

LECTURE LIII

JUSTIFICATION.—Continued.

SYLLABUS.

6. State the general argument, (against Moralists, Socinians, Pelagians, &c.,) to prove that works cannot justify
Turretin, Loc. xvi, Qu. 2. Owen, chs. 10, 14. Dick, Lects. 69, 70. Hill, bk, v, ch. 2. Dr. A. Alexander, Tract.
7. How then reconcile James and Paul, Rom., chs. 3, 4; and James, ch. 2?
Owen, ch. 20. Turretin, Qu. 8. Dick, Lect. 71. Watson's Theol Inst., ch. 23, § 4.
8. Refute the lower Arminian scheme; that Christ only purchased for us a milder law, which accepts penitence and evangelical obedience, instead of perfect obedience.
Owen, ch. 11. Dick, Lect. 70. Waston's Theol. Inst., as above, and § 3 Witsius, bk. i, ch. 9.
9. State and refute the Wesleyan, (or higher Arminian theory), that faith is imputed as our righteousness.
Turretin, Qu. 7, § 1-14. Owen, ch. 3. Dick, Lect. 71. Watson, Theol. Inst., ch. 23, § 3. Hodge, Theol. p, iii, ch. 17, § 8.
10. Complete, then, the argument of our 4th question, by showing what is the meritorious ground of justification.
See Owen. chs. 16, 17. Turretin, Qu. 3, § 11-21. Hill, Dick, Alexander as above. Hodge, as above, § 4.

THE particular phase in which the Romish Church foists the merit of works into justification, has been considered in discussing its nature. But now that we approach the subject of its grounds, it is necessary that we study the general reasons for the exclusion of works, in more comprehensive views. We find the Apostle, Rom. iii : 20, declaring : "Therefore, by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

1. To this agree the views expressed by all the sacred writers of the Old and New Testaments. See Ps. cxxx : 3, 4; lxxi : 16; cxliii : 2; Dan. ix : 18; Job xl : 4. These instances are peculiarly instructive, as showing that Paul broaches no new doctrine; and especially as excluding the Romish pretext, that only works of the carnal nature are excluded; because the Psalmist and Job are the very men who, in other places, make most earnest protestations of their sincerity and piety. Then our Saviour teaches the same doctrine. Luke xvii : 10; xviii : 14. And the Epistles likewise. Rom. iii : 28; iv : 6; xi : 6; Gal. iii : 11; Eph. ii : 8, 9, &c., &c.

2. Justification cannot be by the law, "because by the law is the knowledge of sin." That law which has already condemned cannot be the means of our acquittal. See Eph. ii : 3. The battle is already hopelessly lost, the die cast, and cast against us on this

Because the Law
Convicts.

scheme. If it is to be retrieved, some other method must be found¹ for doing it.

3. The Law of God is absolute; as the transcript of God's moral perfections, and the rule of a perfectly holy God, who cannot favour any sin, it requires a perfect, universal, and perpetual obedience during the time of the probation. See Matt. xxii : 37, 38, &c.; James ii : 10; Gal. iii: 10. Every precept applicable to our condition must be kept; they must be kept all the time; and must all be always kept with perfectly proper motives or intentions! There is not a man upon the earth who, when his conscience is convinced of sin by the Holy Ghost, and enlightened to apprehend the majesty and purity of his Judge, would be willing to risk his acquittal on the best act he ever performed in his life. But see I Jno. iii: 20.

4. While sincerely good works are an all-important part of our salvation, they cannot be the ground of our justification, because they are a result thereof. It is by coming into a state of favour with God, that we acquire from His grace spiritual strength to do anything truly good. See Jno. xv: 1-5; Rom. v: 1-2; vi: 3, 4, 6; Gal. ii: 20. All other works which man does are carnal, selfish, or slavish, and wholly unmeritorious before a perfect God. Hence, it is preposterous to attribute to our works any procuring influence as to our justification.

