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Book translated: [Antidotum Adversus Ecclesiae Romanae De Merito propriè dicto Ex Condigno Venenum : Ex antiquae Ecclesiae Catholicae Testimoniis locupletissimis confectum: Juxta Ecclesiae Anglicanae, & Protestantium omnium unanimem sententiam](#)

To the King's Most Sacred Majesty, humbly presented by the Author.

ANTIDOTE against the POISON of the ROMAN CHURCH concerning MERIT properly so called OF CONDIGNITY: Compounded from the most abundant Testimonies of the ancient Catholic Church: According to the unanimous opinion of the ANGLICAN CHURCH, and of all Protestants: For the Glory of Divine Grace, of the Merits of CHRIST, and for the salutary progress of true piety.

By the Author R. P. THOMAS MORTON, Bishop of Durham.
CAMBRIDGE, From the Press of the most celebrated Academy. In the year of our Lord 1637.

TO THE TWO ACADEMIES OF CAMBRIDGE AND OXFORD, its illustrious Lights and Ornaments, and to the other Candidates of Sacred Theology, and Students of sincerer literature, Grace and Salvation in CHRIST JESUS.

The Doctor of the Gentiles says, "Love rejoices with the truth" (1 Corinthians 13:6). Why then should I not greet both of you, most flourishing sisters, with the kiss of Charity, whom I desire from my heart to gird equally with the belt of Truth and to embrace? Now, what truth we profess, it is in the interest of all to know; and the more so, because Edmund Campion, a primary alumnus of the Jesuit family, seems now to shout me down, in that Preface of his addressed to both Academies: in which he challenged all the Doctors of the Anglican Church, with incredible boasting, to a theological contest, in these words, Campion in his Preface to the book on the ten reasons, "Indeed I can be killed, I cannot be overcome. For I rely on those Doctors whom that Spirit has instructed, who is neither deceived, nor is conquered." This he trumpeted before the victory, himself a false prophet, who not long after in the Tower of London, in the Question on Justification, was as certainly vanquished by our Doctors, as not long after he was received according to his merit.

Yet he was not ashamed to polish that Preface with a splendid lie. "Hanmer and Charke," he says, "have responded to my demands. What then? Everything is for nothing. For they will give no response, save one, honorably, which they will never give: 'We embrace the conditions, the Queen guarantees it; fly hither.'" As if these Doctors, by the weight of whose arguments he was utterly crushed, had refused all disputation with him, as is established from the Treatise which, at that time, was handled by all.

Although what worthy thing would this audacious promiser bring forth with so great an opening of the mouth? And what is that authority on which he wished to seem chiefly to rely? I will tell. "The Fathers, the Fathers," cries and repeats that Roman nightingale, "A voice, and nothing more." Yet how pleasant it is to hear him. Reason 5. "To the Fathers," he says, "if ever it shall be permitted to have access, the battle is finished: they are all as much ours as Gregory the Thirteenth (the Pope) is the most loving father of the sons of the Church." Really? "All ours?" Doubtless this is not far from that Athenian who claimed all the ships in the Piraeus as his own, when he had no right to even a single skiff.

And indeed this invented boast must be considered as such, unless he truly means those very Fathers of whom he said, "They are as much ours as the Roman Pontiff Gregory the Thirteenth." And to this, indeed, the ambitious boaster applies himself: for Reason 6. "Let that faith reign in England," he says, "O that it may reign, which these Fathers build up from Scripture: Cyprian, Athanasius, Nazianzen, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, and the Latin Gregory." These Fathers he listed (Good God!) in this cause of ours (unless I am

most insanelly mistaken) our very own Patrons, to whom we have added eight others of one voice (homomipho), Origen, Tertullian, Hilary, Nyssen, Theodoret, Prosper, Fulgentius, Remigius: to say nothing of Bernard, Bede, Anselm, whom we have added as a supplement: (whose testimonies we have all alleged with ocular proof, not only mine, but also that of others.) Of whom I can truly pronounce, that in this our controversy against Merit of Condignity, they are as much ours as was (of whom Campian also made mention in the same place) the Latin Pontiff Gregory, who was entirely ours.

Gregory, I say, who, not only instructing others, established that eternal life is rendered not On accountof, but Accordingto works: but also, as if conscious to himself, he said, "To life I recover, not from merits, but from pardon." Thus our Gregory, in many respects superior to Gregory the Thirteenth; inasmuch as he was far earlier in time, and therefore designated the First of that name: much more renowned in piety; for which he was distinguished as a Saint: finally, illustrious in the estimation of all; whence he was adorned with this cognomen, the Great.

As for the Anglican Church, "Let it reign," says he; but we say, "Nay, it does reign" (thanks be to God) in England, and would that the faith which these Fathers build up from the Scriptures may also reign forever. Of which truth, as we have shown openly in other controversies, so in the recently published works on the Grand Impostureof the Roman Church (insofar as it boasts itself to be the Catholic Church), and the other On the Roman Mass, we have given some specimen; so also in this conflict I profess to perform brilliantly.

Into which I was primarily driven by that zeal (with Saint Paul as my monitor) towards both Academies, lest from either anyone be captivated by the tricks or deceptions of the Adversaries: what sort these may be, grant me leave, I ask, to divine at least by conjectures, as if by certain auspices.

1. They often boast that these names, 'to merit' and 'merit', are attributed to good works by the Fathers: nor do we conceal this; but in that broad signification, which they also borrowed from the pagans, for the Greek *tynehanein*, in Latin, to acquire, to attain, to obtain, but nowhere in the true and precise (though pestiferous) sense of demandingeternal life from an equality of justice before God. Let all shadow-boxing with words therefore cease; for poison is discerned not from its external color, but from its internal, deadly malice.

2. For a long time now, the Papists have been seized with a disdain and deep contempt for Protestant authors; because forsooth those (especially the Jesuits) claim for themselves alone the first place in every discipline: although (I speak from experience) they are accustomed to frequently water their own little gardens from Protestant springs. In which, how much they owe to Calvin,

anyone may easily guess from what we have drawn from the testimony of Stapleton: Stapleton, Preface to the Evangelical Antidote. "Calvin," he says, "as far as the letter is concerned, is so diligent an interpreter, so moral, so elegant, and pleasing, that—even by the Orthodox themselves he is sometimes eagerly read—whom I have also sometimes heard wish that, with the things disputed against the Church removed, he might come forth censored, for thus his Commentaries would be most useful." How truly he said this is easy to see, not only from Melchior Canus, who transcribed a whole page from him, but much more from Salmeron and others: who, while they desire to fish out the literal sense, sometimes covertly, yet so that they can easily be detected, sometimes word for word, usurp Calvin's interpretation. Which, if they were willing to confess this, I would say they have borrowed; but if they were unwilling, I would say they have stolen it.

3. Indeed, for settling controversies, there is said to be a marvelous consensus and conspiracy among the Papists: namely, after the fashion of the Andabatae, which, as in other controversies, so certainly in this Question may be clearly established, in which all those foundations which some of them have laid with the highest artifice for Merit, are by others immediately undermined with no trouble. Which we think should be attributed to the victory of truth itself. Yet so that that well-known saying of Cato fits these sophists perfectly, "I wonder why a soothsayer did not laugh when he saw another soothsayer."

4. There is a place, however, where they boast prolixly, that from their own Merit the Glory of Christ is altogether amplified, because they assert that "they have received from the merits of Christ that power of theirs for meriting, through an equality of justice before God." This we have proved to be a much more pernicious deception; just as if someone were to burst forth into such madness as to arrogate to himself (which are each the Prerogatives proper to Christ the God-man) the power of Redeeming, of immediately illuminating, of Regenerating, of conferring first grace, and of justifying, as if from the Merits of Christ. That this cannot be done without nefarious sacrilege, even the Papists themselves readily grant.

5. This art not succeeding, they strive to seize tender minds with a new fascination. The Heresy of the Solifidians, forsooth, must be imputed to the Protestants, because with the opinion of Merit of condignity removed, they clamor and vociferate until they are hoarse that all the glory of good works is obscured, the necessity of doing good is taken away, and a license for perpetrating every kind of wickedness is indulged to men. But what (in heaven's name!) does this itch for lying mean? For we have so proved this to be a notable and transparent lie from the candid confessions of the Papists themselves, that if they have taken any pleasure in falsely accusing us, they will lose it upon hearing the true confession of their own Doctors.

Nor yet will it be enough to have refuted the accusations of our adversaries in this way, unless we also prove from the Fathers that Protestants profess no less a necessity of good works, but a far more illustrious dignity, and a more fruitful and happier produce of true piety.

Finally I return to you, most distinguished Men, whose concern it is to see to it, not only that no one wickedly gnaws at the ceremonies, as the phylacteries of the Church: but much more also, that he does not crush its articles, as its vital spirits. From these things you may easily understand why I now dedicate and consecrate to you this, whatever little work it is. In which I have discussed this cause more fully, that I might more easily escape the calumny of the Adversaries; especially since (as Cicero says wisely and cautiously) "Those things which are concluded more narrowly and briefly, are generally more open and fit for criticism." But that you (such is your love of truth, most Honored Men) will take these things in good part, I have no doubt.

Farewell in CHRIST JESUS, who preserve you for the glory of His grace. AMEN.
THO. OF DURHAM.

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THE STATE OF THE CONTROVERSY IN GENERAL.

Protestants defend that GOOD WORKS are necessary for salvation, and are destined means.

Papist Doctors moreover claim that they are PROPERLY SO CALLED MERITS. And they establish that MERIT is twofold, 1. Of Congruity. 2. Of Condignity.

CHAPTER I.

Against MERIT OF CONGRUITY.

Merit of Congruity (by the definition of Vega) is "a free Action, to which it is congruous that some corresponding Reward be given." Vega, book 8. on Justification, chap. 8. Their opinions on this Merit can be reduced to three Questions.

QUESTION I.

Whether any Merits of Congruity precede Justification.

SECTION I.

There have been Authors in the Roman Church of no small name who have affirmed this; against which opinion our Anglican Church has prescribed its Article, as a salutary Antidote, in these words, ARTICLE XIII. "Works done before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-authors say) deserve grace of congruity." Indeed, because they are not done as God has willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

But truly, how little authority the Scholastic Authors of the contrary Opinion have, let the Reader learn from its Refutation, not indeed ours (for it is not necessary) but from the confession of the Papists themselves, who have labored diligently in refuting it. The sum is, That all without faith in Christ are under a curse, Gal. 3. Why then should we not suffer our Adversaries to at length come to their senses, and, as far as is lawful, to return to favor with us? For indeed (if any faith is to be given to Stapleton) "merit of congruity, with respect to first Grace," he says, "has long since been exploded." Stapleton on Original Sin. Book 2. chap. 4. And a little later, "Therefore, however either some Scholastics of old, or some Catholic writers about the beginning of the present Schism may have written imprudently concerning this preparation of man before Grace, and consequently concerning the powers of human nature not yet healed; that is not today defended by any Catholic Author: but according to the definition of the Council of Trent, and the consenting opinions of very many Catholic writers today, it is confessed by all, that the powers of nature have been so broken and weakened by Original sin, that without a habitual gift, infused through the grace

of Christ, they are able neither to love God, nor to perform any good work, as is fitting, and as can be Meritorious: nor without the special help of God to cooperate through free will in accepting the offered gift of Grace." Thus he. We therefore, lest we seem to be, as it were, beating the air(1 Cor. 9:26) and fighting without Adversaries, will dismiss this Member of the first species of Merit of Congruity.

QUESTION II.

Concerning the Dispositions by which Sinners are aroused to Grace by Grace.

SECTION II.

Concerning which Bellarmine thus states; "These do not exclude Merit, provided that Merit of Condignity is not attributed to them." Bellar. book 1. on Justification, chap. 21. Again, "We indeed cannot understand why the name of Merit should not be used at this time, especially with that addition 'of Congruity', when it is a matter of works which are done by preventing Grace." The same Vega contends for this; who nevertheless acknowledges that "certain most learned and most pious Men are inclined to reject Merit of Congruity from the Church, as a new Invention." Vega, opusculum on Merits, quest. 7. Idem Vega, book 8 on Justif. chap. 8. Nay more, Gregory de Valentia, having first rejected that opinion as Pelagian, which taught that Man merits by justice to be received into God's grace, attacks another. "We do not approve," he says, "the Opinion of those who say that we merit the first Grace from the Congruity of Works, by which we are ultimately disposed for it." Greg. de Valent. on divine Grace, part 4. to the end of chap. 6. It is not so: "It is repugnant for Merit of Congruity to have its perfection, or Congruity, from the reward, as from a principle." And a little later, "It would be said far more probably, that by good Moral Works, by which someone before receiving Grace would do what he could Morally, he merits that first Grace of Congruity to the extent that it is suitable and congruous that, when such a one does as much as he morally can in that state, God also should perform that which is of his part: that is, that he should increase his aids, by which helped he may be able to attain Grace, and so may attain it, if he is not wanting to himself."

The Papist Theologian Paulus Benius of Gubbio is much occupied with this Argument. It will be worth the trouble to reduce his opinions, scattered here and there, into a compendium, where he begins from the chief Disposition, which is Faith. "But if Augustine says," he states, "that faith can obtain the remission of sins: And again, that we can by faith merit the Grace of working well: I for my part could appeal to the same Augustine in six hundred places; in which he maintains that Justification is not only not begun, but not even completed, by any preceding Merit of ours: as in Epistle 105. 'What merits of his, therefore, will the one who is freed boast? who, if what was worthy of his merits were rendered, would be nothing but damned.'" Benius on Grace & free Will. chap. 18. num. 13.

referring to Epist. 105 & 106. To this opinion of the Fathers could be added the sense and irrefragable judgment of many Councils. Also the Council of Trent. Sess. 6. chap. 8. explaining that of the Apostle, ["Being justified freely"] "We are therefore said to be justified freely," it says, "because none of those things which precede justification, whether faith or works, merits the grace of justification itself—otherwise, as the same Apostle says, Grace would not be Grace." Afterwards he argues, "We judge that this can be demonstrated, because before the attainment of habitual Charity, we are still children of wrath." Thus he, and some other things to the same effect. But it will be superfluous to accumulate more Testimonies.

QUESTION III.

Whether a Just man established in Grace, if he should happen to fall into mortal sin, can merit the Grace of Reparation.

SECTION III.

To this Bellarmine; "A man not yet reconciled can, through works of penance, obtain and merit of Congruity the Grace of Justification, as has been demonstrated in the first book. Why then will not the same man, while he is just and a friend of God, be able to obtain and merit, of Congruity, reparation, if he should happen to fall?" Bellarm. book 5. on Justif. chap. ult. Moreover. Thus he. In which, how shamefully the Cardinal errs, we shall prove. First, in place of Aquinas, namely the very Oracle of the Roman School (whom nevertheless the Cardinal prudently and knowingly opposes) "It must be said," he says, "that no one can merit for himself reparation after a future fall, neither by merit of Condignity, nor by merit of Congruity, because of the impediment of sin in him for whom one merits." Aquin. 1. 2. qu. 114. art. 7. Behold, moreover, the Jesuit Commentator Vasquez, exceedingly opportune! "This Conclusion of Thomas," he says, "is confirmed by Ezekiel 18. [If a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, all his righteousness that he has done shall not be remembered, but in his iniquity he shall die.]" Vasquez on 1. 2. Tom. 2. qu. 114. disp. 213. art. 7. p. 876. Do you seek consensus? The same, a little before; "Concerning which Conclusion there is no controversy among the Scholastics: to which have consented Alexander, Cajetan, and the rest of the Interpreters of Thomas." Do you demand a reason? "If a work done in Grace were meritorious," he says, "of reparation after a fall, then it would take away sin without any aid." Thus he. Namely, it would avail to prevent the fall into sin. Yea, and Gregory de Valentia, since he is now at hand, is not to be neglected. "But reparation after a fall," he says, "we can in no way merit by works done from grace before the fall—For a past Merit is not in force when someone is restored to grace after a fall: for by the fall it was mortified." Valent. on divine Grace, part 4. chap. 6. If I were permitted to add something of my own, I would say that there can hardly be a dogma (so to speak) more like a stepmother, and more precipitous towards presumption into all sin, than is that Assertion of Bellarmine.

From these things who does not clearly see, in the question concerning Merit of Congruity, how little the Papist Doctors agree among themselves? To say nothing of how unworthily that is called Merit, which, in the opinion of our Adversaries, has no reason of a properly so-called Merit; nor to which a Reward is due by any right. Let therefore all fiction of Meritorious Congruity cease, that we may approach more closely to properly so-called Merit, which they call of Condignity.

CHAPTER II.

On MERIT properly so called OF CONDIGNITY. The Decree of the Roman Church, and the Article of the Anglican Church repugnant to It.

The State of the Controversy.

SECTION I.

There exists a Canon of the Council of TRENT, which those good Fathers newly imposed upon the Consciences of men, viz. "If anyone shall say that the good works of a justified man are in such a way the gifts of God, that they are not also the good Merits of the one justified; or that the one justified, by the good Works which are done by him through the grace of God, and the merit of Jesus Christ, of whom he is a living member, does not truly merit eternal life: let him be Anathema." Council of Trent. Sess. 6. Can. 32. "Our works properly merit happiness of Condignity." Bellarm. book 5. on Justif. chap. 16. & 17. passim. Thus they. What this Merit is, other Papists have defined some more concisely, others more explicitly; yet in such a way that all (who define it correctly) establish that it consists in an Equality of justice before God, for meriting eternal life. For example, 1. Costerus the Jesuit. "Merit of Condignity is a free Action, to which a reward is due from Justice." Coster. Enchiridion, chap. 7. Tract. on Merits. 2. The definition which Bellarmine offered his Readers is of this sort. "God has established an absolute equality between the Merit and the Reward, so that each one may have as great a reward as he merits in the judgment of God." Bellarm. book 5. on Justif. chap. 14. Then he adds; "This is done from the promise of God, without which he cannot demand a reward." 3. Vasquez the Jesuit. "Our works have their dignity not from the person of Christ, but from the person from whom they proceed." Vasquez 1. 2. Tom. 2. disp. 214. chap. 7. n. 44. Item; "Our merits are so perfectly meritorious of eternal life, that we have no defect, on account of which eternal life might be denied them, or could be worthily denied." Ibid. disp. 213. chap. 7. n. 30. And not only this, but also; "Merit is an observance in comparison with some reward, which by its nature demands a reward of this kind, as an equal grace, to be referred to it." Idem ibid. Disp. 213. chap. 5. n. 29. Thus he. Finally, Suarez the Jesuit, with a fuller tone, where he

contends that, "Eternal life is owed to the works of the Just: We are speaking," he says, "of works which require a debt of justice in rigor." Thus he (as we shall relate below, Chap. 11. Sect. 1.) and many other things to the same effect.

And certainly if any Merit of Condignity were to intervene between us and God, it ought to be such as these Jesuits have now delineated: for which it is required 1. that the Action be free: 2. that it consist in an Equality of justice, and not rest on any kindness or mercy of God: 3. that this Equality be Absolute, and not need the extrinsic Grace of Christ: 4. that it be altogether such that it can demand eternal life from God by its own right: 5. supposing a Pact or Promise of God. This is, I confess, a true and exact definition of properly so-called Merit of Condignity.

This is that Monster which we endeavor to prostrate and overthrow both by the sacred and divine authority of the Scriptures, and also by the Catholic authority of Antiquity, according to the opinion of our Anglican Church, which, as a provident Mother solicitous for the salvation of her genuine children, has offered it to us in Articles XI & XII. "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings." "Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's Judgement; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by the fruit."

With which how amicably and orthodoxly other Protestants conspire, I would rather relate from the confession of the Adversaries, than from their own writings. Therefore Vasquez comes forth, who testifies concerning the Protestants in these words; "They say that good works are necessary, just as they also said that Remuneration is necessary, through faith, hope, and charity, for Justification: yet in such a way that the works of the just are not worthy of the remuneration of eternal life, unless God by His kindness should deign to reward them." Below ch. 8. "Thus the Wittenbergers affirmed, thus the Augsburg Confessionists, yea even Calvin, and Chemnitius." Thus he (concerning whom, see below) where the Protestants enlist for themselves many from the ranks of the Papists, both assenting and as Advocates.

Nevertheless, halt your step here (I ask you), Reader, lest you perhaps stumble, while you ask yourself hesitantly, in so great a crisis and conflict of Authors, how I seem to attack the Roman Church itself. I say therefore that by this discourse are refuted all those who defend a true and properly so-called MERIT of men, which indeed the Roman Church has openly done in the Council of Trent, where (as we have now learned) it has pronounced him to be Anathema, whoever should deny that the good works of a justified man truly merit eternal

life. Now, a truly and properly so-called Merit can in no way be imagined, which does not (according to the most accurate definition of the Jesuits) consist in an equality of Justice.

Are there then those who believe their own good work to be Meritorious? These have now drunk it up with their heart. But are there also those who, not believing this, nevertheless use the word Merit as if necessary? These indeed have at least taken the Poison with their mouth. Therefore we, through this Antidote, have been zealous for the health of our Reader, not only of his heart, but also of his mouth.

But first, we shall examine what they may adduce for their Cause from the Scriptures.

I. From the Scriptures, and that regarding the second Sense, they examine the Name.

SECT. II.

The Papists bring forth and urge other Scriptures for themselves. I say, Scriptures in which the Papists dream that the very name of Merit is found. But how can they ever find Merit, that is, the express term (*χει τὸ ῥητὸν*), in the Scriptures? A locust will sooner give birth to an ox, as the Adage goes. But why do I disturb their efforts? Bellarmine insists; from Bellarmine, book 5 on Justification, chapter 2: “There are not lacking,” he says, “testimonies of Scripture, where the name itself is either openly contained, or can be easily deduced from there.”

Come then, present the passages which seem to you to denote the name of Merit openly. The first passage, says Bellarmine, is Ecclesiasticus 16: “All mercy shall make a place for every man according to the merit of his works.” Calvin responds that in the Greek text the name of Merit is not found, but only *κατ’ ἔργα*, that is, according to works: but that “according to works” is rightly translated, according to Merits. This Comment is diluted and utterly empty, because in sentences of this kind [x] and [according to], a comparison between the Operation and the conferring of the Reward is denoted, but by no means a Meritorious Cause.

A King can confer ample Benefits on those who have conducted themselves excellently in a tournament, according to their deeds, out of his mere munificence. But concerning this phrase, we will discuss more fully below,

where it is urged more vehemently by the Adversaries, as noted below in section 4.

Bellarmino argues otherwise; “Another passage,” he says, from Bellarmine, *ibid.*, “is Hebrews 13. ‘Do not forget beneficence and communication, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.’” Where the Greek word εὐαρεστεῖται (is well pleased) is most rightly translated as “is pro-merited:” for it means, God is placated, or God is pleased. This is a cake of the same flour. As if these words, to Placate, or to Please, necessarily imply Merit. The Apostle commands, in Romans 15:2, that everyone should please his neighbor in all things; are therefore individual offices of humanity, whether performed by gesture, wink, nod, or smile, to be numbered among Merits? Indeed, that impious and wicked dancing girl is said to have Pleas'd Herod; did she therefore merit half the kingdom, or (more precious than many kingdoms) the divine head of the Baptist? Artaxerxes, when a Pauper, having nothing else, offered him water with both hands, drawn from a nearby stream as he was riding on the road, received it joyfully and smiled, says the Historian: yet the Pauper did not merit a reward of Condignity. Finally, when slaves do what they are most obliged to do by right, and even without a pact, they please their Masters; do they merit anything of Condignity? You will utterly deny it. In the Vulgate Translation, Psalm 114:9, it is read of David, “I will please the Lord in the land of the living:” which words Bellarmine interprets concerning the heavenly region, beyond this our mortal pilgrimage; where the Saints, he says, from Bellarmine on Psalm 114:9, please God in all ways: although he teaches that the blessed saints are outside the state of meriting. And as he says more explicitly elsewhere, from the same book on Good Works, chapter 9: “Neither sinners outside of grace, nor the Blessed can merit, but only those who are pilgrims on earth.” And thus from the word “Pleases,” the Cardinal can conclude that the Saints merit when they cannot merit; how this may please other Papists, he himself must see.

The same error is easily seen in the Objection of the word “is placated:” because a nurse placates an angry infant by lulling, a boy his father by weeping, any witty person his Adversary by joking, or at least by flattering, yet is devoid of Merit. Phinehas and other leaders of the Israelite people were indignant at the Altar built by the Reubenites, but when they gave their response, namely that it was not erected for the sake of Worship, but only for Memory, they were immediately Placated. But tell me, I pray, could even a single drop of Merit be squeezed from that Response? I shall approach the cause more closely. For what can be said to Please or to Placate more than that which renders another propitious? But the Jesuit Valentia, from Valentia, Jesuit, book 1 on that subject, chapter 5, speaks of the Impetratory Mean, which in the Schools is usually distinguished from the Meritorious Mean: “A virtue of propitiating,” he says, “is attributed in the Scriptures in a peculiar way to prayers, inasmuch as we obtain divine Benefits, through the mercy of God, by them.” Thus he says. Therefore,

that virtue obtains benefits not from the Condignity of the Work, but from the good pleasure of God. So you have still been fishing in the air; for this word, Merit, is utterly silent throughout the whole Scripture; about which, however, we are not so concerned, provided you can elicit from them a clear meaning and sense of Merit of Condignity.

They attempt to establish Merit of Condignity, as to its sense, from the Scriptures; but in vain.

SECT. III.

First Class of Scriptures.

The first Class of Scriptures, which Bellarmine objects, from Bellarmine, book 5 on Justification, chapter 2. Also Costerus, Enchiridion on Merits, chapter 7. "It is Evidently proven," he says, "from the Scriptures."

1. In the places in which the name of Dignity is found, as in Apocalypse 3. "They shall walk in white, for they are worthy." Luke 20:35. "They who shall be accounted worthy of that world." 2 Thessalonians 1:5. "That you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God." But Pererius, a leading Jesuit of your Society, from Pererius, Jesuit, on Romans 3, Disp. 16, last number, will shut your mouths, even if we were silent. "The Pelagians say," he remarks, "that God does not give the first Grace except to the worthy and meriting. To whom I respond: they are said to be worthy to receive grace, not as meriting to receive it Condignly, but because through the grace of God they have been made suitable and fit, and rightly prepared to receive Grace."

Thus he. Have you been reduced to such straits, Bellarmine, that you use Pelagian arms against us? Are you not ashamed? Therefore, what your Pererius says against the Pelagians, with respect to Grace, you should consider as our response to you, concerning Glory; they are called Worthy, not because they are Condignly meriting, but because they are Fit and suitable. Although, lest we ourselves seem to be wanting to ourselves, we respond; the Saints are held Worthy before God, yet not from any dignity of their own Merit, but from the merciful dignation of God. Of which acceptance a clear example exists, Acts 5:41. "The Apostles went away rejoicing, that they (κατηξιώθησαν) were counted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus." Concerning which words Chrysostom, from Chrysostom, on Colossians, Homily 12, says: καταξιωθῆναι γὰρ ὄντως ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ τὰ ὄνομα τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀτιμασθῆναι, that is, "For it is truly a dignation (namely, of God) that they should suffer reproach for his name." Which dignation, and, so to speak, prerogative of honor, the Apostle most expressly teaches to proceed from

the peculiar grace and gift of God, Philippians 1:29. "To you it has been given, not only to believe, but also to suffer for him." If we can obtain your patience while we discuss this cause, you will easily perceive that the Consensus of Primaeval Antiquity so abhors the Papist sense of Merit of Condignity, that they profess that no one is Worthy, nor can we do anything properly Worthy of eternal life.

I pass over the fact that you are often taught by ours that these words, ἀξιῶν (to deem worthy) and ἀξιῶσθαι (to be deemed worthy), signify not Merit, but Dignation; just as in 2 Thessalonians 1:11. "For which cause we also pray always for you, that our God may (ὕμᾱς ἀξιῶσῃ ὁ Θεός) deem you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the (εὐδοκίαν) gratuitous good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power." Where almost every word fights against the dignity of Merits, for the dignation of God.

Second Class of Scriptures, which is objected for Merit of Condignity.

SECT. IV.

The second Class. Bellarmine objects, from Bellarmine, book 5 on Justification, chapter 2 and 3, as above: "There are other places of Scripture, in which we are said to merit eternal life: Matthew 20:8. 'He will render the reward.' Matthew 5. 'Your reward is plentiful in heaven.'" He argues, as stated before: "Reward and Merits are Correlates: But eternal life is properly a Reward: Therefore, Works are properly Merits." Thus he argues for Merit of Condignity; with which that Enthymeme of Maldonatus agrees; from Maldonatus on that passage: "Eternal life is properly the Reward of good works: Therefore a good work is properly a Merit."

When you objected the argument from Correlates, Bellarmine, did you argue seriously and dogmatically, or contentiously and tentatively? Speak, that I may see you. From Bellarmine, book 1 on Justification, chapter 21: "Nor do those arguments," he says, "from the Relation of Merit and Reward convince: for I confess that to every merit corresponds a Reward, but as a certain gift of Congruity: thus we say there is a certain Reward of Congruity, which is owed more from Grace than from justice." Which confession of yours plainly destroys your Argument for Merit of Condignity, if we have any faith in your theologians; of whom the Jesuit Costerus says, from Costerus, Enchiridion, Tract on Merits, chapter 7: "And the Catholics define Merit in this way, that it is an Action to which a reward is due from Justice."

We distinguish concerning Reward. One is a Reward of Equality and Commensuration, or of Condignity to the work: and thus Reward and Merit are correlatives. But another is a Reward of Munificence and Benignity, which exceeds the Dignity of the Work by infinite degrees. But a much more opportune place for discussing this will be in the following chapters on Reward; where anyone may understand that we establish nothing concerning Reward that was not decreed and defined by the Catholic Fathers of antiquity.

The Third Class of Scriptures is objected for Merit of Condignity.

SECT. V.

“There are other places,” says the Cardinal, “in which life is said to be rendered according to measure.” Luke 6. “With what measure you have measured, it shall be measured to you again.” He speaks both of the good and of the bad. And, “He will render to every one according to his works,” to the evil, eternal death, to the good, eternal life, Romans 2:6. The same phrase is used for both. To which Costerus assents. From Costerus, *Enchiridion*, Tract on Merits, chapter 7: “[He will render to every one according to his works.] It is to be observed that Scripture, when it speaks of Retribution, uses the same formula of words when it deals with rendering rewards to the just, as when it denounces punishments to the wicked: so that it may be clearly perceived that we no less merit eternal felicity by good actions, than eternal punishments by evil and flagitious ones.” Thus he. And certainly, if we look at the outcome of the Reward and the Punishment, they are similar: but if we look at the manner or Condignity of the work, on the part of man; or the manner of divine Justice of God, in conferring Rewards and exacting Punishments; this Inference is little short of blasphemy, to refute which there is no need of any confutation from us, especially since the conscience of Costerus himself (than which nothing can be more adverse to a man) tortures and goads him: for in the same Tract on Merits, truth itself extorted this confession from him: from the same, *ibid.*, Solution to objection 4. “If works are considered,” he says, “as they emanate from our will, in this way indeed the sins of the impious merit to be punished with eternal torments, because our perdition is from ourselves, Hosea 13:9. But our works do not merit eternal glory, because all our merit depends on divine grace.” And he immediately adds: “Good works have joined to them the divine promise of an eternal reward: and for this reason they are worthy of the reward; not indeed by their own nature, but from the pact of God.” Therefore, although the Good and the Evil are said to obtain Remuneration according to their works, as to the effect; yet in the genus of causes a twofold difference is perceived: One, that Good works are not entirely ours, because divine Grace operates in us; for thus God says, “Help is from me,” Hosea 13. (Concerning this Objection, Augustine is

to be consulted below, Chapter 3, Section 1.) But Evil works are nothing but ours; whence it is said, “Your perdition is from you,” Ibidem. The other, however, is that Good works are of an inferior nature, so that they cannot be compared with the dignity of the divine Reward. Which response of ours we shall hereafter fortify with the most accurate judgments of the ancient Fathers. In the meantime, the very opportune testimony of Augustine is by no means to be omitted. From Augustine, against the two Epistles of the Pelagians, book 2, chapter 6, at the end: “God pursues the merits of evil men with due retribution: but the good things he bestows by his merciful will through unmerited grace.” Thus he.

There is a place where our Perkins distinguishes between the Remuneration of good Works According to works, as from the benignity of the Remunerator; and the Remuneration On account of works, as from the dignity of the Operator; and immediately he incurs the false derision of your Bishop: from Mr. Bishop in his English Tract against Perkins, the Section which is on Merits: “O,” he says, “the sharp wit of the man!” More rightly we say to him, O Cyclopean audacity! who does not see that by this Sarcasm of his, as with black salt, Pope Gregory the Great is equally smeared: for thus that holy Pope says, from Gregory on Psalm 7 of Penitence, on those words, “Make me to hear, etc.”: “But if the felicity of the Saints is acquired by mercy, where will that be which is written, ‘He will render to every one according to his works’? If according to works, how is it considered mercy? But it is one thing to render According to Works, another On Account of Works.” This Roman Pope could not have pronounced, if he had even dreamed of the Merits of Works of Condignity.

Here again, that all Ambiguity may be removed, a distinction must be made concerning the word “According to,” which sometimes denotes a proportion of quality bestowed by Grace, so that according to the goodness of the Work, the goodness of the Reward is rendered; which can be freely granted, without any Relation to any Merit. Sometimes it designates (as the Papists have now defined) a proportion of the Equality of Justice, from the Condignity of the Work, to eternal life. Which acceptance of the word we not only reject, but also detest: in which we have a most testified consensus from the Catholic Fathers; who both confess the Indignity of our Work, and also assert and proclaim the Supra-dignity of the celestial life. Concerning which, see below, Chapter 10 and Chapter 20, Section 11.

Fourth Class of Scriptures, which is objected for Merit of Condignity.

SECT. VI.

Bellarminus objects to the fourth Class of Scriptures, from Bellarmine, book 5 on justification, chapter 3: "From the places," he says, "where a reason is given why eternal life is given: as in Matthew 21. 'Possess the kingdom; For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat, etc.' And in the same place, 'Because you have been faithful in a few things, I will set you over many things; enter into the joy of your Lord.' And in Apocalypse 1. 'Because they have come out of great tribulation, therefore they are before the throne.'"

Calvin responds that in the Scriptures that word "For" is often a note of Consequence, not of Cause; and thus in these places, because God first willed good Works to be done by the Elect, and afterward His kingdom to be obtained. But Christ speaks in the same way of the rewards of the Good and the punishments of the Evil, "Go into the fire, for you did not give me to eat, etc." And also Salmeron; from P. Salmeron, Commentary on Galatians, Disp. 15: "The words are very clear; for the word, For, is causal, and explains the reason."

