

perfectly scriptural, and realized in the personal experience of ten thousand witnesses. Their sons in the Gospel also maintain, with equal tenacity, that every believer in Christ is justified; and that the blessedness of the justified is not merely nominal and imaginary, but real and permanent.

To this doctrine I have lately met with a consenting testimony, which has afforded me great gratification, and which I doubt not will be equally acceptable to your numerous readers. It is that of the Rev. "Richard Chevenix Trench, M.A., Vicar of Ithen Stoke, Hants; Professor of Divinity, King's College, London; Examining Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Oxford; and late Hulsean Lecturer:" and occurs in the second edition of his learned and instructive "Notes on the Miracles of our Lord," just published, pp. 202, 203. This very able writer thus expresses himself:—

"The absolving words, "*Thy sins be forgiven thee*, (Matt. ix, 2,) are not to be taken as optative merely, as a desire that it might be so, but as declarative of a fact. They are the justification of the sinner; and, as declaratory of that which takes place in the purposes of God, so also effectual, shedding abroad the sense of forgiveness and reconciliation in the sinner's heart. For God's justification of a sinner is not a mere word spoken about a man, but a word spoken to him, and in him; not an act of God's *immanent* in himself, but *transitive* upon the sinner. In it there is the love of God, and so the consciousness of that love shed abroad in his heart in whose behalf the absolving decree has been uttered."

In a note the learned writer adds, "It will be seen that I have used Rom. v. 5, ('The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us,') in a different sense from that in which it is far too often used. The history of the exposition of the verse is curious, and is not altogether foreign to the subject in hand. To Augustine's influence, no doubt, we mainly owe the loss for many centuries of its true interpretation, which Origen, Chrysostom, and Ambrose, men every one of them less penetrated with the spirit of St. Paul than he was, had yet rightly seized; but which, by his influence and frequent use of it in another sense, was so completely lost sight of, that it was not recovered anew till the time of the Reformation. He read in his Latin, *Charitas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum, qui datus est nobis*. Had he read as Ambrose reads it, (*De Spir. Sanc.*, l. i., c. 8, § 88,) and as it should have been, *effusa*, (*ἐκχευται* is the original word,) it is probable he would have been saved from the mistake: for the comparison which would have been suggested with such passages as Acts ii. 17; Isaiah xxxii. 15; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Joel ii. 28, in all which God's large and free communication of himself to men is set forth under the image of a stream from heaven to earth, would have led him to see that this love of God which is poured out in our hearts, and is here declared to be our ground of confidence in him, is *his love to us*, and *ours to him*; that the verse is, in fact, to find its explanation from verse 8, ('God commendeth his love to us,') and affirms the same thing. The passage is of considerable dogmatic importance. The perverted interpretation became in after-times one of the mainstays, indeed by far the chiefest one, of the Romish theory of an *infused* righteousness being the ground of our confidence toward God: which the true interpretation excludes, yet at the