only good, but infinitely good, it follows that he loves goodness with infinite love, and pursues malice with infinite hatred." These things Granatensis.

5. Similarly an offense, even committed in light matter against a man, as I warned above, is judged to be serious, and to merit the dissolution of friendship, if it is committed from full deliberation against him, to whom the offender knows it to very greatly displease. Therefore also the slightest sin committed from full deliberation against GOD, to whom it so greatly displeases, must be held for a serious offense and injury. And it is confirmed, because, he who in a matter of small moment offends God from full deliberation, prefers slight delight or utility to the divine will, and to the observance of his commandments. For to a man deliberating, whether he should commit a sin of this kind, on the one hand is proposed the delight, or utility, which that sin can bring to him, on the other hand are proposed the will of God, and the love by which he pursues virtue, and the hatred by which God pursues vice: so that God is put in one scale, and temporal utility or delight in the other. If therefore in the conclusion of this deliberation, the man resolves with himself to commit that sin, he manifestly prefers temporal, and that slight utility to God: and so takes away the crown and glory, which is owed to God as to the ultimate end, and places it on the creature, that is, on temporal utility, or pleasure. Thus Granatensis reasons in the place cited, chapter 6: where he seems to speak expressly about mortal sin alone: but the argument which he uses there, can be accommodated no less to venial than to mortal sin.

Section III.

Whether venial sins are against the law and whether they are against the end of the law?

1. As to the first question proposed in the title of this Section, Lombard in the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 35, letter A, Thomas in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, to the 1st objection, and among the more recent Pontificians Bellarmine, book 4 on Justification, chapter 14, have taught that venial sins are not against, but besides the law, and only mortal sins are truly and properly against the precepts of the law. Concerning this opinion I say first that it is in itself false and absurd.

2. For first, he who sins venially, can be condemned to a certain punishment, as all confess. But every condemnation to punishment happens by force of some law, by which such punishment is decreed to sinners. Since therefore the law threatens punishment only to those who transgress it, it manifestly follows that those, who sin venially, as such, are transgressors of the law.

3. Second, venial sins are against right reason. For right reason dictates that idle words, inordinate thoughts, and many other things of those, which are reckoned under the name of venial sins, are illicit and to be fled: Therefore venial sins are also against the law of God. The reason for the consequence is, because right reason prohibiting something, or dictating that something is evil, illicit, or to be fled, is nothing other than the law of God written on the heart, according to that, Romans 2:15, "who show the work of the law written in their hearts."

4. Third, if venial sins were not against, but only besides the law of God, now they would not be sins, but indifferent works: and consequently licit. For whatever is prohibited by no law is licit. Likewise if this doctrine were true, he who abstained from these sins, would do a work not of precept, but of counsel, and thus would do a work of supererogation. For a work of counsel and of supererogation are the same thing. For the Pontificians teach, that every good work, which is not commanded by God, is a work of supererogation. But certainly it is very absurd to say that a man by abstaining from any sin does a work of supererogation.

5. I say second that this opinion both formerly displeased and today displeases most of the Pontifical Theologians. For that this opinion must be rejected, unless it is taken otherwise than the words sound, is taught by Durandus in the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 42, question 6, §12, Major in the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 42, question 6, Vega on the Council of Trent, book 14, chapter 13, Vasquez in the first part of the second part, disputation 143, chapter 3, Valentia, volume 2, disputation 6, question 18, point 1, column 712, Alphonsus Curiel in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, doubt 3, §1, Estius in the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 35, §2, Becanus, part 2 of the Theological Summa, treatise 2, chapter 2, question 7, conclusion 2, John à Rada in the 2nd book of Sentences, controversy 17, article 1, conclusion 2, and Francisco de Herrera in the 2nd book of Sentences, disputation 42, question 4, at the end; Indeed Bellarmine himself, although in book 4 on justification, chapter 14, he condemns Andreas de Vega asserting that sins are properly against the law of God, yet in book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 11, he confesses that some venial sins are against the law, but not perfectly.

6. To the second question proposed in the title, Estius in the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 35, §2, Becanus in the Theological Summa, part 2, treatise 2, chapter 2, question 7, and many others, desiring to soften and more cautiously propose that perilous and difficult opinion of Lombard, Thomas and Bellarmine, respond that venial sins are not properly against the end of the law. For (they say) the end of the law is charity, 1 Timothy 1:5. But no venial sin is against charity. But this opinion is no less false and absurd than the preceding. For charity is said to be the end of the law, as Becanus teaches in the place cited, because all the precepts of the law look to this, that we love God from the whole heart, and our neighbor, as ourselves, Matthew 22:37 and 39, and Romans 13:8 and 10. But he who sins venially does not love GOD from the whole heart, as will be clear from section 5.

Section IV.

Whether it must be said simply and without addition that venial sins are against the law of God?

Alphonsus Curiel in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, doubt 3, proposes his opinion on this question in these words. "Venial sin in reality is against the law, against some precept: although, as pertains to the way of speaking, it must not be said simply, and without qualification, that it is against the law, or against a precept: and this because in Scripture the name of law or precept taken absolutely is accustomed to be attributed only to precepts, the observance of which is necessary for attaining eternal life, etc. But venial sins are not against precepts of this kind. Therefore it must not be said simply, and without qualification, that they are against a precept, or against the law." Vasquez also embraces this opinion, in the first part of the second part, disputation 143, chapter 4, number 8.

2. This distinction of the precepts of the divine law into those, the observance of which is necessary for attaining eternal grace, and those, the observance of which is not necessary, can be understood in two ways. For when the adversaries say that the observance of certain precepts is not necessary for obtaining eternal life, or, what amounts to the same thing, that certain sins are not prohibited under the penalty of eternity; if they understand that they are now under the covenant of grace not prohibited strictly and precisely under the peril of eternal punishment, although according to the rigor of justice, they can be prohibited under that penalty, and were also actually prohibited under it in the covenant of works, they say nothing against us, but rather pass over into our opinion. For we directly and expressly assert as much, as is clear from the first part of this Disputation, section 3, §5, 6 and 7. But if they understand that there are certain precepts the observance of which GOD cannot require, as precisely necessary for salvation, and consequently, the transgression of which he cannot justly punish with eternal punishment, they manifestly err, and in assigning the fundamental reason, on account of which venial sins are said not to merit death, they beg the question.

3. I say they err because, we proved above first that all sins, even the slightest can be justly prohibited by God under the penalty of eternal death: second that they were all prohibited under this penalty in the covenant of works: and third that those sins, which are comparatively most light, are in themselves and simply offenses serious, and worthy of eternal death. We demonstrated the first two of these in part 2, section 5, but the third in the first two sections of this third part, and almost the whole second part by most valid arguments.

4. I say they beg the question, because to show that venial sins do not merit eternal death, they take for an argument that very thing, which is here called into controversy, viz. that the transgressions of certain divine precepts cannot justly be prohibited under the penalty of eternal death, because namely they do not merit eternal death.

5. But (says Curiel) sacred Scripture often testifies, that no one can attain eternal glory unless he keeps the commandments, as e.g. Matthew 19:17, John 14:15, and 1 John 2:4, which must

not be understood about all the commandments. For the commandments which prohibit venial sins, cannot be kept by the most just men, who nevertheless attain eternal glory. Therefore it must be understood only about certain commandments, and consequently, there are certain commandments, the observance of which is necessary for salvation, but there are certain, the observance of which is not necessary. Then he confirms it, because Scripture testifies that he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law, Romans 13:8. But he who sins only venially, loves his neighbor. Therefore he has fulfilled the law: that is, he has observed those precepts of the law, the observance of which is necessary for salvation.

6. I respond, that the testimonies of Sacred Scripture, which say that the observance of the commandments is necessary for salvation, and is actually fulfilled by those, who are endowed with true charity, must be understood in different ways. For some of them must be understood about the legal observance of the commandments, for which perfect and numerically absolute obedience, and, what amounts to the same thing, immunity from all sin, even venial, is necessary. But others must be understood about the Evangelical observance of the commandments, which requires from us, as precisely necessary for salvation, only that measure of obedience and spiritual perfection, which is possible through the aids of grace granted to us, and which easily consists with those lighter sins, without which none of the Saints lives, or can live. The first place cited by the Adversary is understood by many of the orthodox about that former observance of the divine commandments, and consequently from it, it is proven that the observance not of certain, but of all the precepts of the law, even of those which prohibit venial sins, is necessary for salvation. See Pareus on book 3 of Bellarmine on Justification, chapter 12, page 812, and book 4, chapter 2, page 966. The rest must be understood about the Evangelical observance of the commandments: and consequently from them it is proven only that there are certain precepts or prohibitions of the law, the observance of which now under the covenant of grace is not required, as precisely necessary for salvation, although according to the rigor of justice it could be so required. Whence it follows that the transgressions of those commandments are venial sins, not from themselves, or according to the rigor of the law, but according to Evangelical indulgence and from the singular mercy of God.

Section V.

Whether venial sins are repugnant to charity which is the end of the law?

1. BELLARMINE in book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 11, argument 3, tries to prove by this reason that venial sins do not merit eternal death. "Eternal punishment is not owed to sin except by reason of aversion from the eternal good, which is God. But venial sin from its own nature does not place aversion from God in man, since it is not repugnant to charity, as is clear. Therefore venial sin from its own nature is not of such a kind, that it makes man guilty of everlasting punishment." The proposition of this syllogism is sound and orthodox. But the assumption, and its confirmation, are most false, as will be manifestly clear from this Section, and the two following.

2. To the question therefore proposed in the title of this section, We respond that venial sins truly and properly are repugnant to charity, which is the end of the law: and this because they are repugnant to the precept of charity by which we are ordered to love GOD above all things, or from the whole heart. But we prove this First from those interpretations of this precept, which the Adversaries bring forward. For this precept is so explained by Bellarmine, in the book on Monks, chapters 2 and 13, likewise book 1 on the loss of grace, chapter 12, response to objection 2, and by Becanus, part 2 of the Summa, treatise 4, chapter 4, question 1, §30, "to love God from the whole heart, is so to love him, that we place or equate nothing before the love of GOD, and that we will to offend God through the love or fear of no creature." Similarly Suarez, book 1 on divine grace, chapter 31, §13, so describes the love of GOD above all things, "The love of God," he says, "above all things ought to be an obediential love, by which the will wills to God not only the goodness which he has in himself, but also on account of that wills to please God in all things, to flee all things contrary, only that it may please him." Vasquez in the first part of the second part, disputation 194, chapter 3, near the end. "It is the same thing," he says, "to love God from the whole heart, as to love God from the whole simple heart, in which nothing of contrary love is admitted."