We respond (although Calvin's response is valid on its own), you will certainly never bring it about that a Causal Condignity is equally present in both: which the recent recantation of Costerus has taught you sufficiently, who, after having fallen into the same precipice of Condignity, in equally rewarding the Good with rewards, and the wicked and flagitious with punishments, immediately acknowledged a wide distinction on the part of the Cause, namely that the dignity of good Works depends on divine grace: On the contrary, the punishments of the Wicked, however great they may be, are due to them from their own proper Guilt. Therefore, whether you will it or not, you must distinguish concerning the causes themselves, because the perdition of the Impious is from themselves, and as from a solitary Cause, and therefore purely and simply Meritorious of punishment.

But whatever good works of the Just are, they are caused Causes; for the pious, being acted upon by the Holy Spirit, are moved to act: which will be easy for us to discern in the same form of the final judgment, where the sentence is pronounced on the impious, "Go, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels." Namely, the Curse, as from a just judge, (no differently than in the case of the Devils) is due only to their malice. The other, "Come, you blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom; for when I was hungry, you gave me to eat, etc." They would certainly never have given anything, unless they were first blessed by God; nor would they afterwards be rewarded by God the Judge, before they were made fit and prepared for the Kingdom by God the Father: "created (κλιθέντες) in good works," says the Apostle, in Ephesians 2, for which they were predestined by him. Which, as is fitting, if we wish to consider it more exactly, oh, how many and how great Blessings of the heavenly Father we shall find to have preceded, (viz. of Election, Vocation, Regeneration, Sanctification,

Reconciliation, and Confirmation in good) before they obtain this eternal Blessing of Glorification!

If we are willing to consult the Judgments of the ancient Fathers, which will be brought forward below, anyone will understand that this Response is entirely of Catholic truth. In the meantime, let the Reader take a taste from Fulgentius, on those words, “Come, you blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world, etc.” from Fulgentius to Monimus on Predestination, page 18. “But this very thing,” he says, “is a work of Grace: for by Grace is given not only a good life to the justified, but also eternal life to the glorified.” To this end, where the question is, why it was said to the Good, “Come, you blessed of my Father;” but it was not said to the Evil, “Go, you cursed of my Father;” your Tostatus Abulensis responds, from Abulensis on Matthew 25, question 96.402, “Because the Blessing is from the Father, but God is not the author of the Malediction: and thus it appears in Predestination and Reprobation; for he chose us from eternity, that we should be Holy, Ephesians 1. Therefore it is not in us, nor from us, that is, in our power, that we have that good, but from the will of God, Romans 9. It is otherwise in Reprobation, the cause is not on the part of God, but from the Self: Blessed, because the Father is the Minister of blessing; but of malediction, each one is the Actor for himself.” Thus he says.

Nor is there any need for the word “FOR” to cause us any trouble, inasmuch as it serves both equally, [“Come, you Blessed, FOR you gave: and, Go, you cursed, FOR you did not give:”] because according to the diversity of the subject, the reasoning of the same word can be diverse: viz. “Come, you blessed, FOR you gave,” namely, through the unmerited grace and blessing of God: and, “Go, you cursed, FOR you did not give,” namely, from the depravity of your will. For you are not unaware that the same word is frequently used variously in the same sentence in the Scriptures. “He who will save his life, shall lose it:” where the former life denotes the temporal, the latter the eternal. And 2 Corinthians 5. “He who knew no sin,” that is, transgression of the law, “was made sin,” that is, a sacrifice for sin. This observation is very familiar among the ancient Fathers, who explain themselves in their Commentaries, just as has now been shown from those words, in the word FOR; both as to GO, and as to POSSESS; which the Vulgate Edition wrongly renders simply [Possess] and not as it is in the Greek [κληρονομήσατε] (have as an inheritance). Which word indicates that the Kingdom comes to the Saints by hereditary right, which utterly excludes all Meritorious Right, as is accurately proven below.

Finally, the Reason for the difference can be this, that he who offends in one point will be guilty of all, James 2:10. Therefore, from one sin, although he may have conducted himself rightly in other things, a man merits death: it does not follow in the same way that from one good work he merits life. Therefore, it is

necessary to consider the difference of the Subjects, as for example, Mark 16. "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved: but he who has not, shall be damned:" The consequence of Salvation from the faith of the one is as valid as the damnation from the unbelief of the other. But the Reason of the consequence is very different: for the damnation of the one who does not believe is from Merit; but the salvation of the one who believes is from Grace and the singular indulgence of God.

As for the other word, BECAUSE, as in Apocalypse 7, "Because they came out of tribulation," it can take the place of a Consequence, just like that saying of Christ, Luke 7:47. "I say to her, her many sins are forgiven, because she loved much." Calvin understood this passage in this way; and immediately Stapleton is beaten by the pedant Stapleton, from his *Promptuarium Catholicum*, on the second day after Passion Sunday: "Calvin marvels," he says, "that our Interpreters are so grossly mistaken as to say that this woman merited forgiveness by her tears. What a foul caviler! None of the ancient Interpreters, nor of the more recent, has used the word 'to Promerit.' Good words, I pray you." But let us examine the genuine sense of this Text: from Stapleton, *ibid.*: "He wants Calvin to think that the offices which this woman performed were neither Merit nor the cause of the remission that followed: but the argument, he says, which Christ uses, is not taken from the cause, but from the effect, because it is prior in order to receive a benefit than to give thanks: but here the great love was the cause, not indeed meritorious, but disposing to it." Ineptly and absurdly Calvin; whatever Magdalene did here, were signs of justice already obtained, exhibited to testify her gratitude. Thus he. There is no surer sign of a badly constituted brain than to reprehend as insipid in others whatever does not please one's own palate. Therefore, others must be consulted, whose senses will perhaps seem to have been a little more learned; first Toletus, Jesuit and Cardinal: from Toletus, on Luke 7, Commentary, after annotation 71: "[For which I say to you, her many sins are forgiven, because she loved much:] That is, that her many sins have been forgiven her, can be manifest by this sign and argument, because she has shown many signs of love toward me. For you, Simon, have judged, and rightly indeed, that to whom much is owed, ought to love much, and be more grateful toward the creditor. Wherefore, where those many signs of love appear, it is to be judged a great remission of sins and debts." In which words the word "BECAUSE" signifies the cause, not of the thing, but of the proof; for it is an argument from the effects and signs: for from the signs of love shown toward him, as to a creditor, he deduces that the woman's sins have been forgiven. Which exposition (that the word BECAUSE does not signify the cause of the thing) is so utterly Calvinistic, as if it had been taken verbatim from Calvin's own Commentary. Which interpretation he also attempts to establish by the judgment and authority of Pope Gregory. "Gregory," he says, "in Book 6, Epistle 22, interprets this of the Love that follows remission: he feels that the word [BECAUSE] indicates a proof, as if it were an Argument from the effect: for in

this it is demonstrated that her many sins were forgiven, from the great love she showed.”

And the Jesuit Salmeron, from Salmeron, Jesuit, Tom. 4, part 2, page 3, dissects this cause no less clearly, and finally concludes: “Other learned men,” he says, “contend that ὅτι, in Latin, QUONIAM (because), does not always signify the efficient cause of a thing, but sometimes by it a reason is given from the effect: for the Lord said [For which I say to you, her many sins are forgiven], and the reason for this my affirmation,” he says, “I add from the effect, [Because she loved much.] For from love, as an effect, he demonstrates that its cause, that is, the remission of sins, has preceded; and this sense is confirmed both by what precedes and by what follows.” From what precedes, because he said, “[He forgave both],” and asked, “[Who therefore loves him more?]” It also follows from what comes after, “[To whom less is forgiven, loves less.]” Thus he; and afterwards, he gives very many examples of this kind of diction; for example, “Cicero is learned, because he writes learnedly.” From Scripture, 1 John 3. “We know that we have been translated from death to life, because we love the brethren.” And Psalm 116. “I cried out, because you heard me.”

What if the very Pontifical doctrine cries out against Stapleton's exposition? For, according to the same Salmeron, “remission of sin, as to its guilt, is never effected on account of love from charity.” A very similar passage in Hebrews 1:9, from the Jesuit Ribera; from Ribera, Jesuit, on Hebrews 2:9, number 83. “Therefore God has anointed you, etc.” S. Thomas affirms that when it is said “Therefore,” it indicates not merit, but the end. What more? That we may freely and willingly grant you, that FOR and BECAUSE are causal terms, which denote that good Works are a cause, not only sine qua non, but also operative: is it therefore your Meritorious cause? Indeed, gray and venerable Antiquity will never permit this; as their testimonies below will demonstrate everywhere.

Fifth Class of Scriptures, which is objected for Merit of Condignity.

SECT. VII.

Bellarminus objects to the fifth class of scriptures. From y Bellarmine, book 5 on justification, chapter 3. The scripture says that the reward is to be rendered to good works out of justice, as 2 Timothy 4:8. “[The just Judge will render me a crown]” And Hebrews 6:10. “[God is not unjust, to forget your work]” Also Apocalypse 2. “[Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life].” I respond that from this Justice of God no reason of Merit can be extracted by any force of intellect; if indeed you would be willing to admit your commentator Espencaeus, along with Augustine, as an interpreter. From Claude Espencaeus's

commentary on 2 Timothy 4, where he attributes all these things to Augustine, which are here: "It is a kind of justice," says Espencaeus, "to perform what you have promised, by which reason God has in a certain way constituted himself a Debtor to us, so that we can call upon him, if not for our merits, yet for his promises. So that if we are mindful of our duty, he who does not refuse to be called unjust if he fails to perform what he has promised, will not refuse." This indeed is both Scholastic and Erasmian. "I will bring forth better things," he says, "which Augustine has treated on the occasion of this passage (2 Timothy 4)." "Paul," he says, "demands a crown, promised indeed out of mercy, but now to be paid out of justice: for it is just that he who owes should pay, and he owes who has promised, out of grace, though not out of debt." And concerning this justice of God, which is the promise of God, the Apostle here as if presumes, and repeats, knowing for certain that he, in whose promise he believed, would keep and render it. A little later, from the same Augustine: "To whom would the just Judge render a crown, if the merciful Father had not given grace?" Then, from the same, *ibid.*, Espencaeus from St. Gregory the Pope, afterwards: "God crowns in mercy: it is therefore established, that to whom he mercifully grants to work well in this life, he more mercifully Bestows on the same, that they may be remunerated with a hundredfold fruit in eternal beatitude: this is the Grace, which the Apostle asserts is to be given for Grace, John 1, so that to whom in this life the grace of Sanctification is divinely given, to them also in the future may be given the grace of eternal felicity."

Therefore, however much Augustine, whenever he uses the name of Merit, seems to suppose some Congruity; certainly indeed he is most averse to the Condignity of Works, which is from the Equality of Justice. For thus it follows in the same Author, from Augustine: "If therefore, O man, you are to receive eternal life, it is indeed the stipend of Justice; but to you it is Grace, to whom also justice (infused) is Grace: for it would be rendered to you as a debt, if you had from yourself the justice to which it was due." And also the Jesuit Barradius, from Barradius, Tom. 3, book 5, chapter 20, on the Parable of the Workers, citing that of Augustine in Psalm 109, says: "Faithful is God, who made himself our debtor, not by receiving anything from us, but by promising us so much." In the same way the Antididagma of the Council of Cologne, insisting on the same footsteps of Augustine, from the Cologne Council's Antididagma: "Lest you think this crown of God's justice is due to your virtues, solely on account of their dignity: it is called the Crown of Justice, not ours, but God's. The Justice of God is spoken of in the same way as we say, 'Salvation is of the Lord,' not because the Lord is saved, but which he gives to those whom he saves. Paul demands the crown of this justice, namely of God, not of his own; but see with what presumption he demands it: 'I know,' he says, 'whom I have believed, and I am certain that he is able to keep my deposit.' Because he believed him who promised, he faithfully demands what was promised, calling God's Promise his own Deposit; promised indeed out of mercy, but now to be paid out of Justice:

for it is just that he should render what he owes, and he owes what he has promised." Almost every word refutes every assertion of Merit, properly so called. In the same sense as Augustine, other Fathers have handed down many things, as will be proven more extensively below in Chapter 9.

Sixth Class of Scriptures, which the Papists object for Merit of Condignity.

SECT. VIII.

Bellarmin objects to the Sixth Class of Scriptures, from d Bellarmine, book 5 on Justification, chapter 3. "In many Scriptures eternal life is promised under the condition of a good Work. Matthew 19. [If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.] And 1 Timothy 4. [Piety is useful for all things, having the promise, etc.] which he promised to those who love him. And in these; James 1. [If you do this: Apocalypse 2. If you conquer, I will give.] Argue: A promise made with the condition of a Work not only makes the promised thing due, so that God is bound to stand by his promises: but also makes it so that he who has fulfilled the work is said to have merited the promised thing, and to demand it by his own right as a reward."

But to demand a reward? from God, too? and by right? and even by the force of His Promise? What do the Protestants say against this? Speak. From the same book 1 on Justification, chapter 21, the Adversaries object that passage, 1 John 1. "If anyone confesses his sins, God is just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." But the Remission of sins, by the confession of all, no one merits, and yet God is just to forgive sins. What do you say? I answer: John speaks of the remission of venial sins, which is rendered by the just judgment of God to the good merits of the Just. Behold a putrid Comment! for I would rather have said that than a Commentary. For, according to Aquinas, from Aquinas on that passage, and the College of Rheims, Annotations on 1 John 1:17, as the Gloss explains, "If we confess our sins," namely, Mortal sins. And that any sin will be remitted, the Text openly professes, so to speak, viz. ["He will cleanse us from all iniquity"]. What do you say to this, Rheims commentators? From Augustine, Bede, etc. "That is, from all Original and Actual, venial and mortal, guilt and punishment." Likewise Arius Montanus; from h Arius Montanus on the same passage. "That is, whoever acknowledges himself a sinner, having confessed his sins, will ask for a propitious God for himself, who will remit all his sins." Vega grants the same from the Fathers; from Vega, on Merit, question 6, page 791. "There is no greater Justice," says Vega, from Jerome, "than to forgive the penitent, and to open the bosom of mercy to one returning to mercy." And St. Augustine boldly said at one time, throughout that whole sixth question: "If God did not receive those who flee to him, there would be iniquity in him." And

Blessed Anselm: “When you punish the wicked, it is just, because it corresponds to their merits: when you spare the wicked, it is just, not because it corresponds to their merits, but because it is fitting to your goodness.”

Then, lest we should seem (if there were need of it) to be deprived of the support of the Jesuits, Estius will interpose his vote; from Estius on the same passage: “But God is here called just, not because forgiveness of sin is due to the penitent by a law of justice, in the way that the reward of eternal life is due to one who works well; but either for this reason, because to keep faith in promises is a certain part of justice.” It follows: “[And that he may cleanse us from all iniquity] which can be taken distributively: so that the sense is; there is no iniquity so great, either in number or in magnitude, from which the blood of Christ does not cleanse us, if we have confessed it.” We have received plenty of Objections and Refutations: yet it will not be enough for us to have proven that the opinion of Merit properly so called of Condignity is not proven from the Scriptures, unless it also clearly appears that it is refuted by the sacred letters; which in our Arguments we shall strive to demonstrate everywhere copiously and appropriately. In the meantime, lest the word MERIT, whenever it occurs to us, might be a prejudice to our Cause, we shall satisfy the objections of the Adversaries.

Objections of the Papists from the Fathers.

I. THESIS.

That the Papists violently extort the name of MERIT from the Greek Fathers.

SECT. I.

The Cardinal begins with the Greek Fathers; but many on our side have often and greatly complained about the translations of the Papists, as being either dishonest or ignorant: who from good Greek sentences have rendered bad Latin ones, so that by this means they might at least extract the name of MERIT.

1. The first Father praised by him is Ignatius in his Epistle to the Romans: “Suffer me to be food for the beasts, through which I may be able to merit God.” Where the Greek word ἐπιτυχεῖν, which is to attain or to obtain, is forcedly translated into Latin as, to Promerit.

2. The second is Justin Martyr, Apology 2, around the middle, in this manner; “That men make themselves worthy of God and will live with him by their merits.” In which Translation a twofold error is perceived;

1. If they show themselves worthy of his counsel through their works [ἐκείνου βουλήματος δι' ἔργων δείξωσι] that is, “If they showed themselves worthy of his

counsel by their works.” But the Papists have granted to us above, Chapter 2, Section 3, that the word, Worthy, generally signifies nothing other than Fit.

2. The other, [τῆς μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἀναστροφῆς καταξιοθῆναι] that is, “to be deemed worthy of His conversation” (namely, God’s). Therefore, we say, God grants this to men out of Dignation, not out of Debt.

3. From Origen, book 2 on Romans, chapter 2. “God will render for merits.” You have received a response from ours, that Bellarmine did not care whether he followed a correct Translation or a distorted one, because not only in the Basel edition, but also in the latest Paris edition, it is not [for Merits] but only [for Works.] This is our old complaint.

4. Chrysostom, Oration 4 on Lazarus: The good and the evil will receive [τὴν ἀξίαν] that is, “as they are worthy.” It is true; for there is also a spiritual Dignity in the Just, according to which they will receive Remuneration. But is it therefore according to the Equality of Justice with God? You have no greater Adversary among the Protestants than this Chrysostom will show himself to be (often below).

5. Gregory of Nyssa in his Oration on loving the Poor. We respond, no such Title exists in the books of Nyssa printed in Basel in the year 1571. Nor, therefore, would a mute Witness deserve any Response.

6. We respond; the name of Merit is absent from the testimonies of Basil and Nazianzen; they are not, therefore, relevant: although the opinion of Nazianzen seems to be of some moment. For he says in his Oration 4 on Holy Baptism, before the end; “Believe in the resurrection, the judgment, the reward to be exacted by the just balance of God.” Which we also freely profess, so that if the Goats and the Sheep, that is, the Just and the Unjust, are compared with each other, the Judgment of God is the balance of highest Justice: but if the Just are examined by themselves according to the rigor of the law, they would not dare to contend in judgment with God from an Equality of justice, if we are willing to believe either the Greek or the Latin Fathers, to whom we often and again appeal.

II. THESIS.

That the Papists have never been able to prove from the Latin Fathers Merit properly so called OF CONDIGNITY.

SECT. II.

We easily acknowledge the sayings of the Fathers: such as Hilary’s, Canon 5. “It is from ourselves to merit eternity.” Ambrose’s, Book 1 of Offices, chapter 15. “It is evident that merits await rewards.” Augustine’s and Prosper’s, “Eternal life is to

be acquired by the Merit of justice." Tertullian's, "There is an order of Merits." Cyprian's, "There is need of justice, that one may be able to merit God." Bernard's, "Take care to have merits." There follow testimonies, in which there is no mention of Merit at all; Jerome's, "Rewards are prepared for labor." And Pope Gregory's, "In this life there is a distinction of works: after this life there will be a distinction of Dignations."

To the Testimonies, in which the words, MERITS, and TO MERIT, sound, we respond; from the sentences of the Fathers, the Papists have never yet been able to extract a clear sense of Merit of Condignity, properly so called. Indeed, to this poison, concerning Merit from the Equality of Justice with God, they have prescribed an Antidote with their Orthodox suffrages. Where not with metaphorical sayings, but with clear and perspicuous Assertions they say, "There is no Merit of ours: We do nothing worthy of eternal life: But, It is above all our Condignity;" and many other things of this kind, as we will prove copiously below. In the meantime, we exhibit some examples of the improper acceptance of the word MERIT among the Ancients.

III. THESIS.

Some Instances of the improper acceptance of the word MERIT in Antiquity, with the admission of our Adversaries.

SECT. III.

Among our Adversaries, Vega is a celebrated name among the Papists. He, from Vega, book 8 on Justification, chapter 8, p. 186, says: "It does not escape me that the name of Merit is sometimes used among the Fathers where there is no reason for Merit, neither of Congruity nor of Condignity. For we are accustomed to say, Happy are those men, who among other animals have merited this grace from God, to be distinguished by freedom of the Will." And Cyprian says, "Infants merit divine Grace more, because at the first beginning of their birth, crying, they do nothing else but pray." Thus he. Augustine also (cited by P. Lombard), from P. Lombard, 2, distinction 4, where he speaks of the Sin against the Holy Spirit, says, "This Sin alone cannot merit forgiveness." And again; from Augustine, Sermon 48 on Time: "Let no sinner despair of himself, since Paul merited Indulgence." Frequent in everyone's mouth is that saying of Pope Gregory about the sin of Adam, which is now sung in the Roman Church, in the blessing of the Candle: "O happy fault, which merited to have such a Savior!" But what can be more familiar among the Papists than their own Bibles? where the Vulgate Interpreter published this translation of his, Genesis 3, as from the mouth of Cain; "My Sin is greater than that it may merit forgiveness." Of the same bran is that which is sung in the solemn Masses; from the Collect, as Stapleton reports, book 10 on Justification, chapter 14: "That we who distrust the quality of our Merits, may merit to obtain not your judgment, but your mercy."

What then do such acceptations of Merit mean? surely nothing other than to obtain, to attain, to acquire, and the like. Therefore what Stapleton is forced to confess concerning Deeds before justification, we easily understand is also rightly said of other Works: from Stapleton, *Promptuarium Catholicum*, sermon 5 after Passion Sunday: “If any of the Ancients,” he says, “used the word, ‘to Promerit,’ he understood it no other way than the Attainment in fact.” Very well indeed.

And if anyone wishes to inquire into the origin of this Interpretation, he will find that this use had its origin in the Latin language from the Roman People, of whom it is said; “In whose power is the judgment, and force, and norm of speaking.” Of which thing we have as a witness that distinguished cultivator and refiner of ancient erudition, Isaac Casaubon, from Pliny the second, in these words; from I. Casaubon, *Annotations on epistle 8 of Pliny to Pompeius*, book In.: “That they should await, and merit the honor of a few.” And again; “For Glory should be followed, not sought: nor, if by some chance it does not follow, is that which did not merit glory any less beautiful.” Hence our most famous Scholiast says, “Meruit, is, The sense is; Excellent deeds, even if they do not find praisers, are not therefore less beautiful.” The word, to merit, does not always signify τὸ τυγχάνειν (to obtain), but notes the fact, not the right, is better known than to need proof. Thus he. Which Observation can be for us an exquisite determination and settlement of the λογομαχία, or Controversy about the Name. Now we must fight further against Merit of Condignity, 1. From the authority of the sacred letters: 2. From the confessions of the Papists themselves: 3. From the patronage of the Primitive Church.

Against MERIT OF CONDIGNITY, from the Sacred Scriptures.

SECT. I.

For the sake of brevity, I will reduce the passages of the Scriptures to a compendium, which are afterwards to be treated by us more accurately for the sake of clarity. They are, however, of many kinds: for, if we consider the principle of acting well, 1 Corinthians 3. “What do you have that you have not received?” If the priority of giving, Romans 11. “Who has first given, and it shall be repaid to him?” If the unworthiness of the Operator in himself, 1 John 1. “Whoever says he has no sin, deceives himself.” If the defect of the work, Romans 7:18. “I do not find how to perform.” But that we may consider the dignity of a Just man, his Condition is not Mercenary, but Filial and Hereditary; John 1. “As many as received him (Christ), to them he gave the power to become sons of God.” Nevertheless his Work, by the precept of God, is a debt; Luke 17. “We have done what we ought to have done.” Nor does it profit the Remunerator

God one bit; Job 22. "What does it profit God that you are just?" Lastly, an Estimation is to be had of the Work, the Reward, and of the remunerating God. To this pertain the following places; Romans 8. "The afflictions are not worthy, etc." Romans 6:23. "Eternal life is the gift of God." Psalm 102:4. "God crowns us in mercy." And 1 Thessalonians 5:18. "In all things give thanks." The highlights of these Scriptures (to omit others) are enough by themselves to overthrow that opinion of Merit from Condignity according to the Equality of Justice with God. This we moreover strive to overthrow and refute with a twofold kind of Arguments: one of which is deduced from the Confessions of the Papists, as if from their own quivers: the other is extracted from the suffrages of the Holy Fathers, as from the armory of Antiquity; and vibrated not so much with our own strength and arms, as with those of the Fathers themselves.

Our first argument against MERIT OF CONDIGNITY, from the confessions of the Papists themselves; concerning the formal Reason thereof, which is said to be the Equality of Justice.

Argumentation.

SECT. I.

Every Merit of Condignity consists in the Condignity of the Equality of Justice to the Reward of eternal life:

But no good Work of ours consists in the Condignity of the Equality of Justice to the Reward of eternal life:

Therefore, no good Work is Meritorious of Condignity.

The Adversaries themselves have freely offered us the Proposition: "Nothing more is required for Condignity than Equality." For they wish one to be Commutative, the other Distributive. (Above, Chapter 2, throughout.) We shall pursue our argument concerning both.

That no good Work consists in either Equality of Justice.

I. Not in Commutative

SECT. II.

Cardinal Bellarmine, from Book 5 on Justification, chapter 14, says, "God ought to render eternal life out of Commutative or Distributive Justice: Out of Commutative, as to the Substance; out of Distributive, as to the mode." Thus he. But we say, diametrically opposed, "Neither Commutative nor Distributive Justice properly intervenes between God and Man." Come on, let foot be joined to foot.

1. We attack Commutative justice; concerning which the Papists explain their sense, among whom the Jesuit Costerus, from Enchiridion, Tract on Merits, chapter 7, says, "Commutative equality is that of a thing with a thing; such as is in purchases, exchanges, and leasings: as, when the wage is equal to the work, or the price to the thing sold or leased." This you also deem to be worthy, to which Merit of Condignity should be attributed: for the Jesuit continues: "The reason of Justice by which God gives eternal life to the just as a reward for their works, pertains in some way to both parts of justice, both to the equality of works, and also to the dignity of persons," as stated above.

Bellarmino also will not hesitate to signify to us what he thinks: "Absolute equality," he says, "between the Reward and the Merit is constituted by the mode of Commutative justice. God exercises judgment by the mode of Commutative justice, whose role it is to constitute absolute equality between Merit and Reward, so that each one may have as much reward as he merits by the judgment of God." We must observe, the Cardinal considers no equality of justice to be true (which, that is, constitutes Merit of Condignity) unless it is absolute, and which can demand a Reward from Debt (for so he said), as noted above under the heading "But the manner."

Which decree of the Cardinal seemed a complete Paradox to his Preceptor Aquinas: for "Commutative justice," he says, from Part 1, question 21, article 1, "does not befit God; because the Apostle says of God, Romans 11:35, 'Who has first given, and it shall be repaid to him?'" Thus he. Whom, his own Homer, the Cardinal excludes whenever he pleases. To whom, however, two Jesuits of the same family rush to meet. The Jesuit Vasquez, from In 1-2, 114, disp. 223, chapter 1, says: "Some more recent authors attribute commutative justice to God: but we show from our established purpose that there is no Scholastic among the ancients who follows the opinion of these Doctors. And they establish a definition of commutative justice handed down by no one hitherto, so that they twist the meaning of this name wherever they wish: which indeed if it were free for everyone, we would have nothing firm, nothing stable in theological disputations." Thus he. Let him who pleases seek and search through the three Chapters which Vasquez employed in the refutation of that doctrine, to which opinion the Jesuit Valentianus rather adheres. From Gregorius de Valentia, Tract on Divine Grace, part 4, chapter 6: "When we speak of the Merit of eternal life," he says, "there is no place for Commutative justice." Finally, Stapleton (lest anyone should think that a strict Equality of justice intervenes between God and Man), from Stapleton on Justification, book 10, chapter 2, says: "The reason of merit does not pertain to Commutative justice; for it is not a servile or mercenary work, but of virtue and charity, which posits friendship." These things they say, so learnedly and so eloquently, that this part in no way needs any further refutation from us. It will nevertheless be our task to commit to memory the reasons proposed by them. The First, that this opinion is new, and

in no way to be tolerated. The Second, that it is repugnant to the Grace of God; concerning which the Apostle says, "God first gave." The Third, that it renders the works of Christians Servile, and not at all Charitable.

II. That the EQUALITY in which they place the Condignity of MERIT is not according to Distributive justice.

SECT. III.

For this Justice, the Jesuit Costerus, from his Enchiridion, Tract on Merits, chapter 7, says: "It is Distributive when an estimation is had not only of the labor, but especially of the person: as, where these two, a Duke and a common soldier, have conducted themselves equally bravely in battle, a greater reward is rendered to the Duke, not for the greatness of the labor, but for the dignity of the person. The reason of Justice, for which God gives eternal life to the just as a reward for their works, also pertains to this justice." Likewise from the Jesuit de Valentia; from Gregorius de Valentia on divine Grace, part 4, chapter 6: "Merit is a good act, which God compensates according to Distributive justice." This is according to a Member of the Papist distinction, to cut which there is no need of our arms; especially when we understand that it has long since been crushed and torn away by the Jesuit Vasquez: from Vasquez, in 1-2, question 114, disp. 223, chapter 4: "We, from Durandus and all others," he says, "who distinguish distributive justice by purpose, have proved that justice of this kind not only does not properly befit God; but also that its mode is not observed by him when he distributes rewards to the just; because merit then has a place from Distributive justice when a Geometric Equality is observed, which Aristotle says is between two persons, and two things to be distributed: so that as is the proportion of dignity between the persons, so is it between the things which they are to receive. Whereas Commutative justice respects only the equality between thing and thing, and of one person to another; as, between debt and payment, between what is given and what is received; which they call only Arithmetic equality: we rightly say, as we prove in the same place, that distributive justice is not in God."

Vasquez proceeds, and refutes the objections that are usually raised against this. Afterwards, Durandus, and your theologians will follow our opinion on foot.

III. Proving that neither Commutative nor Distributive properly befits God towards Men.

SECT. IV.

We appeal again to your Doctors. Although Valentia had embraced the equality of justice, yet afterwards, having discussed the matter diligently and more exactly with himself, he was as if forced by the command of truth to confess that "Between God and men there cannot be an exact equality of justice, such as is

between men themselves,” as stated above. Which he confirms with sound and truly Theological reasons. 1. Because God is not so obligated. 2. Because we are his creation, and all that is ours is his. 3. Because he has bound us to himself by innumerable other benefits. The Jesuit proceeds happily enough, except that he sometimes stumbles upon this name Merit. From this confession, the superior defense of Bellarmine, above, Sect. 2, concerning the Absolute equality of justice between God and Men, is plainly undermined.

The Jesuit Maldonatus adds his contribution; where after he had weighed these Scriptures more exactly, viz. Matthew 25:21. “WELL DONE, GOOD SERVANT, I WILL SET YOU OVER MANY THINGS,” And Romans 8:18. “THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS LIFE ARE NOT WORTHY OF THE FUTURE GLORY;” “What then,” he says, from On Matthew 25:14, 22, “are we to receive some reward, which we have not merited? I do not say that at all: for everything we are to receive as a reward, we will either have merited, or it will not be a reward.” Thus he. But Merit (Good God!) how meager and plainly ludicrous! For this Jesuit continues: “But because,” he says, “one must not look to equality, but to the analogy of the giver and the receiver, the Reward is said to be more than the Merit.” The old story of Alexander is well known; who, when he had ordered a great sum of money to be given to a Poet for a composed poem, and the latter had responded that this was too much for a Poet: The King rejoined, “But this is not too much for Alexander.” Thus far Maldonatus on Analogy; in which there is no trace of the Equality of Justice, any more than between the reward of a most munificent King and the poem of a Poet. Whence one can hardly wonder enough at the folly of those Jesuits, who were not ashamed to peddle the equality of justice between human Merit and God’s Reward, when a Poet was so abhorrent of acknowledging any equality between his Poem and Alexander’s money; who, having received the reward, immediately exclaimed, “TOO MUCH;” which is a most open negation of Analogy.

As for Distributive Justice, which they have defined as having respect to different persons, who are compensated with different remuneration; we say that it fights against all those formulas of God’s Judicial process, which the Adversaries themselves have hitherto objected from the Scriptures to prove their Merit of Condignity. Which formulas, I say, designate not any comparison of different persons, but only an estimation of the individual Workers. The formulas proposed by them (above Chapter 2) are of this kind; The just are called worthy of remuneration; Sect. 3. And, To them rewards are rendered according to their works; Sect. 5. And, Because they have done good Works; Sect. 6. And finally, To those who contend justly and lawfully is promised the Crown of life; Sect. 7. Each of which forms respects the Remuneration of any just man, for himself and his Work, with no relation had to the rewards conferred on others. The phrases of Scripture are of this kind; “God will render to each according to his works.” And, “To him who overcomes will be given,” namely, to each one. Nor

would it have been said generally, “Come, you Blessed of my Father, because you have done;” unless it had been judicially true of each one, “Because YOU have done,” and YOU, and so of the rest. Since therefore there is no mode, except by reason of the thing modified; it follows that because there is no Geometric and distributive proportion to be observed in the Divine Judgment, there can be no Geometric and Distributive mode of Remunerating.

Our second argument, against the Papists' Merit of Condignity, from the Papists themselves.

Argumentation.

SECT. I.

Whatever Work lacks every true principle of properly so-called Condignity before God, that cannot be properly a Merit of Condignity:

But every good Work lacks every true principle of Condignity before God:

Therefore, no good Work can be called properly a Merit of Condignity before God.

The Papists have forged four Principles of their Condignity to eternal life. 1. Insofar as a good Work proceeds from free Will. 2. Insofar as it proceeds from the indwelling Holy Spirit. 3. Insofar as it proceeds from man, as a member of Christ. 4. Insofar as it arises from God's pact. Each of these must now be explored and examined. But that which others have established as a fifth, namely, concerning Christ meriting for us the virtue of meriting, we have postponed to Chapter 17, where it is treated copiously.

Against the first principle of the Papists of Merit of Condignity, which is free Will.

SECT. II.

Concerning a good Work, insofar as it proceeds from free Will in the state of Grace, thus Bellarmine establishes, from Book 5 on Justification, chapter 10: “A reward is due to merit: but a debt does not arise, unless one gives to another what is his own: for if he gave something not his own, but another's, nothing would be due to him: but nothing is properly ours, except what we can do or omit at our discretion.” Thus he. Whom the supreme moderator of the School, Aquinas, informed much differently; who, where he speaks of man constituted in Grace, from Aquinas, 1-2, question 114, article 3, says: “On account of free Will, there is no Condignity, because of the supreme inequality, but only of Congruity.” The reason is learnedly explained by Bellarmine's fellow disciple, the Jesuit Pererius: from Pererius in Romans 6, disp. 11, n. 34: “If human works are considered as they have proceeded from free Will, they would undoubtedly have no proportion of equality, or Condignity to eternal life: for their goodness

and excellence, which they receive from free Will, is something human and natural; but eternal glory is something eternal and supernatural: for this reason therefore a Good work is not condign to eternal life." Thus he. Indeed, even in the opinion of Bellarmine himself, Free will, by itself, is not sufficient for Merit of Condignity, without the other principle of Merit, which now immediately follows, viz. the Holy Spirit.

Against the second principle of the Papists of Merit of Condignity, which is not rightly attributed to the Holy Spirit.

SECT. III.

This principle of Meritorious Condignity, the Papists, to deceive their disciples, pretend as if they were defending their opinion of Merit out of a desire to exalt the grace of God; when in reality they could not detract more from the grace of the Holy Spirit and of Christ; as will be made clear from the following disputation.

But to the matter. Let the Jesuit Costerus come forth as an assertor: from his Enchiridion, Tract on Merits, chapter 7, obj. 4, num. 55. "If our works are considered, as they are effected by us, the sons of God, and by the indwelling Holy Spirit, for this reason an Equality, and true Merit is found between the Works and the Reward." He derived this from Thomas, 1-2, Q. 114, art. 3. In the same way the Jesuit Pererius: "As Works proceed from the indwelling Holy Spirit, they certainly have a dignity with the reward of eternal life." Valentia holds the same.

Although a cohort, as it were, of Papists oppose this opinion, as cited by the Jesuit Vasquez, viz. Gregory, Gabriel, Alphonsus de Castro, the Canons of Cologne, the Council of Sens, and Vega; whose opinion, says Vasquez, from Vasquez in 1-2, disp. 214, Chap. 1, was that "the works of the just, considered in themselves, as they proceed from the help of God, and from the established sanctity by which the Spirit operates in us, do not have the Condignity and relation of merit of eternal life; but only have the reason of merit derived from the promise and pact of God." Among the cited Authors is Vega, who was a theologian of what renown in the Council of Trent, the Jesuit Canisius has related to us: from Canisius, in the Dedicatory Epistle before Vega's book: "Andreas Vega," he says, "previously heard the most learned Theologians and the wisest Fathers debating in the Council of Trent: When the matter of Justification was disputed for many months, he himself most studiously contributed his own views with the other disputants." This Disputant therefore (if any other) could seem a suitable witness to pronounce the judgment of the Council of Trent, to which he himself had most devotedly subjected his own. We demand and implore his sense. From Vega's work on Merits, page 791: "I know," he says, "that there are not lacking Doctors who say that our Works are meritorious and

condign to beatitude, on account of the supernatural dignity of the Holy Spirit from whom they proceed: but having weighed everything on all sides, I would still believe that they are not Condign to beatitude. For although the value of our works is much greater, as they are from Grace and the Holy Spirit; yet there still does not seem to be an equality between them and beatitude, and consequently neither Condignity: in which sense we believe Paul truly said, 'The sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory which shall be revealed in us.'

But let us dismiss persons, let us contend with reasons. Bellarmine, that he may seem to fight for Grace, from Book 5 on Justification, chapter 17, says: "In a good work, proceeding from Grace, there is a certain equality to the eternal reward, is proved from John 1:16. FROM HIS FULLNESS WE HAVE ALL RECEIVED, AND GRACE FOR GRACE: that is, THE GRACE OF REWARD, for THE GRACE OF MERITS, or, as Augustine says, THE GRACE OF THE FATHERLAND, for THE GRACE OF THE WAY. But between Grace and Grace there is a great proportion: GRACE FOR GRACE." Thus he. Therefore from the meritorious condignity of the work, according to the equality of justice? Either prove this, or you lose your case. From which opinion of Merit, as Augustine abhorred it everywhere else, so also in the place objected: from On Grace and Free Will, chapter 9: "FROM HIS FULLNESS WE HAVE ALL RECEIVED: According to our measure," he says, "as our small portions, that we may live well; just as God has distributed the measure of faith, because each one has his own gift from God: GRACE FOR GRACE, when eternal life shall be rendered to us. When he had first said, 'THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH:' deservedly WAGES; because eternal death is rendered as a debt for the militia of the devil. But where he could have said, 'THE WAGES OF JUSTICE IS ETERNAL LIFE,' he preferred to say, 'BUT THE GRACE OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE:' that from this we might understand that God leads us to eternal life not for our Merits, but for his own mercy." Thus he. Nothing therefore is clearer than that, according to the opinion of Augustine, the Reward of good works (which is eternal life) and the Wages of sin (namely, eternal death) differ from each other, as to the condignity of Merit, no less than Non-debt and Debt: For he asserts that the Wages of sin is a Debt; but he says the Reward of good Works is a remuneration of Divine mercy. Sooner therefore would one draw water from a flint, than properly so-called Merit of Man of Condignity from the Grace of God.

Although, concerning the genuine exposition of Scripture, the Jesuit Toletus responds to you learnedly, from Cardinal Toletus, formerly a Jesuit, on John 1, Annotation 51: "That exposition of Augustine," he says, "has not seemed suitable to me." Then he shows that that Grace, which is called, "For which," and which is truly meritorious, signifies a Grace proper to Christ, not inherent in us. From the same, Commentary on those words, Annotation 50: "GRACE FOR GRACE, Because," he says, "in the grace of Christ himself we have obtained grace; and through him we have been made pleasing to God." Thus he. But attend; the

grace by which we have been made pleasing is purely and simply the Grace of Christ, not ours. But he continues: "The sense is the same as with those words, Romans 5:15. MUCH MORE THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE GIFT IN THE GRACE OF JESUS CHRIST HAS ABOUNDED TO MANY: for Christ was so pleasing to God, that by his grace he merited and obtained grace for us: as in Ephesians 1. HE HAS MADE US GRACIOUS IN HIS BELOVED SON: as if to say, IN THE GRACE OF HIS SON HE HAS MADE US GRACIOUS; that is, WE HAVE RECEIVED GRACE FOR GRACE. And this is the legitimate sense." What sort of Grace Paul proclaims in chapter 5 to the Romans, verse 15. "If by the offense of one many died, much more the Grace of God, and the gift in the grace of one man Jesus Christ, has abounded to many." Here also your Toletus demands that attention be paid to him. From his Commentary on Romans 5, Annotation 21: "Attend; he calls it the GRACE OF GOD, by which he makes us gracious to himself:" (Is it inherent? by no means; for he distinguishes it from that) "but the GIFT OF GRACE, which is infused into us by grace."

Let us return to Augustine, from the annotation of the Jesuit Pererius, on Romans 3:24. "BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE." From Pererius, Jesuit, on this passage: "The name Grace seems in this place to signify rather the gratuitous goodness of God towards man, than a quality infused by God into the soul of man: and this Exposition of Augustine fits; This is Grace," he says, "without which neither infants, nor adults can be saved, which is not rendered for merits, but is given freely; for which reason it is called GRACE." Thus he. If, according to the opinion of Augustine, it is called Grace because it is not rendered for Merits; then those who extol their own Merit, take away Grace. Hence it appears that Bellarmine, under the pretext of exalting Grace, fought against Grace to fabricate Merit. We, on the contrary, will turn the passage of the Evangelist against the Adversaries: John 1:16. "Of his fullness we have received, Grace for grace." On which passage Maldonatus says, from On John 1:16: "No one has as much Grace as Christ; for we have not received the fullness, but of the fullness:" Therefore (we say) our good Works, which proceed from the Grace of the Holy Spirit, since they are finite, cannot be of infinite virtue for meriting the reward of eternal life.

I cannot but reflect on Bellarmine's Argument, as one that is sought from the Absurd: because insofar as Grace is of God, it is a gratuitous gift of God; it does not therefore imply, but rather plainly excludes our Merit: although from this we easily elicit that God (such is his infinite goodness) has destined for us a measure of the Grace of glorification in the Fatherland, according to the measure of the Grace of faith and sanctification in the Way.

Against the third Principle of the Papists of Merit of Condignity, which they ascribe to the Christian, as a member of Christ.

SECT. IV.

Ten Authors are numbered by Vasquez, whom he calls Catholic and pious, who, in order to defer honor to Christ in their Merits, said that the Reason of our Merit is from the merit of Christ, inasmuch as Christ, as the head to the members, infuses and operates, and merits: so that, just as Paul said to the Galatians 2:20. "I LIVE, YET NOT I, BUT CHRIST LIVES IN ME:" so it can be said of a Christian, "I MERIT, YET NOT I, BUT CHRIST IN ME." From Vasquez in 1-2, Tom 2, disp. 214, cap. 2, num. 9, 10. "Which can be proved from the fact that it is commonly said, Our works, inasmuch as they are sprinkled with the blood of Christ (Apoc. 7:14), and washed by his merits, are worthy of so great a reward."

Vasquez proposes this opinion of so many Doctors to himself as an Objection to be solved, which he then strives to satisfy strenuously; especially from this part, that "Our works ought to be more worthy from the fact that Christ is our Head, and thus we are reputed to be the same person with Christ." Ibid. cap. 7, num. 44. The sum of his response is this, that our Merits cannot be so called, unless inasmuch as the works are elicited by ourselves: "But in this way," he says, "in which Cajetan, Hosius, and other theologians hold, the increase of dignity in our works cannot be defended; because works are said to receive dignity and value from the person from whom they proximately proceed; but not from the person from whom grace proceeds. But since the person of Christ does not elicit our works, they in no way receive an increase of dignity from Christ, but from the eliciting person according to the dignity of justice and Sanctity: otherwise it would follow that our Works are of infinite value, for meriting infinite glory." Thus he. And he expands his response, and pursues the matter itself accurately, as if that opinion were repugnant to our Merits, because it is required for Merit, Ibid. num. 45, that the Works, by their own nature, and in themselves, have their dignity.

Thence to that, "Christ merits in me," he responds, Ibid. num. 48: "Sotus warns that it is not rightly said that God merits in us, or through us; because to merit denotes some reason of service, with respect to someone from whom we merit. And, because it can in no way befit God to merit from another through some service, therefore it would be said quite ineptly, that God merits in us, or through us." "This part of our opinion Andreas Vega openly teaches." Thus far Vasquez; who moreover encounters another Objection, concerning Works washed in the blood of the Lamb: from Vasquez in 1-2, Tom. 2, disp. 214, C.11, n.87. "We respond, that common saying, OUR WORKS, INASMUCH AS THEY ARE SPRINKLED WITH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, ARE WORTHY OF SO GREAT A REWARD, is to be understood, not by reason of favor, and imputation of the merits of Christ, which is added to works already done by grace; but because from the merits of the blood of Christ grace is given to us for these works, which would not otherwise be given."

Against the fourth Principle of the Papists, for their Merit of Condignity, concerning the Pact, namely.

SECT. V.

This is the common diversion of the Papists, and to which very many, destitute of all other foundation, flee as to the unique bulwark of their cause concerning Merit. We pursue them there. For the necessity of this Principle of Merit of Condignity, from the Pact of God, Bellarmine fights sharply in the first place; from Book 5 on Justification, chapter 14, § Finally: “Whether God renders rewards to the laborers out of commutative justice,” he says, “a promise is necessary; for he who cultivates another’s vineyard of his own accord cannot demand a wage: Whether out of the distributive Justice of God, from this also a promise is necessary; for a reward is not due to the one running faster, unless a pact and promise has preceded.” Thus he; where it is established that the Cardinal has arrived at such arrogance, as to profess that justice which even demands from God the reward of eternal life. Andreas Vega, who was a distinguished actor and athlete in the Council of Trent, having rejected the other Principles, is entirely in this one concerning the Pact.

I. Impugnation from the Pontifical Theologians.

SECT. VI.

The Jesuit Vasquez brings forth many Arguments to refute this opinion. 1. He asserts, from Vasquez in 1-2, Tom 2, disp. 21, cap. 4, n. 17: “Although the divine promise has been added to the works of the just, it nevertheless pertains in no way to the reason of Merit.” 2. He enlists on his side Thomas, and several other Scholastics. 3. He enumerates three theologians, from Ibid. n. 18, “who,” he says, “have written excellently against the Heretics of this age, and inveigh sharply against those who say that a pact and promise are required for the reason of Merit.”

It is objected, Ibid. cap. 5, num. 25: “Although without a pact the works are not worthy of the reward; yet, when they are required by a pact and promise, and without them the promise would not be fulfilled, they seem by the promise itself to be made worthy of so great a reward.” He responds, “This is frivolous; because the work itself is not made more worthy of the promised thing by the promise, than is manifestly apparent in the matter of Justice. For he who would promise a horse for a service, or for money of small value, would not thereby increase the price and value of the money or service, for which he had promised it.” From Ibid. n. 28, “From Matthew 20. When the Paterfamilias agrees with the workers in the vineyard for a daily denarius, he does not make their labor worthy of a denarius: but he supposes the dignity of the work for an equal price. Therefore the dignity of the Works does not arise from the Convention.”

Second Reason. From Ibid. n. 30: "If God were to threaten a heavier penalty than sin by its nature justly demands, as to punish a slight lie with eternal punishment: a venial sin would not thereby be changed into a mortal one by that threat."

Third Reason, from examples. From Ibid. cap. 6, num. 32: "If the Promise alone makes the work Meritorious, then because the remission of sins is promised to Almsgiving, it would be from merit (when however it is from impetration) and thus we would be said to merit our justification condignly; which no one will grant. Then to Abraham was promised the advent of the Redeemer, Gen. 22, and yet neither Abraham, nor the ancient Fathers condignly merited his advent."

Thus far the Jesuit. Whose Reasons are so solid and sinewy in themselves, that they admit no reply. Although we are not lacking other Reasons, by which it is effected that a Pact in no way infers Merit of Condignity.

1. Because that, on the part of God (who renders the reward of eternal life), is entirely Gratuitous, to which Remuneration he had bound himself out of mere grace.
2. On the part of Man, the good work was previously due to God by a legal Pact.
3. Because God compensates a light and shadowy service (such as a cup of cold water, a largess to the poor) with the immense remuneration of eternal life.
4. Because if God had granted the promise of eternal life to dispositions before justification; those dispositions nevertheless, confessedly, are not meritorious of Condignity as adversaries confess, they would not become Meritorious of Condignity.
5. Because a work properly worthy of eternal life would render God properly obligated to man, and as one receiving some good from man, and not merely accepting it. Which individual Reasons we will pursue scattered throughout the following dissertation below.

II. Impugnment from the Scriptures.

SECT. VII.

It seems to us worthwhile to add something by way of a supplement from our own hand. 1. 1 John 1:9. "If we confess our sins, God is just to forgive us our sins." First: "If we confess": Behold the Pact. 2. "God is just": Therefore, it is to be granted out of justice. 3. "If we confess": but no one confesses as he ought, unless he does so willingly; and that, as you interpret it, from free will: nor is there any sincere confession without the operative grace of the Holy Spirit. Does it therefore follow that Merit in the proper sense is inferred from this? Bellarmine denies this himself. What is the reason? Bellarm. l. 5. de Justif. cap. 5. "There is no dignity of Merit," he says, "in the Confession of sin." But he responds that the

Holy Spirit is not an inhabitant in the one confessing. Does the Holy Spirit, then, reside in no one who confesses? This is a marvelous "knower of hearts" (καρδιογνώστης), who can discern whether the Holy Spirit is inhabiting or merely a guest in the heart of the one confessing. But what spirit has taught him this?

In the Primitive Church, adults who were candidates for the baptism of the spirit, before they were sprinkled and sealed with the baptism of the stream, certainly experienced the inhabiting Holy Spirit; because, as the Apostle says, "He who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." No Christian will affirm that the residency of the Holy Spirit is lacking in all who pray in secret, especially those who demonstrate by their works that they are living members of Christ. These criteria, which are usually required for your Merit, are proven to be present individually in one who prays piously; 1. in the Will of the one praying: 2. from the Pact of God with the one praying: 3. the one praying is himself a member of Christ: 4. finally, the same is imbued with the inhabiting Holy Spirit. Let it be asked, therefore, Whether it is necessary to gather from these a Merit properly so called. Speak, Stapleton; Prompt. Cath. Fer. Cinerum, "Even if," he says, "our prayers do not obtain by way of justice, but by way of mercy, that which we ask; and therefore what God grants to our prayers is not a debt, but a grace; and therefore God often denies what we pray for: nevertheless, the words of Christ have manifestly affirmed that God always bestows something for the due manner of praying." Thus he, and most correctly indeed. God concedes many things to those who pray in the due manner: but he is not bound by debt to bestow anything on us, or from our Merit.

What Suarez objects, that this is to be understood of onerous works, is futile. For true contrition, which is a disposition for justification, and is not held by the Pontificals as a meritorious work of condignity, is numbered by the Fathers among the most onerous works: for which reason Scripture calls it mortification, sometimes also the Crucifixion of the old man, which is the absolute abnegation of our depraved will; concerning which even the heathens testify, when they say that wicked men often prefer to lose their life than their depraved will.

Here also we have the Fathers as our guides. Chrysostom, In cap. 6. ad Hebr. Hom. 11. "Mortify your body," he says, "and crucify it, and you shall receive the crown of this martyrdom: for what the sword does there, the alacrity of the mind has done here." Likewise Pope Gregory, Mag. in fine Homil. 3. in Evangelia. "Although the occasion may be lacking," he says, "yet our peace has its Martyrdom; because although we do not submit the necks of our flesh to the sword, we nevertheless slay carnal desires in our mind with a spiritual sword." But the above-mentioned fiction of the Pontificals, concerning the four principles of meritorious condignity, is abundantly refuted below by the ancient Fathers.

CAP. VII.

Our third Argument against Merit of Condignity, from the most ample Confessions of the Pontificals, on the part of the Dignation of the rewarding God.

SECT. I.

No work, which obtains the reward of eternal life from the goodness and dignation of the rewarding God, can be called Meritorious of Condignity before God:

But every good work obtains the reward of eternal life from the benignity and dignation of God:

Therefore, no good work is Meritorious of Condignity before God.

Vasquez clearly professes the Major premise in his Dictatorial Censure of the doctrine of the Protestants: Valquez in 1. 2. Tom 2. disp. 214. Cap. 5. n. 23. "To good works," he says, "they deny the dignity of eternal life according to themselves, but refer their dignity to the favor of God, and acceptance through the merits of Christ: which is nothing other than to deny the true and perfect nature of Merit to our works." Thus he, and indeed most truly: because no Merit which requires the acceptance of God can be said to consist in the Condignity of the worker according to the Equality of Justice before God. Such, therefore, must be the Merit of Condignity, as the Adversaries have proposed to their disciples to be believed.

Therefore, the proof of the Minor premise falls to us. Those who have either undermined it with their own Consequences, or have even held that it should be rejected by their own candid Confessions, will show from the Pontifical Theologians that the contrary opinion of the Pontificals is utterly abhorrent to true theology. Vasquez must be brought in again, so that we may understand whether he, who previously censured the Protestants, is willing to maintain that his own Pontifical Doctors are fighting in our camp: Vasquez in 1. 2. Tom. 2. disp. 2. 14 Cap. 5. n. 23. "If the reason," he says, "of the merit of our works comes from the promise and acceptance of God, it follows that the justice by which eternal life is rendered to those who labor well is not attended to in compensation." Primo. Idem ibid. num. 29. "Likewise, the heretics themselves," he says, "(for so, such is his benevolence towards us, he calls the Protestants) do not deny this Equality in fulfilling the promise." Finally, he expressly says that this opinion "utterly removes the nature of Merit." Thus far Vasquez: Against whom the Doctors of the old School, of great name, will rise up: Scotus, Gregory, Gabriel, Ockam; who (as the same Jesuit confesses) Vafquez quo supra, C. I. n. 2. § Prima. taught that "the works of the just, considered in themselves, as they proceed from the help of Grace and the holiness of the soul, by which the Holy Spirit dwells in the just, do not have the condignity of merit for eternal life, but have

their entire dignity and nature of merit derived from the promise and pact of God."

We will report their opinions and those of others (though he is silent, yet Hosius is a witness): Scotus, dist. 17. lib. 1. Sent. Testimonia hec habentur apud Hosium, cap. 73. pag. 285. 286. teaches that Merit is beyond the intrinsic goodness of the act, from mere gratuitous Divine acceptance. And he who lived at nearly the same time, Nic. de Lyra, in Isa. 26. "All our works," he says, "you have worked in us, O Lord, because they are not meritorious, except from Divine acceptance; and the grace, by which they are acceptable, is effected in us by God alone." Whom Gabriel Biel followed, lib. 2. dist. 22. "In him," he says, "who gives the reward, acceptance is required of the act elicited or commanded, so that the reward of justice does not rest on the goodness of the act, which it has from its intrinsic goodness and its natural principles; but on the Divine ordinance, which is the promise and pact." And in Can. Missa, lect. 86. "It becomes worthy because of the promise of God," he says, "by His liberality, accepting it as Worthy: just as in the book of Esther we read: cap. 6. verf. II. **THIS IS THE HONOR WITH WHICH HE IS WORTHY, WHOMSOEVER THE KING WISHES TO HONOR.**" Stephanus Brulpher (lib. 1. dist. 17.) followed the opinion of Scotus; "No good act, however much elicited by charity, is worthy of eternal life by its own nature. But it is only worthy of eternal life through the passive acceptance of God." Likewise Greg. Ariminens. (lib. I 2. dist. 16.) says, "Our works are meritorious of eternal life not from themselves, but from the sole gracious acceptance of God." Thus far Cardinal Hosius.

Let us return to Vasquez; who offers himself to us as a witness concerning the aforementioned Authors whom he now alleges, who similarly admit no Merit unless it proceeds from the acceptance and dignation of God. Valquer is 1. 2. Tom. 2. disp. 214. cap. 1. First Alphonso de Castro, Alphonfus de Castro, verbo Meritum. "Merit," he says, "does not proceed from the nature of the thing, but from the pact made by God, by which the work done is made equal to the reward: just as if to two contenders in a tournament of one hour's duration, the king promised the victor a gem, or a sum of a thousand gold pieces; the victor would not be said to have merited that gem." Vega follows; Vega, Opusc. de Meritis 5. ad tertium. "I would believe," he says, "that it is not unfitting to say with our subtle Doctor (Scotus) and with Bonaventure, Richard, and others, that God owes beatitude to the just from his promise; **FOR GOD IS NOT UNJUST, TO FORGET YOUR WORK,** Heb. 6:10. AND Paul expressly: 2. Tim. 4. 8. **'A CROWN OF JUSTICE IS LAID UP FOR ME, WHICH THE JUST JUDGE WILL RENDER TO ME.'** And again, 2. Tim. 2. 3. **'GOD CANNOT DENY HIMSELF'** But when we say that God owes beatitude to the just, we judge this not to be from the dignity of the works, but from the excessive mercy and benignity of God."

The Theologians of Cologne occupy the next place, where they interpose (I confess) this name Merit, but in such a way that they mix in this bolus of an antidote, viz. Colonienf. Antididag. fol. 33. "Which Merits, however, should be so understood, that God remunerates works with eternal life out of the gratuitous dignation of his clemency." To these succeed the Canons of the Council of Cologne: Can. Colonriens. Enchirid. Tit. De Justif. pag 576. "Scripture," they say, "does not hesitate to call eternal life the Reward of good works: not that we should think our good deeds are worthy of eternal life, or that eternal life is owed to them on account of their dignity: (for who is so stupid as to think so?) but rather, that God has gratuitously promised eternal life to our faith, which he exercises in us through such works": Concluding finally with the Theologians of the Council of Sens, "A place for each," they say, "according to the Merit of their works, will not indeed be from the Condignity of the works, (FOR THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS LIFE ARE NOT WORTHY OF THE FUTURE GLORY, ROM. 8. 18.) but rather from the gratuitous and liberal promise." Thus they. Pighius, the Achilles of the Pontificals against Luther, does not depart from these; who, since he is entirely on our side in the cause of Justification, thus defined concerning the Merit of a work; Pighius de Justif fol. 80, 81. "The most clement Lord accepts it as a benefit bestowed upon himself, and as a benign master invites his servants to it, proposing for their labor some liberal rewards, to which they would be obligated by their condition and office without any reward."

We shall add Faber Stapulensis, Ferus, Stella, three other celebrated Authors in the Roman Church. Faber Stap. in Luc. 17. pag. 253. Faber; "We believe that remuneration is in no way owed from our works, but is of God's mere benignity: man can owe grace to man, as to an equal; but God can owe it to no one. Far be it, therefore, that we should think any Merit is owed to us from God, as a debt, however holily and religiously we may have lived; because we are UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS; indeed, more than unprofitable, servants to whom nothing is owed, servants who always owe and can never be solvent, who can say, 'WHAT WE OUGHT TO HAVE DONE, WE HAVE NOT DONE.'" Thus he: which words the Spanish Inquisitors did not in the least approve; for that reason they ordered them to be deleted. Index expurg. Hifp. Didacus Stella, in Luc. Tom. 2. cap. 17. who shone before nearly all the preachers of his age, said freely and roundly, that we do not merit beatitude of Condignity. Which the same Inquisitors also wish to be expunged. Joan. Ferus, Ferus in Joan. second to no other in the same faculty; "None of our works, of whatever kind, are meritorious, but God mercifully accepts them." And these words also the Inquisitors order to be laid upon the same sponge; imitating, of course, those skilled surgeons who by their purgings more often let out the healthier blood.

I have thought that two Neoterics, because they are now before my eyes, should by no means be passed over, who speak of Remuneration from Mercy. James

2:13. "JUDGMENT WITHOUT MERCY TO HIM WHO HAS NOT SHOWN MERCY. MERCY TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGMENT." Estius, Estius in eum locum. "From this place it is concluded," he says, "what is usually disputed among theologians, that the reprobate are to be punished not below their merit, but according to the exact and rigid justice of God: for otherwise they would have to be judged with some mercy. But in the next words, MERCY TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGMENT, that is, Mercy glories against Judgment: as if to say, Mercy will prevail in judgment: which is understood of the Elect, who are all to be judged with mercy: for, with mercy set aside, NO ONE LIVING WILL BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR SIGHT, Psal. 142." Thus he. The man truly a Pontifical, Fevardentius, is entirely in this: Fevar-dentius in Jac. 2. 13. "MERCY TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGMENT: The cause of our salvation rests on no other thing than mercy, by which alone we can glory and exult against his severe judgment. It should be noted that for Augustine, the mercy of God will not be without equity in the last judgment: for on him who has shown mercy, the mercy of God is just; for his mercy is not confused: for it is mercy that sins are forgiven; mercy that eternal life is bestowed. And so mercy is evident in grace and reward: justice truly in the consideration of labors and good works." Thus he; who, moreover, demands attention in so serious a matter; Idem paulo póst. "Attend," he says, "how the whole prow and stern of our salvation rests on the mercy of God alone; since, if God should deal with us according to his exact judgment, it would be all over for us. Rightly, therefore, does the Prophet supplicate, Psal. 142. DO NOT ENTER INTO JUDGMENT WITH YOUR SERVANT, O LORD, FOR IN YOUR SIGHT NO ONE LIVING WILL BE JUSTIFIED.—Finally, it is mercy by which alone we can stand in the last judgment of God." Thus Fevardentius, a writer praiseworthy in the mouth of all Pontificals.

Whoever, therefore, wishes to compare this Doctrine with the Confession (from so great a cloud of Witnesses) of the Doctors and Theologians of the Pontificals (who professed no other Merit than that which is merely from acceptance, that is, improperly Meritorious), how will he not confess that for this cause of the Pontificals, it is now plainly lost?

CAP. VIII.

Arguments against Merit of Condignity, taken from the most ample testimonies of the ancient Fathers.

Our first Argument against Merit of Condignity, from the side of the Good Work, as it is a Gift of God.

Argumentatio.

SECT. I.

No Gift can be properly Meritorious before its Giver:
But every good work, contributing to eternal salvation, is a Gift of God:
Therefore, no good work, contributing to eternal salvation, can be properly Meritorious before God.

We shall provide both Propositions proven from the Scriptures and the Fathers.

Probatio

Our proof from the Scriptures, both Apocryphal and Canonical.

SECT II.

The reason is manifest; because no one is said to merit by receiving a good; but to do a good work conducive to salvation is to receive a benefit from God. In the first place, it will be worthwhile to inquire into the Author of good. The Author of the book of Wisdom, chap. 8. 21. "I knew that I could not obtain wisdom, unless God gave it: and this also was a point of wisdom, to know whose gift it was." Let us likewise learn to be wise from the Divine letters, from which we have excerpted a very brief series of good works, insofar as they are destined for salvation.

First, what is required is to think of doing well: which thinking is indeed a good received; 2. Cor. 3. 5. "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything, but our sufficiency is from God." Second is that we believe the salutary good we have come to know: which also is a good received; Phil. 1. 29. "God grants you to believe." Third is, to also will that which we believe: and this is likewise given; Phil. 2. 13. "God grants to will." But to what end is willing, unless (which is the fourth) we then work? The Apostle in the same place, "He grants also to work"; and even to work, not only by doing, but also by constantly suffering; 1. Cor. 10. 13. "God does not suffer us to be tempted beyond our strength, but gives victory through Jesus Christ."

What do the Pontificals have to oppose? Nothing, except that good proceeds from our free will, from which it is called ours. For so Bellarmine (Chap. 6. Sect. 2.) above. But we say; The work, insofar as it is good, even if it is from our free will, yet it proceeds not from it as if it were free in itself, but insofar as it is liberated by grace. From which it follows, that not only can man do good if he wills, but also that he may will; just as the Apostle taught. And hence it is that every good work contributing to eternal salvation through Christ Jesus, is, insofar as it is good, spiritual; insofar as it is spiritual, supernatural; insofar as it is supernatural, gratuitous; and insofar as it is a gratuitous gift, it is anything but Meritorious before God.

The above argument is proven by the suffrages of the Holy Fathers.

SECT. III.

The Holy Fathers, instructed and educated in the Apostolic school, have commended the same doctrine plainly in their writings to all posterity: as Origen; In Rom 4. Pag 509. "TO HIM WHO WORKS, THE REWARD IS NOT RECKONED ACCORDING TO GRACE, BUT ACCORDING TO DEBT: But I, when I consider the excellence of the saying, that it says, IT IS RENDERED ACCORDING TO DEBT, I can hardly persuade myself," he says, "that there is any work which demands remuneration from God as a debt, since even this very thing, that we can do, or think, or speak anything, we do by His gift and bounty. What then will be the debt of him whose grace has preceded?" Thus he. From which this Enthymeme is necessarily constructed: A good work is from the gift of God; Therefore its remuneration (which is eternal life) is not from debt, or our Merit.

The second will be Chrysostom: In Coloss. 3. Hom. 2. "No one," he says, "shows such a conversation of life that he can be worthy of the kingdom; but the whole is the Gift of God himself." Thus He: Namely, the Gift of God removes our Worthiness. No less accurately Hilary, De Trinitate lib. 11. pag. 173. "To merit," he says, "belongs to him who is the author to himself of acquiring the merit." Thus he; who proclaims the "energy" (ἐνέργειας) of Divine grace in all our good works; according to that of the Council of Orange, Can. 12. "God loves us as such as we shall be by his gift, not as we are by our own merit." Arausican. Conc. 2. Can. 12, 20. And apud Binium. apud Can. 20. "There are many good things in man which man does not do; but man does no good things which God does not grant that man should do." Thus the Fathers of this Council. God is therefore the first Author of a good work, by whose guidance man is the Actor.

No less appositely and exquisitely Jerome, Ad Ctesiphont. pag. 253. "We know," he says, "that we are nothing, except what God has given. It is not enough that he has given to me once, unless he always gives: I ask that I may receive; and when I have received, I ask again." Augustine cuts the matter to the quick; In Psal. 102. "God crowns his own gifts, not your works. The Apostle said, I HAVE LABORED MORE THAN ALL: but see what he added, NOT I, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD WITH ME." He immediately introduces the Apostle as if speaking to himself in a soliloquy, "I EXPECT THE CROWN WHICH THE JUST JUDGE WILL GIVE ME: But why? BECAUSE I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.—But whence did you fight? Whence did you keep the faith? NOT I, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD WITH ME." Hence Augustine himself infers: "Therefore, never be proud, always praise the Lord, do not forget all his retributions. It is a retribution when you, a sinner, were called, that you might be justified:—when strength was supplied to you, that you might persevere to the end.—Do not forget all his

retributions, if you wish your soul to bless the Lord, who crowns you in mercy and compassion." Thus these two Fathers; where they understand not only the first justification (as you call it) through the remission of sins; but also that second one which consists in sanctification, right up to the Coronation itself which is eternal life, they number among the retributions of mercy. Finally, there is a place where Augustine argues thus; Vide cap. 17. Sect. 12 infra. "Faith is not a Merit, because it is a Gift of God."

S. Bernard will drive the nail home; S. Bern. Serm. 1. de Annuntiatione. "Our merits are not such," he says, "that on account of them eternal life is owed by right." By the common confession of the Pontificals, they cannot properly be called Merits of Condignity; because they have defined Merit of Condignity to be that to which eternal life is owed by an equality of justice. Finally the same Holy man (below, Chap. 17. Sect. 11.) has held our conclusion most eloquently with us, who denied that eternal life is owed to good works for the reason that they are Gifts of God. Bernard. in Tract. de Gratia & libero arbitrio. Furthermore, how man may equally deserve to be held the Author of the same good work, insofar as it is good, he will clearly explain: "They are undoubtedly God's gifts, both our works and his rewards." And below, "The words are not mine, but the Apostle's; who attributes everything that can be good—to think, to will, and to perfect it—to God's good will, not to his own choice." Thus he, a strenuous champion in this Argument, and most devoted to God.

If some consensus of some of the Pontificals is absent, it is not to be sought; but if it is present, it is not to be rejected. Capreolus therefore (with Hosius as witness) adducing a passage of Thomas here, says, "Our good works, for as much as they are ours and proceed from free will, are of little value, as St. Thomas says." Te-ste Hosio, Confut. opin. contr. pag. 285. Si autem loquitur de bonis operibus nostris, prout sunt informata charitate & gratia, potiùs sunt opera Dei, quàm nostra. Sic ille. "But if he speaks of our good works, as they are informed by charity and grace, they are rather the works of God than ours. Thus he." dist. 15. ad tertiam.

CAP. IX.

Our second Argument from the Fathers against Merit of Condignity, from the side of the Good Work, as it is owed to God.

Argumentatio.

SECT. I.