Indeed, the exclusion of works by Paul is so emphatic, that there must be some evasion adopted, to limit his meaning in order to leave a loophole for doubt. Those evasions we have discussed in detail. We would remark generally, in closing this topic, that the fair way to judge what Paul meant by "works of law," is to find out what an intelligent Pharisee (he was reared one, and was now debating with them), would mean by "the Law," when named without qualification. The answer is plain, the Torah, the whole Law of the Pentateuch, moral, civic and ceremonial. And this law was conceived of, not merely as a set of carnal ordinances, or dry forms, but as a rule spiritually holy and good. See Ps. xix : 7; i: 2. Nor are we to conceive that the intelligent Jews thought of an obedience to this law merely unspiritual, slavish and carnal. They comprehended such precepts as Deut. vi : 4, 5; Ps. li : 6, to be an important part of the Law: and the evidence is, in such passages as Mark xii : 28-33; x: 19, 20. This certainly is the sense in which St. Paul employed the phrase, "works of the law," when he excludes them from justification, in his epistles. See Rom. iii : 20, with vii : 1-12; viii : 3, 4; ix : 31; x : 3.

The Scripture which has been supposed to offer the greatest difficulty against Paul's view, is Jas. ii : 12

7. James ii:12-26.

to end. On this it may be remarked, for

introduction: that if there is a real contradiction, both Epistles cannot be regarded as canonical; our alternative is to reject Paul or James, or else to show their difference only seeming. Further: when one writer treats a given topic formally and professedly, (as Paul obviously does justification in Rom.), and another only incidentally, it is out of all reason to force the seeming sense of the latter on the former.

It is well remarked by Owen, that James' scope is totally different from Paul's. James' is, to defend justification by faith from an Antinomian perversion. (See ver. 14.) Paul's is, to prove, against Legalists, what is the meritorious ground of justification. Rom. i: 17. Again: the faith of which James speaks, is a dead faith: such a faith as Paul himself would judge non-justifying; that of which Paul speaks, when he makes it the sole instrument of justification, is a living faith, infallibly productive of good works. See Rom. vi. And third: the justification of which James speaks, presents a different phase from Paul's, namely: not God's secret and sovereign judicial act, transferring the sinner from a state of condemnation at the time of his conversion, but that act declaratively manifested at any and every subsequent time, especially at the day of judgment. That this is James' meaning, is argued by Owen irrefragably from vv. 21-23. The apostle says, Abraham's justification by works, when he proposed to sacrifice Isaac, was a fulfilling of that Scripture, (Gen. xv: 6), which says: "He believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness." For that justification by faith was notoriously some thirty years before the offering of Isaac. The latter transaction must therefore be the fulfilling of the former statement, in the sense that Abraham's justification was then not originated, but evinced. See close of ver. 23. These three remarks do sufficiently show, that James ought not to be held as contradicting Paul, when their scope and use of terms are so very different.

But a juster view of the matter will be gained by connecting our view of James ii: 14-26, with the other passages, where a similar, seeming difference is presented—e. g., Ps. xv: 1, 2; xxiv: 3, 4; Matt. xxv: 34, 35, 41, 42; Jno. xv: 8, 14; Acts x: 35; I Jno. iii: 7. The amount of all these texts is, that a just life is the test of a justified state; and the general remark is obviously true, that this is a very different thing from asserting that the former is the procuring cause of the latter. Fruit is the test of healthy life in a fruit tree: not therefore the cause of that life. These simple ideas go far to explain the seeming contrariety of these texts to former citations. But perhaps the application of such an explanation to Jas. ii: 14-26, will be attended in the student's mind, with some difficulty, just here. Are we dealing fairly with the text, to suppose that

James' Scope and Terminology Different.

Work Essential as Sign of Justification, Worthless as Cause.

James does indeed use the word justify, a word of meaning so exact, definite and thoroughly established in Bible usage, in a new sense, without giving us any notice thereof? The exegetical evidence that he does, is well stated by Owen, (above). And the view is greatly strengthened by observing that the difference of meaning is in fact not so great. What is the transaction described, for instance, in Matt. xxv : 34, 35, and how does it differ from the act described in Rom. iii : 28? The latter describes the sinner's justification to God; the former the sinner's justification to God's intelligent creatures, (a more correct statement than Owen's, that it describes his justification by man). Each is a declaratory and forensic act; but the one is secret as yet to God and the justified soul; the other is a proclamation of the same declaration to other fellow-creatures. And it is most proper that the latter should be based on the personal possession of a righteous character: in order that the universe may see and applaud the correspondence between God's justifying grace and His sanctifying grace; and thus the divine holiness may be duly magnified.

