

It is a problem which confronts the theist on the barren rocks of speculative reason as fully as it does the believer in a revelation. It is sure to emerge wherever any attempt is made to systematize absolutely the relations of the human and the Divine Spirit; yet nearly all such questions are discussed relatively to each other or to fixed practical standards, and therefore a wide circle of discussion may be swept without ever stirring this, which has seemed to so many powerful minds the master-problem of all. Such was the case with the præ-Augustinian Fathers. The collision which strikes light on a question had not in their days taken place. The Archdeacon says of Pelagius and Augustine:—

"Both of them appealed to the authority of previous Church writers, and here also [*i.e.* as well as when citing Scripture] they might equally claim as many sentences and expressions on the one side as on the other."

This we believe to misrepresent the real state of the case. A sample or two will show that Augustine's supposed support from earlier writers was of the thinnest and feeblest kind. He takes Cyprian's words on *Sanctificetur Nomen Tuum* in the Lord's Prayer, expounding that we pray that that Name may be sanctified *in us*. But we have received baptism, or we could not use the Prayer. Therefore we pray for "the gift of perseverance," and this is wrested into making Cyprian a perseverantist in Augustine's sense. Again, Ambrose had said, "If a man be a follower of Christ, and says he does it because it seems good to him to do so, he does not therefore deny that it seemed good to God, for by God man's will is prepared." Here Ambrose obviously includes as equally axiomatic man's will and God's will—the *visum* of both—and urges that one does not exclude the other. Augustine cites it to show that Ambrose's view was *his* view, *i.e.*, that one *does* exclude the other, *viz.*, the Divine the human. He does not venture to claim Origen, that would have been too obvious a strain even on the forcing-pump of controversy. In Calvin we find an ingenious confession that Ambrose, Origen, and Jerome were all opposed to his own views, which he seems to have regarded as accurately reflecting those of Augustine (*Instit.* iii. xxii. 8).