No moral good work properly owed to God by precept can be Meritorious of Condignity before God: But every moral good work is properly owed to God by

precept: Therefore no moral good work can be properly Meritorious of Condignity before God.

There will be no dispute about the Assumption. The Major must be proven: first from the Scriptures.

Proof from the Scriptures.

SECT. II.

Luke 17. 10. Christ says to his Disciples, "When you have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." Which words seem to us to undermine and utterly remove every opinion of the Merit of good works. How much this passage torments the Pontificals is easily seen from the fact that, to elude their Readers, they turn themselves into all shapes, but so unhappily that they contradict one another.

First Bellarmine, Lib. 5. de Justif. c. 5. seeking all loopholes of evasion, says first, that it was said, "WE ARE UNPROFITABLE," of those who work outside of grace; from Ambrose. Maldonatus and Salmeron on that passage, say that it was said of those servants who do not work willingly out of charity. Thus they: although Christ was then addressing none but his own servants, viz. the Apostles, who then said to him, "Increase our faith": namely, those who were then constituted in grace above others, and, having left all things, were following Christ out of charity. And the Protasis should always agree with the Apodosis.

Secondly, Bellarmine says, "UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS" are spoken of, namely to their Lord: But yet useful to themselves: from Bede. To whom Maldonatus contradicts: For that servant in the Gospel brought utility to his Lord: (Correctly. For he plowed, and fed the herds all day.) Nor does Christ conclude, "SAY, WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS," because we have brought no utility to God; but because "WE HAVE DONE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO." Thus he: and to the same effect Alphonso de Castro, Tit. De Hæresibus.

Thirdly Bellarmine, We are called "UNPROFITABLE," because we have done nothing beyond what we owed: and so we ought to ask for nothing from it, beyond the wage attached by the pact. Thus he, as if from Augustine, Sermon three on the words of the Lord: where nothing of the sort occurs, nor in any of those fifty Sermons on the words of the Lord that are extant there.

Fourthly Bellarmine, "As Chrysostom explains," he says, "He did not say, SAY, YOU ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS, WHEN YOU HAVE DONE ALL THINGS: But, SAY, WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS; that we may think

humbly of ourselves." Most correctly Chrysostom. By whose testimony, Bellarmine, your most arrogant arrogance is beaten back. But as to the question itself, all your fictions hitherto are foul subterfuges, so that you may escape the force of our Argument; which for that reason we will pursue more broadly. We say that a pact of promise concerning a reward for a work exists, if we have done it; and it is not separated from the obligation of the precept, and the threat of punishment, if we have not done it. As can be seen in Matth. 10. 32. concerning those who confess and do not confess Christ: Luc. 9. 24. concerning one who lays down his life, and (when the cause demands it) does not lay it down for Christ: and Rom. 8. 13. concerning those who mortify, and who do not mortify their flesh: All of which abundantly confirm this Consequence of ours: Namely, Our good works, because they are simply, by precept, owed to God, cannot by a pact be made Meritorious. As we have also discussed above, Chap. 6. Sect. 5. Thus far from the Scriptures.

The above argument is lucidly proven by the suffrages of the ancient Fathers.

SECT. III.

First, as was fitting, we summon the ancient Fathers, in this cause, as witnesses. First, Cyprian: In epist. 27. Ad lapsos. "Certain men have written to me," he says, "who have worked grandly and gloriously in the Church, and have imputed their work to the Lord, observing that of the Lord, WHEN YOU HAVE DONE ALL THINGS, etc." Thus that Holy Martyr, concerning the Saints of the primitive Church. Secondly, Chrysostom, In Rom. 3. hom. 7. who, "It is written," he says, "WHEN YOU HAVE DONE ALL THINGS, etc. Therefore, when we give money to the needy, let us think that God first made us liable (or obligated) to himself: and also whatever we distribute is his." Thirdly Jerome: Ad Ctesiphont. "This is the only perfection for men," he says, "if they know themselves to be imperfect: WHEN YOU HAVE DONE ALL THINGS, SAY, WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS; WE HAVE DONE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO." Fourthly Augustine: He, on those words of Christ, John 15. 14. "YOU ARE MY FRIENDS, IF YOU DO. In 15. de verbis Dom. Serm. 3. O great goodness of God," he says, "to whom since we for our condition owe the rendering of services, as servants to a Lord, attendants to God, subjects to the Powerful, slaves to the Redeemer, he promises us the rewards of friendship, to extort from us the due services of servitude. So that those whom he sees are unwilling to serve freely, he may be able to invite by the promises of his benefits." Fifthly Theophylact: In locum. "WHEN YOU HAVE DONE ALL THINGS, etc. Even if one has done all the commandments, he ought not to be exalted; for he has done nothing great; and woe to him, if he has not done them." Sixthly Bernard: In Psal. Qui habitat, &c. Serm. 4. pag. 678. "WE HAVE DONE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO: Woe to us, indeed, if we had not done it: this is virtue and the highest security, when you live piously, and yet attend more to what you lack than to what you seem to have

obtained." Seventhly, the suffrage of Bede is not to be passed over: In locum. "If a man," he says, "requires from a human servant, not a uniform, but a multiple service, and yet has no gratitude for it: how much more should you, who can do nothing without me, not weigh the merits of your labors by their length of time, but with love and spontaneous service always increase your former efforts with new zeal! Therefore SAY, WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS, etc." Thus he.

The testimonies of so many and so great Authors are not so much to be numbered as to be weighed. Whose collections, from the words of Christ, are multiple. First, Therefore our good works are to be imputed to God. Second, Therefore we have received all things from God. Third, Therefore let us know that we are imperfect. Fourth, Therefore God's goodness is greater, in that to us, his servants, who owe everything to him, he promises the rewards of friendship. Fifth, Therefore when we have done all, we have done nothing great; and woe to us if we had not done them. Sixth, Therefore we ought not to weigh the Merits of our labors. By which consequences of the Fathers, all access for Bellarmine's responses is cut off. First, Because the Fathers speak of men constituted in a state of grace. Secondly, Because it is not a question here of a servant, insofar as he is useful only to himself. Thirdly, Because nothing is proposed concerning a reward which is beyond Merit: According to Chrysostom's observation, Namely, that this was said by Christ to his disciples, so that if we have done all things, we should nevertheless think humbly of ourselves. Which by itself slays your cause. For what arrogance can be more arrogant or more conceited than to boast of that Condignity of merit which can demand eternal life from God out of an equality of justice?

CAP. X

Our third Argument against Merit of Condignity, by reason of the Unworthiness of the Worker, or even of the Work.

Argumentatio.

SECT. I.

No worker, who is so unworthy in himself that, for his good works to be accepted, he needs the dignation and mercy of God, can claim Merit of Condignity from his works before God: But every worker, however most holy, is so unworthy in himself that, for his good works to be accepted, he needs the mercy of God: Therefore, he cannot claim Merit of Condignity before God.

The consequence of the Major is conceded by the Jesuit Vasquez: In 1. 2. Tom. z. disp. 214. cap. 5. "To deny to good works," he says, "the dignity of eternal life in themselves, but to refer their dignity to the favor of God, and to acceptance through the merits of Christ, is nothing other than to deny the perfect nature of

Merit to our works." Worthy, therefore, is this argument of ours in which we shall labor, from the light of the Scriptures, from the authority of the ancient Fathers, and from the clear and candid confession of very many Pontificals.

Proof from the Scriptures.

SECT. II.

Whoever has tasted the sacred Bible with, as they say, the tips of his lips, knows that the Scriptures which indicate and pronounce the unworthiness of even the works of the Just are numerous: especially those by which every Christian is instructed to ask for the remission of his offenses, and is judged to be a liar who says that he has no sin. Above others, these Scriptures are most connected with our cause, Psal. 102. 4. "God is he who crowns us in mercy and compassion"; And Matth. 5. 7. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." But Merit of Condignity, which consists in an equality of justice to the crown of eternal life, so that it can demand it from God on the day of coronation, has no need of the acceptance and mercy of God.

To break or dissolve this knot, Bellarmine employs two wedges, as if borrowed from Augustine, from the book de Correptione & Gratia, cap. 13. Bellar. lib. 5. de Justif. cap. 5. The first is, that Beatitude is attributed to mercy, not because it is not a true reward of Merits, but because the Merits themselves are from Mercy. Thus he. The very passage of Augustine, in the same chapter, convicts him of error and ineptitude: Whose words are these, "The number of the Saints predestined to the Kingdom by the grace of God will be brought thither; the mercy of their Savior adheres to them, whether when they are converted, or when they struggle, or when they are crowned: for that mercy is necessary for them then, Holy Scripture testifies, where the holy David says of the Lord his God to his soul, WHO CROWNS YOU IN COMPASSION AND MERCY." Behold the three grades of the state of grace itself: in each of which Mercy is required; of Conversion, of Struggle, and of Coronation. And the last grade is so distinct from the others that he said more expressly of those crowned in the last time, "For that the mercy of God is necessary for them then also, etc." Whom, therefore, does it not pity to see the Jesuit now entangled in such straits?

The second wedge is, that Augustine says, besides the coronation of Merit, mercy is necessary for the remission of venial sins, and that that mercy is owed to the merits of the Saints. Thus he, having brought forth a twin lie in one birth. First, that he says Augustine mentioned Venial Sins; of which there is no mention there. Second, that he says Augustine said, "Besides the coronation, mercy is necessary for the remission of venial sins." But he did not say, "BESIDES the coronation," but, "WITH the coronation" it is necessary. For concerning the passage of James, "JUDGMENT WITHOUT MERCY TO HIM

WHO HAS NOT SHOWN MERCY"; where he shows that even in that judgment, in which the just are crowned and the unjust are damned, some are to be saved with mercy, others to be damned without mercy. And a little after, "WHO WILL BOAST THAT HE IS CLEAN FROM SIN?" And for this reason, the mercy of God is necessary for him also. Then Augustine merely says, "And then for the Merits of good works (namely, improperly so called, as we have often proved from Augustine and other Fathers in chap. 3) in the judgment itself, mercy itself will also be granted." On the contrary, the Cardinal says, "Mercy is owed to good works." Although God, in judgment, whether he damns or spares, is just. The Fathers themselves are now to be heard. But how Augustine wishes good works to be Merits, in a far gentler sense, will be the place for another discussion.

The ancient Fathers accurately defend our cause.

S.ECT. III.

We will report only those testimonies which either expressly note, or equivalently infer, the necessity of Divine mercy, with respect to the just and their works. Cyprianus: Epist. 56. ad Thebaritanos. "The afflictions of this life are not worthy of the glory, when we shall be blessed, honored by the dignation of God." Thus he. Where First the word "Honored" has the same sound as "Crowned." Secondly, that other, by which it is said that this happens by the "Dignation" of God, is the same as by "Compassion." That both these words fight against the Condignity of Merit, Vasquez, in opposing this doctrine of the Protestants, has already openly conceded above, Sect. 1. Hilarius, In Psalm. 51. prope finem. "Our justice and works themselves," he says, "are not sufficient for the perfect merit of beatitude, but that the mercy of God in this justice of will should not reckon the faults of human changes and motions. — Hope therefore is in the mercy of God forever." Jerome also supposed the necessity of the same mercy, when he said, In Isaiam lib. 6. c. 14. "In the day of judgment no work of ours will be found worthy." Thus he, who taught that eternal life is given as a gift from the largesse of God. Augustine, although later in order here, is second to none in authority: He, on the words of the Psalmist, Psal. 102. "HE CROWNS YOU IN MERCY AND COMPASSION," Auguft. in Pfal. 102. He crowns his gifts, not your Merits. A little after, "I EXPECT THE CROWN WHICH THE JUST JUDGE WILL GIVE: But why? BECAUSE I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH. Whence did you keep it? NOT I, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD WITH ME. Therefore, that you are crowned, you are crowned by his mercy. Do not be proud, always praise the Lord, and do not forget his retributions." Where there will be no place for the other loophole of the Pontificals, when they respond that Augustine is speaking of works done outside of grace. For he speaks of works which are called Gifts of Grace, and which God will crown in the last days. As also elsewhere, Idem de Gratia & Libero Arbitr. Cap. 9. He preferred to say (namely Paul to the Rom. 6.) "THE GRACE OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE; so that we might

understand that God leads us to eternal life not for our merits, but for his own compassion." Thus he. By which are excluded Merits both preceding Grace and following it: Because "To lead to eternal life" signifies the consummation of salvation. We have postponed a more ample explanation of Augustine's judgment to its designated place, viz. Chap. 17. Sect. 11.

Bellarmino wishes "faults" to be understood as venial sins. Bellarminus lib. 5. de Julif. c. 6. "Which," he says, "do not make a man unjust." And this is his customary refuge. But of whatever color the faults may be, Hilary said that those works of justice do not suffice for the Merit of beatitude. But what does not suffice for this Merit of beatitude cannot be a meritorious work of Condignity for beatitude. Basilius: In Pfal. 114. "Everlasting rest remains for those who in this life have lawfully contended, not on account of the merits of their deeds, but from the most munificent grace of God." The Cardinal responds that in the Greek it reads, that everlasting rest is to be rendered, "κατ' ὀφείλημα τῶν ἔργων, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὰ τοῦ μεγαλοδώρου Θεοῦ" (according to the debt of works, but according to [the gift] of the most munificent God). That is, Not according to the debt of works, but according to the most munificent God; where the word χάρις (Grace) is missing. Thus he. As if indeed these words, "According to the most munificent God," without any addition, do not render the sentence gaping: or, as if Grace does not most correctly correspond to the most munificent God. Although that which we press and urge is in the words of Basil, that he denies eternal rest is granted "κατ' ὀφείλημα τῶν ἔργων", that is, "According to the debt of works." Where who doubts that "Debt of works" and "Merit of works" are Synonyms? Where also Basil speaks openly of everlasting rest, that is, of essential beatitude itself, not of some accidental degree.

The author of the imperfect work, under the name of Chrysostom, of great antiquity; In Matt. 25. hom. 52. & 53. pag. 1131. "How can the work of the Saints suffice for the salvation of others, when they do not suffice for themselves alone to attain that glory by just judgment?" And Gregory the Great, Pontiff, Lib. 9. Moral. cap. 14. "If I have exercised a work of virtue, I become strong for life, not from merits, but from pardon." Bellarmine responds, Lib. 5. de Fustif. c. 6. "S. Gregory speaks of merits which are in us from ourselves." Thus he, importunately as is his custom; for Gregory speaks of himself, "if I have exercised a good work," when he already feels himself to be in a state of grace. But grant that the Cardinal may thus dispatch this single passage; why, however, does he fly past others, and those most clear? It is not without reason; the shrewd man doubtless sensed that Saint Gregory stands as a champion for our side: In 7. Psal. Pœniten. in illa verba, fac mihi, &c. quo jam supra. "God crowns the Saints from mercy, and does not reward the just on account of their works, but according to their works."

Bernard, in this Argument, as if in a most broad field, exults and expatiates, and explains his orthodox judgment sufficiently, both as to the Thesis in general, and as to the Hypothesis concerning himself. Bernard. Serm. 1. de Annuntiatione. In the Thesis thus, "Nor are the merits of men such that on account of them eternal life is owed by right, or that God would do any injury if he did not grant it." The Cardinal responds, Bellarm. "Bernard teaches that eternal life is not owed to merits by absolute right, without presupposing Grace and the promise." Thus he, who never sheds the Jesuit, acting sophistically, confusing those things which are to be distinguished. As if, indeed, because Bernard supposes there are no Merits without prevenient Grace, therefore he does not act against Merits after Grace has been received, to which eternal life is owed. Wholly perversely; for although he calls good works Merits; yet that they are Merits to which, from their own Condignity, eternal life is owed, he neither said, nor felt, nor ever dreamed; but the contrary. For in the same place: (Pay attention) Bernard adds, "It is necessary first of all to believe that you cannot have remission of sins, except through the indulgence of God." This is the First and Preceding Grace, which he distinguishes from the next degree of Grace: for it follows, "Then, that you can have absolutely no good work, unless he himself has given this also." This concerns assisting and sanctifying grace: Finally ascending to the supreme degree of Grace, he says, "It must be believed lastly, that you can earn eternal life by no works, unless that too is given freely." Thus he, a truly holy man. "Unless THAT TOO is given freely": which particle, "AND", is not without Emphasis, but has a sting. Not long after, as if it had been his purpose to express his meaning most lucidly, "For he himself," he says, "forgives sins, he himself gives merits (Thus far the adversaries confess; but he adds) and he nevertheless gives the rewards again as a gift." Thus he. But what is it, "To give again as a gift," if not "To give with a New gift"? And that "nevertheless," that is, Notwithstanding that he had previously given the Merits. From which it is most clearly apparent, that by Merits he understood anything but the pontifical Merits of Condignity, to which (as the Adversaries assert) eternal life is owed by an equality of justice, and can be demanded by those who work.

Bernard comes to the Hypothesis, that is, to himself: In cant. Serm. 61. "My merit," he says, "is the compassion of the Lord." The Cardinal responds that it is understood that our Merits are not from us, but from God; as he himself explains, Serm. 68. in Cant. "TAKE CARE TO HAVE MERITS: WHEN YOU HAVE THEM, KNOW THEY ARE GIVEN." Thus he. But we rather believe Bernard himself: Idem ibid. "No one has greater compassion than that one should lay down his life for those addicted to death and damned: therefore my merit is the compassion of the Lord. I am not plainly devoid of merit, as long as he is not devoid of compassion: and if the mercies of the Lord are many, I am nevertheless rich in merits. What if I am conscious to myself of many sins? Indeed, WHERE SIN ABOUNDED, THERE GRACE SUPERABOUNDED." Thus Bernard, only concerning the Merits of Christ towards himself, on which he

wholly reclines: which nevertheless Bellarmine has dared to interpret in defense of the Merit of Condignity from an equality of justice before God; who by the same effort would transmute light into darkness.

Confirmation of the same Argument, from the consensus of the Pontificals.

SECT. IV.

We have cited Sect. 2. &c. many Pontifical authors before who have copiously and pugnaciously defended that the remuneration of good works is to be obtained from Divine benignity, acceptance, dignation, and mercy: which place, lest I be lengthy, the Reader can consult. Now, after we have proved that every good work of ours (if it be weighed on the scale of the Divine law) although unworthy of God, is nevertheless owed to him; we further insist and urge, that from our good works God is not made a debtor to us.

CAP. XI.

Our fourth Argument against Merit of Condignity, from the part of the rewarding God.

Argumentatio.

SECT. I.

Every work properly meritorious before God, constitutes God himself as properly a debtor to the worker: But no good work constitutes God as properly a debtor to the worker: Therefore no good work is properly meritorious before God.

The Major is confessed among the primary Doctors of our Adversaries; who bend all the nerves of their intellects to attack the Minor. For since there is a twofold debt: one of fidelity, that one should stand by his promises, the other of obligation from strict justice to another: the first of which all Christians believe pertains to God: the Pontificals now assert and affirm the latter. As for instance the Jesuit Suarez: In 3. Thom. Tom. 1. disp. 41. Sect. 5. &c. "The debt of fidelity," he says, "rests on the truth of the promise: But that, which is the debt of which we now treat, although it requires a promise, and is most especially founded in it; nevertheless it is commensurated and proportioned to the works." Thus he. Afterwards, demanding from this merit an equality of justice before God, Idem in opusc. de Divina libertate, Sect. 2. n. 41, 42. "The debt of justice," he says, "exists when a promise has been made by way of a stipend and wage owed to labor, as to the laborers in the vineyard, Matth. 20. or by way of a prize and reward in a contest, as 1. Cor. 9. & Phil. 3. When therefore the condition is proposed in the promise, justice acquires a right for itself, lest anyone object to

us that the reward is rendered from the debt of Fidelity alone, against the properties of the words of justice and Wage, which in their rigor require a debt of justice." Thus he, who moreover presumes this doctrine to be approved by the Council of Trent. And presupposing the same promise of God, Bellarmine urges the same obligation of justice: y Lib. 5. de Justif. cap. 6. § Ad secund. &c. "I answer," he says, "that every true promise carries with it an obligation, and is to be fulfilled and kept by God." Thus he; namely the same one who did not hesitate to say, Ibid. cap. 14 "God owes eternal life to our merits according to commutative justice." And he calls it elsewhere absolute justice, which can moreover demand a reward from God. (viz. supra, cap. 2. sect. 1.) Likewise Vasquez: In 1. 2. Tom. 2. disp. 213. cap. 5. num. 29. "Merit is an obedience in comparison to some reward, which by its nature demands that a reward of this kind, as an equal grace, be referred to it by the law of a grateful mind, and to which that reward, as an equal remuneration and legitimate compensation, corresponds according to a right estimation of the obedience and the wage." To these Doctors, therefore, if we wish to entrust ourselves to their discipline, we must necessarily learn that God is so obligated to the Merits of men, that he ought in the highest rigor of absolute justice to compensate those works with the remuneration of eternal life. And that, indeed, properly called Merit requires and demands. We will prove the contrary, relying on those supports, against which one cannot resist without violation of the Scriptures, contempt of venerable Antiquity, and the ridicule of the Pontifical Doctors of better note.

Scripture, which is adverse to the Dogma of the Pontificals.

SECT. II.

Those Scriptures which we have set forth before can be sufficient to dispel these shadows: by which we have hitherto proved, either that every good work is a Gift of God, (cap. 8.) or by which we have evinced, that every good work, although not worthy in itself, (cap. 10.) is nevertheless owed to God. How much more will this be established, when we shall have shown that no good work is condign with the celestial remuneration? I abstain from their repetition, and we shall make an attempt whether the Fathers incline to our opinion.

The patronage of the Holy Fathers, by which the above Argument is confirmed.

SECT. III.

One Scripture (for I confess) seems to oppose us, but it only seems, to which, in the first place, satisfaction must be made, so that our dissertation in the remaining parts may be found easier and more expeditious. 2. Tim. 4. 8. "There is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the just judge will render to me." Which passage Bellarmine objected, (supra, cap. 7. sect. 7.) and thence concluded,

that the reward is to be rendered to good works from an absolute equality of justice. Where he received a response from Espencaeus; "God is said to be a Debtor in a certain way, although not on account of our merits, yet on account of his promises." Which exposition he calls Scholastic. Then he reports the sayings of Augustine; "It is just that God should render it, because he owes it: but he owes it, because he promised it; from grace, although not from debt." These individual points conclude for the justice of the Promise; but they utterly exclude the justice of the Condignity of the works. And as if this doctrine could not be sufficiently taught or learned, elsewhere he first acts as an admonisher: Auguft. de verbis Domini, serm. 3. "Let no one glory in works, because by our condition we owe obedience, as servants to a Lord, as attendants to God, as subjects to the Powerful, as slaves to the Redeemer, etc." Here man is shown to be the debtor, not God; except as a promiser, only by the debt of fidelity. Elsewhere also he argues against the superior assertion of the Pontificals: Idem Epist. 105. ad Sixtum. "The crown would be rendered to you as due," he says, "if the justice to which it was due were from you." Finally he concludes most expressly against it; Idem in Pfal. 109. "Faithful is God, who made himself a debtor to us." But in what way, at last? Say, I beseech you, Holy Father. "Not by receiving anything from us, but by promising such great things to us." Thus he.

For several centuries before Augustine, Origen promulgated our Doctrine: In Rom. 4 pag. 509. "I can hardly persuade myself," he says, "that there is any work which demands remuneration from God as a debt." To whom Chrysostom chimes in; "Eternal life is not something owed to us, or a wage." (supra, cap. 8.) Basil insists on the same footsteps with the other holy Fathers: in Pfal. 114. "Eternal life is rendered not as something due, or a wage, but as a gift": The same Basil, to be sure, who said (supra, cap. 8.) that everlasting rest is not rendered according to debt. For us stands also Bede, on those words of Christ, "WE HAVE DONE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO": Bede in Luc. 17. "Indeed," he says, "we ought; because HE CAME NOT TO BE SERVED, BUT TO SERVE. He made us debtors to himself, lest, trusting in our works, but always fearing his examination, we say with the Prophet, WHAT SHALL WE RENDER TO THE LORD FOR ALL &c." In this choir of the Holy Fathers, Bernard sweetly raises his harmony: h Sermon. 1. de Annunciatione: in initio. "For the merits of men are not such, that on account of them eternal life should be owed to them by right, or that God would do any injury, unless he gave it; for all Merits are gifts of God, and man is more a debtor to God on account of them, than God to man." This, so to speak, vernacular of the Fathers was learned by Elias, the Scholiast of Gregory Nazianzen: In Gregor. Naz. in orat. 30. "We ought to understand by Mercy that reward which God repays us; for we, as servants, owe virtue, so that we may perform and offer all the best things and those pleasing to God as a certain debt; since indeed we have nothing that we have not received from him. But God as Lord has mercy, he gives to us rather than repays." Thus far from the Fathers, not that they do not sometimes say God is a debtor, but in a sense by no

means that Papist one, which other Pontificals have fabricated; but in ours, that is, a plainly Orthodox and Catholic one, which we now defend.

This is what Stapleton, of very celebrated note among his own, ingeniously confesses, among our Adversaries: Lib. 10. de Justif cap. 7. "Whenever," he says, "one reads in the Fathers that God is a debtor for eternal life; it is to be understood that he is a debtor to himself, and with respect to his promises; but not that he is a debtor to us." From the consensus of the ancient Fathers, as if from an upper chamber, let us descend to the confessions of certain Pontificals, as to a lower room.

Confessions of some Pontificals against the dogma of God as debtor.

SECT. IV.

We have received Stapleton's judgment on the sayings of the Fathers as very opportune and suitable: we now await his own opinion, in which we ask that he show himself a true theologian, and bring forth his meaning from the divine utterances. Stapler. in loco jam supra citato. "This meaning," he says, "the Apostle expressed. 2. Tim. 2. 12. IF WE ENDURE, WE SHALL ALSO REIGN WITH HIM: afterwards he adds, HE (God) IS FAITHFUL, HE CANNOT DENY HIMSELF. And to Heb. 10. 23. LET US HOLD FAST THE CONFESSION OF OUR HOPE WITHOUT WAVERING; FOR HE IS FAITHFUL WHO PROMISED. In this sense God is a debtor, but to himself, not to us; on account of His promises, not on account of our dignity or that of our works; which however great it may be, is grace, it is from God. Nor do these two things amount to the same, THAT GOD IS A DEBTOR TO HIMSELF in the aforesaid sense, and, THAT GOD IS A DEBTOR TO US: because this latter sense seems to posit a debt of merit without grace, or certainly without a gratuitous retribution; which the former sense does not do." Thus he. By which indeed he could not have inflicted a more grievous wound on the Pontifical cause. For nothing can be more repugnant to the definition of Merit of condignity than to deny that good works obtain remuneration from the dignity of the works, in which the formal reason of merit of condignity entirely consists, however much Stapleton may soften that sense of his with a new gloss. Indeed, even concerning works, insofar as they proceed from Grace, "Far be it," says Faber Stapulensis, "that we should think any debt is owed to us by God, we who are unprofitable servants, by doing what we ought: indeed, more than unprofitable, by not even doing what we ought." (supra, cap. 8. sect. 6.)

Why should not that Luther-scourge Pighius interpose his judgment here? De Justif. Controvers. 2. fol. 80. a. "This kind of merit," he says, "has no place between God and men, since we can in no way constitute him a debtor to us: as his is the universe, and what we are, and what we do, and what we can do." Thus

he. This objection the School once urged, viz. That it is a debt that a reward be repaid. To which Aquinas met, asserting, "God is not made a debtor to us simply, but to himself, in so far as it is a debt that his ordinance be fulfilled." Then (with Vasquez as witness) In 1. 2. Tom. 1. disp. 214. num. 10. the more recent Thomists are unwilling to concede that God is a debtor to us, but to himself; "because debt is a certain obligation to another, but obligation always respects him as a superior to whom one is obligated." Indeed, even Costerus the Jesuit, as if now repenting and returning to a saner mind, says, *Enchirid. Tract. de Meritis*, c. 7. "There is no exact relation between God and men: and this is the reason why God cannot properly be a debtor." Therefore P. Andreas Vega in this question demands sobriety from his followers: *Popusc. de Meritis*, q. 5. pag. 794. "it is necessary," he says, "to temper our speech soberly and religiously, so that when we say that God owes us beatitude, we should indicate that this is not from the dignity of our works, but from the excessive mercy of God."

From these it will be prompt and easy for anyone to argue irrefragably from the definition of Merit of Condignity: because Merit of Condignity is a work, which by its Condignity demands a reward from the remunerator, as a debt. Because this cannot be affirmed of God without impiety, therefore there can be no Merit of Condignity of man before God.

Finally, other Pontificals taught that the sense of the Scriptures objected to above by the Adversaries is undermined by other Scriptures: for example; 1. John 1. "If anyone confesses his sins, God is just to forgive sins." What justice is this? Of condignity in the confessor? Or of fidelity in the promiser? Estius the Jesuit will explain: "God is called just here," he says, "not because forgiveness of sin is owed to the penitent by a law of justice; but because to keep faith is a certain part of justice." Thus he. (*supra*, cap. 2. sect. 8.) Which is the opinion of all the Pontificals, as well as of your Vega: *Opusc. de Merito*, qu. 6. "For God," he says, "did not promise forgiveness to the penitent as a wage and reward for penitence; for he knew that penitence was not meritorious of so great and excellent a benefit: but he promised forgiveness as a certain exceptional and super-exceeding gift beyond the price of all our works." These are from Andrea Vega. There is therefore no doubt that the assertions of Bellarmine, Suarez, and others fall upon the sponge of Borgia the Jesuit, who is numbered among the first ten of the Jesuit society: *vita Borgiæ, cui affuitur Tractatus qui inscribitur OPUSCULA BORGIAE, ab Alphonso de Oria Jesuitâ emissus: ubi habentur nova in Sermone Borgiæ in Luc. 19. pag. 564.* "There is," says that one, "another notable error which holds back spiritual men; who when they feel in themselves a desire for poverty, obedience, and other virtues, they are pleased with themselves in this, and as if from a debtor God, they ask that he favor them; nor do they advert to how much they owe God, from whom they had such desires; nor do they understand that new benefits are not owed to them, but that for those received

they owe new duties." Thus he. But how little spiritual are they to be called, whom so notable an error occupies!

...occupies them, like a Lymphatic disease; and how epidemic, and plainly Sontic, this disease of Merit properly so called is among the Pontifical Doctors, is difficult to say.

CAP. XII.

Our fifth Argument against Merit of Condignity, from the part of the Secondary End, viz. eternal life, quatenus est Dei donum.

Argumentatio.

SECT. I.

No gift is properly from Merit of Condignity: but eternal life is a gift of God: therefore eternal life is not from Merit of Condignity.

The Major is evident by itself, because to give belongs only to liberality. The Minor is contested.

Ex Scripturis.

SECT. II.

Rom. 6. verf. ult. "The wages of sin is death; but the grace of God is eternal life, through Christ our Lord." Our reason is this: If the reason of Merit of Condignity of the good for eternal life were the same as that of the evil for eternal death; the Apostle would not have deliberately changed the formula of speech, calling eternal death the wage of sin, but eternal life a "Charisma" (Χάρισμα), a Grace of Grace, or a free Gift. This dagger sticks in the very viscera of the cause itself. Let us permit the interpretation of this passage to the patronage of Antiquity.

The common interpretation of the ancient Fathers, repugnant to the glosses of the Pontificals.

SECT. III.

But while we try to show this, the Adversaries interrupt and disturb us with their usual objection from Augustine, who, lest we listen too much to our own custom, must first be heard, then reconciled by us: The passage they so often inculcate is this: Auguft. epist. 105. "See," he says, "how vigilantly the Apostle placed the words, THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH: Who would not judge it consequent and most fitting to add, THE WAGES OF JUSTICE IS ETERNAL LIFE. And it is

true, just as death is rendered by the merit of sin, so eternal life is rendered as a Wage by the merit of justice." Thus he. So, they inquire, and indeed most truly: For if we consider the outcome, by which God remunerates the good and the evil, but not if we weigh the adequate cause of each. About which a little later. Augustine meanwhile proceeds, explaining the reason why the Apostle does not apply the same form to both. "Against the plague of pride," says the Apostle, "THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH. Rightly WAGES, because it is owed, because it is worthily repaid, because it is rendered to merit. Then, lest justice should extol itself for human merit, just as the evil human merit is undoubtedly sin, he did not relate it in the contrary way, saying, THE WAGES OF JUSTICE IS ETERNAL LIFE: but, THE GRACE," he says, "OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE: and this, lest any other way besides the Mediator should be sought, he added, IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.—O human not Justice, but under the name of Justice, plain Pride! —To which eternal life is owed, it is true justice, if however it is true, it is not from you, IT IS FROM ABOVE FROM THE FATHER OF LIGHTS... FOR WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU DID NOT RECEIVE? Wherefore, O man, if you are to receive eternal life, it is indeed the wage of justice, but to you it is free, to whom justice itself is a grace; but it would be rendered to you as owed, if the justice to which it was owed were from you." Thus the Holy Father. But whoever accurately weighs the coherence of his words, will surely feel that that Papist Merit of Condignity is forthwith overthrown for two reasons.

Come then, let that portent of yours, namely Merit of Condignity, come forth into the midst. "It is," they say (*supra*, cap. 2.), "a free action consisting in an equality of justice, to which by the condignity of the work eternal life is owed before God." Now we call upon S. Augustine as arbiter. 1. He indeed calls the operation of good things justice; but a justice which is the Grace of God, because it is not from you. 2. The second follows from the first in this manner: Although eternal life is a Wage, "but to you it is Grace," he says, "to whom it would be rendered as owed, if the justice to which it was owed were from you." Such a wage, therefore, he calls eternal life, which he concludes is not rendered to the workers from debt; dissenting "through and through" (*διὰ πασῶν*) from Merit of Condignity, to which (from the Pontificals' definition) eternal life is owed, and that by an equality of justice; from which sense Augustine wholly abhorred. Therefore, under the sacrament of an oath, a pious Reader might pronounce that the Augustinian wage is not rendered from Merit of Condignity: But especially, because elsewhere Augustine, explaining himself, says, *De Gratia & libero Arbitrio* cap. 9. "Although [the Apostle] could have rightly said, BUT THE WAGES OF JUSTICE IS ETERNAL LIFE, he preferred to say, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE: that we might understand that God leads us to eternal life not for our merits, but for his own compassion." While the Pontificals, if they wish to be consistent with their definition, fighting Augustine diametrically, would say, "That we might understand, that God leads us to eternal life for our merits, and not for his own compassion." What more?