A scheme of justification has been advanced by many of the lower Arminians, which is, in its practical results, not far removed from the Popish. It represents that the purpose of Christ's work for man was not to procure a righteousness to be imputed to any individual believers; but to offer to God such a mediatorial work, as would procure for believers in general the repeal of the old, absolute and unbending law as a rule of justification, and the substitution of a milder law, one which demands only sincere evangelical obedience. The thing then, which is imputed for the sinner's justification, is the whole merit of his sincere faith, humble penitence, and strivings to do his duty, which God is pleased, for Christ's sake, to accept in lieu of a perfect righteousness. These theologians would say, with the Romanists, and higher Arminians, that our "faith is accounted as our righteousness;" but they would define justifying faith as a seminal principle of good works, and inclusive of all the obedience which was to flow from it. The point of inosculation of this, and the Popish theory, (determining them to be the same in essential character) is here. They both conceive Christ as having procured for man (in general) a new probation, evangelical indeed, instead of absolute; but in which the sinner still has his own proximate merit of justification to work out, by something he does. Whereas, the Bible conception is, that the Second Adam perfected, for His people, the line of probation dropped by Adam, by purchasing for them a title to eternal life, and covering also all guilt of the breaches of the first covenant. The student cannot discriminate these two conceptions too carefully. The former is "another gospel." It robs us of the very essence of

8. Christ did not
Lower the Law.

a salvation by grace. It violates that fundamental principle laid down by the Apostle, Rom. xi : 6 : that the two plans of adoption unto life, the legal and gospel plans, cannot be combined. The attempt to do so confounds both. In one word : since man's will, in its best estate is, *per se*, fallible, if the plan of our salvation is that of a new probation by obedience, and if God's grace in regeneration and sanctification is only synergistic, then no believer is ever sure of his redemption. Our view of Christ's substitution under the Covenant of Paradise determines our view of justification. Thus : Adam by nature was righteous, innocent and guiltless ; but not yet adopted. The first covenant was given him, that he might by it earn his adoption of life, his elevation from the state of a (holy) servant, to that of a son. He failed in the undertaking, and fell, with his race, into the state of an enemy, both corrupted and guilty. The second Adam steps into the place vacated by the fall of the first, takes up the work where he dropped it ; and, while He makes expiation for the guilt, original and actual purchases for all believers a perfect title, not to restoration to that mutable state from which Adam fell, but to that state of adoption, to which he had aspired. My desire is, that the student adopt this view as the touchstone of his doctrine.

I would remark, at the outset, that it comes with a very poor grace from these men to object to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, because it was not literally and personally wrought by us. It seems they consider that it is more consistent in God to account a believer's righteousness to him as that which it is not, thus basing his justification on a falsehood, than to account the legal benefits of Christ's righteousness to him for what it truly is—i. e., a perfect righteousness !

I refer here to the favourite cavil against imputation ; that it dishonours God, by representing Him as basing His judgment on a legal fiction. But I retort with the question : Which is more a legal fiction ; the Arminian scheme, which makes God adjudge a partial righteousness a complete one, *per acceptilationem* ; or ours, which represents Him as admitting an appropriate substitution, by which a perfect righteousness is rendered in the sinner's stead, and the law gloriously satisfied ? There is, in fact, no legal fiction in this whatever ; unless men mean to denounce the Scriptural doctrine of substitution. God's judgment does not assert the perfect righteousness as done by the believer ; which it was not ; but as done for the believer ; which it was. I explained the true nature of "satisfaction," by the parable of the landlord and his bankrupt tenant. The bankrupt's brother, who is his surety, is a competent and faithful carpenter. As the landlord is building extensively, the surety proposes to pay the whole debt in faithful labour, at so much *per diem*, the fair market price of such labour. When

that labour is all rendered, where is the legal fiction in the creditor's giving receipt in full? But had the surety proposed that he should receive receipt in full for some half-worthless script belonging to his bankrupt brother, this would have been a legal fiction indeed!