3. Thus also Valentia, volume 3, disputation 3, question 4, point 2, column 545, speaking about that precept by which we are ordered to love GOD from the whole heart, from the whole soul, etc. "By these things," he says, "is not required from us the highest intension also of the act of dilection, or that we love GOD more than all things intensively, but that we indeed love GOD summarily appreciatively: which is done when no other thing is placed before God as he is our ultimate end." Indeed Thomas himself in the second part of the second part, question 24, in the body of article 12, explains the precept of charity in the same sense: "It is," he says, "of the nature of charity that man so love GOD, that he will to subject himself to him in all things, and to follow the rule of his precepts in all things: for whatever is contrary to his precepts, is manifestly contrary to charity." And Alvarez, book 6 on the aids of divine grace, disputation 51, §4, says that to love GOD from the opinion of Thomas, is to refer all things to GOD as to the ultimate end, and to admit nothing contrary to divine dilection in the heart.

4. But according to these explications of the precept of charity it is manifest that innumerable venial sins are contrary to charity. For he who commits the slightest sin knowingly, willingly, and from full deliberation, prefers temporal utility, or delight, on account of which he sins, to GOD and his love, and consequently does not love GOD above all things appreciatively: he does not care to offend GOD for the love of a vile creature: he does not strive to please GOD in all things, nor flee all things which are contrary to the divine will: he also admits something of contrary love or illicit love of creatures into his heart: he, as will be clear below, does not refer all things to GOD as to the ultimate end. Finally, to use the words of Thomas, he does not subject himself to GOD in all things, nor follow the rule of his precepts in all things. For every sin is a transgression of the divine law: for otherwise it would not be sin.

5. To this argument the Adversaries variously respond and use various escapes to show that those who sin only venially perfectly subject themselves to the law of GOD and follow the rule of his precepts in all things. For some say that venial sins are not against but besides the law. But

others that they are not against those precepts of the law, the observance of which is necessary for salvation. But these escapes have been refuted in the two preceding sections.

6. Second, we prove by a most evident reason that venial sins are opposed to the precept of charity. For he who loves something more than GOD, that is who prefers something to him, he manifestly transgresses the precept of charity. But he who sins venially, prefers something to GOD. Therefore, etc. The major of this syllogism is conceded by all the Adversaries. For they say that mortal sin is opposed to charity because he who commits it prefers the creature to the creator. See Vasquez in the first part of the second part, disputation 143, chapter 4, number 7. Therefore, that we may prove the minor, which the adversaries pertinaciously deny, we ask of them what it is for a sinner to prefer the creature to the creator? or to love it more than the creator? Likewise in what sense they themselves say that he, who sins mortally loves the creature more than the creator?

7. For when they say that he who sins mortally loves the creature more than the creator, they either understand that he formally and expressly holds the creature for a more excellent good, or they understand that he virtually and interpretatively does this, that is, so conducts himself, as if the creature were a more excellent good, and to be preferred to GOD. The former cannot be said: for Christians committing fornication constantly believe that GOD is the highest good of man: indeed they are often so affected, that they are prepared to expose their life, and honor, and all their faculties to peril for the glory of GOD and the defense of true religion, if necessity so demands, as Gregory Martinez teaches in the first objection to the second objection of question 1, article 5, doubt 2, response to argument 3, and Vasquez on the same article 5, disputation 5, chapter 1, response to argument 3. Moreover, this is more confirmed by the example of those who sin mortally from crass and vincible ignorance, thinking that they are rendering obedience to GOD, as Paul e.g. in the persecution of the Church. For they do, or at least seem to themselves to do what they do, from true love towards GOD: and consequently they do not formally and expressly prefer the creature to the creator. The latter therefore must be said, as Alphonsus Curiel well observed in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, doubt 3, §3, viz. that they do this only virtually and interpretatively: because viz. on account of the love of creatures they dare to offend GOD and afflict him with injury. But he who sins venially, also does this virtually and interpretatively: because on account of a creature he does not hesitate to transgress the will and precept of GOD, and thus so conducts himself, as if the creature were to be preferred to the creator. For to transgress the commandment on account of a creature, and to despise the will of the creator, is so to conduct oneself, as if more were to be attributed to the creature than to the creator.

8. The Adversaries respond that the reason in this matter is unequal of those who mortally, and of those who venially transgress the commandments of GOD on account of some creature. And this first because he who sins venially, does not so prefer the creature to GOD, that he wills on account of it to commit a serious offense against GOD, as does he who sins mortally. Second, he who sins venially cannot be said to prefer the creature to divine friendship: and this because he knows that divine friendship, which intercedes between us and GOD, is not dissolved

through venial sins, as it is dissolved through mortal sins. But these reasons are inept and manifestly beg the question.

9. For as to the former reason, it supposes that as true and certain, which is here most called into controversy, viz. that venial sins are simply and absolutely speaking light offenses. We showed this to be false above in section 2 of this third part. Second, from this reason it only follows, what we freely concede, viz. that he who sins venially, does not so prefer the creature to the creator, as does he who sins mortally. But what is this to the point? For if in some way he prefers it, our argument stands firm, and in it, it is concluded that those who sin venially love the creature more than the creator virtually or interpretatively.

10. As to the latter reason, those who commit venial sins from full deliberation, thinking that friendship with GOD is not dissolved through them, either think that they from themselves are so light that they do not merit the dissolution of divine friendship, or they think that they indeed merit the dissolution of divine friendship, but that GOD so graciously acts with us, that on account of them he does not exclude us from his friendship. If they think that they do not merit the dissolution of divine friendship, they remarkably err, indeed they seriously sin against GOD by pronouncing their sins to be light, and by fixing limits and terms to the justice of GOD, as if it were not lawful for GOD to punish sins of this kind with more serious penalties. The absurdity of this error is clear from the whole 2nd part of this disputation, and from the preceding sections of this part: and consequently here the Adversaries manifestly beg the question, when they say that these sins do not merit the dissolution of divine friendship. But if they think that they merit the dissolution of divine friendship, and that it is from the grace of GOD, that those who commit them are not excluded from the favor of GOD, then it will follow that those, who on account of the love of creatures offend GOD by these sins, prefer creatures to GOD and his favor and friendship. For he who on account of some creature does that which can justly exclude him from the favor of GOD, must be said to prefer the creature to the favor of GOD. Nor does the contempt of divine friendship, of which he is guilty, in any way excuse or extenuate, but on the contrary very greatly aggravates, that he knows that these sins do not actually exclude a justified man from the favor or friendship of GOD. For since it is from mere and singular grace of GOD that venial sins do not exclude the sinner from the favor of GOD, certainly those who abuse this clemency of GOD for the license of sinning, must be said to remarkably despise the friendship of GOD, and to turn his grace into lasciviousness.

11. From these arguments, which we have sufficiently vindicated from the evasions of the Adversaries, it is clear that Vasquez trifles when in disputation 143 on the first part of the second part of St. Thomas, chapter 4, number 7, he follows Alexander of Hales saying that he who sins venially loves the creature short of GOD, but not above GOD, or equally with GOD. For although the just man sinning venially, habitually loves GOD above all things, yet insofar as he sins venially, he prefers the creature to GOD, and consequently loves it above GOD, as we have already proven. And it is confirmed from the words of Vasquez himself in that place where he says that to love the creature short of GOD, is so to love it, that the love of the creature is not against the divine law of charity. But the love of the creature in venial sin is directly repugnant to

the divine law of charity, as it is explained by the Pontificians themselves, as is abundantly clear from their testimonies cited above.

Section VI.

Whether venial sins place aversion from GOD, as from the ultimate end, in the sinner?

The Pontificians think that mortal sin differs from venial sin principally in this, that one sinning mortally averts himself from GOD, insofar as he is the ultimate end, but one sinning venially, although through the sin which he commits he is in some way diverted from GOD, yet he is not properly averted from him. That the falsity of this delirium may appear, certain things must be noted beforehand.

2. First, it must be noted that the aversion of the sinner from God is distinguished by the Adversaries into formal or express aversion, and virtual or implicit aversion. Formal aversion from their opinion is, when he who sins expressly and formally wills not to have friendship with God and not to have God for his ultimate end, but the creature. Virtual aversion is, when he who sins, although he does not expressly will to constitute his ultimate end in the creature rather than in the creator, yet he does this interpretatively: that is, he so conducts himself, as if he held not the creator, but the creature for the ultimate end.

3. Second, it must be noted that that formal and express aversion from God is not found in every mortal sin, but only in hatred of God, and in the sin of Atheism, but virtual or implicit aversion from God is found in every mortal sin, from the opinion of the adversaries, and this because, whoever sins mortally so that he may obtain some created good, as e.g. temporal pleasure, or utility, omits the obedience due to God. But whoever does this, so conducts himself, as if he loved that created good more than God: and consequently he denies to GOD the place of the ultimate end, of which it is proper to be loved above all things.

4. Third, because in the Schools it is commonly accustomed to be said that those, who avert themselves from God as from the ultimate end, constitute the ultimate end in the creature, it must be noted that someone can constitute the ultimate end in the creature in two ways, viz. positively, and negatively. He positively constitutes the ultimate end in the creature, who loves the creature as his total and supreme good, and refers all things which he does to it, as to the end. He negatively constitutes his ultimate end in the creature, who although he loves it only as a partial good, and thus does not hold it for his highest good, yet in no way refers, nor can refer it to God, as to the ultimate end. He who sins mortally, does not constitute the ultimate end in the creature in the former way, unless with the Atheists he is in that error, that the highest good of man is in pleasure, riches, or in some other created thing: yet he constitutes the ultimate end in the creature in the latter way, because that illicit utility or pleasure which by sinning he acquires, or strives to acquire, is something irreferrable to God, that is, it is neither actually

referred, nor can it be referred to the glory of GOD as to the end, since it displeases GOD, and is prohibited by him.

5. These things having been posited, it is asked whether one sinning venially, no less truly and properly, than one sinning mortally, averts himself from God by virtual aversion? and whether he constitutes the ultimate end in the creature at least negatively? The Adversaries assert that he who sins venially, is not averted from God, as from the ultimate end: but they bring forward no solid reason for their assertion; indeed while they try to explain and confirm this they most manifestly beg the question, declaring and proving obscure things through those which are equally obscure and doubtful. We on the contrary assert that he who sins venially truly and properly averts himself from God as from the ultimate end: and we prove this.

