

dogmatic formularies, which, as we have had occasion before to remark, are in great measure the antagonisms of the sixteenth century crystallized into tests, Justification by Faith in its extreme form being the expression of antagonism to Indulgences, while Predestination is the logical though not the moral corollary of Justification by Faith. It is not surprising that the religious conscience, awakened and enlightened by inquiry, should struggle against its bonds. Nor is it surprising that peculiar uneasiness should be excited by the dogma of Predestination. No ingenuity can reconcile a belief in the article of the Westminster Confession on that subject with a belief in the justice of God. The sophistries of Necessarianism which Jonathan Edwards has with such calamitous skill pressed into the service of his terrible creed may perplex the understanding but cannot possibly confound the moral sense. The iron chain of causation on which his theory depends cannot really be regarded as having its initial link in man, or even in the first Father of the race; it must be traced up to the Creator, who is responsible for all effects of the First Cause. It is true that without Free Will goodness and badness, simply as noxious or beneficent qualities, may exist in man as well as in animals, plants or minerals; but sin cannot exist without Free Will, nor without sin can punishment, much less everlasting punishment, for sin be just. The process of revising formularies in an age of criticism and general disintegration is arduous; those who are summoned to undertake it cannot help feeling that they are asked to open a flood-gate which may let in an overwhelming flood; and the relaxation of tests naturally suggests itself as an easier and safer policy than the reconstruction or expurgation of doctrine. The Church of Rome looking on at all this perplexity and distress of conscience will exult in the august simplicity of a system which stands in need of no tests, but only requires blind faith and absolute obedience. The answer to her taunts is that what she has to deplore is not perplexity or distress of conscience within her communion, but the revolt and practical secession of entire