Against this form of the Arminian scheme, I present the following:

1. The source and basis of God's moral law is His own moral character; which is necessary and immutable. Supposing creatures to exist, there are certain relations between them and God, which cannot be other than they are, God continuing what He is. Among these must obviously be the essential moral relations of the law. These flow, not from any positive institution of God alone, but also from the very relations of creatures and the attributes of God. And if any moral relations are necessary, the requirement of a universal obedience is clearly so; because our Saviour represents the obligation to love God with all the mind, soul, heart, and strength, and our neighbor as ourself, as the very essence of that law. Hence, the idea that God can substitute an imperfect law for one perfect, is a derogation to His perfection. Either the former standard required more than was right, or the new one requires less than is right; and in either case God would be unrighteous. That Christ should perform all His work as an inducement to His father to perpetrate such unrighteousness, would be derogatory to Him. Hence, we find that He expressly repudiates such a design. Matt. v : 17. And here we may add, that the Bible nowhere indicates such a relaxation of the believer's law of living. David, a justified person, represents the rule by which he regulated himself, as "perfect," "pure," and "right," and "very righteous." Ps. xix : 7, 8; cxix : 140; Jas. i : 25; ii : 10. Everywhere, the law which we are still required to obey, is the same law which, by its perfectness, condemned us. Practically, the allowance of an imperfect standard of obedience would be ruinous; because man ever falls below his standard.

It is objected again: God has changed His law, substituting certain simpler and easier precepts, in place of old ones; as in abrogating the burdensome ritual of Moses, and giving in its place the easy yoke of the New Testament ceremonial. We reply: those were only positive, not eternal and natural precepts of morality; the obligation to keep them only arose from God's command to do so; and hence, when the command was retracted, there was no longer any sin in their omission. To retract such commands is far different from making that no longer sin, which is in its nature sin. Again, it has been objected, that God's permission has been given, in some cases,

Proofs. 1. The Law Unchangeable as God.

Asserted Changes of Law Explained.

to do what, without such permission, would have been, in its nature sin; as when Abraham was directed to slay Isaac, and and Israel the Canaanites. It seems to me surprising that these cases should be advanced with any confidence in this argument, or that they should be supposed by any to prove that the intrinsic relations of morality are alterable by God's mere positive precepts; or that so acute a writer as Mansel, in his "Limits of Religious Thought," should feel occasion to take refuge from the exigencies of the case, in the inability of human reason to conceive the infinite and absolute Being fully. The truth is, that in those cases there is no alteration whatever of any principle of natural morality, by which God has ever regulated Himself, or His human subjects. It always has been right for God to slay any of His rebel creatures, whom He pleases; He kills some thirty millions of them each year, by various means. And whenever God appoints man to slay it is no sin for him to do so, be it in the case of magistrates, self-defence, or defensive war. So that God's appointment of a man to take a given life renders it perfectly moral to take it. An instance of such an appointment is therefore no instance at all, of a conversion of what is naturally sinful into right. As fairly might one say, that when the master tells his servants that the unauthorized use of his substance is theft, and afterwards directs one of them to take and consume some fruit of his field, he has undertaken to alter the fundamental relations of morality! We repeat: there is, and can be no case, in which God has made that which is naturally wrong to be right.

2. Scripture represents the Bible saints as repudiating all their own works, even while they protest their affectionate sincerity in them. See Job xl : 4, &c. Moreover, their consciences rebuke them for every shortcoming from perfect love and holiness. Surely that which cannot justify us to our own consciences, will hardly answer with God! We appeal to each man's conscience: when it is enlightened by the Holy Ghost, does not it bear out this experience of Bible saints?

3. By such a scheme of justification Christ's work, instead of resulting in a complete harmonizing of God's absolute holiness and perfect Law, in the sinner's acceptance, would leave the law forever ruptured and dislocated. We are taught in Scripture that Christ was to "magnify the Law, and make it honourable;" "that mercy and truth were to meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other"; that He "came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill." Now, if He has procured the abrogation of that perfect law, during each believer's Christian life, there is a demand of the law which remains unmet; and that forever. The doctrine makes a piece of patchwork: men do not sew new cloth on an old garment.