6. First from the very words of the Adversaries, by which they describe that virtual aversion from God, which happens through mortal sin. Suarez, book 11 on divine grace, chapter 3, §8, says that he, who sins mortally, averts himself from God, and seriously offends him, and prefers the creature to him, because he loves it above God: and he proves this, because he loves it against the will of God. Becanus, part 2 of the Summa, treatise 2, chapter 2, question 2, §2, thus disputes about the aversion from God of those who sin mortally: "The reason," he says, "of mortal sin properly consists in aversion from God or in contempt of divine friendship, or in this that someone loves the creature more than God. For these three, if they are well explained, are equivalent. For he who sins mortally, e.g. who commits adultery, loves pleasure more than God, because so that he can enjoy pleasure, he despises the law of God, which prohibits adultery, and in this way averts himself from the law and will of God, and consequently also from the friendship of God." But these things are no less truly said about venial sin than about mortal sin. For he who sins venially, prefers the creature to God, and loves it more than God, according to the reasoning of Suarez, and this because he loves it against the will of God. Likewise, he who sins venially by uttering a jocose lie for the sake of pleasure, he according to the reasoning of Becanus, loves pleasure more than God, because so that he can enjoy that slight pleasure he despises the law of God which prohibits every lie, and in this way averts himself from the law and will of God, and consequently also from the friendship of God, supply, if God willed to deal with him according to the rigor of his justice.

7. Second, for a sinner to avert himself from God to the creature is in reality nothing other than to love the creature more than God. For he who loves the creature more than God, he, as I warned in Section 2, takes away the crown and glory, which is owed to GOD as to the ultimate end and highest good, and places it on a vile creature. Whence Vasquez in the first part of the second part, disputation 5, chapter 1, proves against Adrian that he who sins mortally, averts himself from GOD, principally by this argument, because he loves the creature more than GOD. But he who sins venially on account of temporal utility or pleasure, he loves it more than GOD. Therefore he who sins venially, averts himself from GOD, as from the ultimate end. The proposition of this syllogism is clear per se. The assumption is also manifest, partly from section 2, partly also from the things which have been said in the preceding section from §6 to the end.

8. Third, whoever converts himself to the creature, and in it constitutes the ultimate end, he averts himself from GOD, insofar as he is the ultimate end. But one sinning venially converts himself to the creature, and in it constitutes the ultimate end. Therefore he averts himself from GOD. The proposition is clear: because the whole reason for aversion from GOD is the inordinate conversion to the creature, just as the whole reason for recession from the terminus a quo is the accession to the terminus ad quem. The assumption is proven: because every human action has some ultimate end, as Thomas teaches in the first part of the second part, question 1, article 6, and consequently that action which is venial sin, has some ultimate end. But it does not have God for the ultimate end, because it is repugnant to any sin to be referred to God. Therefore it has the creature for the ultimate end.

Section VII.

Whether a justified man by sinning venially constitutes the ultimate end in the creature?

To the last argument of the third argument proposed in the previous section, which viz. one sinning venially does not refer, nor can refer, his vicious act to God as to the end, St. Thomas often responds, viz. in the first part of the second part, question 88, article 1, to the 2nd and 3rd objections, and in the second part of the second part, question 24, article 10, to the 2nd objection, and in the disputed questions, question 7 on evil, article 1, to the 4th, 9th and 22nd objections. The sum of the response is, that the immediate object of venial sin, or the creature which is loved in the commission of venial sin, is referred by the justified man to God habitually, although not actually, and this because venial sin does not exclude inherent grace and charity, through which the justified man habitually, or through a stable and permanent inclination, refers himself and all his things to God. Therefore he posits this difference between mortal and venial sin that one sinning mortally refers his work to God neither actually nor habitually, and this because by sinning he loses the habit of charity, without which nothing can be referred to God; but one sinning venially refers his work to God not indeed in act (because when he sins he refers nothing in act to GOD) but in habit, as has already been said.

2. More recent Thomists try in various ways to explain and defend this doctrine of his, but they waste their effort. For although it often happens that someone refers his work to God in habit, when in act he does not refer it to him; (as e.g. when some pious person renders obedience to his parents thinking nothing in act about God) yet this never happens, except in good and praiseworthy works which can be referred to GOD, nor are they repugnant to this relation. But this cannot be said about sins, of whatever kind they may be, i.e. whether they are mortal or venial, because they are of such a nature that they cannot be referred to the glory of God by the sinner. Whence I argue thus: what can never be referred to God in act, that is badly said to be referred to God habitually. But venial sin can never be referred to God in act, since it displeases him, and is prohibited by him. Therefore it is badly said to be referred to God habitually. Vasquez uses this argument in the first part of the second part, question 1, article 5, disputation 5,

chapter 2, and Curiel on the same article 5, single doubt, §6, and by it they refute the evasions of Cajetan, and others by which they try to defend this doctrine of Thomas.

3. The response of Thomas having been rejected, Vasquez responds otherwise to the argument last proposed in the preceding section in the place already cited and disputation 143, chapter 4, §10. Where in reality he teaches nothing other, than that one sinning does not in that way or in that degree constitute the ultimate end in the creature through venial sin, in which he constitutes it through mortal sin. For he posits this difference between mortal and venial sin, that the love of the creature in mortal sin is not only irreferable to GOD, or cannot be referred to GOD as to the end, but is also contrary to the love of charity, by which GOD is loved by us as the ultimate end on account of himself, but the love of the creature in venial sin although it cannot be referred to GOD as to the end, yet is not contrary to GOD, or to the love of charity, by which we love GOD.

4. This response is in many names unworthy of so great a Theologian. For first it matters little that one sinning venially loves the creature otherwise, than one sinning mortally: for this notwithstanding one sinning venially no less truly and properly constitutes the ultimate end in the creature than one sinning mortally, and this because he can no more refer his work to GOD as to the end, than one sinning mortally. Therefore he refers it only to the creature: and consequently the creature is the ultimate end of one sinning venially, as such. Second, Vasquez falsely asserts that the illicit love of the creature in venial sin is not contrary to charity, or to GOD, who ought to be the ultimate end of all our actions. For charity requires from us that we obey the law of GOD, and that we love GOD above all things, and thus that we prefer no created good to GOD and his will. But he who sins venially, transgresses the divine law, as is clear from sections 3 and 4 of this part, and prefers a vile creature to GOD and his will, as has been proven in section 5. Third, the reason which Vasquez brings forward why the illicit love of the creature in venial sin is not repugnant to GOD or to charity, when he says that it does not exclude, or expel the habits of charity and grace, by which we are habitually directed and ordered to GOD, (that is, according to their mind, does not merit the privation of grace and charity) this reason, I say, is very inept and ridiculous.

5. For first it is a nugatory begging of the question. For it takes and supposes that as true and certain, which is here principally called into controversy, viz. that venial sin is so light, that it does not merit to be punished by the privation of grace. Second, a circle is here manifestly committed. For Vasquez proves that venial sin from itself and its own nature is such, or is so light, that it does not merit the privation of charity and grace, because through it man is not averted from GOD, nor does he constitute his ultimate end in the creature, as he does through mortal sin. And again, he proves that through venial sin man is not averted from GOD, nor does he constitute the ultimate end in the creature, because this sin does not exclude charity (or does not merit the privation of charity) by which we are habitually directed and ordered to GOD. Third, from this, that charity, by which we are habitually referred and ordered to GOD, remains in the pious sinning venially, this only follows that the pious, insofar as they are endowed with the habit of charity are habitually referred to GOD: but it does not follow that the pious, insofar as they sin venially, are habitually referred to GOD. For just as venial sin itself is in no way referred to GOD as to the end, so also one sinning venially, as such, is in no way referred to GOD: For as such,

he in some way displeases GOD, and transgresses the law of GOD. Therefore, the habitual relation or ordination of the pious man to GOD, or to the ultimate end through the habit of charity notwithstanding, it can happen that in act through venial sin he is averted from him, and converted to the creature as to the ultimate end speaking about the ultimate end negatively so called.

6. Alphonsus Curiel in the first part of the second part, question 1, article 5, single doubt, §6, perceiving, as it seems, the weakness of the response brought forward by Vasquez, devised another. For to that illation, which we used in the third argument proposed in the preceding section, saying that venial sin does not have GOD for the ultimate end, and consequently has the creature for the ultimate end; he responds by denying the consequence. For he thinks that there is given something midway between GOD as the ultimate end, and the creature as the ultimate end, viz. blessedness in common, or, that I may use his words, the good satiating our appetite. Whence he thus writes about the just or pious man sinning venially: "For," he says, "although the operation or action, which is venial sin as much as is from the intention of the one operating, does not have GOD for the ultimate end, it does not follow that it has the creature for the ultimate end, because it is enough that it has for the ultimate end the good satiating the appetite of the just man himself."

7. That we may refute this escape of Alphonsus Curiel, it must be noted first that he here does not speak about the end of venial sin in general, or in any subject, but only about the end of venial sin committed by a just man. Second, it must be noted that there is a twofold ultimate end, viz. the formal ultimate end and the material ultimate end. The formal ultimate end is the common or general notion of blessedness, or as others speak, is the ratio of blessedness in common. The material ultimate end is that thing in particular in which that ratio of blessedness is found. E.g. this ratio of blessedness according to the truth of the thing is found in GOD alone. But according to the estimation of men it is also often found in creatures. Third, it must be noted that every man on account of the formal ultimate end, that is, blessedness in common desires all things which he desires, and does all things which he does, whether they are good and licit, or evil and illicit. For we always propose this to ourselves in our actions, that we may have ourselves better, and consequently that we may make further progress in the attainment of the good satiating our appetite. But the ratio of the material ultimate end is far otherwise. For not all have in all their actions one and the same material end proposed to themselves; but some constitute it in the creator, others in some creature. Thomas hands down this observation in the first part of the second part, question 1, article 7, and it is received by all.