Augustine would never have denied that eternal life is owed by justice, if he had believed with the Pontificals, that the just man merits eternal life just as the impious and wicked man merits, as a wage, eternal death. Although not even the word wage, if it were there, would necessarily infer Merit of Condignity.

Other Fathers, without any hesitation, consonant with us in almost the same syllables, not only agree in mind. The first of whom is Origen, in eum locum Apostoli, who thence teaches it is to be understood that eternal death is called the wage of sin, because it is a debt; and eternal life is not called a wage, but a gift, because it is not a debt. "Well," he says, "the Apostle preserves the proposed Metaphor, so that to those who fight under the King of sin, he says death is paid as a wage: But it was not worthy for God to give a Wage to his soldiers, as if some debt; but a gift of grace, which is eternal life." The second will be Chrysostom, Chrysoft. in eum locum. hom. 12. who from the reason of the changed order of the words observes that eternal life is therefore not called a REWARD, but a GIFT, because it was GIVEN, not OWED; whether we consider the liberation of man before justification, or, after it, the function of good works: "The Apostle, speaking of good things, did not keep the same order. For he does not say, THE REWARD OF YOUR GOOD DEEDS IS ETERNAL LIFE, but THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE; to show that they were not liberated by their own strength, nor is it a debt, or a reward, or a retribution for labors; but they received all those things from the gratuitous divine gift."

Third is Jerome, who wishes death, as the wage of sin, to be opposed to eternal life, as the gift of God. And the justice of God in the wicked is opposed to his largesse and goodness towards the pious. Hieron lib. 2. in Ezech. in illa verba, Secundum vias eorum dabo eis. "To sinners God will give according to their ways, so that he may hold the truth of judgment: but towards the Saints, his clemency exceeds measure. THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH; which the sinner receives according to his ways and works: but the virtue of the just enjoys the largesse of the Lord, of which Paul speaks, "THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE." Fourth is Theodoretus, In eum locum Apostoli. who supposes the antithesis to be between death, as the reward of the impious, and eternal life towards the pious, as a gift: "Because sin once reigned, but now exercises a tyranny, the Apostle calls it 'opsōnia' (ὀψώνια), WAGES, [REWARD] which is the soldier's pay, 1. Cor. 9. 7. But when he speaks of eternal life, which is rendered to the works of justice, he did not call it a REWARD, but GRACE: for eternal life is a gift of God." Fifth is Theophylact: In eum locum. "GRACE, however, not REWARD, he said would come from God; as if to say, For you do not receive the reward of your labors, but by grace all these things are done, in Christ Jesus, who works and brings these things about." Sixth, who closes the line, is Fulgentius: De Prædest. lib. 1. ad Monimum. "But why is death called a WAGE, and eternal life the GRACE OF GOD: unless because the former IS PAID, the latter IS GIVEN?" Thus these ancient Fathers; nor from all of Antiquity, as far as I know, does any

Father oppose them, not even one. Who if they had deliberately wanted to defend the cause of the Protestants, could not have expressed our sense more clearly or eloquently.

CHAPTER XIII.

Our Sixth Argument against Merit of Condignity, again from the perspective of the Secondary End, namely eternal life, insofar as it is an inherited gift.

Argumentation.

SECTION I.

That work whose end is not properly a wage, but an inheritance, is not properly meritorious of condignity before God: but the end of a good work (namely, eternal life) is not properly a wage, but an inheritance: therefore, the good work itself is not properly meritorious of condignity before God.

The Adversaries, having conceded the Major premise, respond to the Minor.

State of the Question.

Bellarmino, for the Roman Church, says: "It is certain," he says, "that the Council of Trent, session 6, chapter 16, teaches that eternal life is given to the sons, mercifully promised through Christ, and at the same time is a reward for good works faithfully rendered according to God's promise to be rendered. And Canon 32 declares those works to be meritorious which are done by the justified through the grace of God, as they are living members of Christ." Book 5 on Justification, c. 12. And this, etc. And elsewhere, "Eternal life in the Scriptures is as often, and perhaps more often, called a REWARD than an INHERITANCE."

Maldonado, however, growing more than sufficiently heated, inveighs against the Protestants: "If they were not blinded by their own error," he says, "they would surely understand that eternal life is called a REWARD because it is given to Servants; an INHERITANCE because it is given to Sons." In Matt. 25. 34. So he says; for whom the Jesuit manner is too familiar. But to the point. We say that eternal life, with respect to the just, is properly called an inheritance: but a reward only improperly and broadly understood. And so we call it a reward, insofar as it is only a prize of munificence, and a remuneration by pact, which remuneration is above condignity: but properly and strictly, that is a Reward which is of condignity, and corresponds to the definition of Merit of condignity; which the Adversaries truly feel consists in an equality of justice and condignity unto eternal life. The former meaning we admit and approve: the latter we detest, because it is repugnant both to the authority of the Scriptures and also to the doctrine of Catholic Antiquity. This distinction, if it were truly to be made

clear, could be the absolute decision of this entire controversy: and that it is indeed most clear, the subsequent sections demonstrate.

SECTION II.

That eternal life is an absolute inheritance for the Just is proven from the Scriptures.

Our Adversaries freely grant with full and unanimous consent that eternal life is properly an inheritance. Why then do we waste time and paper in proving it? But we establish it to be an absolute inheritance: that is, in such a way that Christianity itself rests entirely on the adoption of sonship. Concerning which sonship, if it is asked, whence is it? 1 Peter 1:3-4. "God the Father has regenerated us into an inheritance." If it is asked, how can one be an heir when still an infant? Galatians 4:1. Even while alive, though an infant, he is nevertheless an heir. If, as to the state of Grace, to what extent? Galatians 4:1-2. Although under guardians, yet he is lord of all. If, to what end? 1 Peter 1:14-15. "Be ye sons of obedience" (that is, of Obedience), "and holy in all your conduct": and (if the cause should demand it) not only in doing, but equally in suffering; Romans 8:17. "If sons, then also heirs, and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him." If finally, as to the state of Glory; Matthew 25:34. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit (κληρονομήσατε)," which is not merely "Possess" (as the Vulgate has it), but "Possess by inheritance." Which acceptance of an inheritance, although it can coexist with the reward of Munificence, can surely never consist with the reward of Commensuration and Condignity.

SECTION III.

That eternal life cannot properly be called both a Reward and an Inheritance at the same time, is proven from the Scriptures.

We cannot but embrace this opinion of Bellarmine with eager arms, as they say: "In the Scriptures," he says, in the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and elsewhere, "eternal life is called an inheritance, which properly pertains to sons; therefore it is not the wage of slaves, even if they should serve for a thousand years, but the proper portion of sons." Book 5 on Justification, c. 13. To these Scriptures. So he says; but with respect to works outside of Grace; therefore he adds that "Regeneration, and the Adoption of sons, is a necessary condition for the Merit of eternal life." But we believe the Scripture more, which distinguishes these two titles of Son and Servant, and plainly separates and dissolves them: Galatians 4:7. "Therefore thou art no more a servant, but a son": so that the name of inheritance is Native, when it is attributed to eternal life; but the name of reward, with respect to the former, is Adventitious: as the very passages of the Scriptures in the preceding section declare.

SECTION IV.

The ancient Holy Fathers believed that the name of reward was used improperly, but that of inheritance, in the State of Grace, was taken properly.

From the Apostle, to the Romans 6:23, “The wages of sin is death, but eternal life is the Grace of God,” the Holy Fathers, patrons of Catholic truth, affirmed with the highest consensus, that in this comparison eternal life is called Grace, and not Wages, so that it may be known to us that there is a huge difference between the remuneration of good works, as a *χάρισμα* (charisma), that is, a gift of grace, and the punishment of the wicked, which is their just wage: and therefore this term is not properly suited to eternal life. The Fathers were neither fewer nor of lesser rank than these whom we designate, Origen, Chrysostom, Jerome, Theodoret, Theophylact, entirely against the Papist sense (of which above); now we add other suffrages of the Fathers. Of Basil: “Eternal life is given not according to the debt of works, but according to the munificence of God.” (above, chap. 11. sect. 3.) So he says. Which words manifestly confirm our above distinction concerning the reward of Liberality or Munificence, and that of Condignity and Equality. Likewise of Hilary: “But for hope, all time is free, so that the workers might obtain the reward not of work, but of mercy.” In Ps. 139, at the end. And again; “And indeed, a reward from a gift is nothing, because it is owed from work.” The same in Matt. can. 20. pag. 306. Of Mark the Hermit, following in the footsteps of his Greek Fathers, whose conclusion is this, “For this reason the kingdom of heaven is not a reward for works, but a grace of the Lord prepared for faithful servants” (Διὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστι μισθὸς ἔργων ἢ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἀλλὰ χάρις δεσπότου πιστοῖς δούλοις ἡτοιμασμένη), that is, “Therefore the Kingdom of heaven is not a reward of works, but the grace of the Lord prepared for faithful servants.” On the resurrection, Mark the Hermit on the justification of works. Of St. Bernard: “All things are of God: Grace is given freely: even when it is bought, it is bought freely because what is given for it is better retained by us.”

Thus far we have completed the negative part; namely, that eternal life is not properly called a Reward: We now gird ourselves for the affirmative, concerning Inheritance, so that we may understand whether this Title has pleased them more. Among the most ancient of all the Fathers, Origen has held almost the first place: “After we have come,” he says, “from the spirit of servitude to the spirit of adoption, there is no fear, that is, we do nothing on account of punishment, but on account of the love of the Father.” In Rom. 8. And a little later, “The Servant expects a reward, the Son an inheritance.” So he says; opposing Servant and Son to one another, as things which are, if taken strictly, incompatible (ἀσύστατα). Ambrose observed the effect (ἐνέργειαν) of the same hereditary property from the same opposition: “God,” he says, “in order to make us more ready to obey him, therefore calls us Sons and future Heirs.” In Rom. Which property, in turn, Theophylact teaches is to be discerned in those words of Christ, “COME, YOU BLESSED OF MY FATHER, POSSESS THE

KINGDOM": "Christ calls the Saints," he says, "BLESSED, as having been received by the Father: and He makes them heirs of the kingdom, showing that God will make them partakers of the kingdom, as His sons." Theoph. in Matth. 25. For He did not say "RECEIVE," but "POSSESS," as a paternal substance. So he says of the sons of the kingdom, which I think no one will feel can be properly affirmed of those who are properly servants. Indeed, Theophylact distinguishes the hereditary right of possessing from every meritorious right of acquiring that paternal substance. We have deferred Gregory Nazianzen to this last place, not because we wish to detract anything from this admirable Theologian, but to prefer his authority to such a degree that, on account of the exquisite and clear exposition of his opinion, we can deservedly designate him as the Moderator of this cause. Gregor. Naz. Orat. 4. Bapt: Pag. 645. He, distinguishing those who attain salvation into three classes, namely, of Servants (Δουλείαν), of Hirelings (Μισθαρνίαν), and of Sons (Υιότητα), calls the Servants "small-souled" (Μικροψύχους), "endowed with abject minds; for whom it seems a great thing to escape punishment" (εις μέγα, τὸ φυγεῖν βάσανον): the Hirelings he calls "great-souled" (μεγαλοψύχους), "magnanimous, whose purpose is to attain rewards" (τυχῶν ἀντιδόσεων) "and also to aspire to a wage": finally, the Sons he says are "most godlike" (θεοειδέστατους), "above both." Then he admonishes each order individually: "If you are a servant, fear the stripes: if a hireling, expect only a wage: if, finally, a son, revere your father, and apply yourself to good works; because it is good to obey the Father, even if nothing is to come of it" (κἂν μηδὲν ἔσσεσθαι μέλλῃ). "The reward itself is to please the Father" (Τὸ αὐτὸ μισθός, τὸ τῷ πατρὶ χαρίζεσθαι), "Even if from that thing no gain should return to you: because this very thing is the reward, namely, to obey the Father." So he says, teaching that these classes ought to be distinguished, not confused. But the Adversaries, lest they should seem to be destitute of all support from the ancient Fathers, like men submerged in water, snatch at rushes, and anything, even shadowy; but in vain, except that in this way they busy themselves to create trouble for us.

Section V.

The Objection of the Adversaries from the Fathers, that the Kingdom of heaven is said by them to be FOR SALE, is very vehement, but evanescent.

The Jesuit Vasquez did not cease to press us with certain testimonies of the Fathers, in which it is said that Heaven is proposed to us for sale: "Our Jesuits of Cologne," he says, "have taught excellently that Heaven is proposed to us for sale, which is to be obtained by condign merits, as by an equal price." Vasquez in 1.2. Tom. 2. disp. 215. cap. 2. Which opinion Chemnitz (this one of the Protestants) took indignantly and refuted, so as to take away the dignity of our merits." Furthermore, Jacobus Paiva confirmed the opinion of our Jesuits, and crushed the calumny of Chemnitz from the Fathers: for Clement of Alexandria in his Exhortationsays, "Most precious salvation is bought for the treasure of charity and faith, as for a just price." And Basil, at the beginning of his work on Proverbs,

says that “we are merchants, purchasing the celestial possession with our works.” Also Augustine (Sermon 22 on the words of the Apostle) says of Judas Iscariot, “Avarice sent you to the Indies to bring back gold; I placed Christ before your door, from whom you might buy the Kingdom of heaven.” So he says; but more sparingly. Therefore, Cardinal Hosius must be brought in; for he has something to give, and indeed generously; “Augustine,” he says, “in Psalm 93. The Kingdom of heaven is for sale.” Hosius c. 73. Confut. opin. contr. pag. 300. “But you will say, ‘How much is it worth?’ Its price is labor. — Ambrose, On Elijah and Fasting, chapter 20. We have subsidies with which to redeem our sins: you have money, redeem your sin: the Lord is not for sale, but you yourself are for sale.” Chrysostom, on the Epistle to the Philippians, Sermon 15. “We do not say the Kingdom of heaven is bought with money, but with will:— If you have that, you can buy Heaven for two small coins.” Gregory Nazianzen in oration 18 to the citizens; “The Kingdom of heaven is bought with a little Blood, and everlasting glory with temporal things.” Peter Chrysologus, homily 41. “God sells His kingdom for the love of the poor.” Pope Gregory, Morals, book 20, chapter 16. “The Apostles, by leaving temporal things, purchased the glory of eternal power.” Clement of Alexandria, in his Exhortation to the Gentiles, “Most precious salvation is bought with the coin of charity.” Similar things are found in Ambrose, Ephrem, and Caesarius. The Adversaries have laboriously scraped together these phrases from the Fathers in defense of their Merit of Condignity: And truly we must confess, if indeed the heavenly Kingdom is properly for sale for our merits, that it is by no means an inheritance. To this objection we will adapt a threefold solution.

SOLUTION I.

By explaining the sophistical trick of the Adversaries, by which they treat their Readers as if for sport and ridicule.

SECTION VI.

This is the wondrous and miserable sophistication of the Adversaries, which confuses the most diverse things. For there are two kinds of Comparisons: one of quality, or similarity: the other of quantity, or equality, as all know. I shall take an example from the Gospel, which seems to us most clear: Matthew 13:45-46. “The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; who, having found a certain pearl of great price, went away and sold all that he had, and bought it.” What this Parable means, we will permit your Interpreters to explain: but first of all the Jesuit Salmeron on this Text; “The sense from Augustine is that we Christians are the merchants, and Christ is the pearl: Christ is the pearl, the Word made flesh; let us give ourselves for that pearl, not because we are worth so much, but because we cannot give more.” In Evang. qu. Evang. 13. Tom. 7. Traft. 11. pag. 60. Tom. 3. Serm. 6. Thus far Augustine. Therefore, we say, nothing less is understood than a price conferred out of condignity. And

Ambrose; “The Christian merchant preferred to lose all the gems of the world which he has, that he might buy this one pearl.” So he says. This transaction is also beyond condignity, unless perhaps the Adversaries have come to such madness as to think that from an equality of justice they can merit Christ himself, who is (as Salmeron also correctly notes in the same place) “the Pearl, which has in itself the properties of all precious stones.” Nothing, therefore, can be plainer than that this comparison of buying, in itself, contains the rationale of quality and similarity: but not any of quantity, condignity, commensuration, and equality.

SOLUTION II.

The Adversaries' Argument for Condignity from the same similitude of buying is confuted by the Fathers themselves.

SECTION VII.

The Adversaries have already above strenuously urged Chrysostom from Sermon 15 on the Epistle to the Philippians. That Holy Father, in the place alleged, expressing the sense of his mind in this manner, says: “Do not object poverty of price: for as much as you can, for so much buy.” “Do you have a denarius? Buy heaven; not because heaven is for sale, but because the Lord is merciful. Do you not have a denarius? Give a cup of cold water.” So he says. Therefore, with Chrysostom as Moderator, heaven is not for sale: for so he says, namely, properly from a commensuration of equality, for a denarius, or a cup of cold water; but from the grace and acceptance of a merciful Lord. What could be clearer? and yet the Adversaries were not ashamed to object to us this testimony of his, so utterly repugnant to their tenets. With the same plain cleverness, entirely distorted, they have foisted Ambrose upon us. He wants the penitent to redeem his sins by almsgiving, which is also a phrase of the Vulgate edition: which saying of his they adduce for Merit of Condignity, although they all deny that we can merit the forgiveness of sins from Condignity. Indeed, and Augustine they also claim for themselves, who, if he were alive, would religiously swear that this sense had never come into his mind. He does indeed say, “The Kingdom is for sale at the price of labor.” But is it at the price of equality and condignity? He (in the following chapter, section 3) will teach the plain contrary, where, in order that the reward may be equal to the labor, he says that eternal life (which is impossible) must be procured by eternal labor. If again the question is of possible labor, who might most of all merit the Kingdom of heaven; all with one voice will prefer the work of martyrdom to all other labors: by which, however, it is so far from being the case that they would properly buy the Kingdom of heaven, according to the opinion of Augustine; that he himself affirms that the death of a martyr for Christ was first bought by the death of Christ. (below chap. 15. sect. 3.) Finally, concerning all grace, Bernard says: “All grace, when it is bought, is bought freely.” (above, section 4 of this chapter.) Thus

far the Fathers. It is to be wished, therefore, that the Adversaries would at last return to a sounder mind, and cease to abuse the ingenious elegances of the Fathers, and to foist their seasonings (*ἡδύσματα*) as if they were foods (*ἐδέσματα*); so as to impose perniciously upon their readers. Which the next Solution will show more clearly. Meanwhile it is clear that the Adversaries, in objecting the Fathers, have so far been fishing in the air, and hunting in the midst of the sea.

SOLUTION III.

That the Adversaries themselves have blathered this objection, about Heaven being for sale, with a light and wounded conscience.

SECTION VIII.

The Pontifical Doctors, as often as they come upon these phrases of the Fathers, about buying heaven, and Heaven being for sale, etc., immediately urge and inculcate them, as a clear Argument for Merit of Condignity. In which they show themselves to be excellent turncoats; because they are often forced to acknowledge the contrary. For since buying and selling, and every contract of this kind, by the confession of all, pertain to Commutative justice, which they themselves have denied to intervene between us and God; yet they dare to object these buyings and sellings to us from the Fathers. Among those who are caught in the act is Cardinal Hosius: "Justice between contracting parties, that is, the buyer and the seller, is Commutative, which respects Arithmetical equality, which is of quantity: which if anyone considers, it is certain, that it is neither just nor worthy that for the sufferings of this time eternal glory should be given; since between the sufferings of this time and the eternal reward there is no equality.": chap. 73. confutation of the contrary opinion. pag. 182. Thus now he argues against Commutative justice, who yet just now gathered so many testimonies of the Fathers to prove, from Merit of Condignity, that Heaven is for sale and sellable, which is peculiar to Commutative justice.

Following and chiming in with this Cardinal is the Jesuit Vasquez; he diligently urged the testimonies of the Fathers about buying heaven, although this is proper to Commutative justice, which he likewise opposed: for he said that this doctrine had hitherto been handed down by none of the ancient Scholastics. (above, chap. 5. sect. 2.) Here it is pleasing to note another contradiction of the Adversaries. The Jesuit Coster thinks he explains the matter brilliantly when he says, "He to whom an inheritance is given as a reward, is a hireling and a son." *Enchiridion*, *Treatise on Merits*, b. 7. So he says: where he urges both terms in their proper sense: whom we send to Stapleton, to demand from him the reason why he denied that Merit accrues according to Commutative justice. Lest good works seem to be servile. But now we will leave the Adversaries bound by their own arguments (as if by snares). We hasten to an Argument which (as it seems to us) concludes the cause with what are, as it were, terminating terms.

CHAPTER XIV.

Our Seventh Argument against the Pontificals' Merit of Condignity, from the perspective of the Reward of good works, insofar as it is above the condignity of the work.

Argumentation.

SECTION I.

The work whose reward is above Condignity, that work is not properly Meritorious of Condignity before God: But the reward of any good work (which is eternal life) is above its Condignity, or Worthiness: Therefore, no good work is properly Meritorious of Condignity for eternal life before God. The Major Proposition is derived from the locus of absolute opposites: because for a reward to be From Condignity, and to be Above Condignity (which is Not from Condignity) are incompatible (*ἀσύστατα*) and contradictory: So that the Jesuit Vasquez ingenuously concedes the consequence of the Major: In 1.2. Tom. 2. disp. 214. cap. 7. “For if we concede,” he says, “that our works are remunerated by God beyond their own dignity, it plainly follows that that accession of remuneration is given to us in view of the merits of Christ, and not in view of our works alone.” There are two passages of Scripture, illustrated by the most lucid expositions of the Fathers, on which we will insist.

SECTION II.

The first passage of Scripture convicting the dogma of the Pontificals of falsity.

Rom. 8:18. “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” This passage, which we have considered to be a clear Achilles' heel, Bellarmine thinks he can avoid with a slight, as it were, turn of his body: “The Apostle speaks,” he says, “of the substance of the works, not of the absolute proportion: for the sufferings of this time are brief, but the glory is eternal: yet there is a proportion between these sufferings and that glory, because of the dignity of the charity from which they proceed.” Book 2 on Justification, c. 3. Nor by these. So he says, still harping on the absolute equality of justice of good works before God. Concerning his objections, later, in section 4. But we hold and defend from this Scripture, that the Comparison of good works is, not only as to the substance of the acts, with respect to the brevity of the sufferings and the eternity of life; but also with respect to any proportion whatever that there can be of the dignity of the works to the excellence of the blessedness of eternal life; as is clear from the immediately preceding words: “For you have not received,” he says, “the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” “Because the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs

with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together: For he immediately adds, The sufferings are not worthy, etc.” In which words you have whatever can be required for the dignity of a good work. 1. The word is ἄξια, worthy. 2. Because it deals with works done in the state of Grace, and by those in whom the Holy Spirit is dwelling, “You have received the Spirit of adoption,” he says. 3. The pact of God is also expressed: “If,” he says, “we suffer with him, that we may be glorified together.” It must be confessed therefore, that this, “Not Worthy,” etc., ought to be referred as much to any dignity of the persons as to the substance of the works or acts. In which, however, we desire no faith to be placed in us, which the authority of the holy Fathers does not seem to demand and, as it were, command.

SECTION III.

The most eloquent testimonies of the Holy Fathers, by which they teach that the most distinguished works (which are the passions of the Saints) are not at all condign with eternal life.

We said they were most eloquent, because they speak only of essential blessedness, and consider not only the dignity of the Passions, but also of the Sufferers. The first will be Cyprian: “THE PASSIONS ARE NOT WORTHY,” etc. “When we shall be blessed, honored by the condescension of the Lord.” In epist. ad Thebaritanos. 56. So he says. Where the Condescension of God most certainly implies whatever dignity the Sufferers themselves may have. Second, Athanasius: “Nor, by renouncing the whole world, can we compensate with anything worthy for the celestial habitations.” In the life of St. Anthony, as cited by Bellarmine, book 5 on Justification, chap. 14. Hucetiam. He speaks generally of all the best works, and of any celestial habitation whatsoever. Third, Ambrose: “THEY ARE NOT WORTHY,” etc. “We are said to suffer for Christ, when what we suffer profits not him, but us: but he [Christ], because he seeks an occasion to remunerate us, commands this. For as a lavish bestower, he seeks a reason how he may give to the unworthy or the bashful. Finally, that the very destructions might be tolerated, he himself suggests the strength.” In the text of the Apostle. Ambrose: “THEY ARE NOT WORTHY,” etc.: “Therefore, the form of the celestial decrees concerning men proceeds not according to our merits, but according to the mercy of God.” In Psalm 118. Serm. 20. a little after the middle. This holy Father confirms our Conclusion, that eternal life is not obtained according to our merits: by which he, as it were, tramples and crushes with his feet our condignity of meriting from an equality of justice (and this with six arguments). The first is the unworthiness of the sufferer, that it profits not Christ, but himself alone. The second, that suffering is commanded to him, so that it is a work owed to Christ. The third, that the remuneration is rendered not from debt, but from lavish bestowal. The fourth, that the reward is conferred, if the Saints are strictly examined, upon the unworthy. The fifth, that in suffering, they are sustained not by their own strength, but by the power of God. The sixth, that

God, in his judicial dispensation, acts according to mercy. Fourth, also Jerome: "THEY ARE NOT WORTHY," etc. "For in truth man can suffer nothing condign with celestial glory, even if that glory were such as life is now." Rom. 8. "For whatever he may have suffered from death, is no more than what he had previously deserved for his sins; but now his sins are also forgiven, and then eternal life will be granted." He pricks and purges the boil of meritorious condignity in a twofold manner, while he denies that we can, through the passions of martyrdom, merit even the benefits of this life: and not only this, but he also admonishes that Martyrs, while they suffer for Christ, should rather think of their own demerits; as if they themselves had merited those sufferings. Chrysostom follows in the fifth place: "THEY ARE NOT WORTHY," etc. he subjoined, "IF INDEED WE SUFFER WITH HIM, THAT WE MAY ALSO BE GLORIFIED WITH HIM." In Rom. 8. hom. "For how will he not repay, when he sees men laboring and suffering such things, who has heaped upon us such great gifts, while we had done no good?" And a little later; "See how he both depresses and raises the sense of the contestants; for when he shows that the rewards are greater than the labors, he both exhorts more, and does not permit them to be wise in their pride; inasmuch as they are overcome by the retribution of the crowns." So he says. But in suffering for Christ, pride does not arise from the excellence of the reward, but from the sufferer's opinion of his own condignity. Again, the same Chrysostom employs another machine to attack this condignity of Merit. Chrysostom on compunction of heart, around the middle of book 2. He, first considering the temporal benefits of God, both of creation and of conservation, says, "Though we should die a thousand times, though we should fulfill all the virtues of the soul, we do nothing worthy for those things which we have received from him." "For see how, when he himself has need of nothing of ours, yet when we were not, he made us to be, etc." Then, considering the spiritual benefits of God, "Much more," he says, "the just man, considering the future goods which are to come through Christ which are promised, every hour and moment, and attending to the immense sea of God's benefits, would say, 'WHAT SHALL I RENDER TO THE LORD FOR ALL,' etc." So he says. Observe, I beseech you, the Dialectic of this most holy and likewise most learned Father. If by dying a thousand times for Christ, we are yet by no virtue of ours to be judged worthy of past benefits; much less are we to be considered worthy of those future ones, which excel the past no less than an immense sea of goods excels a handful of cheaper gifts, notwithstanding any estimation whatsoever of our own virtue. For so he says, "Even if we fulfill all the virtues of the soul." The sixth is the Author of the imperfect work, a writer indeed most ancient: "THEY ARE NOT WORTHY," etc. In Matt. hom 52, 53. "If, therefore, the glory will be greater than what each of the Saints deserves; how can their work suffice for the salvation of others, when it does not even suffice for themselves to attain glory by a just judgment?" "What then shall we do that is worthy in this world, that we may be made partakers of our Lord in the heavenly kingdoms?" "Therefore the Apostle said, 'THE PASSIONS ARE NOT WORTHY,' etc." So he says. His

consequence is our conclusion, that the passions are not worthy, etc. But his reason is one of our premises: not only because the remuneration excels the passion, but because no one is sufficient for himself to attain glory.

Seventh, Eusebius of Emesa: "Though we should sweat with all the powers of soul and body, though we should be exercised with all the powers of obedience, yet we shall be able to compensate and offer nothing of condign merit for the celestial goods." As cited by Bellarmine, book 5 on Justification, c. 14. Also here. So he says. In these words, "powers of the soul," and "of obedience," he comprehends every office of charity and faith, and whatever spiritual dignity there can be; and yet "Nothing condign," etc. Eighth, Augustine: "Attend:" he says, "in a certain way God has proposed the kingdom of heaven for sale. You say to him, 'How much is it worth?' Its price is labor." In Ps. 93. "How great is the labor? —I show you how great that rest is, you judge by how much labor it is to be bought. —You will have eternal life, a rest that has no end. With how much labor is a rest that has no end worthy? If you wish to compare truly, and to judge truly, eternal rest is rightly bought by eternal labor." "Because it is an everlasting rest, the price is equal: eternal rest is certainly worthy to be procured by eternal labor. —This is true, but do not fear, God is merciful." This dagger is sharper than can be blunted. We find Vasquez and the Jesuits of Cologne often boasting that Heaven is for sale; to show that there is a true and proper commensuration of Condignity of the merit of the sufferers with the reward of eternal life: yet our most distinguished Patron Augustine asserts, if eternal life were for sale, it ought to be bought by some eternal Labor. Since we are utterly unequal to this, he therefore persuades us to cast ourselves into the bosom of Divine mercy. Likewise the same Augustine, "If," he says, "a man were in labors, hardships, and torments his whole life; few are the days of this life compared to the heavenly kingdom." In Psalm 36. Likewise elsewhere, "If," he says, "it were necessary to endure torments daily, if to tolerate hell itself for a time, of all the Saints, that we might be worthy to see Christ coming in glory; it would not be worthy to suffer so much, that we might be made partakers of so great a good." The same in the Feast of All Saints, Serm. 1, Tom. 10, Pag. 1244. In this argument, the most holy man imagines to himself the passion of extreme evils, to tolerate Gehenna for a time, and this to be imposed on man under a pact and condition of obtaining future glory: Nevertheless, he openly and eloquently concludes, both concerning the sufferer, that he is not worthy, and concerning the work of the sufferer, that it is not worthy of so great a good. Ninth and tenth (that I may join two together, especially since they are so of one mind (ὁμοψύχους)), Primasius and Isidore of Seville. Rom. 8. Primasius: "THEY ARE NOT WORTHY," etc. "For whatever we have suffered from death, is no more than what we deserved for our sins." Similarly also Isidore: "THEY ARE NOT WORTHY," etc. "Do not murmur, do not say, 'Why do I endure these things?' but, 'I am not worthy; I acknowledge that I have been struck less than I deserved.'" On the contempt of the world; in the beginning of the book. Both agreeing almost word for word with the

preceding suffrage of Jerome (above in this section). Of which Fathers the words do not need our commentary. For nothing could be said against the Merit of Condignity for eternal life from an equality of justice that is more effective, more forceful, more repugnant. Eleventh, Fulgentius: “Eternal life is not unjustly called GRACE; because not only does God render his own gifts for his gifts, but because the Grace of Divine retribution so abounds, that it incomparably and ineffably exceeds every merit, although good, and given by God, of human will and operation.” Lib. 1. ad Monim. pag. 19. So he says, he is repugnant to the answers of the Papists, not only concerning the act of good works, but also expressly concerning their merit and whatever dignity they may have. Twelfth, Remigius: “THEY ARE NOT WORTHY,” etc. “If any man could have fulfilled all the precepts of the Old and New Testament (behold, both covenants!), and endured all kinds of torments (behold, the most noble work of Christians!), he would in no way be worthy of the future glory which the elect are to receive.” In Rom. 8. Behold! The Sufferer himself, though a Martyr, is yet judged unworthy of eternal life. Thirteenth, Bernard: “What are all merits to so great a glory?” Hem vobis vocabulum ipsum Merita, & quidem omnia, nullo excepto; in qua tamen voce operum vestrorum dignissimam dignitatem collocatis. Serm. 1. on the Annunciation. Fourteenth, Anselm: “THEY ARE NOT WORTHY,” etc. “If someone should suffer,” he says, “ALL the bitternesses of this life, all the passions would not be a worthy merit for the attainment of glory.” In Rom. 8. These things the holy Fathers state quite exactly. We will pursue the same truth more fully, and, as far as possible, more clearly, when we discuss martyrdom, below, chapter 18.

SECTION IV.

Refutation of the adversaries' objections.

First objection. The Cardinal (to prove that Christians merit eternal life not from the dignity of their own work, but from the dignity of their persons) argues thus: “Otherwise the passions of Christ, which were shorter than the punishments of the damned, which are eternal, would not have satisfied on account of the dignity of his person.” Bellarmine. lib. 5. de Justif. c. 3. Nor these. So he says. Than which nothing can be concluded more obtusely, or more repugnantly to the Christian faith, or indeed even to Bellarmine himself. For first, how immeasurably (as far as the power of meriting and satisfying is concerned) does the person of Christ differ from the person of any Christian! For since the person of Christ was the God-man (Θεάνθρωπος), on account of the hypostatic union of the Deity, so that his passion was also theandric (θεανδρική), not even a single drop of his precious blood could, by itself, even according to the rigor of justice, be insufficient to redeem a thousand worlds; because in him the Deity itself dwells bodily. But of Christians, even the most holy (when compared with Christ), the Apostle John pronounces, “And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” John 1:16. But what is our little drop to that supreme

fullness? Lest I be too verbose; to satisfy Bellarmine's objection, a single Bellarmine will suffice. His words are these, "God indeed does not accept for a true satisfaction for sin, except infinite justice; because sin is an infinite offense: but it is enough for this, that it be the justice of an infinite person, such as is Christ, God and man; in which respect it is infinite, and in the true rigor of justice it was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world." Lib. 2. de Justif. c. 5. Quod. So he says. Now, Merit is always the foundation of satisfaction, and no less respects the infinite justice of God, which demands our infinite justice. Therefore, the Adversaries must invent a new Christ, and another subject of hypostatic union, before they can prove that the act of any mere man can merit of condignity any infinite reward.