Saints Strive to Keep
the Perfect Law.

The Law Would
Not be Magnified.

We conclude then, that the two methods of obtaining an adoption of life cannot be compounded; that, namely, by a probation of works; and that by gospel grace. The adoption of the one must exclude the other. This conclusion raises at once the question; Has not the Covenant of Works, then, been abrogated? To this many of the Reformed reply: Yes: and they refer us, for proof, to such passages as Heb. viii: 13. Arminius also asserted an abrogation of the legal covenant with Adam, but it was in a far different sense, and for a different scope from those of the Reformed. Hence has arisen confusion and intermingling of views, which calls for careful disentangling. Arminius claims that the legal covenant was wholly abrogated at Adam's fall; because first, the promise of life through that covenant was then revoked, and where there is no compact there can be no obligation; because second, man could not be justly bound to obedience in a state of orphanage where God neither promised nor bestowed the gracious help essential to enable him to a true and hearty service; and because, third: it would be derogatory to God's wisdom, holiness and majesty, to practice such a farce as calling the depraved creature to a service of holy and entire love; the only one a spiritual God can condescend to accept. The use which his party designed to make of their conclusion, was this: In order that fallen man may be justly brought again under obligation to obey, the law of a new covenant must be enacted for him, to which his impaired powers may be adequate, and the imposition of which must be accompanied by the enabling helps of common grace. Thus he sought to prepare the way for the theory of justification which we have been discussing under our eighth head.

Now, the Reformed divines of Holland easily refuted this kind of abrogation of the legal covenant by such facts as these. Man's obligation to obey never was founded merely in covenant between him and his Maker. It is founded immutably in the nature of God, and of His rational creature, and in their natural relation as Master and servant. The covenant only added a reinforcement to that original obligation. Supposing the covenant completely abrogated, the original bond of duty would remain. Second: The inability of will, into which the race has fallen, is self-induced, and is itself criminal. Hence it does not at all relieve man of his just obligation. Third: It is one thing to say, it would be derogatory to God to allow Himself to be cheated by a heartless and hostile service from corrupt man; but wholly another thing to say, as Arminius does, that man's criminal and voluntary hostility has stripped God of the proper right to demand of him the hearty and loving service naturally due. And the whole argument of Arminius is shown to be preposterous, by this result: That it makes the sinner gain emancipation from righteous obligation, by sinning. There is no

principle of law clearer than this; that no man is entitled to plead his own wrong-doing. Posit the conclusion of Arminius; and it will be only necessary for every creature in the universe to make himself vile, in order to strip God of His whole right of rule. That is, the servant's wrong may dethrone his rightful Lord! Once more: "where there is no law, there is no transgression." After obligation has ceased, of course, there is no more sin or guilt, and ought to be no more punishment. Thus we should reach this amazing result: Only let the creature make Himself wicked enough; and God will no longer have a right to punish him for his new wickedness.

The abrogation of the legal covenant in that sense, then, is absurd and unscriptural; and the student is placed at the proper point of view for appreciating the arguments by which we have above refuted that scheme of justification.

To what extent, then, does the consistent Reformed theologian hold the old covenant to be abrogated? The answer may be given by a series of propositions, which will commend themselves to belief by their mere statement. The Ruler's claims to obedience are not abrogated by the subjects' falling by transgression, under penal relations to Him: So, all moralists and jurists hold, of all governments. God's law being the immutable expression of His own perfections, and the creature's obligation to obey being grounded in his nature and relation to God, it is impossible that any change of the legal status under any covenant imaginable, legal or gracious, should abrogate the authority of the law as a rule of acting for us. Third: It remains true, under all dispensations, that the "wages of sin is death." Fourth: It remains forever true, that a perfect obedience is requisite to purchase eternal life. And such a compliance is rendered to the covenant of works for our justification, namely, by our Surety. Let us then beware how we speak of the covenant of works as in every sense abrogated; for it is under that very covenant that the second Adam has acted, in purchasing our redemption. That is the covenant which He actually fulfills, for us. Again, it is that covenant under which the sinner out of Christ now dies, just as the first sinner was condemned under it. The law is still in force, then, in three respects: as the dispensation under which our Substitute acts for us: as the rule of our own obedience; and as the rule by which transgressors dying out of Christ are condemned. Some, even, of the Reformed, have been so incautious as to conclude, that by the rule that "a compact broken on one side, is broken for both sides," transgression abrogates the legal covenant wholly, as soon as it is committed. One plain question exposes this: By what authority, then, does the Ruler punish the transgressor after the law is broken? If, for instance, a murder abrogated the legal covenant between the murderer and the commonwealth, from the hour it was committed, I presume that he would