8. These things having been posited we refute the escape of Curiel by these reasons. First, the ultimate end of venial sin committed by an impious or unregenerate man is the creature; as all confess. Therefore also the ultimate end of venial sin committed by a pious man. For the nature of both is the same. Nor does it matter that in the pious man there is the habit of charity, which can direct his actions to another end. For, as Curiel himself notes in the cited place, charity can refer to GOD those things alone which are referrible to him. But it is repugnant to venial sins to be referred to GOD, as he himself also confesses in the same place. Second, he who sins mortally has blessedness in common for the ultimate end, as is clear from the third observation,

and from the doctrine of Thomas in the place there cited: and yet this notwithstanding Theologians say that he constitutes the ultimate end for himself in the creature. Therefore the same must be said about one sinning venially, as such. The reason for the consequence is because one sinning mortally is said to constitute the ultimate end for himself in the creature, not because the creature, which he loves in any mortal sin, is to him the ultimate end positively: for this is impossible; but because it is to him the ultimate end negatively (namely because in no way can he refer it to GOD as to the ultimate end) according to the distinction proposed by me in the preceding section, §4. But one sinning venially in this way constitutes the ultimate end in the creature, as Curiel himself not only teaches, but also efficaciously proves. It must therefore be said that those sinning venially, as such, no less truly and properly than those sinning mortally have blessedness in common for the formal ultimate end, and have the creature for the material ultimate end. For those sinning venially can have no other material end, as is clear from the things said.

9. Curiel responds, however, that the reason of those sinning mortally and of those sinning venially is unequal: And this because those sinning mortally not only cannot refer the creature which they love to God, but also, as much as is on the part of their affection, or, as others say, interpretatively, they prefer the creature, which they love to GOD, which cannot here be said about those sinning venially. This response was refuted in section 5. For in it we proved that also those sinning venially interpretatively prefer the creature on account of which they sin to GOD, because viz. on account of it they despise the will of GOD, and do not hesitate to transgress his commandment. There also we refuted the further evasions of Curiel, by which he endeavors to explain and confirm this response. Moreover, this response of Curiel does not exhaust the difficulty. For since one sinning venially has the creature for the material end, or for the thing, in which he seeks a certain temporal felicity, and since that creature illicitly desired by him is in no way referred to a further material end, that is, to GOD, as Curiel concedes, it necessarily follows that that creature is his ultimate material end. Whence it is clear that what we said above is true, that all sinning, whether they sin mortally or venially, have blessedness in common for the formal ultimate end, and have the creature for the material ultimate end.

10. Suarez and Martinez have also devised other evasions: For Suarez, book 11 on divine grace, chapter 3, §12 and 17, thinks that a just man sinning venially, although for the material end, he neither has GOD, nor something referrible to GOD, yet cannot be said to constitute the ultimate end in the creature: and this because either he does not perfectly deliberate as is necessary to constitute for himself the ultimate end, or the matter of sin (or that in which it is committed) is so slight that morally it does not fix his heart and love on it, formally or virtually preferring it to divine love. "For no one," he says, "morally speaking is considered so to love a slight thing and of small moment." Here Suarez brings forward two reasons, why one sinning venially cannot be said to constitute the ultimate end in the creature. One is because he does not fully and perfectly deliberate, the second is, because the creature, which he has for an end, he does not love so vehemently, that he can be said to fix his heart and love on it, or virtually to prefer it to GOD. But the former reason does not have place in all venial sins, but in those only, which are said to be venial from subreption, or from indeliberation: and consequently this reason notwithstanding, what we here assert will be true about the rest of venial sins, viz. that a man by

committing them constitutes the ultimate end in the creature. But the latter reason is plainly inept, because from it, it follows that also those who sin mortally, as such, do not always constitute the ultimate end in the creature. For often men sin mortally in that thing which they do not much love, indeed from which they very greatly abhor, as e.g. when he who most detests homicide, from sudden anger, or from vincible ignorance commits homicide. Finally, whoever from full deliberation sins in a most slight matter, he virtually and interpretatively prefers the creature to GOD, as is clear from the things which have been said above, section 5.

11. Gregory Martinez in the first part of the second part, question 1, article 5, doubt 1, response to the 9th objection, responds to our argument by three responses. First, he says that the act of venial sin committed by a just man is referred to God as to the end habitually, although not actually. But this response was refuted at the beginning of this section. Second, he says that the act of venial sin is referred to GOD according to the common ratio of good or delectable, although not according to the particular ratio of the highest delectable, or the highest good. But what is it to be referred to GOD according to the common ratio of delectable? To this question he himself responds, writing on article 6 of the aforesaid question, doubt 3, near the end: "The sinner," he says, "and the demon even in their sins, seek God, considering God according to the common ratio of good. For the fullness of goodness is found in no other than in God: therefore by seeking good in common they are said to seek God implicitly." And at the beginning of the same doubt he cites Thomas saying, that in every good the highest good is desired, because it is a certain participation of the highest good, which is GOD. But in this sense not only venial sin, but also mortal sin is referred to GOD, as Martinez expressly teaches in the same place, and is clear per se: for one sinning mortally has good in common for an end as I warned above. But no one on account of this denies that one sinning mortally constitutes the ultimate end in the creature. Therefore neither on account of this must it be denied that one sinning venially constitutes the ultimate end in the creature. Third, he says that a just man, or faithful, sinning venially tends to GOD, and to the creature on account of which he sins, as to two adequate ultimate ends, and not subordinate, but to GOD efficaciously and absolutely, to the creature truly inefficaciously, imperfectly, and in a certain respect: and this because through the habit of charity remaining in him he principally respects God, as his ultimate end. But first if one sinning venially in some way respects the creature as an end, then in some way he constitutes the ultimate end in the creature and thus we have our proposition. Second, although the very person who sins venially habitually tends to GOD, as to the end, on account of the habit of charity remaining in him, yet the very act of venial sin committed by him in no way tends to God, as to the end, because it can in no way be referred to God. Therefore one sinning venially, as such, is in no way referred to God, as to the end, but has the creature for the ultimate end. Third, it is per accidens, and from the mere grace of God, that the habit of charity is not taken away from a man sinning venially. For every sin according to the rigor of justice, merits the removal of charity, as we proved above. Fourth, if God in a man sinning mortally conserved the habit of charity (which is possible even from the opinion of the Adversaries, as we warned above, part 2, section 7), then one sinning mortally would tend to God habitually, and yet this notwithstanding, he would simply and absolutely be said to constitute the ultimate end in the creature. Therefore the same can be said about one sinning venially even if the habit of charity remains in him.

Appendix On the possibility of fulfilling the law of God considered according to Evangelical ἐπιείκεια.

In Which two most useful questions are treated and explained.

The former is, Whether God under the covenant of grace strictly and precisely requires from us that observance of his commandments, which is simply impossible for us, as necessary for salvation? The latter is, Whether from our doctrine on the culpable imperfection of good works it follows that the justified fulfill no part of the law, or do no good work?

Section I. Whether that observance of the law, which God now under the covenant of grace requires from us as precisely necessary for salvation, is possible for us?

First assertion: That obedience of the law, which the covenant of works, or the law considered according to its rigor, requires from us, as precisely necessary for salvation, is possible for us neither through the powers of nature (as the Pelagians once thought) nor through the ordinary aids of grace (as the Pontificians teach today). This is clear, as from many other arguments, so also from the impossibility of avoiding venial sins, which the Adversaries commonly acknowledge. For that these are truly against the law of GOD, against the end of the law, that is, Charity, and against the precepts the observance of which from the rigor of justice is necessary for attaining eternal life, we have demonstrated at length against all the evasions of the Adversaries in the second and third parts of this disputation.

2. Second assertion: That obedience of the law which the Gospel, or covenant of grace, requires from us as precisely necessary for salvation, is possible for us through the ordinary aids of grace; indeed all the commandments of God, whether legal or Evangelical, can be fulfilled separately from that part from which they are now proposed by God as strictly and precisely obliging under the peril and penalty of eternal damnation. Many Doctors, and those of great name, among the Evangelicals expressly defend this assertion, viz. Morton in the Appeal of the Protestants, book 5, chapter 12, section 4, where he affirms that Evangelical observance of the divine commandments, that is, that imperfect obedience which is graciously accepted by GOD in CHRIST, is possible, and that the doctrine of those, who deny this, is from the common opinion of the Fathers and Evangelicals an heretical opinion; Davenant on actual justice, chapter 51, where he says that GOD gives all things (that is supplies the powers of doing all things) which according to the Evangelical covenant necessarily pertain to obtaining salvation; and yet does not give in this life the possibility of fulfilling the law, understand, according to the rigor of it; and that illustrious defender of the orthodox faith Francis White in the Reply to the Response of Fischer the Jesuit, page 524, where to the adversary objecting that GOD does not require impossibilities from us, thus responds: "If the Jesuit speaks about actions and duties simply necessary for salvation, GOD, (as respecting us in CHRIST through the mirror of Evangelical mercy) does not require impossibilities from his sons." and page 533. "We do not believe," he says, "that GOD in the Evangelical covenant severely requires anything from us, as necessary for salvation, which we cannot do through the aid of grace."

3. The rest of our writers do not really dissent from these, although few of them openly assert this. For they teach that we have been freed by CHRIST from the moral law, insofar as it is a damning law or from the damnation and curse of the law. Which liberation encompasses two remarkable benefits or two special, and at least by reason distinct liberations, from the opinion of Theologians. Viz. 1. Liberation from the damnation, to which we were liable on account of past sins: 2. Liberation from the damnation, to which we can be liable, indeed necessarily, grace having been set aside, we will be, on account of the imperfection of the obedience to be rendered hereafter. Whence that great Calvin in book 2 of the Institutes, chapter 7, §15, teaches that it is necessary that we be loosed from the bonds, unless we will perish miserably under them. "But from what bonds? from that austere and infested exaction, which remits nothing from the highest right, nor leaves any transgression unpunished." For as the same Author warns in the preceding words, "the law not only teaches, but imperiously requires what it commands. If it is not exhibited, indeed if there is a cessation from duty in any part, it draws the thunderbolt of the curse." Similarly Polanus, in the Theological Syntagma, book 6, chapter 10, in the disputation against the Antinomians, response to objection 8, says: "Christians have been redeemed from the subjection of the law, not simply, as if they owe no more obedience to the law, but in a certain respect, namely insofar as they are no longer bound to fulfill most perfectly the law of GOD, which CHRIST has fulfilled for them." And chapter 38 of the same book, "The liberty," he says, "from the yoke of the moral law is twofold: namely both from the necessity of fulfilling the law most perfectly in this life, and consequently also from that most rigid, and most severe exaction of most perfect obedience to be rendered in this life for obtaining eternal life, and from the curse, etc." Piscator also in the Aphorisms of Christian Doctrine, place 8, which is on the law of GOD, Aphorism 15, affirms that "the faithful have been freed by CHRIST both from

the curse of the law, and from the rigor or rigid exaction of it:" and in the exegesis of that Aphorism he asserts that John when he says, that the commandments of GOD are not grievous, speaks about the liberation of the faithful from the rigor of the law. See also Zanchi, volume 4, chapter 28, on the abrogation of the law, Bucanus, place 33, question 8, Rivet in the Synopsis of Purer Theology, disputation 35, thesis 13, Amesius' Bellarmine Enervated, volume 4, book 6, chapter 5, near the end.