Second objection. Two Jesuits (namely, Vasquez and Estius) snarl at us differently, with the same mind, yet with a different argument: "Between the sin of the wicked and their wage," they say, "no one will deny that there is condignity: But the pleasures of the wicked are momentary and temporal; yet the punishment and pain inflicted on them is eternal." In 1.2. Tom. 2. disp. 2140. 11. Estius in Rom. 8. So they say. The futility of this sophism has already been exploded above: because there is a huge difference between these: since the works of the wicked are most properly their own; but the works of the saints are charisms and gifts of God, which, by the grace of adoption, are made pleasing to God through the merit of Christ. Chap. 2. sect. 5. The Apostle James has clearly delivered this broad difference, chapter 2, verse 13, where first against the wicked, he says, "Judgment without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy." But towards the pious, what? "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment." Do you seek an interpreter? Behold, Estius is ready for you: "The impious man," he says, "who does not show mercy, will experience God as a just judge, punishing according to the exact rigor of justice: But as for the elect, mercy is said to 'boast against' (κατακαυχᾶσθαι), to exalt and glory above judgment, because the just are to be judged with mercy." In that place. So he says. What could be clearer? Who, therefore, would not deservedly be disgusted by the pertinacity and perversity of our Adversaries, contending so importunately and so pugnaciously for Merit of Condignity?

CHAPTER XV.

Our Eighth Argument against Merit of Condignity, from the perspective of the remunerating God, insofar as a good work profits Him nothing.

Argumentation.

SECTION I.

Whoever properly merits of Condignity, also profits the remunerator himself in some way: But no one at all, by his good works, profits the remunerating God in

any way: Therefore, no one by his good works merits anything of Condignity before God.

The voice of the Scriptures.

SECTION II.

The Scriptures teach that no one anticipates God by doing good. Romans 11:35. "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" On which passage, the Jesuit Toletus comments most learnedly: "It is God who first did good: but whatever good a man may have done man toward God, is subsequent; for you had first received that good from God, before he who gave that we might be men, exhibited any good: God therefore gives to man, he does not repay." So he says. Therefore, from the former he confers nothing on God: But from the latter? Just as much: certainly not even a hair. Of wondrous antiquity is this truth, in the book of Job, chapter 22, verse 3. "What does it profit God, that you are just?" and 35:7. "If you act justly, what will you give him, or what will he receive from your hand?" I will say it in one word. In the Scriptures man is said to give thanks and to bless God a thousand times, but never to do good to Him. We do not dwell on the confessions of the Scholastics. The preceding testimonies, scattered here and there, bear this meaning. But whether the ancient Fathers approve our premises, we shall see.

The judgments of the ancient Fathers.

SECTION III.

Tertullian, to express that what we confer on God is less than nothing, says, "We pray, 'HALLOWED BE THY NAME,' not because it is fitting for men to wish well to God, as if there were something else that could be wished for him, or he would suffer if we did not wish it." On the Lord's Prayer. Plainly, it is fitting for God to be blessed in every place and time, on account of the due remembrance of His benefits: But this also serves in place of a blessing. By Antonomasia the theologian called Gregory Nazianzen, says, "Although you should have made a loss of all your faculties [by giving], although you should have joined yourself to your faculties [namely, by enduring death for Christ], you will never overcome the liberality of God." Oration on the love of the poor. He adds the reason, "For this is to receive all, to be given to God" (Τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν ὅλα λαβεῖν, τὸ τῷ Θεῷ δοθῆναι), "Because to be given to God, is to receive [from God]." So he says. So far is it, therefore, from our adding anything to God, that rather we owe to him our very donation, and should interpret it as an acceptance of grace. Chrysostom a little more expressly: "If we wish to offer anything to God, what more can we than thanks? He needs none of our things, except words; yet he requires this very thanksgiving in our speech, not because he himself has need of it, but to teach us to be grateful, and to acknowledge the supplier of such great goods." In Gen. hom. 26. So he says. Who already above said, "When we give alms, God makes

us indebted and bound to him.” chap. 9. But that a man should merit well from a man, merely by giving thanks for benefits, or by receiving the good which he does, and conferring nothing whatsoever on the benefactor, has scarcely ever been heard of by report. To these let there be added (as we have said) the consensus of other Fathers. Set. 3. Of Basil: “God is not our debtor by receiving anything.” In Ps. 114. and of Augustine: “PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD IS THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS: He bought it with the blood [of Christ], which” In Ps. 115. “he first shed for the salvation of his servants, lest the servants should hesitate to shed theirs for the name of the Lord: which however would profit their own utility, not the Lord's.” This Augustine says of martyrdom itself, which the Church has always held among the works of most consummate virtue. Which also Prosper, as it were a disciple of Augustine, noted no less religiously: “Although the death of the servants,” he says, “profits the servants, not the Lord.” In Ps. 115. The very same reason which Ambrose used, where he expounds the words of the Apostle, “THE PASSIONS OF THIS LIFE ARE NOT WORTHY OF THE GLORY WHICH SHALL BE REVEALED IN US: Because for small things he has promised magnificent things, for temporal things perpetual rewards. He is said to suffer for Christ, when it profits not him, but the martyr himself.” In Rom. 8. The authority of the Venerable Bede is to be venerated, as often elsewhere, so most especially in this argument, who, on those words of Christ, “WHEN YOU HAVE DONE ALL THAT IS COMMANDED YOU, SAY, WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS; WE HAVE DONE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO,” says: “Unprofitable, because the Lord does not need your good things: if, however, he who has done all is unprofitable, what is to be said of him who either could not fulfill what was commanded through infirmity, or, what is worse, despised it through pride?” In Luke 17. Both our premises are sufficiently corroborated and established from these opinions of the Fathers. “Know thyself,” was held even among the pagans as a voice worthy of an oracle. Let us therefore also learn at last to be wise. For what is it, to confer something to the glory of God? It is indeed that which is, to lend the splendor of a candle to the sun. Lest any of you say that I am inventing this, consult your Toletus, I pray: “God,” he says, “clarifies, or glorifies, man, and man God; but in a very different way: for God glorifies man by conferring benefits on him, and good things, by which man is made glorious: but man can offer no good to God; but he glorifies God, when he has a clear knowledge of God, and makes it manifest to those who are ignorant.” In John 17. So he says. I add: In that this glorification of ours is pleasing to God, it is owed to his grace alone. What further? Our so-called Merit of Condignity, since it does not profit God, cannot but be insulting to him: which we now endeavor to confirm more precisely.

CHAPTER XVI.

Our Ninth Argument against Merit of Condignity, from a comparison of Merits between men.

Argumentation.

SECTION I.

What, when offered to a man, is necessarily insulting, that, if offered to God, cannot but be profane: But before a man who has deserved most amply of us, to peddle our Merit of Condignity cannot but be insulting to him: Therefore, to do so before God must necessarily be profane. This argument, being Divine, Catholic, Ethical or Moral, and not by natural light only, but also Pagan, and finally altogether convincing, we shall easily prove.

1. The Holy Scripture demonstrates that the above Argument is Divine.

SECTION II.

The passages of the Scriptures are many: we have made a selection, content with only two; of which one is drawn from the Old Testament, the other from the New. In the Old, namely Malachi 1, after the Prophet had inveighed sharply against their nefarious profanation, who, keeping for themselves healthy and whole animals, offered to God in sacrifice only the languid, withered, and blemished, he reproaches them in God's name, "Is this not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts." If any of the Pontificals perhaps does not sufficiently grasp the force of this argument, let him consult the Jesuit Ribera: "The Prophet's argument," he says, "is from the greater to the lesser; as if he had said, 'You would not dare to offer these things to your governor, and yet you dare to offer them to me [your God]?' " So he says. It is therefore the height of impiety not to shrink from inflicting on the immortal God as much contempt and insult as a good and modest man would be utterly ashamed to impose on a mortal governor. The other we have drawn from the Gospel, namely, Luke 17:7. "Which of you, having a servant plowing, would say to him when he returns from the field, 'Come forth and sit down to eat?' But would he not rather say, 'Serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you shall eat and drink?' Does he thank that servant, because he did what he was commanded to do? I think not. So you also, when you have done all things, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we ought to do.'" Where Christ (as we also) takes an argument which is called *Ad hominem* in the Schools: as if he would constitute men themselves as judges for themselves, "Which of you?" he says. Then, he indicates what the disposition of any servant ought to be (if he is willing to confess the truth), saying, "I have done what I ought," namely, by plowing, ministering, and performing the other duties of a servant, as the Lord has commanded me: which duties, although they are pleasing to the Lord, yet I am ungrateful if I think this grace of gratitude is owed to me by him. "Will he," he says, "have thanks for that servant? I think not."

2. The Fathers will teach that the same Argument is plainly Catholic.

SECTION III.

Although why did I say the Fathers; as if in so clear a matter it were worthwhile to inquire more laboriously into the testimonies of a few Fathers, when one Chrysostom can stand for all, especially in that opinion, which no one would wish to contradict? He therefore, on those words of Christ, Matthew 7:11, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, etc.," sweetly teaching the duty of children towards their parents, says: "As much as children are loved by their parents, so much is the difference between malice and goodness. For so much is the difference between God's affection and ours." Chrysostom in Ephes. serm. 19. Would any son of good disposition, then, boast of having merited his paternal inheritance for some service he has rendered? But however this may have been possible, yet to allege Merit of Condignity from an equality of justice before God, between whom and our most Christian parents there can be no greater proportion of love and gentleness than there is (as Chrysostom says) between malice and goodness, no sane person will doubt that this is not the act of a sane man.

3. The same Argument is entirely valid in Ethics and Morals.

SECTION IV.

Since fictitious similitudes have the same force as real ones, as the Logicians hold, and as can also be seen in the Evangelical Parables; let us imagine a servant peddling his merits before a King, as one who would demand a most distinguished rank of honor from the King out of an equality of justice, which is the true and proper definition of Merit of Condignity. The King, as soon as he understands this, orders the servant to be called to him, whom, as soon as he sees him, he thus rebukes: "You, whom I once restored from death to life, a man guilty of treason; whom, a wretch of the lowest station, I advanced to dignity, and whom, although you performed illustrious deeds (yet at my expense, with my subsidies and strength), I have enriched with the most ample possessions; yet in such a way that if you had not performed them, it would have been all over for your salvation; do you, I say, feel that so great a benefit is owed to you out of an equality of justice, by your condignity?" Thus the King silenced his subject: How much more will the immortal God silence a man who is too pleased with himself about his Merits; when it is established that he has nothing that he has not received; nor has he received, except from the supplied faculty of receiving; indeed, he has not even been willing to receive, except through that grace which makes a man willing from being unwilling; nor, when he was willing or able, did he prefer to serve God, rather than to consult his own salvation; or, if he did prefer it, he still did not help God at all! Finally, grant that he did good by a pact, but this good was nevertheless owed by right: and on account of the remuneration also, but far beyond what was condign. Whence it will come to pass that illustrious works infected with so much venom of arrogance, are considered not to have been done at all.

4. Adumbration of the same Argument from the Philosophical Schools of the Pagans.

SECTION V.

Aristotle handed down to his disciples: Seneca adapted this to our purpose, who, while in his other treatises he excelled all other Professors of the ethical discipline, in this one on benefits he excelled himself. Where, speaking of the sun and moon, numbered among the gods of the pagans, to teach what difference there is between men and those gods, he says, "The condition of these things and ours is dissimilar: for he who profits me, that he may also profit himself, has not given a benefit; because he was an instrument of his own utility. But the sun and moon, although they preside over us, yet do not so preside in order to profit by us: for what can we confer on them?" This reasoning which this pagan Doctor brings forth in defense of false gods, the same ancient Fathers have often inculcated, from the side of the true God, against the fastidious pride concerning the merits of men, as is to be seen above. Then the same Seneca, an exquisite estimator of benefits, describing the properties of doing good, says, "The greatest benefits are those which are conferred on the unknowing, and sometimes on the unwilling." And again, "The gods pour forth their gifts, without our intercession, by day and by night." Finally, in the chief benefits, he requires that they be necessary, useful, pleasant, and lasting to the recipient. So he speaks only of sublunary benefits, who, if by the grace of God he had been instructed in the School of Christians, and had understood the infinite graces conferred upon us through Jesus Christ, benefits, I say, gratuitous from the mere good pleasure of God, first, so necessary for the redemption of soul and body from hell; secondly, so useful for the preservation of both even in the state of Grace; thirdly, so pleasant, as conducive to our blessedness; and finally, so lasting, as looking to eternity itself; if that learned man had ever imbibed this theology, he would surely have cursed this opinion of the Pontificals about the condignity of their merits. I wish it were not permissible for us to take up the same complaint against the Pontificals, especially those of today, concerning the true God, which Seneca hurled against his pagans for their false gods; "I have found many who are just towards men, but none towards God." I will add a colophon from Cicero, from which it may be gathered how the pagans would have been animated, if indeed they had drawn any spiritual taste of the doctrine of the gratuitous gifts of God towards us: "This indeed," says Cicero, "all mortals so hold, that they have external commodities and the prosperity of life from the gods: but no one has ever referred virtue as received from God." Lib. 3. de Natura deorum pag. 160. Rightly, to be sure. "For on account of virtue we are justly praised, and in virtue we rightly glory. Which would not happen, if we had that gift from God, and not from ourselves. But indeed, whether we are advanced in honors, or have obtained some fortuitous good, or if we have driven away evil, we both give thanks to the gods, and think that nothing has been assumed to our own praise.

Did anyone ever give thanks to the gods because he was a good man? But because he was rich, because he was honored, because he was safe." So he says. Do you see, O Romans, the disposition of the pagan Romans, that they arrogate to themselves no merit or glory for any gift bestowed on them by God?

5. The eviction of the same truth from some confession of the Jesuits.

SECTION VI.

The Jesuit Coster, whose name was famous among the chief of the Jesuits, defends the Papist condignity with all his might, and after the question had been agitated and vexed this way and that, after he had defined that Merit of Condignity rests on an equality of justice, which may be Commutative or Distributive, and indeed pertains in some way to both parts of justice; at length he was reduced to such straits that he was forced to profess in the following words, "The third Proposition is, Between God and men there cannot be, such as there is between men, an exact justice." *Enchiridion, Treatise on Merits, cap. 7. Ibid. From these, etc.* "1. Because God cannot owe us in such a way that, his merciful grace being set aside, he remains obligated to us for any thing." Of which he gives three reasons. First, "Because we are his creation, who has made and possesses us in every part, and to whom all our things belong." This reason speaks of creation and preservation. Second, "Because while he has bound us to himself by innumerable other benefits, he has also bought us with the price of his blood and life." This reason of his demonstrates the benefit of redemption. Third, "Because both the Grace by which we may work, and the very Heaven to be merited, we have received from God, WHO WORKS IN US BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO, ACCORDING TO HIS GOOD PLEASURE, Phil. 2:13." So he says. But what can do more to expose the remarkable stupor of these men, and to cut the throat of their meritorious condignity, than when they confess that an exact justice does not intervene between God and men, such as intervenes between men themselves, and yet they define Merit of Condignity from an absolute equality of justice, such as men themselves, in cases of this kind, would abhor to acknowledge? Then, another similitude, which is found in the same Jesuit in the same section, illustrates this matter: "The money," he says, "with which we purchase anything from him is God's, that is, the Grace of God, in which the whole reason of our merit consists. For which reason, just as it is not possible to establish a perfect justice between a beggar buying a house from some rich man, and the rich man himself; because although he sells the house to the beggar for a just price, yet in the meantime he gives him the money freely, with which he may purchase it: so neither is it possible between God and us, because both the Grace by which we may work, and the very works by which we are said to purchase and merit heaven, we have received from God." So he says, where he deals with Merit of Condignity, according to the equality of justice. In which similitude, whoever will try to elicit a properly so-called Merit of Condignity

from the money of the buyer, freely given to him by the seller, I do not see why he should not be thought to have dreamed the dreams of a feverish man.

Another will be the conclusion of the Jesuit Vasquez: "He who promises a horse," he says, "for a small sum of money, does not thereby increase the price and value of the money for which he has promised it: but in the same way, what would be given from the promise would exceed that minimum price, as if no pact had intervened." 1.2. Tom. 2. disp. 214. cap. 5. num. 26. "And therefore, the excess of that thing which is rendered from a promise for a small price, is rather judged a donation, than a compensation and sale of the price." So he says. By which confession the greatest bulwark of the Pontificals' Merit of Condignity, which is called the pact, is cast down and collapses. He who does not see in these similitudes a firmament for our cause, I will say nothing else to him than that proverbial saying, "What is a blind man to a mirror?" But let us attempt greater things.

CHAPTER XVII.

Our Tenth Argument, from the perspective of the meriting Christ, against the Pontificals' last stronghold, or rather hiding-place of their defense:

namely,

That Christ merited for us the power of meriting eternal life.

State of the question concerning our power of meriting from the Merits of Christ.

SECTION I.

The Protestants faithfully believe, and openly and constantly profess, that our good works are rendered pleasing and acceptable to God by the proper merits of Christ: but the Pontificals, distrusting the proper Merits of Christ (as will soon be evident), invent for themselves their own peculiar power of meriting, as if granted to them from his Merits. It is right that we should hear the Adversaries themselves. Stapleton says, "Christ merited for us the power of meriting." Lib. 2. de Justif. c. From which canticle Bellarmine learned his own, "Our merits depend on the Merits of Christ." Lib. 5. de Justif. c. 17. Coster follows them, like an attendant. Bellarmine returns again, and brings a re-cooked cabbage: "The works of Christ," he says, "merited before God, not only that we should obtain salvation, but also that we should obtain it through our own merits." Lib. 5. de Justif. c. 5. § At inquit, &c. But so that all may understand that they put on this specious pretext of the Merit of Christ, as a mask, with which to deceive children, and from this title, as from a golden cup, they propound to their readers the deadly poison of their meritorious condignity; we, with God's help, will discuss and uncover this mystery of error.

Argumentation against the Pontificals' fictitious power of meriting.

SECTION II.

Every sacrilegious dogma, and one derogatory to the proper Merits of Christ, is execrable: But this opinion of the Pontificals concerning their power of Meriting, under the pretext that Christ merited it for them, is a dogma derogatory to the proper Merits of Christ: Therefore, it is execrable. The Minor premise (for there will be no dispute about the Major) will be fortified by Theological reasons, by the most eloquent opinions of the ancient Fathers, and finally by the judgment and practice of the Roman Church itself and confirmed. We will pursue our plan through Theses, some of which directly, others obliquely and by consequence, attack that monstrosity of the Pontificals.

Against the dogma of the Pontificals

THESIS I.

There are various virtues of Excellence of Christ, which to attribute to a mere man is a sacrilegious presumption.

SECTION III.

We will enumerate the various species of those which are called Virtues of Excellence proper to Christ, from the confessions of the Pontificals themselves. First, (as Suarez in his Treatises) "It pertains to the virtue of Excellence proper to Christ, to have the power to redeem men, and to illuminate souls: Secondly, to perform miracles by himself." We have a specimen of this, where Peter, acknowledging a miracle done by him, but not through him, says, "Not by our own power," etc. Acts 3:12. A third kind of virtues is seen in the Sacraments. That God is their first cause, either inasmuch as they confer grace, or signify infallibility; that the second cause is Christ as man, because the humanity of Christ is joined with the Divinity hypostatically, the Cardinal confesses: "And this," he says, "is a power of Excellence." The same can be said of the fourth kind of power, namely, the judicial: which is proper to Christ (says Suarez) equally for reward and for punishment. Tom. 2. disp. 30. § 15. To which we add a fifth kind, that of mediation: concerning which the Cardinal says most orthodoxly, "It is proper to Christ, that through his Merits we ask something immediately from God; for he alone is our immediate Intercessor with God." Bellarm. de Missa, c. 8. Ad aliam. This kind the Pontifical Doctors, partly concerning the Royal, partly concerning the Prophetic, and partly also concerning the Sacerdotal power proper to Christ, not obscurely confessing these powers of excellence to be so peculiar to Christ, that to attribute them to any created nature would be to invent a false Christ, and to despoil the true Christ of his rights.

THESIS II.

There are many virtues of Christ, also Meritorious, which are of excellence, which no one can usurp without impiety.

SECTION IV.

We will produce such testimonies of the Pontificals, as will serve this our purpose most especially. Bellarm. lib. 5. de Justif. & lib. 1. de Justif. c. 2. First, "No one besides Christ can merit grace for others." Secondly, "Christ has this grace, because by his merits he merits grace and glory." § It is however. Thirdly, "Christ is the meritorious cause of our justification, because he exactly paid the price of redemption, and by the rigor of justice (as the Theologians say) satisfied for the sins of us all." These are from the Cardinal; where he speaks of Christ alone. We will adduce many other instances of this kind below. But these now proposed imply this consequence, with no one gainsaying, namely, that anyone who should claim for himself the meritorious virtues proper to Christ, would bind himself with the crime of sacrilege.

THESIS III.

By their dogma of Condignity, the Pontificals usurp a virtue of meritorious excellence proper to Christ.

SECTION V.

Merit of Condignity (from the superior definition and explanation of the Pontificals themselves) is a good work, which according to the absolute equality of justice, from its dignity, can demand the reward of eternal life, by rigor, from God. But that such a Merit is a work of excellence, and therefore proper to Christ the God-man (Θεανθρώπου), we will evince by most necessary reasons, partly in this, partly in the subsequent sections. First reason. A work condign with eternal life before God from such an equality of justice, is a work of excellence; because it is necessarily of infinite virtue; both because God, before whom man is said to merit and demand it, is a person of infinite Majesty; and also because eternal life itself, which is paid back to that Merit, is of infinite duration. To this reason, the consequence of the Jesuit Suarez, on another question, is very consonant: namely, whether the Fathers of the Old Testament disposed themselves condignly, so that they were condign progenitors of Christ. Tom. 1. disp. 10. Sect. 7. § You will say; Could etc. Suarez responds, "No one will dare to say that they merited this of condignity; because this good is of another order, to which grace by its nature is not ordered, and in a certain way it is an infinite good exceeding the proportion of the merit of a pure creature." So he says. How does this reason differ from ours, which is not so much similar as altogether the same? Furthermore, our reason is confirmed by Augustine (above, chap. 14. sect. 3), who teaches (if the matter is estimated by proportion) concerning the passion of the martyrs, that an eternal reward (if it were possible) should be procured only by eternal labor. Second reason. Since, among the Pontificals, the power of man in meriting is the same as it is in satisfying before God, from their doctrine of satisfaction it will be easy to elicit that the merit which they peddle is a Virtue of Excellence. Where the Protestants object against their doctrine of satisfaction in this manner: If we by right make satisfaction before God, when the satisfaction

of Christ is also applied to us; (as the Pontificals hold) then these are either two satisfactions, or one: if two, then the same fault is punished twice: if, however, one, then it is either ours, or Christ's: if Christ's, then we do not satisfy: if ours, then we either exclude the satisfaction of Christ, or divide the honor with Christ. Thus the Protestants: And for this reason, in our opinion altogether solid and irrefragable, they demand an answer. Attend: The Cardinal's answers exist; "There are," he says, "two satisfactions, but one dependent on the other. But the more probable answer is, that there is one." Bellarm. lib. 1. de Purgatorio, cap. 10. The second is, etc. How miserable is this hallucination, to offer two answers, and those repugnant to each other, but most of all to the truth itself! Because although the satisfaction of Christ is the imputed satisfaction of Peter, because it was exhibited for Peter, because our Second Adam sustained the person of the whole human race; yet the personal satisfaction of Peter cannot be the satisfaction of Christ any more than Peter can be Christ. But what, do all the Pontificals rave alike? Indeed, the Theologians of Louvain (as the Cardinal admits) taught that the passions of the Saints are not just compensations for the punishments which we owe to God, that is, true satisfactions. & Bellarm. lib. 1. de indulgentiis, cap. 4. § Sixth objection. Nor is it surprising: For nothing is more unjust, or more abhorrent to religion, than to mix the Divine blood of Christ the God-man (Θεανθρώπος), the expiation for all sins, with the sinful dregs of humanity, in the same remuneration of satisfactions. Then, how ridiculous it is to deny that those satisfactions are two, of which if one is sufficient, the other must necessarily be super-sufficient and super-satisfactory! If Pope Gregory were alive now, he would curse these fictions of the Adversaries from his soul, for his was this holy and Divine profession: "The passion of our Redeemer is far different from ours (namely, that which the martyrs endure), because he suffered without fault, whereas we endure with fault." With these words, he neither allows that two satisfactions are one, nor that our satisfaction, which is with fault, is for the penalty. Therefore, your commercial power for attaining eternal life, from the condignity of your work, which was bought at the price of Christ's blood, is nothing other than a foul defilement of the most absolute Merit of Christ.

FOURTH THESIS.

That the Pontificians, in order to establish their own power of meriting, wickedly exclude the true proper merits of Christ.

SECTION VI.

The Jesuit Vazquez, above all others, has provided an exact and accurate explanation of the Pontifical dogma, which removes all the tricks of ambiguity and dispels the darkness. From it, it may become clear to all that, through this fiction of theirs, of a power of meriting from oneself, all the true and proper merits of Christ, by which our works and we ourselves have been made pleasing to God, are utterly excluded. For example:

1. If one should ask him whether our works obtain grace with God from the proper merits of Christ, he will deny it. Vazquez, in 1.2. Tom. 2. Disp. 101. cap. 7. num. 44, says: "It cannot be said that our works increase in dignity from the person of Christ: because this would happen either because God, in favor of the merits of Christ, accepts the works for a greater glory than they would otherwise have; but this is not so, because a work, otherwise not worthy, cannot be made more worthy than it would otherwise be by a merely extrinsic favor, as long as it does not change in itself." And this being established, if anyone should ask Vazquez whether it matters at all to the dignity of our works that Christ is our Head, he will deny it. The same, *ibid.* "It is not that our works," he says, "are more worthy because Christ is our Head, and thus we are considered the same person with him, and for this reason it is said that Christ offers our works as his own, and thus they are worthy of eternal life. But this increase of dignity in our works cannot be defended in this way either; because our works are said to receive their dignity from the person from whom they immediately proceed. Otherwise, it would follow that our works are of infinite value, because, insofar as they proceed from the Grace of Christ, they are attributed to Christ himself as the Head."

2. It is a custom among men that, from the king's favor towards Titius, his grace may also be conferred upon Sempronius. The question is whether the same reasoning holds with God. Vazquez will deny it. *Ibid.* num. 45. "Nor do we say," he says, "that justifying grace, because it is given to us by Christ, makes us or our works more pleasing to God, as happens among men, among whom a thing (like a ring) given by a king is more pleasing because it is given by a more noble person. But with God, intrinsic justice and holiness make them more pleasing by their own nature, from what is in them, and not from extrinsic favor."

3. We ask whether it is necessary for the power of Christ's own merits to intervene here. He will deny it. The same, *ibid.* disp. num. 30. "Since the works of the just," he says, "condignly merit eternal life as an equal reward, there is no need for the intervention of another condign merit, such as the merit of Christ, for eternal life to be rendered to them; nay, the merit of a just man has something particular with respect to himself, which the merit of Christ does not have; namely, to render the man just and worthy of eternal life, so that he may worthily obtain it." And again: "But our merits are so perfectly meritorious of eternal life that it can hardly be worthily denied them: therefore, the merits of Christ would intervene again in vain for eternal life to be given to them."

4. If by chance someone should say that we are absolutely and formally just through the satisfactory justice of Christ, by which we are absolved from sins, and our works obtain acceptance with God, and should ask what Vazquez thinks; Vazquez, as above, num. 30., he will deny it. "But the merit of Christ," he says, "although it is most worthy to obtain glory for us from God, yet it does not have

this efficacy and power to render us formally just and worthy of eternal life, but men attain this effect in themselves through a power derived from him; and so we never ask of God through the merits of Christ that the reward of eternal life be given to our worthy and meritorious works, but that through Christ that grace may be given to us, by which we can worthily merit eternal life." Finally, he hastens to the conclusion: Num. 32. "Our merits," he says, "have the force to render us formally worthy of eternal life—but Christ is worthy that on account of them he may obtain for us whatever he himself has asked for us. Therefore, this latter imputation under a double title of giving eternal life seems to be in vain, since in us, to whom it is to be given, there is through our merits a dignity for such a prize; and therefore eternal life is our reward, by reason of the dignity of our works, and not by reason of the dignity of the works of Christ." Thus far Vazquez. Therefore, what can be a more execrable derogation from the proper merits of Christ than that men, from a fictitious power of meriting, should so defend their own condignity that the proper power of Christ to make us pleasing to God, that his proper power to work good acts sufficiently in us, that also his power to absolutely supply our necessary defects, by which we may be held more pleasing before God, that his power by which we may obtain a hereditary right to the celestial kingdom; that these, I say, individual powers, which are most absolute in Christ, should be utterly thrust out by the condignity of our merits? Thus far against the sacrilegious audacity of the Pontificians (for the following sections will abundantly supply other reasons); now the cause of the Protestants must be asserted, lest our Adversaries should accuse us of the same sacrilegious crime of which we have now found them to be guilty.

V THESIS.

The contrary doctrine of the Protestants is vindicated from the calumnies of the adversaries. To deny that Christ merited for us the power of meriting is not to detract from the merits of Christ: and this truth is most consonant with theological principles.

SECTION VII.

The confessions of our Adversaries testify at length that there are many kinds of works, even of excellent merit, in which no one without nefarious impiety could pretend that Christ merited for us the power of meriting. (above in this chapter) The first kind is of those things which are outside of us; "Only Christ can merit grace or glory: Only he can pay for us the price of redemption which is required by the rigor of justice." The second is of those things which pertain to our justification. The Adversaries themselves confess, Vazquez in 1.2. Tom. 2. disp. 222, "From the merits of Christ we have justification and the dispositions to it, such as faith, prayer, contrition, love, all of which God could deny us, because before justification we are unworthy." Thus Christ merited for us the help of prevenient and operating grace for the first movement of the will. Thus far Vazquez. Each of these merits they make so proper to Christ that they would feel

not only that a heinous injury was done to Christ if anyone were to say that Christ merited for us the power of meriting condignly for others grace or glory, or the dispositions to justification, but they would also (and not unjustly) inveigh bitterly against him as a profane violator of Christ's prerogative. So far are we, therefore, in denying that Papist power of meriting, from wishing to detract or diminish anything from the true and proper merits of Christ, that it is now clearly established that the contrary affirmations of the Papists are convicted of the same impiety. For the sake of greater confirmation, I would like to insist here on Vazquez's confession see chap. 14. sect. 1. above: "If we grant," he says, "that our works are rewarded by God beyond their own dignity, it clearly follows that that accession of remuneration is given to us in view of the merits of Christ, and not in view of our own works." This from the Jesuit. Therefore, the consideration of the dignity of our works, as to merit, cannot consist with the consideration of the dignity of the merits of Christ; and so much the less, because, from the common consent of the ancient Fathers, we have taught above (chap. 14. sect. 3), that essential beatitude surpasses all dignity of our actions and even of our passions.

VI THESIS.

To diminish a good work, as our own, is in reality to amplify the glory of God's grace.

SECTION VIII.

A work has more power to amplify the glory of God, the more that is attributed to His goodness and power. But while the Pontificians arrogate to themselves the better part in the cooperation of a good work, Protestants attribute a good work, inasmuch as it is good, wholly to God, as His spiritual and supernatural, and indeed gratuitous, gift, so that it cannot be meritorious with God. Therefore, this dogma, which states that Christ merited for us the power of meriting, is as dissonant, absurd, and plainly impious as if they were to assert that Christ merited from God that Christians should not, without the opinion of their own merits, acknowledge his spiritual, supernatural, and gratuitous gifts. For indeed, they will say, to diminish the dignity of our merits in this way will be to diminish also the grace of Christ towards us. On the contrary, I say, no more than the Holy Spirit diminishes the glory of God through those diminutions (μειώσεις) and extenuations which occur very frequently in the Scriptures: for instance, in military affairs, after a victory has been won, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory," Psalm 115:1, although they had fought bravely and courageously. Likewise, in the miraculous work, Peter says, "He was not made to walk by our own power, but in the name of Jesus," Acts 3:12, and yet Peter spoke the words of healing. And also in the ecclesiastical function, Paul says, "Not I, but the Grace of God with me," 1 Corinthians 15:10, although he then asserts that he labored, even more than all of them. Finally, in a matter most spiritual, which is inherent sanctification itself, the same Apostle says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ

lives in me," Galatians 2:20. And again, "By the grace of God I am what I am," 1 Corinthians 15:10. Was this truly to obscure or darken the power of God, and not rather to illustrate it magnificently?

VII. THESIS.

The way of obtaining eternal life proposed by the Protestants is to extol, but the other, boasted by the Pontificians, is to diminish and in fact to take away the glory of the Merits of Christ.

SECTION IX.

There are two points on which we accuse the Pontificians of the crime of derogation from the Grace of Christ: one is against the meritorious Grace of Christ; the other, against his operating Grace. In order that these may be more clearly known to all (just as fire is struck from the collision of stones, so truth is elicited from the comparison of different opinions), we shall begin with the meritorious Grace of Christ. When it comes to the extrinsic meritorious justice of Christ, the Pontificians do not hesitate to exclude it from our sufficient justification, which we call imputative. But I would rather deliver to the reader Vazquez the Jesuit's confession, on our opinion, than any assertion of my own. Vazquez in 1.2. Tom. 2. disp. 222. cap. 1 sect. 1. "The gifts of God's grace," he says, "both of exciting and adjuvant help to merit eternal life, as well as of inherent grace and justice to wash away the stains of sin, are all given to us on account of the merits of Christ, and we cannot but acknowledge some application and imputation of the merits of Christ concerning each of them: which our heretics of this time (he means the Protestants) indeed freely confess, except that, in order to diminish the dignity of these gifts [namely, of inherent justice], they so extol to us this imputation of the merits of Christ [namely, those which are proper to Christ], that they think we are justified by their justice, and not by the justice inherent in us as a form; and also that by them, and not by our own works, we merit before God." He published this confession, in which he most openly confesses that the true difference between us and the Pontificians consists in this, that the Protestants, admitting no merits of our own from inherent justice, rely only on the merits of Christ himself, both as to obtaining grace and as to obtaining glory with God. On the contrary, the Pontificians, having set aside the merits of Christ, rest in the condignity of their own merits. The matter is therefore now confessed: Protestants diminish the dignity of their own works, by denying them to be meritorious, in order to extol the proper merits of Christ. What wonder is it then, if Protestants are called Heretics by the pseudo-catholics? Thus far we have confirmed our cause with reasons, which must now be corroborated by the votes of the ancient Fathers.

We appeal to the consensus of the ancient Fathers, as to the judgment of the Catholic Church.

I. THESIS.

That dogma concerning our power of meriting, as if from the Merits of Christ, is overthrown and shaken as by a whirlwind by the unanimous consent of Antiquity.

SECTION X.

We consult the judgment of both the Catholic and the Roman Church: but first and foremost we inquire about the testimonies of the Fathers, whose arguments seem to us to be irrefutable for our cause.