be exceedingly mystified to know under what law he was going to be hung! The obvious statement is this: The transgression has indeed terminated the sinner's right to the sanction of reward; but it has not terminated his obligation to obey, nor to the penal sanction.

This last remark shows us, in what sense the covenant of works was abrogated when Adam fell—and this is obviously the sense of Paul. The proposal of life by the law is at an end for the fallen; they have forever disabled themselves for acquiring, under that law, the sanction of reward, by their own works. Hence, God, in His mercy, withdraws that covenant so far as it is a dispensation for that result; and He substitutes for all who are in Christ, the covenant of grace. Compare Gal. v : 3; iii : 10; Matt. v : 18; Rom. vi : 14, 15.

The Wesleyan divines, while they disclaim and argue against the imputation of Christ's righteousness, also discard the scheme we have just considered. They say that faith is imputed as the believer's justifying righteousness. Justification is, with them, simply pardon. They define faith properly as a simply receiving and resting upon Christ for salvation, and they earnestly disclaim the Socinian confusion adopted by so many of the Continental Arminians, which includes in the justifying power of faith the evangelical obedience of which it is operative. If asked whether Christ has not made satisfaction for sin, they fully assent, and they say in many forms, that pardon is "through His blood," "in His name" and "for His sake alone." If we ask, "How is it then, that an act whose organic virtue in the matter of our justification is a simple receptivity, an act which brings nothing to satisfy the claims of law, but only receives, can be accounted to us as a substitute for a whole and complete righteousness?" They reply that this is the gracious effect of Christ's sacrifice; this is what His precious blood procures for us; and this is the sense in which pardon is of free grace. Thus they suppose they escape the "absurdities of imputation," and still exalt the absolute freeness of Gospel redemption.

In this view, the doctrine is open to all the objections urged against the one just refuted above, and Makes Faith a Work. in greater force; for it represents God's imputation as a most glaring violation of truth, in accounting not the imperfect duties of a Christian life, but one imperfect act as a complete obedience! And while it seems to repudiate works, and establish faith, it really foists in again the doctrine of human merit and works; for faith is also an act, an act of obedience to law. (Jno. vi : 29; 1 Jno. iii : 23), and if rendered as a matter of righteousness before God, or, indeed, for anything except the mere instrument of accepting Christ, it is a work. But faith and work should be opposed.

Again: the idea that faith is accounted to us as our justifying righteousness, contradicts, in two ways, that nature which Scripture attributes to it. It is said in many places, that righteousness is by faith, (Rom. i: 17, etc., etc). Now, then, it cannot be identical with it. Moreover, faith is defined as an act purely receptive, and receptive of Christ our righteousness. Jno. i: 12. Now, that it should be a righteousness when its very nature is to embrace a righteousness, is as contradictory, as that the beggar's confessions of destitution can constitute a price to purchase relief.

And last: the whole question is decisively settled against this theory, as well as against the Popish, and all other false ones, which make the procuring cause of our justification to be, either in whole or in part, anything wrought by us, or wrought in us, in all those passages which declare that we are justified on account of God's righteousness, and sometimes it is God's righteousness as contrasted with ours. See Rom. i: 17; iii: 22; Phil. iii: 9. How can these expressions be evaded? The righteousness by which we are justified is not ours, but God's—therefore not constituted of any acts or graces of ours.