4. From these things it is clear that the doctrine proposed by me in assertion 2, on the obedience of the law, is commonly received in our Churches. For they teach that we have been freed by Christ from the necessity of fulfilling the law perfectly, under the penalty of damnation: and yet they do not think that we have been simply freed from the necessity of obeying the divine law, even under the penalty of damnation. For they acknowledge that good works are altogether necessary for salvation, and that no one can avoid eternal damnation, unless he follows holiness, without which no one will see GOD, Hebrews 12:14. Therefore they think that we are strictly and precisely obliged to that measure alone of obedience, which is possible for us through ordinary grace, under the peril of eternal damnation.

5. The same is also clear from many other heads of our doctrine. For our Theologians teach that that perfection, which GOD in the Scriptures, Genesis 17:1, Matthew 5:48, Colossians 1:28, 2 Timothy 3:17, requires from all as necessary for salvation, is a perfection not of degrees, but of parts: and this they confess is not only possible, but also that the faithful actually attain it. Whence that most illustrious Pareus in Bellarmine book 4 on Justification, chapter 11, response to the second kind of testimonies, "In the places," he says, "alleged, which attribute perfection to some, or require it from all, perfection is understood, not of degrees, or of that degree of obedience, which the rigor of the law requires, but perfection of parts, that is a true zeal of obeying GOD, of repugnatng lusts, and the beginning of obedience according to all the commandments of GOD." Similarly they teach that our good works although they are imperfectly good please God in Christ: and consequently that obedience which we render to the law is graciously accepted by God, as if it were absolutely perfect. See Ursinus' Catechetical Explications, part 3, place on good works, question 4, and Pareus book 4 of Bellarmine on Justification, chapter 15, response to testimony 7, where he thus writes: "Yet the works of the faithful are said to please God on the throne of mercy, on account of Christ accepting them, not because they are absolutely good in themselves, but he holds them accepted as if such; because they are the obsequies of sons." Since therefore that obedience, which GOD graciously accepts, is necessary, and according to the covenant of grace sufficient for salvation, and since that obedience, which is possible for us through the aid of the Holy Spirit, from the opinion of our Theologians, is graciously accepted by God, it manifestly follows that that measure of obedience, which is possible for us through the aid of the Holy Spirit, from the opinion of our Theologians is under this gracious covenant sufficient for salvation.

6. But why do I linger longer in citing the testimonies of men? the thing itself about which I speak is plain and clear from the Scriptures. For first Christ in Matthew 11:30 says that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light: which is to be understood not about the law considered according to its rigor, as the Pontificians dream, but about the Gospel, or covenant of grace, as our

Theologians everywhere teach. But the yoke of the Gospel would not be easy if it proposed no hope of salvation except under the condition of impossible, that is, of most exact obedience of the commandments. Likewise John in 1 Epistle, chapter 5, verse 3, says that the commandments of GOD are not grievous. But they would be grievous if they strictly and precisely required perfect obedience from us who cannot render it. Whence Beza on the place cited from Matthew 11 notes that the yoke of Christ is easy, because it can be easily borne. "For," he says, "his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5:3."

7. Second, Scripture promises eternal salvation to those walking according to the Spirit, Romans 8:1, 4 and 13. But those, who render this imperfect and Evangelical obedience walk according to the spirit, as is clear from the places cited. Therefore to them eternal salvation is promised, and consequently exact obedience is not necessary for them to attain salvation.

8. Finally, this can be demonstrated by a most evident reason. For either it must be said that now no obedience of the law is necessary for salvation, or it must be said that perfect obedience of the law is now necessary for salvation, or finally it must be said that that measure of obedience, which is possible through ordinary grace, is necessary and according to the gracious covenant of GOD sufficient for salvation. Of these three the first cannot be said, because thus there would be no necessity of good works: nor the second, because thus there would be no hope of salvation to those who do not perfectly fulfill the law. Therefore the third must be said, viz. that that measure of obedience, which is possible through grace, is now necessary and sufficient for salvation.

9. Someone will say that the second member of that disjunct is true, nor does that disadvantage follow from it, which is brought forward in its refutation, and this because the imperfection of the obedience rendered by any elect is supplied through the most exact obedience of Christ imputed to him, and thus it is not imputed to him unto damnation. I respond: if that which is lacking to the obedience rendered by him is supplied through the obedience of Christ imputed to him, we have what we want, viz. that that which is lacking to his obedience is not required from him as necessary for salvation, or as necessarily to be rendered by him in his own proper person. Therefore, that we may preclude all evasions of this kind against those thinking otherwise, we propose our argument thus: Besides the holiness or justice of Christ imputed to us, another is required to be truly and really rendered by us ourselves in our own proper persons, as necessary for salvation, it is required, I say, not under the nature of merit or satisfaction, but under the nature of gratitude and new obedience, Luke 11:28, John 13:17, Hebrews 12:14. But this obedience, which is thus to be rendered by us ourselves as necessary for salvation, is not that perfect obedience which exactly satisfies the law: for thus no one would attain eternal life. Therefore this obedience which is to be rendered by us ourselves as necessary for salvation, is that imperfect obedience, which God graciously accepts, and which is possible for us through grace.

10. You will say first, that someone can attain salvation, although he does not render that obedience, which is now required as necessary for salvation: and this because although he commits serious and horrible sins, yet he can do penance, and thus attain salvation. I respond

first: it implies a contradiction to say that someone can be saved without that obedience which is necessary for salvation. Second, a justified person having lapsed into serious sins cannot be saved, as long as he remains in that state. For when we commit mortal sin, then we do not walk according to the Spirit, but we wander from that way which leads to salvation, and we enter the broad way which leads to destruction: and consequently, if we proceed in it to the end of life, we will necessarily perish. But far be it from us to say this about a justified man sinning venially. For since our faith, repentance, and good works are defiled by those blemishes, which are truly sins, but in the elect through the grace of GOD are venial, and since by believing, doing penance, and doing good works, we walk according to the spirit, and make progress in that narrow way, which leads to salvation, we can not only remain in that state and attain salvation: but it is also necessary that we persevere in that state, that is, in the state of imperfect justice, and defiled by the admixture of venial sins (which we try to avoid but cannot) if we want to attain salvation. Not that this imperfection of justice is useful or necessary for salvation; for on the contrary it is plainly useless, indeed harmful and according to the rigor of justice deadly; but because during this life we cannot be fully freed from it, or what amounts to the same thing, because this imperfection is an inseparable condition of that justice in which we are bound to persevere. For now we know in part, and we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, 1 Corinthians 13:9-10.

11. You will say second: no one of the Saints can attain that perfection of obedience to which he has sufficient powers of grace granted by God for attaining. For all the pious confess, that they could have done more good works, than they actually did, and avoided more sins, than they actually avoided. Therefore even under the covenant of grace we are obliged to do more than we can do. I respond first: it implies a contradiction to say that someone absolutely cannot do that, for doing which he has sufficient powers of grace. Second, not only those defects of our obedience which are physically inevitable, that is, which we can avoid neither by the powers of nature, nor of grace, but also those which are morally inevitable, that is, which cannot be avoided except with the highest trouble and difficulty, if they happen in a lighter matter, and if there is in us a true and sincere zeal of avoiding them, are venial to us from the grace and mercy of God: and consequently we are not obliged strictly and precisely to avoid them under the peril of eternal damnation.

12. But (you will say) if we had applied a true and sincere zeal of avoiding those defects, we would have actually avoided them. I respond: it does not follow. For in the pious the zeal or endeavor of acting well has conjoined to itself a certain weakness of mind and will for constantly working, from which it often happens that some work, e.g. prayer, is begun with great attention and fervor, and a little after from negligence, culpable indeed, but venial through the grace of GOD, a vain thought creeps in, and is again immediately rejected, and thus that work is duly continued.

Section II. Whether the good works of the regenerate, from the opinion of the Evangelicals, are mortal sins? and whether simply and absolutely they are sins?

That I may fully respond to the latter question proposed above, I will briefly, but clearly propose the doctrine of our Theologians on the blemishes, which adhere to our good works, in three assertions.

2. First assertion: Although the good works of the regenerate, simply and absolutely, from the opinion of our Theologians, were sins, yet it would not follow from this, what the Adversaries gather from our doctrine, viz. that all the good works of the regenerate are mortal sins. The reason is: because although our Theologians teach that all sins are from themselves, and their own nature, mortal, yet they do not teach that all sins according to the administration of divine providence in punishing them under the covenant of grace are mortal; but on the contrary they affirm that the lighter offenses of the regenerate are sins venial through the grace and mercy of God: and among the lighter offenses of the regenerate they expressly number the blemishes, which adhere to the good works of the regenerate, as is clear from part 1 of this Disputation, section 2, §11.

3. Second assertion: The good works of the regenerate, from the opinion of our Theologians, are not simply and absolutely speaking sins, but only in a certain respect and in some regard. The reason is: because they have all things, although not perfectly and in the highest degree, which are essentially required for the moral goodness of an action. For they are good 1. as to the object, because they are concerned with a thing licit and prescribed by divine law. 2. as to the principle, because they are done from faith, and true love of GOD. 3. as to the end, because they are referred to the glory of GOD. And 4. as to the circumstances, because the due circumstances are observed in doing them. But they are called evil and aspersed with the stain of sin in a certain respect, and in some regard, because certain of these requisites are not in them in that degree of perfection, in which according to the rigor of the law they ought to be. e.g. although they are done from faith and charity, yet they are not done from faith simply and absolutely firm, nor from charity having that fervor, which the law requires.

4. For our charity is not only imperfect comparatively, or with respect to the charity which we will have in heaven, as Bellarmine dreams in book 4 on justification, chapter 17, but also absolutely, in itself, and culpably imperfect, as is clear both from the rigor of that precept you shall love the LORD your GOD with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole mind, and from the most manifest testimony of Augustine, who in epistle 29 to Jerome thus writes: "Most full charity which cannot be increased, as long as man lives here, is in no one. But as long as it can be increased, certainly that which is less than it ought, is from vice; from which vice there is not a just man on earth, who does good and does not sin: from which vice no one living will be justified in the sight of GOD: on account of which vice, however much we have profited, it is necessary for us to say, forgive us our debts."