The first argument, which we have drawn from the Fathers, is that they testified that every good work, insofar as it is good, is a gift of God: from which some of them concluded, first, that no one is worthy of eternal life; second, that both their works and their rewards are gifts; third, that they are gifts of God, and therefore have no remuneration from debt; and the like. The Fathers whom we have cited (chap. 8) are Augustine, Chrysostom, Bernard, Origen, respectively.

The second argument of the Fathers: Since the adversaries define merit of condignity to be, first, insofar as it is a good work proceeding from free will; then, insofar as it makes God properly a debtor: against the first, the Fathers taught, first, that men in giving to the needy are more bound to God; second, that we ought not to extol ourselves, even by doing all things, because we do nothing great; third, woe to us if we do not do them; fourth, that many things are lacking which we have not done; fifth, that merits are not to be weighed by labor. For these we have produced Chrysostom, Theophylact, Bernard, and Bede (chap. 9). Then, as to the second, first, that God ought not to be a debtor to us by receiving anything, but by promising; second, that no work of ours makes God a debtor; third, indeed, by our good work we have been made debtors to God; fourth, that eternal life is not owed to us by right. These are from Augustine, Origen, Basil, Chrysostom, Bede, and Bernard, respectively (above, chap. 11).

The third argument is that in which they observe and deplore the unworthiness of the doers, against the defense of merit of condignity, to which the adversaries attribute a condignity according to an equality of justice to the celestial prize, which they do not want to be granted to them by the acceptance and mercy of God. In which they openly contradict the Fathers, who, confessing our unworthiness, profess the merciful acceptance of God in rewarding the works of the just. Both of these those ancient leaders of the Church have explained in their own phrases, which are the express symbols of their judgments. First, "Let everyone humble himself, because he can incur guilt unknowingly." Second, "The exaction of the Divine judgment will be most severe." Third, "Even the three youths in the furnace said, 'We have committed impiety!' And, 'How easy it is to be entangled in grave sins, which are esteemed by us as light!'" Fourth, "Let us beat our breast, and say, 'Lord, be merciful.'" Fifth, "Our justice is injustice

when brought to the examination of Divine justice." Sixth, "There is nothing in us clean or innocent; no merits are sufficient, unless God mercifully does not count our defects." Seventh, "The work of the saints is not sufficient to attain glory." Eighth, "The good things to which the saints persevere are always lacking in us." Concerning these matters, the aforementioned Fathers have written most copiously, above, chap. 10, sect. 2, and below, chap. 20, sect. 11.

This is concerning the first kind. What follows is about acceptance and mercy in retribution, in these words: First, "Retributions are granted on account of the sole benignity of God." Second, "Our justice is not sufficient for beatitude; hope is in mercy; we shall be blessed, honored by the condescension of the Lord." Third, "In that day no work of ours will be found worthy." Fourth, "We cannot exhibit a worthy work; God rewards the just in mercy." Fifth, "We are crowned not in our merits, but in mercy." Sixth, "Pay more attention to what is lacking, even if you live piously; our justice is as a menstruous cloth; we are worthy, not by our own dignity, but by the condescension of God." The Fathers who speak to the first part have been cited: Ambrose, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Augustine, Pope Gregory, Hilary, the author of the imperfect work, and Bede (chap. 10). For the latter part, Basil, Hilary, Cyprian, Jerome, Pope Gregory, Bernard, and Bede (above, same chapter).

The fourth argument of the Fathers is that our works do not affect our Remunerator, God, with any good or advantage. I willingly abstain from a repetition of their statements. For this argument we praise among the Fathers Gregory, Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Basil, Augustine, Prosper, Ambrose, Tertullian (above, chap. 15).

The fifth argument of the Fathers is that since the adversaries argue for their merit of condignity from the name "reward" properly understood, the Fathers, however, when speaking of eternal life, have comparatively rejected the name "reward" and have established that it is properly an "inheritance": namely, Jerome, Theodoret, Theophylact, Fulgentius, Chrysostom, Origen, Mark the Hermit, Bernard, as can be seen above, chap. 3, sect. 2, and chap. 16. Although the word "reward" does not have in itself the force of "merit," as we have proved in the same place.

Another argument is that the Fathers confess that eternal life is above all dignity of works, whose passages we will refer to when we discuss martyrdom (below chap. 18), which will be a most powerful conviction of the adversaries. Meanwhile, from these premises we conclude that our adversaries must either brand each of the above-named Fathers with the mark of ignorance and impiety, because they have defeated and demolished this their power of meriting condignly, or they must confess themselves to be impostors and

deceivers in defending and propagating it. In most of the arguments, Augustine is introduced as a witness, whom the Pontificians claim for their side.

The judgment of Augustine in this cause is objected by the Pontificians, and vindicated by the Protestants.

SECTION XI.

First objection. Bellarmine, book 5 on Justification, c. 6. In Epistle 105 to Sixtus. Wherever Augustine condemns merits, he speaks of merits that are from us, without the grace of God. He says, "Eternal life itself, which will be had without end, and is therefore rendered to merits, yet because the same merits to which it is rendered are not produced by us through our own sufficiency, but are made in us by grace, is also itself called Grace, for no other reason than because it is given freely; not because it is not given to merits, but because the very merits to which it is given are also given." And below: "To whom eternal life is owed, there is true justice; but if it is true justice, it is not from you, but descending from the Father of lights. Therefore, O man, if you are to receive eternal life, it is indeed the stipend of justice, but to you it is grace, to whom justice itself is grace. For it would be rendered to you as owed, if the justice to which it was owed were from you." What follows from these? "We have from this passage," says the Cardinal, "that our justice, to which eternal life is rendered, is true justice, and therefore is truly meritorious. Then we have that Augustine, when he says that eternal life is not owed from merits, but is given freely, is speaking of man inasmuch as he is without grace and operates by his own powers alone. For Augustine says that eternal life is rendered as a stipend of justice to the works which man operates through grace." Thus he speaks, who in arguing too much loses the truth, not sufficiently discerning the state of the question. For we do not deny that good works are called merits by Augustine; but whether they are called merits properly, that is, of condignity, that is the question. But a merit of condignity is not, unless (as the adversaries themselves truly state) it can claim eternal life as owed to it from an equality of justice before God. Augustine is most opposed to this in the cited passages: we therefore will easily turn back Augustine's testimony into the breasts of the adversaries.

That to which eternal life is not rendered as owed, is not properly meritorious of condignity: but to a work, done in grace, eternal life is not rendered as owed: therefore that good work is not meritorious of condignity. Augustine supports the minor premise: for thus he argues concerning the regenerate man, "Eternal life would be rendered to you as owed, if the justice to which it was owed were from you," clearly indicating that eternal life is not owed. Where (as he very frequently does elsewhere) it is plain that he is speaking of works done in grace: and he everywhere teaches us to discern among the retributions of Divine grace, just as in Psalm 102, on those words, "FORGET NOT THE RETRIBUTIONS OF THE LORD": Do not be proud, first, when as a sinner (namely, outside of grace)

you were called to be justified; second, when strength was supplied to you (certainly within the state of grace) to persevere to the end; third, when God crowns you (namely, in the state of glory) in mercy and compassion.

But he calls our justice true. This antecedent we also confess: will it therefore be meritorious of condignity? We utterly deny this consequence. For the faith of him who prayed in this manner, "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief," was certainly a true faith, although weak. Augustine everywhere teaches that our justice is likewise imperfect, and that, of itself, it cannot stand before the judgment of God. Augustine, in epistle 29 to Jerome. One instance will suffice: "The most full charity, as long as one lives here, is in no one: but as long as it can be increased, certainly that which is less than it ought to be, is from vice: from which vice NO ONE IS JUST ON EARTH, WHO DOES GOOD, AND DOES NOT SIN: from which vice EVERY LIVING THING WILL NOT BE JUSTIFIED IN THE SIGHT OF GOD." But suppose it is perfect; nevertheless he denies that eternal life is owed to it: the reason; "Because your justice is not from you, but from God."

The vindication of the Protestants, and the application of the opinion of Augustine.

SECTION XII.

Augustine, Book on Free Will, ch. 6.: "If the Pelagians understood that merits are to be so acknowledged, their opinion would not be to be condemned... For to one thinking such things it is most truly said, 'God crowns His own gifts, not your merits,' if your merits are from yourself, and not from Him." And elsewhere; Opusculum on Merits, question 7, to the second. "He does not crown your merits, as your merits, but as His gifts." Hence Bellarmine: "Therefore, he only condemns merits which are not in us from God." Let it be so; yet he never thought them to be properly called merits, not even those of the saints, who operate most gloriously from grace. For would he ever have dreamed that any merit of ours exists which claims eternal life from an equality of justice, of condignity, and of debt before God, who, first, denies that eternal life is rendered to the just as a debt? Second, who does not permit God to be a debtor, except by promising? Third, who taught that eternal life is a reward above condignity for works? Fourth, who judges that any good work is crowned only in mercy? Fifth, who finally states (if the matter be treated with exact proportion) that no one ought to attain eternal life, except by his own eternal labor? I will add a sixth, concerning "Gift," from which it is a pleasure to see how much trouble Augustine causes for your Vega: Augustine (he says) argues thus: "Faith is not a merit, because it is a gift of God." Then Vega, after some skirmishes, as if turning his back, says, "But these things are enough, for the piety which we owe to so great a Doctor; for it is not necessary to believe that all his arguments are demonstrative or effective." Thus Vega, as it befitted a strenuous athlete, of course. But

Augustine has shown himself to this point to be a sufficiently constant patron of our cause, and hereafter he will demonstrate himself to be more and more the same.

II. THESIS.

The dogma of the Pontificians concerning the power of meriting of Condignity, as if from the Merits of Christ, was not for many centuries a doctrine of Faith, even in the Roman Church itself.

SECTION XIII.

What the doctrine of the ancient Roman Church was, can easily be established both from the writings of celebrated authors and also from its practice, from ancient times past down to the use of the modern Roman Liturgy. As for the doctrine, it is not necessary for us to run through the series of times: it will be enough to insist on a few Roman authors, who are beyond exception: namely, Popes Leo I and Gregory I, Bishop Anselm, and Abbot Bernard. Pope Leo says, "What does God insinuate into our hearts, or what does he commend, except that no one should presume on his own justice, and no one should despair of His mercy? which then stands out more evidently when a sinner is sanctified, and one who is cast down is raised up. For the measure of heavenly gifts does not depend on the quality of our works." This single testimony can be an ample and brilliant detection of the vanity of the Bellarminian defense; who was accustomed, first, to interpret the sayings of the Fathers concerning works done outside of grace; but Leo speaks of the sanctified. Second, the Cardinal contended for the dignity of the work in itself; but Leo denies that the heavenly gift depends on any quality of the work. Finally, he urged a commensuration between works and rewards; but the other completely excludes a properly so-called measure of the work.

Pope Gregory, surnamed the Great, and if compared with his successors, truly the Greatest, first proposes this question to himself: Gregory on the 7th Penitential Psalm, on the words, "Make me to hear, etc." "If that happiness of the saints is of mercy, and is not acquired by merits, where will that be which is written, 'HE WILL RENDER TO EACH ONE ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS'? For if it is rendered 'ACCORDING TO WORKS,' how is it esteemed 'MERCY'?" To this objection, immediately adapting his response, he says, "It is one thing to render 'ACCORDING TO WORKS,' another to render 'BECAUSE OF WORKS.'" Thus he spoke. Concerning this testimony, see above chap. 2. sect. 2, in which he now denies that happiness is rendered on account of works, as on account of a meritorious cause. The same Pontiff, descending from the thesis to the hypothesis, The same, book 5 on Job, chap. 8. says, "Our justice itself, brought to the examination of Divine justice, is injustice, and is filth in the scrutiny of the Judge, what shines in the estimation of the doer." Likewise, "Our perfection itself is not without fault, unless the severe Judge in the subtle balance of examination

mercifully weighs it." Likewise concerning himself, The same, book 9 on Job, chap. "From your mercy alone I implore," he says, "what I do not hope for from merits." Likewise, The same on Ezekiel, hom. 7, at the end. "Our Advocate, being just, will defend us in judgment, because we know and accuse ourselves as unjust: therefore let us not trust in our own actions, but let us confide in the allegation of our Advocate." Thus he spoke. And there are many other testimonies of this kind, which are opposed ἀντιφατικῶς (in contradiction) to the defense of the Pontificians' merits of condignity. For they say, "From merits"; but he, "Happiness is acquired not from merits." They say, "On account of works," as a meritorious cause: he, "Remuneration is rendered not 'on account of,' but 'according to' works." They say, "Our merits are worthy, by which we are formally just before God": he, "It is not so, for our justice is filthy, and, We are unjust." Finally, they say, "We have no need of the merits of Christ, outside of us in the judgment of God, to attain eternal life": but he, "We must trust not in our own actions, but in the allegation of our Advocate." Thus the Roman Pontiff convicts of falsehood the modern dogma of the Romans, concerning our power of meriting, as if compared from the merits of Christ to us.

Bernard, some centuries ago in a dark age, shone like a celestial star. His thesis was this, where it is a question of properly so-called merits: Bernard, Book on Free Will, at the end. "If what we call our merits are properly so named, they are indeed the seedbeds of hope, incentives of charity, hidden signs of predestination, presages of future happiness, the way to the kingdom, not the cause of reigning." Thus he, describing the prerogatives of good works, and excellent ones at that, the last of which is that they are the way to the kingdom, although not the cause of reigning. More on this below. Afterwards, the same Bernard, where he comes to the hypothesis, says: The same, Sermon 5 on the words of Isaiah, around the middle. "Our justice, if it is humble, is perhaps upright, but not pure: unless perhaps we believe ourselves to be better than our fathers, who said no less truthfully than humbly, 'ALL OUR RIGHTEOUSNESSES ARE LIKE A MENSTRUOUS CLOTH.'" Thus he spoke. From a comparison of this doctrine with the above dogma of the Pontificians, the reader may easily understand that they differ no less from each other than these antitheses: first, our works are not the meritorious cause of reigning, and, they are the meritorious cause of reigning of Condignity; second, our righteousneses are not pure, nor are we in this better than our fathers, and, we are formally just from works, and to that extent better than our fathers. Thus far concerning the profession itself; what follows is the practice of the Roman Church, received for many centuries, and celebrated to the present day. I omit the testimonies of Anselm and Bede, which are scattered throughout this treatise.

II. THESIS.

The practice of the modern Roman Church contradicts the dogma of the same Church.

SECTION XIII.

Today in the Collect, in the Commemoration for the dead, these words exist: "Remember, O Lord, etc. And to your servants, who hope in the multitude of your mercies, deign to grant some part and society with your saints: into whose fellowship, admit us, not as an Assessor of merit, but as a Giver of pardon, through Christ our Lord." These are the words of the Collect, which plainly contradict the above dogma of the same Church, "From the merits of Christ we have the power of meriting, according to the equality of justice, which demands the prize of eternal life from God." If these two are compared with each other, who can sufficiently wonder at the stupor of these men, who in praying teach that God is not an Assessor of their merits, yet in defining and concluding decree that he is an Assessor of their merits? Again, by this doctrine, they boast of their power of meriting through the merits of Christ; yet in prayer, through Christ (and therefore through his merits), they ask for pardon, lest they be judged by their merits. Perhaps they will say that their profession concerning merits is of faith, but their prayer is only the offspring of hope. They tell of monsters. For hope is nothing but the daughter of faith, as it is written, "Faith is of things to be hoped for," Hebrews 11:1. But the faith which the Pontificians sell is thus: our meritorious work demands eternal life from God. But what does their hope expect? That He may admit us into the fellowship of the saints, not as an Assessor of merits. Lo, the daughter has now devoured the mother. Are our adversaries therefore to be ridiculed, or rather pitied? It is hard to say.

Cardinal Hosius, chap. 73. Confutation of the contrary Opinion, page 292, commemorates other practices of this kind: one from Anselm, observed by the Friars of the order of Francis, towards those near death: "From which," says Hosius, "anyone can perceive what the custom was in the Church of God." The words are these: "About to die, they were admonished to place all their hope and confidence in no other thing than in the merit of the passion and death of Christ." The same, above. He adds another: "We have seen," he says, "the priestly 'WORDS,' in which are these Interrogations and 'Responses': 'Do you BELIEVE that you can come to glory, not by your own merits, but by the power and merit of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ?'" The sick person answers, "I BELIEVE." Therefore, this is a voice not only of hope, but also of faith. The Index Expurgatorius printed in Madrid by Alphonsus Gomezius, the Royal Typographer, in the year 1584, ordered these WORDS to be deleted, because they seemed to oppose the errors of the Pontiffs, along with another Interrogation & Response, namely: "Do you BELIEVE that our Lord Jesus Christ died for our salvation? & that no one can be saved by his own merits, or in any other way, except in the merit of His Passion? Response. I BELIEVE."

Hosius continues, "And in the end the priest says, 'IF the Lord should wish to judge you according to your sins, say, O Lord God, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and your judgment, ... and into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.'" And after he had commemorated a similar profession made by a certain Dominican, he said, "This is the Catholic faith, which can deceive no one." Thus far on this argument. We hasten to the next.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Our eleventh argument against merit of condignity, as from the merits of Christ, from the standpoint of martyrdom, as it is the most noble means of attaining to eternal life.

Argumentation.

SECTION I.

Whatever excellence belongs to every good work, that certainly is to be attributed to martyrdom: but this excellence, viz., to be meritorious of eternal life of condignity, is not to be attributed to martyrdom: Therefore, to be meritorious of eternal life of condignity does not belong to every good work. The major premise is easily proven from the Scriptures, in which martyrdom, as the most noble means of attaining eternal life, is often preferred to all others: to which I have no doubt that our adversaries will also assent.

I THESIS.

The ancient Fathers did not attribute to the Martyrs the power of meriting, as if from the merits of Christ. In which we have, as it were, a most clear mirror of Catholic truth.

SECTION II.

The phosphors ($\Phi\omega\sigma\phi\acute{o}\rho\omicron\iota$, light-bearers) of Catholic truth, the ancient Fathers, in their expositions on the passage of the Apostle, Romans 8:18, where the Apostle clearly taught concerning the sufferings of Christians, "The afflictions of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the future glory," have generously exhibited their Catholic and Orthodox judgments (above), by which they utterly routed this monster, which is said to demand a reward from God of condignity from an equality of justice. It is helpful to touch upon at least some of the force of their reasons.

The first reason, from those testimonies by which the Fathers diminish the dignity of good works, in this manner. Athanasius, Jerome, Chrysostom. First, "Renouncing the entire world, we have done nothing worthy." Second, "No one can suffer anything worthy of glory." Third, "Even if we were to die a thousand times, we do nothing worthy for the goods we have received, let alone for those to come." Fourth, Author of the imperfect work. "Nothing is worthy of the heavenly kingdoms." Fifth, Augustine. "Eternal rest is worthy of eternal labor." So

that (as the Pontificians are wont to object elsewhere), if the word "worthy" implies merit of condignity, the Fathers, when they so often pronounce good works not to be worthy of eternal life, deny that they are meritorious of condignity by the same force. (This is above, chap. 14).

The second reason is from the sentences in which the Fathers expressly denied that good works are meritorious (above, chap. 10, & chap. 14), namely: Ambrose, and the author of the imperfect work. First, "The plan of the heavenly decrees proceeds not according to our merits, but according to the mercy of God upon men." Second, Eusebius of Emesa. "The glory will be greater than anyone can merit." Third, Fulgentius, Bernard. "Although we sweat with all our strength, yet we compensate nothing worthy of merit." Fourth, Anselm. "Eternal life ineffably exceeds merit." Fifth, "All merits are nothing compared to such glory." Sixth, "Not all passions are a condign merit for that glory." Therefore, Bellarmine's subterfuge was ludicrous when he said, "The passions are not worthy of eternal glory, not with respect to meritorious dignity, but with respect to their lightness and brevity, in comparison with the immensity of the prize to be hoped for." Utterly false: for in these, merit and the dignity of works are expressly excluded.

The third reason, from the manner which they used to combat merit of condignity, where, omitting the works, they render the persons themselves who work unworthy of the eternal prize. Cyprian. First, "We are crowned by the condescension of God." Second, Ambrose. "God gives eternal life to the unworthy." Third, Augustine. "If we were to endure torments for our whole life, we would not be worthy." Fourth, Remigius. "Even if someone has fulfilled all the precepts of both Testaments, yet he is not worthy of that glory." (above, chap. 14).

The fourth reason for arguing is seen in these phrases of the Fathers, viz., first, by warning martyrs to consider that they do not suffer more than they deserved for their sins. Thus Jerome, and in precisely the same words, Primasius. With whom Isidore of Seville agrees. Finally, it is said by the Apostle, "THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME ARE NOT WORTHY, etc.," to suppress the pride of the suffering. These individual points are more fully expressed above, chap. 14.

Further testimonies from the ancient Fathers, which prove that martyrdom itself is not a work meritorious of condignity for eternal life, from Psalm 116.

SECTION III.

Psalm 116 (according to the Vulgate, 115): "What shall I render to the Lord for all that he has given me? I will take the cup of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We do not here contend about the genuine and literal sense of this text, but about the judgments of the ancient Fathers (as it pertains to martyrdom) which they

have committed to their writings. Nor is it hidden from our adversaries that the holy Fathers interpreted this passage concerning the martyrdom of the faithful, as attested by Bellarmine on Psalm 115, both from the occasion of those words, "Precious is the death of the Saints," and, "I will take the cup of salvation," and also because of the allusion to Christ's words about the martyrdom of His disciples, "You shall indeed drink of the cup that I am about to drink," Matthew 20. It will be our task to bring forth the testimonies of the Fathers.

Chrysostom, on this Psalm: "What shall I render to the Lord, that He has honored me with His own image, has clothed me with the glory of the Angels?" Chrysostom continues, mentioning many other most distinguished means of our salvation, and finally, "The Prophet," he says, "when he had surveyed all things in his thought, and no worthy and perfect retribution to God occurred to him, he noticed one thing more excellent, namely, the work of martyrdom; and concerning this he infers, saying, 'I WILL TAKE THE CUP OF SALVATION!'"

Augustine, on the same Psalm: "Your death (he addresses the martyr) Christ bought with his blood, which he shed for the salvation of men, that men might not hesitate to shed their own for his name, who confess their condition to have been bought at so great a price." He adds many other things; at the end, returning to the CUP OF SALVATION, he says, "Truly, whatever anyone thinks well to vow to the Lord, this is required, this is owed." From these we learn that the death of a martyr is called precious because it was bought with the price of Christ's blood, and is owed to Christ by reason of that price, and is a work not of merit (for he denies this), but of gratitude, as a holocaust of praise.

Prosper, as if treading in the footsteps of Augustine, on the same Psalm: "WHAT SHALL I RENDER TO THE LORD? He found nothing to render, except what he had received from the Lord: 'I WILL TAKE THE CUP OF SALVATION,' namely, a precious death, because he [Christ] bought it with his blood; yet the death of servants profits the servants, not the Lord."

Theodoret, on the same Psalm, calls DEATH "THE CUP OF SALVATION," for piety's sake: he teaches us, therefore, to undergo death boldly for Christ, and to give this remuneration for various duties. "If we have undergone that death worthy of admiration, we shall obtain glory and honor from God. But if, having been made superior to our enemies, we have routed their line, we shall offer a hymn of thanksgiving, confessing our servitude."

Therefore, come hither, all you who are vainglorious trumpeters and avengers of your merit of condignity: observe the admirable consensus of so many and so great Fathers: then (I beseech you by God) diligently weigh each of the points of their reasons, and say, if you can, whether these most brilliant lights of the Catholic religion, if they had been Protestants, could have more expressly, more

accurately, more forcefully refuted and convicted your meritorious condignity. For that meritorious condignity from equality of justice, which the Pontificians have judged should be ascribed to the giving of a cup of cold water, the Catholic Fathers have denied to the passion, or cup of blood, of the martyrs themselves.

CHAPTER XIX.

Our twelfth argument against merit of condignity, from the standpoint of our debt of gratitude towards God in every good work.

Argumentation.

SECTION I.

No work of gratitude towards God can be meritorious of condignity with God: But every good work is a work of gratitude towards God: Therefore, no good work can be meritorious of condignity with God. The following theses will prove these premises.

I THESIS.

All are bound to give thanks to God in all things.

SECTION II.

The Scriptures are sufficiently manifest in themselves. 1. "Pray without ceasing, and in all things give thanks," 1 Thessalonians 5. And indeed, every good work is (either expressly or implicitly) a work of our gratitude towards God, as the Apostle implies, 1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Nor is it any wonder, because on the contrary (as the School teaches), material ingratitude is in every sin.

II THESIS.

The power of properly meriting of condignity with God cannot underlie an act of gratitude. This is proven by the Fathers from the various properties of gratitude.

SECTION III.

Only Vazquez (as far as I know) has opposed this thesis. Aquinas in 1.2. q. To the first. In Tom. 1. disp. 214. c. 12. "Even if," he says, "man were bound to offer works to God from an affection of gratitude, yet without doubt he would merit from God: for he who is grateful to God, from the very work of gratitude, is worthy of eternal life." Thus he, under the pretext of gratitude, foists the opinion of merit, just as cunning fishermen do, when they offer bait to fish, but not without a hook. We appeal to the Fathers.

Antiquity has described very many properties of gratitude, and has commended them to us, their posterity, through their writings, by which these most faithful

ancient witnesses of the truth have abundantly explained their judgment against merit of condignity.

The first property of gratitude is to acknowledge that we cannot render worthy thanks to God. Clement of Alexandria taught this: "Nor can we at all give thanks worthy of salvation." Thus he. Therefore, thanks cannot be merits of condignity. To which that saying of Gregory Nazianzen, oration 16, pertains: "Give all things to the Lord, because he gave all things; yet you will never conquer him, even if you cast away all things, nay, not even if you add yourself." Stromateis, Book 7.

The second property of gratitude is that men offer verbal praises to God for his real benefits. Augustine on Psalm 50: "We give thanks," he says, "we do not give, we do not render, but we only act with words to God; but he has saved us freely." Chrysostom, in Genesis, Homily 26, wisely ponders the same property: "If we wish to offer anything to God," he says, "what more can we do than when we give thanks with words? But what he exhibits, he performs in deed. How unequal, however, are words and works! And the Lord is in need of no things, etc." Again: "If we wish to be grateful to the Lord, we make ourselves more illustrious; because he does not wish this to be done because he needs our celebration, but so that whatever profit there is may return to us, and that he may make us worthy of greater subsidies." Where the word "worthy" can be understood in no other way than as "fit" and "apt" (according to the sense acknowledged above by the adversaries), the matter itself proclaims, and the same Chrysostom, in Matthew 8, Homily 26, proves it: "The giving of thanks adds nothing to him [God]." Thus he. By which argument the Fathers (above chap. 2, sect. 3) have most plainly refuted the doctrine of the condignity of merits.

The third property of gratitude touches upon our unworthiness, so that those giving thanks may understand that they are not worthy that their thanks should be accepted by God. To which end Fulgentius, epistle to Proba on prayer and compunction of heart, shrewdly says: "We ought to give thanks to God, that by his gratuitous mercy he has subjected us to himself, so that we may be humble, because as long as we are in this mortal body, we cannot be without sin while we exhibit perfect humility to God. Therefore, thanks are to be given to God, inasmuch as he grants us to work well, lest we be ungrateful for his gifts; and effort must be made to advance to better things, lest we fall into deadly pride, if we think our conduct is perfect in every part." Thus he.

The fourth property of gratitude is that a justified man should not glory in his works before God. Therefore, Basil, Homily on humility, circumspectly and deliberately says: "Christ has been made for us," he says, "righteousness, wisdom, and redemption; so that he who glories, may glory in the Lord. Perfect and complete glorying is in God: when one is not exalted because of his own righteousness, but acknowledges that he is indeed destitute of true

righteousness, but is justified by faith alone in Christ." Augustine held in delight that saying of Cyprian (in tractate on the words of the Apostle, "WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU DID NOT RECEIVE?"), "In nothing is one to glory, because nothing is our own." Similarly Ambrose, On Jacob and the blessed life, book 1, chap. 6: "I will not glory because I am just, but because I have been redeemed; not because I am void of sin, but because my sins have been forgiven me; I will not glory because I have been profitable, but because Christ is an Advocate for me." Thus these Fathers fixed the anchor of their faith and hope in heaven. But on the contrary, those who dogmatize that a human work is meritorious of condignity from an equality of justice before God, boast that the foundation of merit (as that which is called ours) is placed in our own will. Moreover, as to glorying, there are some who not inappropriately distinguish between an internal glorying and confidence from works, and in works. They judge the latter to be pernicious, and not undeservedly (as we have proved thus far from the feigned and adulterated condignity of the work and the worker); but the former they judge to be sometimes very salutary, inasmuch as the worker relies on the grace and power of God. For just as the experience of David in slaying the lion and the bear gave him confidence in Divine help to overthrow the huge Philistine, so the Apostle teaches that we should not doubt in the least that God, who has begun every good work in us, will also perfect it until the day of the glorious advent of Christ. This was the reason why Bernard, when he had altogether denied that good works are properly the cause of reigning, yet held firmly, and confidently, and with holy and joyful glorying pronounced that they are the seedbeds of hope, incentives of charity, hidden signs of predestination, presages of future happiness; finally, the way to the kingdom. And this indeed is to glory in God, and not in ourselves.

5. As often as from the ancient and public Liturgies of all the churches, Christians are instructed to pray to God that he would deign to accept the thanks rendered by them, so far are they from presenting their own merits, that they have rather always by profession suppressed that boasting (*ῥυκον*) with their prayers. Augustine, on the merits of sinners, book 2, chap. 5. Certainly, Augustine put his finger on another ulcer of the Pharisee: "The Pharisee," he says, "giving thanks, was asking for nothing to be added to his righteousness." Gregory of Nyssa, on the Lord's Prayer, on that petition, "Forgive us, etc.," plainly lances the tumor of such pride: "If the Pharisee," he says, "had paid attention to human nature, he would have understood the Scripture, that it is not pure from filth, Prov. 20:9, Eccles. 7:20. nor can one be found among men who lives a single day without stain. Therefore, he who is about to approach God, lest such an affection be generated in his soul, the Sermon bids him not to look back at things well done, but to remember the common debts of human nature, of which everyone is altogether a participant, and to ask the judge to grant impunity for his offenses." Thus he. Concerning which matter, Chrysostom, to the people of

Antioch, Homily 38, elegantly indeed says, "The most certain treasury of right deeds is oblivion."

III THESIS.

The opinion of merit of condignity is convicted of falsehood by the necessity and difficulty of true gratitude.

SECTION III.

First, the necessity of gratitude is best elicited from the atrocity of ingratitude. But the vice of ingratitude seemed so detestable even among the heathens themselves that Seneca, when giving a reason why this, unlike other vices, does not find an action in a human court, says skillfully and wittily, Book 3 on benefits, chap. 6: "Not because we absolve this hateful vice, but since the estimation of an uncertain matter would be difficult, we have left it among those vices which we send to the avenging gods." Thus he, concerning his heathens, who numbered parricide among vices of this kind. But the iniquity of ingratitude is also sufficiently shown by that severe reproof and rebuke of God against the people of Judah, by which he sent them away to the beasts, from whom they might be taught: "The ox," he says, "knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib." The School enumerates four species of this kind: Aquinas, 2.2, question 7, article 3, in the body of the article. first, not to recognize benefits; second, not to praise the benefactor; third, not to give thanks; fourth, not to give something in return.

2. The difficulty of true and necessary gratitude, how manifold it is, is perceived from its various objects, as they are distinguished by the holy Fathers.

As to the first kind of objects of gratitude, we are bound to give thanks for adverse as well as for prosperous things. Chrysostom, on the Colossians, homily 8, speaks divinely on this, concerning the blessing of Job: "There is nothing more holy than that tongue which gives thanks to God in evils: indeed, it is not inferior to the tongue of the martyrs." So also other Fathers; but we sing familiar songs.

The objects of the second kind are the multitude and magnitude of benefits. As to magnitude, Chrysostom, in Genesis, homily 27, gives an instance from the Gospel of John, chap. 3: "FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT ALL WHO BELIEVE IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE." The son of thunder, astonished at this miracle, etc. "How full of miracle is this saying! Tell me the measure, the magnitude, and the excellence of it." Augustine, Book 2 of Meditations, on loving God, c. 2: "God gives in such a way that our soul fails in the consideration of his benefits. Behold what things God, from the goodness of his grace, has conferred upon us, with no merits of ours demanding them." This opinion of Augustine is our very own profession.

As for the third, we are bound to give thanks for daily and for the smallest things, as in 1 Corinthians 10:19: "Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Bernard, inserting this sentence among his flowers, in his Sermon on the Passion of the Lord, sweetly modulates the following words: "The fragments of food ought to be collected, lest they perish. Does not that perish which is given to the ungrateful?" Let the adversaries think, and consider among themselves (however much for whole loaves and most ample benefits) whether they have rendered due thanks to God for the fragments.

As for the fourth, we are bound to show ourselves grateful for common goods as if for our own. This is perhaps a rarer and more sublime speculation than can be immediately apprehended by all. In which argument, Chrysostom, Book 3 on the compunction of heart, towards the end, having happily engaged, says: "This is the affection of a faithful servant, that he should consider the benefits of his Lord, which were given in common to all, as if they were granted to him alone, and as if he himself were the debtor for all, and he alone were held liable for all." This Paul did, who says that the death of our Lord and Savior, which was paid for the entire world, was bestowed on him alone: for as if speaking of himself alone, he thus writes: "FOR WHAT I NOW LIVE IN THE FLESH, I LIVE IN THE FAITH OF THE SON OF GOD, WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME." He said these things, however, not wishing to narrow the most ample gifts of Christ spread throughout the world, but as one who judged himself alone bound for all. For this reason, in the parable of the good shepherd, it is not said, "Because he came to seek MANY sheep," but "ONE." For it is ONE, because thus divine benefits are conferred on all, as if on ONE. Thus he. With which words he commends to every Christian breast the Condignity of the merits of Christ, but not to each his own, as the fanatics speak and think.

The fifth kind is of those benefits (of which we have spoken above Chap. 16. from Seneca) which were conferred upon us unwillingly. Which consideration opened again that golden mouth of Chrysostom, On the Providence of God, who admonishes us to give thanks also for those good things which are given to us against our will.

