

At the Reformation, however, we encounter the phenomenon that all the eminent leaders at first not only adopted, but even exaggerated, the absolutism of Augustine. This might seem strange, for it was apparently natural that the absolute papacy should identify itself with the absolute, and that asserters of freedom would have stood on the free-will theology. The twin doctrines of the supremacy of Scripture, and of justification by faith, were amply sufficient, without predestination, for their purpose to abolish the whole system of popish corruption. The former dethroned alike the authority of tradition and the popedom; the latter swept away alike the mediations of Mary, saints, and priests. But the first heroic impulse of reform tends to magnify the issues to their utmost dimensions. The old free-will theology belonged universally to the old historic Church, and was identified by the first Reformers with its corruptions. Luther at first, in his reply to Erasmus "On the Bondage of the Will," uttered fatalisms that probably had hardly ever been heard in the Christian Church, and perhaps it would be hard to find a Calvinist at the present day who would adopt the trenchant predestinarian utterances of Calvin. Under the indoctrinations of these leaders, especially of Calvin at Geneva, the absolute doctrines were diffused and formed into the creeds of Germany, the Netherlands, France, England, and Switzerland. But in Germany the "second sober thought" of Melancthon, who at first coincided with Luther, receded from predestination, and Melancthon himself intimates that Luther receded with him; so that the Lutherans are now essentially Arminian. In the Netherlands the same "second thought," led by Arminius himself, was suppressed by State power. In France, Protestantism, which was Calvinistic, was overwhelmed in blood. In England the Calvinism was generally of a gentle type, and the same "second thought," was