5. But someone will say: If something is lacking to our good works, which the law requires for their perfection, they are simply evil, and in no way good. For an action cannot be good unless it has in itself all things which are required for the moral goodness of an action, according to that saying of Dionysius, which is celebrated in the Schools, Good is from an integral cause, evil from any defect. I respond: an action cannot be morally good, and acceptable to God under the nature of true and filial obedience, unless it has all the requisites in species, or in some degree, yet it can be good in that way, although it does not have all things in the highest degree of perfection, which the divine law requires. And in this sense that is true, Good is from an integral cause. But that which follows evil is from any defect, must be understood not of a gradual defect, but of a specific defect. But there is a specific, or essential defect, when something of the requisites for the moral goodness of an action, is in no way, or in no degree in the action; as e.g. when it does not proceed from the due principle, or is not referred to the due end. A gradual defect is, when all the requisites are in the action according to species, although not according to that individual perfection, which the law considered according to its rigor requires: as e.g. when the action proceeds from the due principle, but less perfect, or when it is referred to the due end, but not with so great purity and perfection of intention, as the law from the rigor of justice requires. An act defective in the former way is so evil, that it cannot be simply good. But if it is defective only in the latter way, it is truly and properly, although imperfectly good, as will be more clear from the confirmation of the third assertion.

6. Third assertion: an act can be truly good and pleasing to GOD acting with us according to the covenant of grace, although it is imperfectly good and defiled by some aspersion of sin. I oppose this assertion to the most harsh and rigid assertion of certain Pontificians, by which they affirm that no deed aspersed with the stain of sin, or laboring under a culpable defect, can be called a good act, or be pleasing to GOD. See Vasquez in the first part of the second part, disputation 70, Vega on the Council of Trent, book 11, chapter 27, Becanus in the Summa, part 2, treatise 1, chapter 5, question 3, Bellarmine book 4 on justification, chapter 17, and Suarez book 12 on divine grace, chapter 4, §6 and following. For these tenaciously defend that assertion, but against the most manifest truth, as will be clear from the following section.

Section III.

Whether goodness and moral malice are compatible in one and the same act?

Our opinion about the conjunction or compatibility of goodness and moral malice in the same act is undeservedly condemned by the Adversaries as new and absurd.

2. For first, Augustine in the place cited in the preceding section openly asserts that our charity, which is truly and properly a virtue, labors under a culpable defect, and Gregory in book 35 of

the *Morals*, last chapter, says that our evils, that is, sins are pure evils, and our good works can in no way be pure goods.

3. Second, certain Pontifical Theologians thought that not only a gradual defect, about which alone we here dissent from the Adversaries, but also a specific defect of good intention, or of due circumstances, could consist with the moral goodness of an action. For James Almain in treatise 1 of *morals*, chapter 12, and with him certain more recent Pontificians, taught that one and the same external work on account of two ends, one good, the other evil, to which it is referred, can be at the same time good and evil. William of Belmont (as Almain reports in the cited place) thought that not only the same external work, but also the same internal act of the will, can be from a diverse end at the same time good and evil; that is, from one end to which it is referred good, and from another evil. Cajetan, volume 2, little works, response 13, affirmed that the same act of the will can be at the same time good from the object, and evil from the end, or some other circumstance, and consequently in the same act goodness and moral malice can be conjoined at the same time.

4. Third, Vasquez, Suarez, and Becanus although they condemn the opinion of Almain, Cajetan and others about the compatibility of goodness and moral malice in the same act, yet openly confess that someone at the same moment in which by one act he does a good work, can by another act sin venially, and consequently moral goodness and malice are compatible in the same subject, and at the same moment of time, although not in the same act. Vasquez in the place cited above, that is, disputation 70, on the first part of the second part, chapter 3, says that a work of mercy, which someone exercises from a true end of virtue, retains its moral goodness, although on the occasion of that work there creeps in a certain affection of vainglory, or pride. Likewise there can be in the same man an act of charity and of any other virtue from a true end of virtue with an act of vainglory, or of another venial sin. Becanus, part 2 of the *Summa*, treatise 1, chapter 5, question 3, §2 and 17, writes that the will of dying for Christ is not on that account of no merit or dignity, because to it accedes a slight intention of vain glory. Suarez, book 12 on divine grace, chapter 4, §12, affirms that he who simultaneously with the act of internal faith has the will of confessing it on account of human honor, although in this he sins venially, yet does not lose the merit of internal faith.

5. From this doctrine of the Adversaries a valid and efficacious argument can be gathered for our opinion. For if he who does a good work, can be called just and pleasing and acceptable to God, although at the same moment, in which he does it, he commits sin, why also cannot a man doing a good work, be pleasing to God, although not only at the same moment, but also by the same act he sins? For he is no less filthy and guilty of sin, who by one act acts well, and by another badly, than he who by one and the same act acts well, and sins. And it is confirmed, because it is not absurd, from the opinion of the Adversaries, nor does it imply a contradiction, that one and the same man at the same time, and at the same time, acts well and sins, is good and evil, is worthy of reward and punishment. Therefore, neither does it imply a contradiction to say that the same act of a just man is morally good and evil, especially since from our opinion it is simply, and absolutely good, and only in a certain respect evil.

6. The Adversaries will respond: the reason is not equal, and this because a good act is not infected from a supervening evil act, nor does it contract the least degree of malice, as Vasquez speaks in the cited place: and consequently someone can be denominated and held good from it, although from another coexisting act he is denominated evil. But that act, to which some moral malice intrinsically adheres, is so infected and vitiated by it, that it is in no way good, and consequently the agent is simply to be denominated evil, and in no way good from it.

7. This response does not satisfy. For first, the depraved intention of the agent, whether it precedes the good act, or accompanies it, is a vice of the action. For the agent who from a single intention and that good, viz. from the intention of divine glory began the act well, the intention of vain glory coming, continues it badly. For then he acts on account of two ends, one good, the other evil, that is, he acts both from the intention of divine glory, and from the intention of his own glory. But to act from an evil intention, is a manifest vice of the action. Therefore the Adversaries impudently deny that a good act is vitiated from a supervening intention or affection of vain glory. Second, that which vitiates the agent, also vitiates his action, and makes it less pleasing to God: But that supervening act vitiates and infects the agent, as all confess. Therefore, etc. The reason for the proposition is, because a moral act receives value and dignity from the condition of the one operating, as Bellarmine expressly teaches, book 5 on Justification, chapter 12, §Moreover, and §The second reason, Suarez, book 12 on divine grace, chapter 14, §14, Vasquez on the first part of the second part, volume 2, disputation 216, chapter 2, and Valentia, volume 3, disputation 8, question 6, point 3, columns 1170 and 1171. Therefore, the dignity of the agent having been diminished, the dignity of the act is also diminished, that is, if the agent by sinning venially merits to be less pleasing to GOD, the good act which he elicits while he sins will also be from itself less pleasing to GOD, and consequently contracts a stain or blemish from the coexisting act of sin. Third, for the moral goodness of acts of religion, as e.g. acts of prayer, giving of thanks, or reception of some sacrament, it is required that our mind not wander or be distracted through worldly thoughts. Therefore, these supervening, the act of religion begun from a good intention, and with due circumstances is vitiated, and contracts a culpable defect. Fourth, the act of mortal sin coexisting with a morally good act, although it is an act really diverse from it, not only vitiates it, but also takes away all moral dignity, as the Adversaries commonly teach. See Suarez, book recently cited, chapter 4, §12. Therefore venial sin supervening on a good act, in some way vitiates it, and in some way takes away its dignity. The Adversaries respond that this happens per accidens: because mortal sin destroys inherent grace, without which neither the agent himself, nor his act, can be pleasing to GOD. But this escape is easily refuted, because although GOD in a man sinning mortally conserved the habit of grace (which is possible, as I warned above in part 1, section 7), yet that good act, to which is joined a mortally evil act, would be pleasing to GOD in no way: and consequently an evil act per se, and from its own nature, derogates from the value, and dignity of the good act, with which it coexists. Fifth, Gregory the Great in the place cited above speaking about the depraved intentions and affections, which interfere with and mix themselves into our best actions, says two things. First, that our good works on account of their admixture, are not pure goods, that is, are impure, vitiated, and aspersed with the stain of sin. Whence Bellarmine, book 4 on Justification, chapter 21, renders this reason for that saying of Gregory, because (he says) it cannot happen that there does not sometimes creep in something, by

which some good works are vitiated. Note that vitiated. For Bellarmine contrary to the opinion of Suarez, and others confesses that good works are vitiated through joined evil acts, indeed contrary to his own opinion, which he defends there, he concedes that some works can be good, although they are vitiated and aspersed with the stain of sin. Second, from this that our works are impure and vitiated, Gregory gathers that no place of salvation remains, if we are judged strictly by God. His words are worthy of note, "It must be confessed therefore," he says, "that our right intention indeed, by which it desires to please God alone, is sometimes accompanied by a less right intention, which seeks to please men from the gifts of God. But if we are strictly discussed about these things by God, what place of salvation remains among these, when both our evils are pure evils: and the goods, which we believe we have, can in no way be pure goods?"

8. Fourth, many of our Adversaries attribute a culpable imperfection and a certain injustice to the good works of the regenerate. Estius on the 2nd book of Sentences, distinction 41, §4, near the end, thus expresses the opinion of certain Pontificians (which he himself does not condemn, but leaves to other more learned men to examine) about the conjunction of goodness and moral malice in the same act: "it is one thing," he says, "for a man to sin in some work, but another for the work itself to be sin. For even the just in those works, which are undoubtedly good, often sin, while to them is mixed in some way either concupiscence, or negligence or the defect of some lighter circumstance required for the integrity of a good work; as happens in a more prolix prayer to God, in a sermon to the people, in the study of sacred letters; and other things of this kind. To which Gregory seems to have had respect when at the end of the Morals he says, the goods which we believe we have, can in no way be pure goods."

