

no farther than as he thinks that he sins ; *tantum peccat quis, quantum putat se peccare et non magis*. The illustration of the principle is then given. "If Peter committing fornication think that he sins mortally, then he sins mortally ; if he think that he sins venially, then he sins venially ; but if he think that he sins not at all, then he sins not at all" (vol. ii. page 3).

What, then, is the amount of authority which will warrant one in thinking that in doing a certain action, generally believed to be sinful, he does not sin ? Must many authors concur or several, or on the contrary will one suffice ? Some, he asserts, contend that one will suffice, provided the person believes him to be learned and honest. Moreover, does a person sin if he seek after an author who will allow the act in question, and when he has found him will do the act ? Busenbaum holds that such do not sin, for this reason, that they intend to follow a probable opinion, and Busenbaum is, laments La Quintinye, in the hands of all our men. Hence the doctrine of Probabilism comes to this, that any opinion affirming the lawfulness of an action given by even one teacher whom you esteem learned and honest, warrants you in holding that action as lawful, and that your own estimate *at the time* of its lawfulness or unlawfulness decides your innocence or guilt. But in the sequel it will appear that by many Probabilists, even the guard of your own approbation is withdrawn, that also being overridden by an "authority."

Here is no room for any such principle as this : "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in the thing that he alloweth." If the man's own mind at the moment allow the deed, then he cannot condemn himself, and God will not condemn him. A banker learns that two of his clerks have robbed him, but that one of them, though he had fallen into crime, felt that he was sinning, and now feels that he did sin, but the other has a theory of pay and self-compensation which prevents him from thinking the robbery wrong, and now prevents him from feeling condemned. According to our theory this man is no sinner, the other is a great one, and that just in proportion to his correctness of judgment on the sin of theft. The banker will have his opinion as to which of the two is the more dangerous man in a bank.