The sixth kind can be said with respect to sins: that we should give thanks for sins both remitted and not committed. Concerning which, there is that well-known and very celebrated saying of Augustine: "Lord, I confess that all my sins have been forgiven, both those which I committed with you watching, and those which, with you as my guide, I did not commit." If these individual objects of gratitude are compared with each other, they sufficiently demonstrate how impossible it is for us not to be implicated and involved in multiple charges of ingratitude; by which (unless God, out of His paternal compassion, for the sake of Christ's merits, should remit and dissolve the rigor of His judgment) we might

justly suspect that it is all over for us. This one consideration would utterly crush and destroy all the papistical arrogance of our own proper condignity, from an equality of justice before God.

CHAPTER XX.

Our thirteenth argument against merit of condignity, from the standpoint of the progress of true piety.

Argumentation.

SECTION I.

A profession which is less effective for the progress of true piety is less to be approved: But the profession of merit of condignity is less effective for the progress of true piety than the contrary profession of the Protestants: Therefore, it is less to be approved. The major premise is more manifest than can be denied by the adversaries: the following dissertation, with God as guide, will abundantly demonstrate the minor. Three things can be required for the progress of true piety: the necessity, dignity, and purity of good works.

On the necessity of good works.

I THESIS.

Protestants are atrociously accused by the Pontifical informers as defendants for denying the necessity of good works.

SECTION II.

We would indeed wish to have received the accusations of the Pontificians with deaf ears only, but since they shout and vociferate so much, even to hoarseness, we are forced to hear, even against our will, their truly foul accusations which they hurl at the Protestants. Sanderus, *On the Visible Monarchy*, book 7, year 1338, page 295, says: namely, first, "Eunomius is reported to have been so hostile to good morals that he asserted that the perpetration and perseverance in any sins whatsoever would not harm anyone at all, if he were a participant in that faith which was taught by him." (Augustine, *Heresies* 54). "Do not the Lutherans and Calvinists teach this very thing, when they contend that we are justified from all sins by faith alone?" Thus Sanderus. Second, Stapleton, on *Justification*, p. 15: "The ancient heretics taught their followers that they should not care about good works, to which their [the Protestants'] doctrine of faith alone is related." Thus Stapleton. Third, Fevardentius Jacobus: "All the sectarians, who are comprehended under the ill-omened name of Huguenots, have taken upon themselves to restore and defend in this age the impious opinion of the Gnostics of old, that faith alone justifies, and that a man cannot be damned, provided he only believes." Thus Fevardentius. Fourth, Bozius, on the signs of the Church, book 6, chap. 5, around the middle, § It is well: "In order that you may attain eternal salvation and be holy, all Protestants say, it is not necessary that you

should will, attempt, or do anything good: if you trust in Christ, you may dare anything with impunity, and bring it to completion." Thus Bozius. Thus far the adversaries themselves, omitting others, who no less rabidly attack and inveigh against the Protestants under the same name. Could these things be said, and not be refuted? On the contrary, most easily.

II. THESIS.

That a monstrous injury has been done to the Protestants by these accusations is shown from the writings of the Protestants.

SECTION III.

The Protestants are primarily two, through whose sides the Pontificians (in the cited passages) attempt to strike and pierce: Luther and Calvin. It will be sufficient in the first place, to repel the calumny from their own signed documents, lest a preconceived prejudice should suffocate a right judgment. Luther, in Sunday 1 Advent, tract on good works, page 8, speaks in this manner: "A sincere Christian life is situated in faith and love. If you ask what are the good works we ought to do; I say, give your whole self, as much as you are, to your neighbor." Likewise, The same in Sunday 4 after Epiphany, from Romans 15, § Whence etc.: "Where faith comes, it changes a man, and forms him in such a way that he performs and fulfills the works of the law, and proves that he is justified by faith." Likewise, The same, Sunday 1 of Lent, from Matthew 4, § Then etc., near the end, page 117: "The Scripture nowhere requires works without faith; but a living faith, from which works emanate, it requires everywhere." Likewise, The same, in a sermon, year 1521, § 3, folio 273b: "Where faith is sincere, it cannot be without works, just as no living man can be without some motion of operating." Likewise, The same, in the Feast of...: "The kingdom of God, which we are, is not situated in speech, but in power, that is, in works and exercise: God does not love hearers, or parrots who only recite words readily, but imitators and doers of the word in faith through love. For faith without love is by no means sufficient, indeed it is not faith, but a certain dream and phantom of faith: just as a face seen in a mirror is not a true face, but an image of a face." Thus he. Calvin likewise, in 1 Corinthians 1, in the Antidote: "The Apostle says," he writes, "CHRIST WAS MADE FOR US BY GOD WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS, SANCTIFICATION, AND REDEMPTION. Here he calls SANCTIFICATION that by which he means that we, who are otherwise profane, are regenerated by his Spirit into holiness, so that we may serve God. From this we also gather that we cannot be justified freely by faith alone, without at the same time living holy lives. For these graces are coherent with an indivisible bond, so that he who strives to separate them, in a certain way dismembers Christ. We do not dream of a faith void of works, nor of a justification that consists without them." Thus he. There are three hundred testimonies of this kind, which could free them from that calumny: but it is not necessary to report more, especially since we can summon our adversaries themselves, as most ready advocates. But in this

the perversity of the calumniating adversaries is most clearly seen, that they wrongly, and that willingly, pretend that by "faith alone," the Protestants understand not only a historical and dead faith, but a living, operative, trusting, and therefore saving faith.

III THESIS.

The confessions of the Pontificians themselves, by which the above calumnies are convicted of falsehood.

SECT. III.

Even if the adversaries were to sift through all the books of all the Protestants, so that they might select whatever chaff they could from them, they could never, however, from any testimony of theirs (as far as I know) show that repentance is not necessarily required by them in all who are justified. For what they have stated concerning repentance, one Bellarmine, Book 1 on repentance, chap. 18, can be a sufficiently able reporter: "Luther teaches," he says, "that repentance is sorrow for sin, and a resolution for a better life... Melancthon in express words says that new obedience is the third part of repentance... The opinion of Calvin constitutes two parts, mortification and vivification: by mortification understanding the mortification of vices, or self-denial; by vivification, a pious study of living well, and an effect towards good works... into which opinion Beza descends." Again, the same from Calvin; "The Augsburg Confession, by 'faith alone,' does not exclude other virtues, but their merit." Likewise; "The Protestants," they say, "deny that faith can consist with evil works; for he who has the intention of sinning, can conceive no faith of the remission of sins." Likewise, Cardinal Toletus, on John 13, annotation 6, page 150, ingenuously says of the Protestants: "The Protestants say that faith is sufficient for salvation; yet they deny that it can be without works." Likewise Vega, On Justification, book 15, chap. 3: "They assert that sanctification and justification are so conjoined that one cannot be torn away from the other. Even you, Calvin, require repentance in sinners, that they may be justified." Stapleton, finally, On Justification, book 9, chap. 7: "All the Protestants, to a man, say that the faith which justifies is living, and operative through charity and other works." Thus they spoke, which we have selected from a heap of many other confessions.

III THESIS.

The impiety of the above calumnies is refuted and disproved not only by the cruelty of the Pontificians themselves, but also by the patience of the Protestants.

SECT. V.

The Pontificians formerly accused the Protestants of impiety, because they abhorred adoring the image of the Crucifix, and at the same time they received a response from them, namely, that they themselves were ready to become true and living images of the Crucifix, by enduring all torments for the name of

JESUS. This they, having first been condemned to death by the decrees of the Pontificians, constantly and happily performed. Let them now have a similar response, since a thousand times a thousand Protestants have refused no kind of torments for the faith of Christ, which faith indeed very many of them have sealed with their own blood. That these should now be heard from you as Solifidians and enemies of all good works? Oh, the faith and front of men!

FIFTH THESIS.

Protestants require the necessity of true piety just as absolutely as the Papists do: as a cause sine qua non, through which they are led to eternal life.

SECTION VI.

A cause sine qua non, consequently, implies the most absolute necessity. This can be the necessity of good works, which belongs to the entire pious and Christian conduct of the faithful; inasmuch as this is almost a hundred times called a way in the Scriptures, as in Matthew 7. One way is broad, which leads to death; the other is narrow, which leads to life. The Papists should not deny that this necessity could not but contribute greatly to the progress of true piety, unless perhaps they wish to extinguish the two most brilliant lights of the Roman Church; who, while abhorring the doctrine of the condign merit of works, nevertheless taught the necessity of works in the manner of a way. First, Pope Gregory, who says, "We shall be judged not on account of our works, but according to our works." Then Bernard, who says, "Good works are the way to the kingdom, not the cause of reigning." In whose testimonies the reason for persuading to piety was not lacking, because he calls good works presages of future happiness. Nor should we think that they, because they wish good works to be a cause sine qua non, for that reason denied that good works are in any way the cause through which we acquire eternal life. The reason follows in the next Thesis.

SIXTH THESIS.

Good works are necessarily the Actual cause (the Meritorious cause being excluded) through which we obtain eternal life.

SECTION VII.

We are not unaware that our Adversaries press against us that passage from 2 Corinthians 4:17, where the Tribulation of the Saints is said to *κατεργάζεσθαι* (work out) in us an eternal weight of glory: and Philippians 2:12, where the Apostle admonishes us to *κατεργάζεσθαι* (work out) our salvation with fear and trembling. We also acknowledge that the Greek word means to bring about; is it therefore from Condign Merit? The Apostle has already denied this before; "The tribulations of this life," he says, "are not worthy of the future glory." Indeed, the same phrase is used where there can be no underlying reason of Merit: Romans 4:15, "The law worketh wrath"; and 5:3, "Tribulation worketh patience"; and James

1:3, "The trying of your faith worketh patience": in which, however, there is no meritorious power. And lest anyone should think that if all our effort towards salvation is said to be a walking in the way, this in any way hinders piety, I add the next Thesis.

SEVENTH THESIS.

To walk in the WAY to the kingdom of heaven embraces within itself all the progress of true piety.

SECTION VIII.

Christian conduct is not so often called a way in the Scriptures that we should linger idly in it; but that we should necessarily strive day by day with all our effort toward the heavenly kingdom: as is clear in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in good works, that we should WALK in them": and Romans 6:4, "That we should WALK in newness of life." Therefore, whether the manner of arriving at eternal life is called a race in a stadium, or labor in a vineyard, or a fight in the arena, or anything else in the Scriptures; it is nevertheless a walking in the way to the heavenly inheritance, obtained and procured not by our merit, but by that of Christ; as the Fathers have taught above. Therefore, Hilary rightly says; To obey God is the journey to heaven. On Matthew. Therefore, one must not despair of him who has finished his life in this way: for most glorious are they who have proceeded thither through martyrdom, as if through the Red Sea. But to aspire to it through condign merit is to journey outside the way. Furthermore, concerning the metaphor of walking in the way (with that wisdom and learning in which he excelled), Augustine gravely and elegantly cultivates men with the precepts of all virtues: What is it to walk? On the words of the Apostle, Sermon 15. I say briefly, to make progress; lest perhaps you do not understand, and walk lazily. Let what you are always displeasèd you, if you wish to arrive at what you are not yet. For where you have pleased yourself, there you have remained. Walk therefore and make progress, do not go back, do not deviate. He who does not make progress remains; he who returns to those things from which he had already departed, goes back; he who apostatizes, deviates. It is better for a lame man to go in the way, than for a runner to go beside the way. Thus he speaks. Than which, for the progress of piety, nothing more can be required.

On the imperfection of good works

FIRST THESIS.

The acknowledgment of the unrighteousness of our works does not prove that good works are simply sins.

SECTION IX.

What perfection the Papists attribute to works, we have shown above, where they established that the proportion in them, from an equality of justice before God, is absolute. We, however, feel and acknowledge such an imperfection in them that they need the gracious acceptance of God, without which they cannot expect the reward of blessedness. Therefore, the Papists attack and inveigh against us, as if we defended that good works are simply sins: from which, they say, it follows that good works are not to be done by us, nor commanded by God, much less praised. These things are fabricated by our Adversaries as μορμολύκεια (a boogeyman), to frighten children away from our religion; therefore, we respond to these furious and slanderous consequences. First, we do not say that good works are simply sins, but only incidentally: yet we acknowledge them to be, both as to the substance of the action, and also (in the Regenerate) as to a certain manner of acting, true virtues; but from the vicious depravity of the old man rebelling, though not predominating, as to the degree of due integrity, they are plainly defects, not only beside but also against the perfection of the Divine law, whose Letter kills: Although these defects and imperfections, by the ἐπιεικεία (clemency) of the Gospel, through the merit of Christ, by whose blood they have been expiated and blotted out, can consist with his grace: yet so, that they be seasoned with continual contrition of heart, without which all holiness is filthy, stinks, and generates a worm in the conscience. 2. Cor. 3.6. These things having been so weighed, it will not be difficult to judge how good works, from the inspiration and ἐνεργεία (operation) of the Holy Spirit, being truly good and praiseworthy, are yet polluted by our own dregs. To prove this, the Jesuit Vasquez comes forward, a witness beyond all exception, who offered such a testimony concerning the Protestants: "They say," he states, "that the works to which eternal life is promised are in themselves indeed good, but from some defect have the character of fault, yet are not evil in their own nature: such as to steal, to commit adultery, etc." Tom. 1. disp. 214. cap. 5. num. 23. Thus he speaks. Indeed, we say that imperfect works are to be distinguished from perfect and absolutely good works, as pure wine from diluted, or an apple in no part faulty from a fallen one. And he can be an example to us, who said to Christ in the Gospel, "I believe, Lord; help my unbelief." That word, "I believe," indicates true faith; but this, "Help my unbelief," reveals that it was imperfect. It is objected that the just, in the Scriptures, would not have said that they had kept the commandments of God, unless they had kept them perfectly. Augustine answered this objection many centuries ago: "But I would say," he states, "that they kept the commandments of God in such a way that we remember the commandments themselves pertain to prayer, in which the holy children of the promise daily truly declare, **THY WILL BE DONE, and, FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS.**" Contra duas Epist. Pelag. lib. 3. cap. 7. fiac. 2. We respond, since good works are good in themselves, and not evil, except incidentally, we teach that they are to be done. For we do not for that reason keep a boy instructed in forming letters from writing, because he does not yet write perfectly; nor is anyone so mad as to prohibit a groom from driving a

donkey, because it limps. Finally (as to the manner), God also praises good works, and, although imperfect, approves them: not however from the obligation of law, as a severe Judge, but out of unowed grace, as a merciful Father, concerning which things it has been spoken before.

SECOND THESIS.

We have learned the imperfection of good works from Scripture.

SECTION X.

The reason for this truth will be most readily understood, if only we note that the man of whom we are speaking here is by no means a ψυχικός (natural) man, as Jerome calls him, but spiritual; and yet not plainly perfect in that respect, we must see to what extent. For in every regenerate and justified person there is a twofold man, the old, and the new. These two, like Jacob and Esau in one womb, struggle in the one and same breast of a Christian man. The Apostle gravely lamented this state of the regenerate man, that in the same good work, in which he delighted as to the inner man, yet by reason of his outward and carnal man he did not find how to perform it, Romans 7:18. And indeed, if Jacob himself should wish to strive and wrestle with God's law as he did with God himself, it is necessary that he should limp. Gen. 32. 31. I return to the passage of the Apostle: concerning which Augustine, returning to his second thoughts, says, "It did not seem to me that the Apostle could have said of himself, I AM CARNAL, since he was spiritual, and that HE WAS LED CAPTIVE UNDER THE LAW OF SIN. But afterward I yielded to better and more intelligent men, or rather (which must be confessed) to truth itself: so that I might see in those words of the Apostle the groaning of the saints, fighting against carnal concupiscences. Hence it came to pass that I so understood it, as Hilary, Gregory, Ambrose, and the other holy and renowned Doctors of the Church understood it." Contre Julian. lib. 6. cap. 18. Thus he speaks. And truly in the words of the Apostle all things are ὀμφαλικώτατα (most central). Namely, "The evil which I would not," and, "I do not work," and, "What I hate, that I do." Certainly a ψυχικός (natural) man cannot feel this struggle in himself. Nor is it necessary here to understand by "carnal" the body itself, but also the higher part, inasmuch as it is not perfectly renewed, which is called φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός (the mind of the flesh). And the Text suggests this: "I myself," he says, "with the flesh serve the law of sin; but with the mind [I the same serve] the law of God": but this, by doing good, yet that, by not perfecting the good. Although he said, "With the flesh I serve the law of sin," because the flesh, as the old man, is opposed to the mind as the spiritual man. For so also Augustine: "With what propriety is it said, THE FLESH LUSTETH, when the soul not only provides animal life to the flesh, but even according to the flesh itself lusts after something, which it is not in your power not to lust after, as long as sin is in your members!" Gen. ad literam, lib. 10. cap. 12. Thus he speaks. For since there are two commandments, which even the most regenerate man, as long as he is mortal, cannot fulfill: the Negative one, "Thou shalt not covet." The other

Affirmative, "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy strength": the regenerate man, from the consciousness of his own weakness in performing good works (for it is only of these that the Apostle argues), breaks forth into a twofold complaint, proceeding from a twofold hatred. The first is, of not perfecting that which he piously wills. The other is of coveting, even though he greatly wills it not. So far is the regenerate man from being willing to consent by flattering himself in evil works, that he is, as it were, a hatred to himself, because he does not find how to perform thus.

THIRD THESIS.

The ancient Fathers have set forth the imperfection of good works in many ways.

SECTION XI.

We shall confine those testimonies which will be brought forward to a good work, as it has in itself some admixture of depravity.

1. Bernard: "You can by no means," he says, "escape the judgment of God. Though I were righteous, I will not lift up my head; for all our righteousnesses are as a menstruous cloth before him. There is none that is justified in his sight, no, not one." Sermon on the words of Origen, in Augustine, before the middle.

2. Hilary: "Our body is the matter of all vices, by which being polluted, we obtain nothing in us that is not unclean, nothing innocent. And a little before, he says that Christ taught that malice was not lacking even in the Apostles themselves, though now corrected and sanctified by the word of faith, when he said, IF YOU, BEING EVIL, KNOW HOW TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS TO YOUR CHILDREN, etc." lib. 2. contra Julian.

3. Augustine: "The most full charity," he says, "while we live here, is in the seed: as long as it can be increased, surely that which is less than it ought to be, is from a fault. From which fault NOT EVERYONE LIVING SHALL BE JUSTIFIED IN THY SIGHT." Epist. 19. ad Hieron. post med.

4. Pope Gregory the Great: "As we have often said, human justice is injustice, if it be strictly judged. Even if it has grown to a work of virtue, it will attain to life, not from merits, but from pardon." Where he understands this of one and the same work, as also elsewhere, "For who, from the consciousness of his own virtue, would not be in some small measure proud?" Again, "Often, as we have said long before," he says, "our work is a cause of damnation, which is thought to be the progress of virtue." In 9. Job, lib. 9. c. 14. In 14 Job, lib. 9. cap. 17. In 3. Job. lib. 5. cap. 4.

5. Bernard: "Our humble justice," he says, "if there be any, is perhaps right, but not pure, unless perhaps we believe ourselves to be better than our Fathers, who no less truthfully than humbly said, ALL OUR RIGHTEOUSNESSES ARE AS A MENSTRUOUS CLOTH: For how can justice be pure, where fault cannot yet be absent?" De verbis Esaie Serm. 5. circa medium. Here we do not dispute about the genuine sense of this Scripture, we only inquire into the judgment of the

Fathers concerning our imperfection. Although the Jesuit Salmeron also brings forward this reason why we should not trust in our own merits: "Even if someone be just," he says, "and holy, yet he should not trust in his works; because our righteousnesses are uncertain, because they are not pure, but mixed with many spots, like a menstruous cloth." Tom. 7. tract. 33. de Pharif. & Publ. n. 30. Other Papists have given the same interpretation.

6. Jerome: "But if indeed," he says, "the just are so called in the Scriptures, and not only just, but just in the sight of God; they are so called according to that justice, according to which it was said above, A JUST MAN SINS SEVEN TIMES A DAY, AND SHALL RISE AGAIN." Ad Rucicum, epist. 43. And from him we have received this aphorism, "This is the only perfection for men, if they know themselves to be imperfect." Idem adversus Pelag. ad Ctesiphont.

7. Chrysostom: "Even the three youths, when cast into the fire, what did they say in the furnace? We have sinned, we have done iniquity." Idem in epist. ad Philemon. hom. 3. Thus he speaks. And again, on 1 Corinthians 4:4, on those words, I AM CONSCIOUS OF NOTHING TO MYSELF, etc. "How often is it easy to be involved in grave crimes, which are considered by us either light or nothing! because we do many good things, yet not with a good mind; we praise many, not for the sake of their praise, but that we may bite others: and it very often happens that someone does a good thing, not that he may congratulate his brother, but that he may harm another." Apostoli, hom. 11. then, he also sometimes chastises, not that you may amend, but that you may censure. But these counsels are unknown to men."

8. Augustine, after he had cited the words of the Apostle, "Indeed, we too," he says, "do not say that we are perfectly holy; but we beat our breast, and say to God, Be merciful, lest I sin against thee." In verb. Apostoli, Serm. 1. Again; "Examine any very just man in this life; although he may already be worthy of the name of JUST, yet he is not without sin. Indeed, even Job himself (to whom the Lord bore such a testimony that the Devil was envious) what does he say? For who is clean? not even an infant whose life is of one day upon the earth." Idem in Joan. Tract. 41. But plainly many are called just without complaint, which is understood as without crime: for no complaint is just concerning those in human affairs who have no crime." Augustine again, always the same in this argument: "The good," he says, "insofar as they do not sin, are sons of God: but insofar as they do sin (which they testify by their not-lying confession), they are certainly evil." August. Epist. 54. ad Maced. And elsewhere, meeting another objection; "The virgins in the Apocalypse, the Saints, who did not defile themselves with women; and in their mouth was found no lie, because they were irreproachable: surely they were irreproachable for this reason, that they truly reproached themselves: and for this reason no lie was found in their mouth, because if they were to say they have no sins, they would deceive themselves." Idem de peccator. meritis & remiss. Lib. 2. cap. 7.

9. Bede: "This is the only perfection of faith, if, when all that is commanded has been fulfilled, they know themselves to be imperfect, and as long as they are

pilgrims from the Lord, they always remember that evils are within them which they must lament, and always remember that good things are lacking to them, towards which, with the help of His grace, they may advance." In Luc. 17.

We see in the testimony of Jerome, the same saints are at once sinners and just: in that of Chrysostom, the youths are blessed, yet sinning: in that of Augustine, they are just, but not perfectly holy; of the same Augustine, just, yet not without sin: again, finally, they are called irreproachable, and reproachable: of Bede, they are called at once perfect and imperfect. Of this, this one reason can be given, that although the sin of rebellion is in them, it is not, however, reigning: but they snatch away the kingdom of Satan. How these testimonies of the Fathers cohere with Merit of condignity, from an equality of justice before God, our Adversaries have never hitherto been able to explain. There is a point, however, where the Papists respond, that the Fathers, out of ignorance of their own perfection, uttered such sayings, that is, through humility. Which response the Fathers themselves prove false; for they say that the Saints (as Augustine says) testify these things with a not-lying confession: and that the same (as Bernard says) spoke no less truthfully than humbly. For true humility cannot exist, which is joined with a lie, as a matron with a harlot. Before I conclude this section, I will propose to our Papists a certain sketch concerning prayer: so that from this one religious action they may perceive how easy it is to err many times in one pious work. Their author will be the Jesuit Ruiz: "From the common doctrine of the Fathers," he says, "especially of Gregory and Bernard, any good works whatsoever, whether of supererogation or of precept, are for the most part stained by us with venial faults." In 1. Thom. quest. 23. art. 4. disp. 48. sect. 5. Let prayer be an example, which we stain with irreverence, distraction of thoughts, drowsiness, vainglory, lukewarmness, lack of confidence, or confidence in our own effort. Thus he speaks; to which he ought to have added this, (which is under discussion) namely, that it is most foully defiled by this opinion of properly condign merit.

FOURTH THESIS.

The acknowledgment of one's own imperfection can be a spur to more zealous progress in true piety.

SECTION XII.

Certainly that proverbial saying which Christ used, "They that are whole need not a physician," implies that those who seem to themselves to be whole, although perhaps they may have been seized by a lethal disease, neglect every aid for their health. Then, when he adds this conclusion, "I came not to call the righteous," he teaches that their madness is similar, who, while they Pharisaically think themselves to be perfectly just, seek help from no other source. But those who are conscious of their own imperfection, strive the more urgently in prayers before God, that strength might be supplied to them, so that they may

progress more and more. It also sometimes happens that those who perceive themselves to be stumbling or tripping in the way, renew their course more vehemently and accelerate more swiftly. Let him who wishes consult all histories, both Sacred and Ecclesiastical; I will boldly say, he will find none to have existed more perfect or worthy in the practice of piety than those who confessed their imperfections, and, so to speak, their own unworthiness. Hence, surely, are those sighs of Abraham, "I, who am but dust and ashes," Genesis 18:27, and of Jacob, "I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies," Genesis 32:10. I pass over Job, the three youths, Daniel, and others, living and illustrious stars of sanctity, of whom there is more lengthy mention in the Scriptures. Let us return to the ancient Fathers, whose preceding examples can be a lesson to us, how much this confession of our infirmity contributes to the increase of piety; according to that saying of Bede in the preceding section, "Men who feel evils in themselves, advance to better things, with God's help." Similarly Fulgentius, chap. 19. sect. 3. Finally, unless the acknowledgment of our imperfection were a help to us for true piety, these words would never have been consigned to the most holy Gospel of Christ, "When you pray, say, Forgive us our debts." Where, first, the Author who spoke was Christ, who is truth itself. Second, when He said, "When you pray," he was addressing his disciples, who were most instructed in the school of piety. Third, "Forgive DEBTS." Therefore, they were not altogether free from offenses. But when and how often were they to pray? "WHEN," he says, "you pray": to signify that as often as they pray, they have need of this petition and supplication. Nor, however, do we strip good works of their dignity.

On the dignity of good works

FIRST THESIS.

Protestants profess a truer and more illustrious dignity of good works than the Papists are accustomed to.

SECTION XIII.

Good works receive a twofold dignity: one from the principle of their operation, which is the Holy Spirit: the other from the state of the one operating, which is the condition of adoption through Christ Jesus. First, concerning the principle. In every truly Christian man there is a twofold man: the internal and the external; that is, the carnal and the spiritual. From this we discern two principles of action in one and the same good work. The first is the Spirit of God, from which a good work is made Spiritual, Supernatural, and pleasing to God; whence that voice of the Apostle, "The good that I do." The other is our limping Nature; whence that other dissonant voice, "How to perform I find not." Now, indeed, of the dignity which the Papists attribute to their good works, they arrogate a part to themselves and their free will: whereas Protestants ascribe the dignity of supernatural goodness, however great it may be, to the Divine operation. Concerning which, more copiously above. The second consideration is of the

person operating, as to the state of adoption, from which he who performs good works has a right properly hereditary only to eternal life: so say the Protestants: (but the Papists claim for themselves from their works an equally proper mercenary right) not that we should or wish to deny that a Christian can do good works with a view to the reward of eternal life, provided he understands the reward to be of Divine munificence and liberality, and not without properly condign merit and equality: which the ancient Fathers utterly rejected, because eternal life is above the condignity of the work: as above, chap. 13. If all Protestants, gathered into one Synod, should wish to devise a refutation of the Papist doctrine concerning reward, with respect to inheritance; they could not, I think, produce a more accurate and clear one than is the very opinion of the Jesuit Lorinus, worthy to be impressed upon the memories of all readers: "There is another reason," he says, "why the name of INHERITANCE befits blessedness, because it depends especially on the grace of God, and we enter into the labors and merits of Christ." in Act. Apost. 20. 32. Again, "Our same Essential inheritance," he says, "comes to us by the death and merit of Christ, and we are called Co-heirs of Christ, who died for us, inasmuch as he merited for us, that what he had by NATURE, we might acquire as INHERITED, that is, procured by his death." These things are very much in agreement with our preceding reasons deduced from the Fathers. For if Essential blessedness is called an inheritance, for the reason that it depends especially on grace; then surely it cannot properly be called a Reward, which is owed to works. Then, if this inheritance was obtained for us by the merits of Christ, certainly our works, by which we acquire it, are not properly meritorious. Lastly, if we acquire that inheritance only from the proper merits of Christ for us; then this does not happen because Christ merited for us the power of meriting eternal life: concerning which we have discoursed most copiously above.

SECOND THESIS.

Those who rely on the dignity of hereditary Sonship are much more zealous for true piety than those who depend on the meritorious virtue of Servants.

SECTION XIV.

It might seem to be of a servile and rustic mind for anyone to doubt this Thesis: therefore, we shall not be lengthy in its confirmation. The Apostle, in Romans 8:17, that he might provoke and lead Christians to the summit and height of piety, which is martyrdom itself, borrows a reason from hereditary right: "If children," he says, "then heirs: heirs indeed of God, and co-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." From which we may learn that Martyrdom for Christ is owed to him, not meritorious; because (as Augustine and Prosper said above) Christ had first purchased this inheritance for the sons of God by his death. Then Cyprian; "I remember with great praise certain ones who worked gloriously, who yet imputed all their good work to God." Ambrose; "God therefore calls us Sons and Heirs, that he may

make us more ready to obey him." Nazianzen raises his voice higher, and when he had said that Servants are μικροψύχους (small-souled), to whom it seems a fine thing merely to avoid punishment, and that Mercenaries are μισθωτούς (hired hands), whose purpose is also to aspire to a reward; finally, he says that Sons are θεοφιλεῖς (lovers of God), because they reverence God the Father, and apply themselves to good works, even if no gain is to come to them from thence. The testimonies of these Fathers are found entire, above, chap. 13, sect. 4.

THIRD THESIS.

A Type of the preceding Truth in the Israelites.

SECTION XV.

To the Israelites, for many ages before they were born, the Land of Canaan was destined by the express covenant of God; to which, however, they did not arrive at last without the forty years' weariness of the journey, not without the most grievous hardships in the desert, not without the sharpest battles with the enemy. Yet not by these means (we say), as by meritorious conditions, did they obtain that inheritance: for, lest this opinion should occupy anyone's mind, God meets them with a certain tacit and chiding reproof, Psalm 44:3, "Not by thine own arm didst thou get this land for thyself." In this type, it will be permitted to us to contemplate the true hereditary property; and the necessity of acquiring it through works, even sometimes not without sweat and blood, yet without the condignity of meriting.

On the progress of true piety in particular,

FIRST THESIS.

Gratitude towards God is the mother of all true piety; from the Scriptures, and the Fathers.

SECTION XVI.

Our Adversaries must be asked again and again to observe with us the Dialectic of the Holy Spirit in exhorting and attracting men to every kind of virtue, from our gratitude for the mere mercy of God. 1 Corinthians 6:20. "For you are bought with a great price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." And Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice to God, etc." We have very many testimonies of the same kind on record; by which it may be clear that there is no other Argument in the Scriptures more frequent, stronger, or more persuasive for leading men who are to be justified from impiety, or for confirming and perfecting the justified in the profession of sanctity. But we have no business here (lest our Adversaries not know this) with obstinate men, hardened in sin (whether they be Papists or Protestants), who, as the Apostle says, "turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness," Epistle of Jude, verse 4. For

this our disputation is instituted concerning bees, not spiders. But have the Fathers kept silent their judgment here? Indeed, they have plainly trumpeted the same truth. Namely, Fulgentius: "Thanks are to be given to God, inasmuch as he grants to us that we may work well, lest we be ungrateful for his gifts: and pains must be taken, that we may advance to better things, lest (let the Adversaries hear) we fall into deadly pride, if we think our conduct to be in every respect perfect." Epist. 4. ad Prob. de compunct. cordis, cap. 7. Likewise Basil: "Perfect and entire glorying is in God, when one is not exalted on account of his own righteousness, but knows that he is justified by the righteousness of Christ alone." supra, cap. 19. sect. 3. To this is added Chrysostom: "The memory of benefits is sufficient to exhort us to the love of God, and to increase it daily." There is a more ample recitation of these in the preceding sections. But Augustine is most worthy to add the final word, who, on those words of Luke 12:48, TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN, OF HIM MUCH SHALL BE REQUIRED, says, "Therefore, O Lord, it is fitting for me to be so much the more grateful and devoted to you, and to exist more ready to serve; inasmuch as I see myself more obliged for all your benefits."

SECOND THESIS.

Protestants have fought with the same Arguments against Merit of condignity, as an enemy of gratitude and true piety; which the ancient Fathers often used to promote piety.

SECTION XVII.

Merit of condignity, which consists in an equality of justice before God, the holy Fathers, most celebrated heralds of truth, have already slain above with their most accurate votes.

1. From the fact that every good work is a debt to God: from which (as regards piety) they inferred, that men, not weighing their own merits, by spontaneous service should always increase grace with new zeal. (above, chap. 9.)

2. They also brandished another weapon against the condignity of Merit, because, forsooth, a good work (even if it be the death of a martyr) profits God nothing. From which, however, they incite men as to undergo the most honorable work of Martyrdom, because Christ had first purchased their death for their salvation with his own blood. (above, chap. 15.)

3. They argued against the Merit of a work for eternal life, as of condignity, for the reason that eternal life is above the condignity of any work: by which reasoning they inflamed the minds of Christians to extinguish all the flames of persecution with spiritual fortitude. (above, chap. 14.)

4. Indeed, (to return to the very mother pregnant with every kind of piety) the holy Fathers felt that the properties of gratitude consist chiefly in this, that we acknowledge we cannot give worthy thanks to God; but that, with no merits of ours demanding it, we receive the benefits of God. (above, chap. 19.)

5. Finally, they thought it pertained to this gratitude that we should establish among ourselves that God rewards our works out of kindness and condescension (above, chap. 10), and that God is not properly our Debtor (above, chap. 11), and that men should be so much the more thankful and devoted to God, and more ready to serve, the more they know themselves to be obliged to God for all benefits. By each of these points they undermined the very opinion of Merit of condignity: even then when they judged that others ought especially to be instructed unto piety.

Conclusion.

Pope Gregory the Great, concerning a similar kind of spiritual pride: "Eleazar," he says, "in battle struck down an elephant, but fell under the very one he killed. Thus are those who, overcoming vices, succumb by pride under the very thing they subdue." Lib. 19. in Job. cap. 17 "For he dies, as it were, under the enemy he lays low, who is puffed up concerning the fault he overcomes." Thus he speaks. But what more detestable pride can there be, than that which not only claims for itself too much of the Grace for overcoming vices, but also demands the Glory of eternal life from an equality of justice, and decrees that it is owed to itself by condignity, and pertinaciously defends it?

To the Author of every good work, to God alone, By whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, be glory forever. AMEN. Romans 11:36.

THE END.

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