

of absolute predestination, as instanced in the teaching of other great saints beside him, such as St. Fulgentius, St. Prosper, St. Gregory, St. Thomas, and St. Buonaventure. Yet in the last centuries a great explanation and modification of this doctrine has been effected by the efforts of the Jesuit School, which have issued in the reception of a distinction between predestination to grace and predestination to glory; and a consequent admission of the principle that, though our own works do not avail for bringing us into a state of salvation on earth, they do avail, when in that state of salvation or grace, for our attainment of eternal glory in heaven. Two saints of late centuries, St. Francis de Sales and St. Alfonso, seem to have professed this less rigid opinion, which is now the more common doctrine of the day.

Another instance is supplied by the Papal decisions concerning Usury. Pope Clement V., in the Council of Vienne, declares, "If any one shall have fallen into the error of pertinaciously presuming to affirm that usury is no sin, we determine that he is to be punished as a heretic." However, in the year 1831 the Sacred *Penitentiaria* answered an inquiry on the subject, to the effect that the Holy See suspended its decision on the point, and that a confessor who allowed of usury was not to be disturbed, "non esse inquietandum." Here again a double aspect seems to have been realized of the idea intended by the word *usury*.

To show how natural this process of partial and gradually developed teaching is, we may refer to the apparent contradiction of Bellarmine, who says "the Pope, whether he can err or not, is to be obeyed by all the faithful," (*Rom. Pont.* iv. 2), yet, as I have quoted him above. p. 52-53, sets down (ii. 29) cases in which he is not to be obeyed. An illustration may be given in political history in the discussions which took place years ago as to the force of the Sovereign's Coronation Oath to uphold the Established Church. The words were large and general, and seemed to preclude any act on his part to the prejudice of the Establishment; but lawyers succeeded at length in making a distinction between the legislative and executive action of the Crown, which is now generally accepted.

These instances out of many similar are sufficient to show what caution is to be observed, on the part of private and unauthorized persons, in imposing upon the consciences of others any interpretation of dogmatic enunciations which is beyond the legitimate sense of the words, inconsistent with the principle that all general rules have exceptions, and unrecognized by the Theological *Schola*.

12. From these various considerations it follows, that Papal and Synodal definitions, obligatory on our faith, are of rare occurrence; and this is confessed by all sober theologians. Father O'Reilly, for instance, of Dublin, one of the first theologians of the day says:—

"The Papal Infallibility is comparatively seldom brought into action. I am very far from denying that the Vicar of Christ is largely assisted by God in the fulfilment of his sublime office, that he receives great ight and strength to do well the great work entrusted to him and imposed on him, that he is continually guided

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