9. Andreas Vega, book 11 on the Council of Trent, chapter 40, "Many things," he says, "which now are good and just meritorious works, exalted to that sanctity and purity by which we ought to serve God, and which God could from rigor exact from us both on account of his goodness, and on account of his excellent benefits towards us, would truly be vices, and evil works, and injustice. For not only is it true that the life of any just persons is continually defiled and disfigured by many venial sins: but also the very works of the perfect fall far short from that goodness, by which it would be fitting for us to worship, praise and honor God. For they are joined with many imperfections, as long as we live here: nor are they so pure, nor so holy and fervent, as the magnitude of divine goodness and beneficence towards us would require. And although God now on account of his excellent sweetness and suavity towards us does not impute even to venial guilt those defects and imperfections to us, yet he could attribute them to us as guilt, if he willed to deal with us strictly, and beyond his suavity, and kindness." And below in the same place. "Therefore Gregory affirms, that all the merit of our virtue, is vice: because no work of ours is done by us so purely, so holily, so fervently, so perfectly in every part, as it would be fitting to be done, that we might serve God according to the magnitude of his goodness and his benefits towards us, and as he himself could exact from us, if he willed to judge strictly." Finally, in the last words of that chapter he concludes, "that many good works are now done by us, and without any stain of sin, and which nevertheless, if God willed to deal with us strictly and injustice they would be, and evil and not good, they would be proved."

10. Francis Coster in the *Enchiridion of Controversies*, chapter 6, page 246 of the Cologne edition of the year 1589, thus writes, "It must be confessed," he says, "that some works of the just, sometimes do not shine with that purity, but that they contract at least light stains, or are sprinkled with the dust of venial sins. For we are distracted in prayers, vainglory creeps in on one conferring alms, we accomplish many things negligently and in passing." And below about a justified man doing works, good indeed, but impure and imperfectly good he thus disputes. "Therefore as he is a son of God he does holy works as a son of Adam he mixes dusts and imperfections with good works. Hence it does not follow that internal justice is not clean, and pleasing to God, because the works are not most clean, since good works draw their cleanness and goodness from internal justice; their impurity from concupiscence. Therefore as a painter ought not to be judged unskilled in his art, if impeded by another he painted something less elegantly: so also the perfection of internal justice ought not to be weighed from less perfect works, since the cause of imperfection is not justice, but innate concupiscence."

11. Fifth, the doctrine of Bellarmine, Suarez, and others, who affirm that the acts of the regenerate defiled by some culpable imperfection are in no way pleasing and acceptable to GOD, much derogates, First from the singular and paternal love of God, by which he pursues his sons adopted in Christ. For it is alien from that his kindness, on account of those involuntary and morally inevitable defects, to abhor, condemn, and hold for mere sins, the best works of his sons, which they do with fear and trembling, and also from a serious zeal of pleasing him. Second, it derogates from the efficacy of the intercession of Christ. For from it, it follows that the imperfectly good works of the regenerate cannot be commended to GOD through the intercession of Christ (for those works which are simply and absolutely sins cannot be commended to GOD) and their sacrifices, which in themselves have something, on account of which they are less acceptable, cannot be made acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 2:5. But certainly this is absurd and impious to say. For who would have believed that the intercession of Christ cannot effect, that that father of mercies and GOD of all consolation, 2 Corinthians 1:3, accept the small obedience of his sons, as if full, and that he so forgive those defects and blemishes adhering to our obedience, that nothing of the value and moral goodness of the good works, which we do, on account of them depart in his gracious estimation? Who would have believed that that most merciful lamb of GOD, either does not will, or cannot bring aid to those, who prostrate at his feet with groaning and tears ask that he commend their imperfect obedience to his father? Who would have believed that that gracious Lord, who heard the father of the lunatic crying out, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief," Mark 9:24, now hears with a deaf ear the sighs and prayers of those, who most humbly pray him, that he deign to supply through his merits and intercession, what they with the highest sorrow acknowledge to be lacking to their faith, repentance, and gratitude. Third, it derogates from the consolation of those, who, while they exercise the acts of religion prescribed by God, do not satisfy themselves, and consequently believe that they much less satisfy God. For if you say to them that all the acts of obedience and religion, which are defiled by some culpable defect or stain, are mere sins, they will immediately conclude with themselves that they have never rendered due obedience to GOD, and consequently that they are in a state of certain and manifest damnation. This disadvantage pertains to very many, indeed to the best Christians. For who of the number of those who are held most holy, feels that he is fervent enough in the love of GOD?

Who does not acknowledge that he is very often remiss in the fear of GOD? Who sustains afflictions with such and so great patience, as the law of GOD requires? Who in prayers is always attentive and assiduous? To whom do there not often creep in while praying doubts about being heard and depraved thoughts? Whence Croquetius a modern papist in Catechesis 152 affirms that not only the profane and impious, but also those, who are more religious, sin in many ways in exercising public acts of religion. For (he says) "besides fables, besides discourse, and wandering eyes, if worse things are not done, almost nothing is discerned. There are perhaps some a little more religious, but in the meantime there is so great tepidity so great distraction, that in supplicating we almost sin in nothing other."

12. Sixth, the works of the ethical virtues done by unbelievers are not as truly and properly good, nor as pleasing to God, as the works done by the faithful from true faith and sincere love of God, but with some culpable defect. But the former works, although they are very defective, yet from the opinion of the Adversaries, are not mere sins, indeed they are truly and properly good. Therefore much less must it be said that the defective works of the faithful are mere sins.

13. Seventh, servile fear, and attrition, which is sorrow for sins proceeding from this fear, are from the opinion of the Adversaries, morally good acts, although they labor under a culpable defect, and that specific, and substantial. Therefore they impudently deny that acts defiled by some gradual defect can be morally good. I know the Adversaries constantly assert that those defects, which are in these acts are not culpable, and use various evasions, so that they may avoid the reasons brought forward to the contrary. Therefore I will append a brief digression on the culpable defect of attrition and of servile fear to this last section.

Digression on the culpable defect of the acts of servile fear, and of attrition which arises from it.

Therefore, first, as to servile fear, two things can be considered in it, viz. fear of punishment, and the servility of that fear, about which Estius thus writes in the 3rd book of Sentences, distinction 34, §6. "In servile fear two things must be considered, fear and servility: of which one is good, the other evil. For it is good to fear punishment, but it is evil to fear servilely, that is, so to fear the evil of punishment, that the good of justice is not yet loved." The rest of the Pontifical writers also dispute in the same way about servile fear. For Suarez, book 2 on divine grace, chapter 21, §20, says that the fear of punishment which includes the servile condition is depraved, and Valentia, volume 3, disputation 2, question 2, point 3, says, that servile fear, as servile, is evil. Indeed Thomas himself, in the second part of the second part, question 19, article 4, says that servile fear, inasmuch as it is servile, is contrary to charity, likewise, that servile fear is good according to substance, but its servility is evil.

2. From these things I argue thus: Servile fear includes in itself something morally evil, viz. servility, which is a culpable defect, as all the Adversaries teach. Therefore it is true, what I said

in the preceding section, that the act of servile fear is defiled by a culpable blemish, or defect. Thomas himself responds, and with him Bellarmine, book 2 on penance, last chapter, Estius in the cited place and others, that servility is in no way included in the act of servile fear, nor is it an intrinsic defect to it, but on the contrary, it is an extrinsic defect, which affects the fearing man, but not the very act of fear itself. For the act (they say) by which someone fears punishment is indeed in itself licit (because just as it is licit to love beatitude with the love of concupiscence, so it is licit to hate and fear the misery contrary to it) but it is in a culpable and defective subject: that is, it exists in him, who from love of self fears punishment, and does not from love of God fear guilt. Whence Bellarmine in the cited place. "Therefore," he says, "he who servilely fears, is evil, because he makes more of punishment, than of guilt; but the fear itself is not evil, but good: because he is not evil on that account, because he vehemently fears punishment, but because he does not more vehemently fear guilt."

3. That we may preclude this evasion from the Adversaries, and that we may show that servile fear, from which arises attrition, is in itself and as to its substance servile, we ask from the Adversaries whether every fear of punishment is licit and praiseworthy? Suarez responds, disputation 1 on hope, section 4, §6, that punishment can be feared in two ways: "First moderately and according to right reason on account of the true malice which it has in itself. Second immoderately and beyond the measure of right reason, as if punishment is feared as the highest supreme, and worst evil: and then," he says, "it is a depraved fear: for through it man prefers his own evil to the evil of God: whence he constitutes the ultimate end in himself not in God, which then alone happens, when man fears guilt more than punishment, etc." Valentia also teaches the same thing, volume 3, disputation 2, question 2, point 3.

4. I freely accept this distinction and its explication, which Suarez brings forward. For first, it contradicts Bellarmine asserting in the cited place that that fear by which someone fears punishment more than guilt, is in itself good, although he to whom this fear is in is evil. For Suarez here on the contrary asserts that that fear is in itself depraved, and inordinate, because it is not done with due moderation or with a just appreciation of punishment, and arises from too much love of self. Second, because this distinction slays the cause which Suarez himself defends: For he who has servile fear, he principally fears punishment, as the precipuous and greatest evil, the antecedent is proven. First by the most manifest testimonies of Thomas; for he in the second part of the second part, question 19, article 2, distinguishes servile fear from initial fear in this that servile fear primarily, but initial fear secondarily respects punishment, and in the same place, article 6, he expressly says, that the fear of punishment cannot be servile, except when punishment is dreaded as the principal evil. Second, the same is proven by a most evident reason. For he who has servile fear, either does not at all fear guilt, or if he fears it, he only fears it, insofar as it is the cause of punishment, and thus he fears it on account of punishment. But he who fears guilt on account of punishment, fears punishment more, according to the rule, on account of which each thing is such, that is more such. Third, he who has servile fear, fears nothing more than punishment, indeed fears nothing equally as punishment. Therefore he fears punishment most. The antecedent is proven, because he does not principally fear guilt, insofar as it is an offense of God. For this cannot be done without charity and filial fear. But he who has servile fear, does not yet filially fear from charity, as is

clear from Lombard, 3rd book of Sentences, distinction 34, and Estius in the same place, and from the various testimonies of Augustine, which are cited there by them.

5. You will say first, that these arguments rest on a false supposition. For they suppose that the Pontificians in this question, which they treat against Luther on servile fear, speak about servile fear formally so called, which is altogether separated from filial fear, and from charity, and which cannot coexist with filial fear in some person, when yet they speak about servile fear materially and as to its substance considered, that is, about the fear of punishment absolutely, and generally considered, insofar as it is the fear of punishment. For the fear of punishment, indeed the fear of guilt on account of punishment can be, and actually is in the most holy men, who although by one act they fear guilt on account of punishment, and that vehemently, yet by another act they more fear guilt or the offense of God on account of itself, and as such.

