

word "impute" means to reckon to the account of any one as a basis of judicial treatment. Such is the meaning of the Greek words *logizomai*, translated "impute" in Rom. iv., and *allogeo* so translated Rom. v. 13, and used in this sense, Philemon 18. What else can be meant when David says, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity?" "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom. iv. 6, 8). What righteousness and whose righteousness is thus imputed so as to be a ground of judicial treatment or complete justification? Surely, none other than "the righteousness of God (provided by God), which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto and upon all that believe," "revealed from faith to faith;" "the obedience of one" by which "many were made righteous." "Impute," then, in the meaning of Scripture and of those who hold to imputation, means no literal transfer of personal qualities; but simply a putting anything to the account of a person as a basis of judicial treatment, whether that thing be literally his own or another's. Nothing more need be said in reference to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer.

In respect to the imputation of the believer's sins to Christ little need be added. He "became sin for us." How? By the literal transfer of its pollution to him? Never! How, then, excepting by its being so reckoned to his account that he became liable to and bore its penalty? And did he not? Did he not "become a curse for us," and "bear our sins?" How, unless in bearing their penalty? "By his stripes are we healed." But how can these inflictions be reconciled with even the appearance of justice if not laid upon him as the bearer of our sins? And if our transgressions were not thus punished in Christ's sufferings and death, must they not be punished in the person of the sinner himself? For must not every transgression "receive its just recompense of reward," either in the person of the sinner or of a fit, willing, and accepted substitute?

This suggests the root of the conflict between what Dr. Hodge and, we think, with him, nearly the whole Christian Church have deemed in one respect the scriptural view, as contrasted with the so-called governmental or expiatory theory of the Atonement. According to the former view, sin is in its own nature evil and detestable. On account of its intrinsic ill-desert it ought to be visited with suffering its "just recompense of reward," either in the person of the transgressor or of a suitable substitute. To leave it unpunished would be an abnormity and cause a fatal lesson in the moral system. All considerations of expediency aside, it is inconceivable that God should treat "the abominable thing which his soul hateth" in the same manner as that holiness without which no man shall see him. Sin must be punished, then, in the person of the transgressor or of a fit and accepted substitute. No doubt the atonement or expiatory sufferings of Christ have wrought a greater impression and influence in the moral universe in favour of holiness and against sin than the eternal punishment of all the saved would have done. But the very possibility of such an impression depends upon the fact (1.) that the punishment from which the sinner is saved is his righteous due, the "just recompense of his sin;" (2.) that, not in violation of justice, but at its behest, this sin, because he freely assumed it, so far as its obligation to punishment was concerned, was imputed, reckoned to the account of Christ, thus suffering, the just for the unjust, that he might "bring us to God," and so declare God's righteousness, that he might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. So justice is satisfied, being preserved immaculate; while mercy triumphs, not through the subversion, but the vindication of it. Mercy and truth meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. "Grace reigns through righteousness," not by its overthrow. All the divine perfections are manifested without spot or wrinkle, in matchless harmony and glory:

"Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace."

It is no part of this view, as is often alleged, that the vicarious sufferings of Christ are identical with those of the sinners in whose room He suffers, in kind, intensity, or duration. They are simply the equivalent of them, on account of the infinite dignity of the sufferer. We are not redeemed with corruptible things. The Lord of Glory was crucified for us. He purchased the Church with His own blood. The im-

prisonment of an earthly monarch is more than that of a thousand banditti. Christ suffered no remorse of conscience, as adversaries of this doctrine say it implies. Punishment is evil inflicted by a ruler or law-giver for sin, in vindication of the law violated by it. To say that it may not be transferred to others beyond the literal transgressor on account of a proper relation between the parties constituted voluntarily by them, or otherwise, is to go athwart Scripture, Providence, and the instinctive beliefs of mankind, from that first offence of one which came upon all men to condemnation, through the woes sent upon families and nations for the sins of their heads, to the bloody sweat of Gethsemane and that mysterious outburst of a sinless yet God-forsaken soul. "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

THE WORD, THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.

A missionary at Rome relates the following incidents of the power of the Word of God to convert sinners.

One of the converts, when first presented with a New Testament, said, "Very well; it is the very size for me to make my cigarettes," and so he began to smoke it away. He smoked away all the evangelists, till he was at the tenth chapter of John, when it struck him that he must read a bit of it, for if he didn't there would soon be no more left to read. The first word struck home, and the man read himself into Christ.

A carpenter converted by reading John's gospel, put the little book into a frame instead of the Madonna, from which he could take it down and read it to his visitors.

A secret society of political conspirators, who sought to achieve their purposes by assassination, were in the habit of placing a Bible (as a blind) on the table in the room where they met for deliberation; and one night, when there happened to be little business to transact and they were all rather sleepy, a member of the society opened the Bible, and saw a verse that went right to his heart. He soon returned to the book, and read more of it; and now he is a very earnest follower of the Lord Jesus.

THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES.