But, says the Arminian, it is vain to speculate against the express words of Scripture; and here we have it, four times over, Gen. xv: 6; Rom. iv.: 3, 5, 22, 24. We reply that they clearly overstrain and force the text. It is true, that in Gen. xv: 6, the construction is, "His faith was accounted righteousness (no preposition). Now, suppose that in the other three cases in the New Testament, the construction were even as difficult as they suppose in this: would not a fair criticism say, that these somewhat peculiar statements should not be strained into a sense contradictory to the current of plainer expressions elsewhere, which always say we obtain righteousness by our faith! And as Calvin well argues, on Gen. xv: 6, when the very context clearly shows that the whole amount of Abraham's faith in this case was to embrace a set of promises tendered to him, since it did not bring anything on its own part to the transaction, but merely received what God brought, in His promise; the sense must not and cannot be strained to make the receptive act the meritorious cause of the bestowal which itself merely accepted. There is obviously just such an embracing of the result in the instrument, as occurs in Jno. xii: 50; xvii: 3. But our case is far stronger than even this. The Septuagint and Paul, an inspired interpreter, uniformly give the sense, *πίστις λογίζεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην*. This all these Arminian interpreters, with a perverse inattention or ignorance, persist in translating "faith is accounted as righteousness;" the English ones being probably misled by the occasional use of our preposition, "for" in the

Faith only Re-
ceives.

The Righteousness Im-
puted is God's.

Wesleyan Proo f-
texts Considered.

sense of our "as" (e. g., "I reckon him for a valuable citizen.") But the Greek preposition, *εως*, with the accusative, rarely carries that sense. See one instance, Rom. ix: 8; and its obvious force in this passage is, that of designed results. "His faith is imputed in order to the attaining of righteousness"—i. e., Christ's. This gives faith its proper instrumental office. Compare Rom. x: 10. *Πιστεύεται εις δικαιοσυνην*. Consult Harrison's Greek Prep., and cases, p. 226. Our argument for the Apostle's construction is greatly strengthened by observing that the Hebrew Syntax (see Nordheimer), expressly recognizes the construction of a noun objective after a verb, to express this very sense of intended result.

In conclusion of this head, the Scriptures clearly assign that office, on the whole, to faith. This appears, first, from its nature, as receptive of a promise. The matter embraced must of course be contributed by the promiser. The act of the receiver is not procuring, but only instrumental. Second: all the locutions in which faith is connected with justification express the instrumental idea by their fair grammatical force. Thus, the current expressions are justified *πιστει* (Ablative), *δια πιστεως*, *εξ πιστεως*. Never once are we said to be justified *δια πιστεω*; the construction which is commonly used to express the relation of Christ's righteousness, or blood, to our justification.

We have now passed in review all the prominent theories which deny the truth. By precluding one, and then another, we have shut the inquirer up to the Bible doctrine, that the sinner is justified "only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us." The remaining affirmative argument for this proposition is therefore very short and simple; it will consist in a grouping together of the Bible statements; so classified as to exhibit the multitude of proof-texts by a few representatives:

1. Our justification is gratuitous. Rom. iii: 24; Eph. ii: 5; Tit. iii: 7.
2. Christ is our Surety. Heb. vii: 22; and our sins are imputed to Him, that His righteousness may be imputed to us. Is. liii: 6 and 11; 2 Cor. v: 21; 1 Pet. ii: 24.
3. He is our propitiation. Rom. iii: 25; 1 Jno. ii: 2.
4. We are justified through Christ, or for His name, or His sake, or by His blood. Acts x: 43; xiii: 38, 39; Eph. i: 7; iv: 32; Rom. v: 9; 1 Jno. ii: 12.
5. Christ is called "our righteousness." Jer. xxxiii: 6; 1 Cor. i: 30; Rom. x: 4.
6. We are justified by His obedience, or righteousness. Rom. v: 18, 19.
7. The righteousness that justifies us is God's and Christ's, as opposed to ours. Rom. i: 17; iii: 22; Phil. iii: 9.

Let the student weigh these and such like texts, and he will

see accumulative proof of the proposition. In fine; no other construction of the facts coheres with the doctrine of Christ's substitution. Let but the simple ideas, in which all evangelical Christians concur, be weighed; that Christ acted as our surety; that His mediatorial actions were vicarious; that we are justified in Him and for their sake; and we shall see that the doctrine of our catechism is the fair and obvious result. What do men mean by a substitute or vicar? That the acts which he does as such are accounted, as to their legal effect, as the acts of his principal.