6. I respond that supposition is not false. For first, Bellarmine, book 2 on penance, chapter 17, Estius in the 3rd book of Sentences, distinction 34, §5, 6, 7 and 8, and Andreas Vega on the Council of Trent, book 6, chapter 26, openly profess that they speak about servile fear formally so called, by which someone so fears punishment, and guilt on account of punishment, that in no way, that is, neither actually, nor habitually does he fear guilt on account of the offense of God, as on account of the principal cause of fear. Second, that fear of punishment by which someone so fears punishment, or guilt on account of punishment, that at the same time either in habit, or in act he more fears guilt on account of God offended, or on account of the offense of God, has no servility. For it is not of servants, but of sons so to fear punishment, that they more fear guilt or the offense of the father of the family. Third, Thomas in the second part of the second part, question 19, article 2, says that he who is converted to God, both from fear of guilt, and from fear of punishment, has fear not servile, but initial: which must undoubtedly be understood about him who so fears punishment that from an imperfect and weak certain love of God he also fears guilt, or the offense of God. For he who so fears punishment, that from perfect love he more fears guilt, he filially fears. Whence Bellarmine in the cited place proves by many testimonies of the Fathers that fear of punishment of this kind is found in the most holy men and thus also in the Martyrs themselves. Fourth, the Pontificians ought to speak about servile fear as it is taken by Augustine and the other Fathers. But by them it is taken for formally servile fear, by which someone abstains from sin by the mere fear of punishment, as is clear from their testimonies, which Bellarmine and Estius bring forward in the cited places. Fifth, if the Pontificians do not speak about formally servile fear, they ineptly and ridiculously dispute against Luther's assertion about servile fear. For he only condemned servile fear formally considered, as Bellarmine openly confesses in the cited place.

7. You will say second that the Pontificians in this question speak neither about that fear of punishment, by which someone so fears punishment, that at the same time from true charity he more fears guilt, nor about that fear by which a man destitute of charity immoderately fears punishment as his greatest evil, but about that fear by which someone destitute of charity fears punishment moderately, and with due appreciation, that is, by which he fears punishment not as his greatest evil, but simply as something evil, and harmful to himself. I respond to fear punishment with due moderation and just appreciation of it is to fear it as a secondary evil,

which does not happen except in him who has charity, as Thomas expressly teaches in the second part of the second part, question 19, article 4: and it is confirmed because no one without charity can love the glory of God more than his own beatitude. Therefore neither without it can he be said to abhor the offense of GOD more than his own misery. Second, he who is destitute of charity, does not principally abhor or fear guilt on account of the offense of GOD. Therefore he principally fears it on account of his own loss, and consequently he fears it on account of punishment, as on account of the greatest evil. For if he did not hold it for the greatest evil, he would not principally fear on account of it. Third, he who has servile fear, fears punishment alone per se: for he does not fear the offense of GOD except insofar as it is the cause of punishment. Therefore he fears punishment as an evil greater than the offense of GOD. Finally, where true love of GOD is absent, there inordinate love of self dominates, which always fears its own evil more than the evil of GOD (as Suarez speaks), that is, than the offense of GOD.

8. These things about the culpable defect in the act of servile fear, which they affirm to be morally good, although not meritorious of eternal life. Now, as to the attrition conceived from servile fear, we demonstrate by no trouble that it is culpably defective. First, because it arises from culpable fear, and consequently is itself culpable. Second, because although it is concerned with the due object, that is, with guilt, yet it is not always concerned with it under the due respect; that is, it is not always concerned with it insofar as it is guilt, or an offense of GOD (for often it is concerned with it only insofar as it is the cause of punishment, and consequently is not so much sorrow for guilt as for punishment) or if it is about guilt insofar as it is an offense of GOD, yet it is not concerned with it with due appreciation, that is, it is not sorrow for the offense of GOD as for the highest evil detestable above all things, as Valentia teaches, volume 4, disputation 7, question 8, point 1, and consequently is sorrow for the eternal misery, which threatens the sinner, as for the greatest and highest evil. Third, if sometimes it happens that it is concerned with the due object, under the due respect, and also with just appreciation, that is, if it happens that it is sorrow for sin, insofar as it is an offense of GOD, as for the greatest evil (which Toletus says can happen in the Instruction of the Priest, book 3, chapter 4, §6), yet it does not then include a firm purpose of avoiding all sins hereafter, which is necessarily required in that sorrow, which GOD requires from us, when he orders that we return to him through true repentance. For true repentance cannot consist without this purpose, indeed without the real practice, and execution of this purpose, as is clear from Ezekiel 18:21, 27, 30, Matthew 3:8, Acts 26:20, and the Adversaries themselves confess, viz. Vasquez on the third part of Thomas, volume 4, question 86, article 2, doubt 4, number 7, and Valentia, in the cited place, point 6, last assertion. Therefore although the sorrow of attrition precisely considered in itself were good (which nevertheless most rarely happens, because for the most part, either it is not about sin under the due respect, or it is not about it with just appreciation) yet it would not lack a culpable defect: and this because, insofar as it is an act of conversion, or of repentance, it does not fully satisfy the precepts handed down by God about repentance.

9. The Adversaries, so that they might avoid the force of this last argument, devised certain new, and horrible to the hearing dogmas. For Navarrus, Victoria, and certain others (as Vasquez testifies in the cited place, doubt 2, and Valentia, also in the cited place, point 3), taught that

perfect sorrow for sins (which necessarily includes a purpose of avoiding sins hereafter) is not under precept, or no precept exists in Scripture, by which we are obliged to perfect contrition. Melchior Cano in the rereading on repentance, part 4, question 2, conclusion 4, teaches that there exist in the Scriptures precepts about repentance, and perfect contrition, but they do not oblige except indeterminately and under disjunction, that viz. either we have perfect contrition outside the sacrament of penance, or certainly we have attrition in the use of the sacrament. Finally, Gregory de Valentia, in the cited place, point 4, assertion 6, column 1256, Vasquez also in the cited place, doubts 5 and 6, Becanus in the third part of the Summa, treatise 2, chapter 35, question 7, and many others teach that perfect contrition itself per se and determinately is under precept, but they say First, that we from the precept of contrition are not obliged to have contrition immediately after we have sinned, and consequently that we can for a certain time licitly defer our repentance. Second, the precept of contrition does not oblige sinners having lapsed into serious sins except at a certain time, viz. in the article of extreme necessity, that is, in the peril of death (for about no other particular time, in which this precept obliges, is there agreement among those Cadmean brothers) and consequently their sorrow who are only attrite, and not contrite, does not labor under a culpable defect, except in that moment of time, in which the precept of contrition obliges.

10. But if you object to them that saying of Sirach (whose book among them is canonical) Ecclesiasticus 5:8, "Delay not to turn to the Lord, nor defer it from day to day," they respond that it is not a precept, but a counsel: whence it follows that those who immediately after sin has been committed are converted to GOD, from the opinion of the Pontificians, do a work of supererogation. These ravings are not to be refuted, but exploded, or rather to be deplored with groaning and tears. Meanwhile I will briefly by one argument prove that conversion to GOD is necessary from the precept of GOD immediately after sin has been committed. It can be proposed thus: In no moment is it licit to be in sin. Therefore we are bound from the precept of GOD immediately to relinquish sin, and consequently to have true and perfect contrition, without which sin cannot be taken away. The antecedent is clear, since sin is per se illicit, it implies a contradiction to say that it is licit to be in sin. Gregory de Valentia, in the cited place, point 4, assertion 1, response to argument 3, page 1245, while he tries to respond to this argument, openly gives his hand, that is, he concedes that the sinner is obliged to perfect repentance immediately after sin has been committed. "Someone is bound," he says, "at any moment to abandon sin from that same precept, against which properly that sin is committed, in which he remains; but not from a special precept of repentance, so that if he does not immediately abandon it, he commits a special sin of impenitence." But if he is bound to do penance, and to return to God through true contrition, we have what we want, viz. that he, who is only attrite, and not yet contrite, is obliged to have a further perfection of spiritual sorrow, and consequently his sorrow labors under a culpable defect. See if it pleases Cajetan's little Summa under the word CONTRITION §But the time, etc.

11. From the things which have been said it is manifestly clear that there is a huge difference between mortal and venial sins, as to those three effects, which we have explained in this section, and in sections 5 and 6. For first, because the regenerate having lapsed into atrocious sins laying waste the conscience cease to render that obedience, which the covenant of grace

demands from us as necessary for attaining further gifts of grace in this life, and for obtaining the beatific vision of GOD in the future life; and because they during this state are incapable of those benefits, not only from their own demerit, but also according to the sentence of the covenant of grace, therefore I said above that the benevolence of GOD towards them is so bound and impeded, that it cannot, during that state, confer on them the remission of sins, or peace and joy of conscience, and much less that glory to which he has ordained them from eternity, until through a singular, extraordinary, and perfectly practical repentance, they return to GOD, and remove from before the eyes of God all such malignity of their actions, Isaiah 1:16. Moreover, during this state, not only the sins committed by them displease God, but also their obedience, prayers, and giving of thanks: indeed nothing can proceed from them, which for the time being is pleasing and acceptable to God, Psalm 50:16, Isaiah 1:14-15, Jeremiah 14:11-12. But when the elect justified commit those lighter sins from inadvertence or weakness, they do not cease to render that obedience, which the covenant of grace demands as precisely necessary for salvation: but notwithstanding these they are said to walk according to the spirit, Romans 8:1, indeed also to follow God with the whole heart, 1 Kings 14:8, and to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly, Luke 1:6. Therefore, although the slightest sins from themselves and their own nature render us incapable and unworthy of the gifts of divine grace, although also they in themselves not only displease GOD, but also could deservedly make it so that our whole obedience would be filthy in the eyes of the Lord, and utterly displease him, nevertheless GOD, who does not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see perversity in Israel, Numbers 23:21, notwithstanding these, accepts our imperfect obedience in Christ, and as it were averting his eyes from the blemishes adhering to it, graciously regards the sincerity and humility of the same, and takes complacency and delight from them. Second, as to the two remaining effects of mortal sin, although they follow even venial sins from the rigor of justice, yet according to the administration of divine providence under the covenant of grace, they by no means actually follow them: that is, the elect committing those lighter sins are neither deprived of the gifts of inherent grace, as all confess, nor do they lose their present aptitude for entering that heavenly kingdom. For first, GOD does not impute those sins to his sons believing in Christ and walking according to the Spirit unto the guilt of eternal death. Second, by the secret and efficacious motion of his holy spirit he then excites them to recognize and deplore the guilt contracted from them.