It is so common to hear it said that the spirit of the times is hostile to Christianity, that it may not be out of place to inquire how much there may be, in an assertion of that kind.

If, indeed, the spirit of the times is hostile to Christianity, is that anything more or different from what has always been the case? The echo of those ill-omened words, "Ye shall not surely die," has never ceased to resound in the ears of our fallen race. But noisy repetition does not transform that ancient lie into a truth. And very little can now be said in its favor which has not been already said, and perhaps better and more freshly said. It is true that revealed religion is bitterly attacked by some who have a credit for knowledge and worldly wisdom. But it has been assailed by that class from the very first, and over the wreck and ruin of its adversaries it has gone on conquering and to conquer. It may be truthfully said, also, that however eminent its present adversaries may be, yet in point of intellectual force and greatness they belong to a class inferior to those who have sought to overthrow it in other days. Compare, for instance, Huxley, Froude and Spencer, with Hobbes, Rousseau and Voltaire. The noblest triumphs of Christianity have been over the strength of those, compared with whom its present foes appear to be mere pigmies.

Another practical consideration on this question is suggested by the vitality of Christianity as a system, in the times in which we live. All the world-religions in turn wear out and cease to be an aggressive force among men. Christianity, after a historic life of eighteen centuries, is reaching forth its hand in every direction after new conquests. There is no new land discovered to which the missionary does not confidently turn in his labor of love. There is no amount of failure, repulse or hostility which can permanently shut him out from any land or people. And so it always has been. In lands where Christianity seems to have died out, as in France, by what power is it, if not a divine power, by which it revives with greater promise than ever? When Paganism went down, the power of the Empire under Julian could not restore it. When Romanism fell, the power of Jesuitism, added to the prestige of the Pope, can only secure at the

popular election two, out of twelve of the municipal councillors. Its temporal power falls, never to rise again. But in priest-ridden, infidel-ridden Paris the people are now crying for the once rejected word of God. And so it is elsewhere. The activity of Christianity and the successes of Christianity show that it is moving on with powerful stride.

And there is still another consideration, which appeals with conclusive and irresistible force to every Christian. It is the obvious fact, that the necessity of the heart for Christianity is just as great as it ever was, and that there is no substitute for Christianity. Also, that the blessed fruits of Christianity are just as available as ever. What voice in the universe, save one, says, or can say, "I will give you rest!" What hand in the universe, save one, is stretched out to save sinners? What heart in the universe, save one, loves the sinner with an everlasting love? We cannot dispense with a gospel which reveals facts like these. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, are just as precious as they ever were. What has infidelity to offer us for these? Nothing whatever! To the so-called spirit of the time, the meaning of the word "Hope" is utterly unknown. That can be taught only by the spirit of eternity.

Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'll call them vanity and lies,
And bind the gospel to my heart.

—South-Western Presbyterian.

THE THREE BOOKS.

An aged servant of God, who lived in a poor and lonely cottage, always showed so much wisdom and sense when any one asked him for his advice about anything, that the people round about thought he must be a very learned man.

A very great scholar who went one day to see him, and was astonished at the wise words he heard from his lips, said:

"How is it, my good friend, that I don't see a library, or any collection of books at all in your cottage? I don't even see the smallest book-shelf. And yet you have been able to teach me, who am thought to be so learned myself, much I never knew before."

"Sir," replied the old man, "I have, it is true, but a very small collection of books,—in fact, I have only three, but they are the three best a man can have. They are the wonderful works of God, which I can always look at, and which show me how great and good He is, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, the trees; the law of God written in my own conscience, telling me what I ought to do and what I ought not to do; and most of all, the word of God, the Bible. The works of God are spread out all round me in earth and sky; they are as a great book always open. Conscience is a never silent teacher, unless we stop its voice ourselves by refusing to listen to it.

"But these two books would fall short of teaching us the truest wisdom if we had not the blessed word of God, to make that known to us which we can know in no other way. For in the Bible we read how God made the heavens and the earth, and all these glorious things we see around us. He teaches us there also how man sinned, and how the Lord Jesus Christ redeemed us with His blood. In that book we read what that blessed Saviour did and suffered for us, and what He commanded and promised to all who seek Him. Conscience can, indeed, show us our sins, but it is God's word alone which teaches how they can be forgiven, and how we can be saved from them.

"Thus, without a library or human teachers, the three books of Conscience, God's Works, and God's Word, will make a man truly wise."—From the German.

"I AM no fanatic, I hope, as to Sabbath; but I look abroad over the map of popular freedom in the world, and it does not seem to me accidental that Switzerland, Scotland, England, and the United States, the countries which best observe Sabbath, constitute almost the entire map of safe, popular government."—Joseph Cook.

BUT the process of being made free, is slow and difficult. We cannot be made free faster than we suffer ourselves to be brought out of all untruth. There is not only untruth in our thoughts and ways, but also in our substance and mode of our being. Hence between every man in the flesh and freedom, there is a very strait gate. Freedom is the end, crucifixion is the means.—Pulsford.