

and intend to lay down infallible laws for the regulation of the universal Church of God; for if so he is confessedly out of harmony with his own rules, and then his own personal conduct must be pronounced on as faulty, because not in harmony with the fundamental laws of the Gospel.

Just as certainly as a mere beginner in the study of mathematics can pronounce on the fact that it is a mistake to say twice two are ten, so, with absolute certainty, can one of the least in the kingdom know that Paul was out of harmony with the Gospel if he undertook at any time to teach ultimate truth to his converts in the matter of veiling or any other thing. Paul must be judged by his multiplication table as certainly as the mathematician by his.

AUGUSTINE.

This voluminous writer and foremost man of his, the fifth century, demands more than a passing notice, in connection with our study of the Fathers.

Most of our readers are acquainted with the story of his conversion in answer to the persevering prayers of his pious mother, and with the fact of the conspicuous place he held in the Church of his day, and also of the commanding position he still holds in the realm of dogmatic theology.

In looking over his writings, we were impressed, as never before, with the greatness of his sway over the whole domain of creed life. It seems to us that both Arminian and Calvinistic theology adopted entire his theological cosmos, and then simply left out some of the parts, so great is the harmony between them all. And yet we arose from our study of this great champion of dogmatic theology with this general opinion concerning him and his work, viz., that Augustine was a convert to the Christianity of his times, after precisely the same pattern that Cardinal Newman was a convert to the infallibility of the Pope. Hence his writings consist entirely of efforts to establish what he had accepted as truth; His conversion was not simply to

Christ, but also to all that was taught in the orthodox Church.

We find neither the slightest trace of doubt concerning any one of the doctrines of his day, nor an effort to search for truth, unhampered by reverence for tradition or even superstition in the Church. Indeed, to him the slightest departure from orthodoxy was heresy, heresy to be denounced and fought with all his might of pen and tongue.

It never seemed to occur to him to go to the fountain head and trace the teachings of Christ from the beginning, he ever reversed this natural order, and read into the words of the founder of Christianity the meaning which the *Fathers* had gradually put into them. Therefore, it came to pass that he became more eminent for his ingenuity in argument than for profound research.

However, his innate candor ever and anon asserts itself, for, unlike many modern creedists, he does not quail before monstrous and even absurd, legitimate deductions which are the immediate offspring of his arguments, as witness the following, where he reasons concerning man's inability to keep the commandments. For he argues on this wise, that as God commanded Adam not to do a certain thing, although He knew he would do it, so He commands men now to keep His commandments, knowing that they cannot.

It is not common now for any writer to bluntly state that God commands us to do the impossible, and threatens punishment for disobedience; the usual device nowadays is to not say so in as many words, but to imply it in a roundabout way.

Augustine is very definite in his statements about baptism. He affirms in a matter-of-course way as simply being a mouthpiece for the Church, that at orthodox baptism, whether the subject be an infant or adult, he is forgiven all past sins, and original, inbred sin is cleansed away, the soul rising from it regenerate to live a new life in the Spirit. After baptism sins are forgiven, on repentance for individual sins, with penance.

The following extract shows how he dealt with the question of holy living: