authority. Sensuality remains—'By the law of the flesh I understand the sensuality which I call the image of sin' (ii, 11, p. 206)—and spirituality has to be sought in rules of Christian behaviour and in the laws of Holy Church.

But the great source of strength in these early struggles to overcome the image of sin and to discover Jesus in the soul lies in the Church herself. By faith a man abandons himself to the Church as to the living Word of God—'to whom can we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' No longer is he guided by his own reason, making up his own mind what is true or false, right or wrong. Man has found a Mind and Will infinitely greater than his own and he has found it not up in the clouds in some mysterious vision, but in the Christ-on-earth, the Word still living in the flesh of men. Within, the mystery of iniquity still struggles for the mastery but he is now entered once more into his Mother's womb and his Mother the Church nourishes him and gives him life, bringing him forth to the new birth and helping him to become in himself another 'body of Christ'. The Church despite the stiffness and pharisaism of some of those who make up the Church, still tenderly encloses the newly-conceived child of God, reforming it into the image of Jesus.

> For Holy Church that is mother of all these and hath tender love to all her children ghostly, prayeth and asketh for them all tenderly of her spouse, that is Jesus, and getteth them health of soul through virtue of her passion. (ii, 10, p. 203.)

Faith is not an energetic form of mental acrobatics, but a tender formation of the soul which before was misshapen and hard as cast metal. And the re-formation by faith is already the fashioning of a limb to Christ.

ST AUGUSTINE, THE DOCTOR OF GRACE[1]

BY

PAUL A. TAYLOR

MANY of our Saints have but a limited appeal, even among the ranks of the faithful; few of them indeed may be said to have a great following outside the Catholic Church. One thinks of St Vincent de Paul, St John of the Cross, more than any other perhaps St Francis of Assisi. But there is one whose position is quite unique, whose chief works belong to the great classics of human literature, whose influence on Christian

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thought has never been surpassed, not even by the Angelic Doctor. Augustine is truly the bridge between antiquity and the medieval period; not only was he the most prolific writer of the early Fathers, but also his epoch was one of transition, and violent transition, from the dying age of universal Roman sway to a new age, that of the barbarian peoples. As he lay dying on 28th August, 431, there came to his ears the cries of the Vandal armies laying siege to his episcopal town of Hippo. All seemed to be collapsing, all that was best in the ancient civilisation, yet Providence had arranged that his work was to survive this ordeal of fire and blood to be the main channel by which all that was best in the old world should pass as a civilising leaven into the new.

What Italian would claim to be a man of culture who had never opened the pages of Dante? what Englishman who had never heard the name of Shakespeare? and what Christian to whom Augustine's *Confessions* and *City of God* were but dusty tomes with the pages uncut on his bookshelves? In the one we have the first spiritual autobiography, every page of which tells the tale of that long struggle between the most brilliant and sensitive of human souls and the grace of God, pursuing that wayward soul in much the way that Francis Thompson has so vividly portrayed in *The Hound of Heaven*. *The City of God* is not so easy nor so exciting to read; it bears only too obvious traces of having been interrupted frequently and for long intervals; its repetitions do tend to be tedious to modern ears; and yet it is unexcelled as a work of originality and genius. Augustine's encyclopaedic mind takes in the whole sweep of the canvas of human history; to change the metaphor, he unravels its tangled skein with consummate skill and identifies the chief threads. He constructs a new and lasting, because true, philosophy of history, seeing it all in its deepest setting, that of the struggle that must go on to the end of time between the two cities, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

For these two works alone Augustine would be entitled to a niche among the greatest thinkers of all time, yet they constitute but a small fraction of his total literary output and in many ways they are far from typical of his thought.

His greatest influence on posterity was to come through the vast theological synthesis he achieved, not an orderly and logical synthesis such as St Thomas was to give us in the thirteenth century, but a truly vast conspectus of the whole science of things divine. Hardly a question escaped his attention; hardly a question on which he is not recognised as a foremost authority to this day. As a

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Christian writer he covered a period of roughly four decades, from 390 to 430. And those dates have a deep significance in the history of theology. I might describe them as post-Trinitarian and pre-Christological; let me explain: the Arian and semi-Arian heresies had worked themselves out by the end of the fourth century; political Arianism was certainly a force to be reckoned with, but intellectually the movement was bankrupt. Augustine certainly drove a few more nails into its coffin, but it was very definitely a corpse when he appeared on the scene and he is not usually regarded as a writer of paramount importance in this field. During the closing years of his life there was promoted to the Church of Constantinople a bishop whose name was to live amongst the great heresiarchs, Nestorius, whose followers exist to this day; twenty years later another was to follow in his footsteps, Eutyches, the originator of the Monophysite heresy. The two decades following Augustine's death were to see two major crises, both concerned with belief in our divine Saviour, but it was left to others to defend orthodoxy on these matters. Augustine by then had fought the good fight and already he saw the fulness of the truth in the beatific vision.

His major battles were three in number; as a recent convert, to borrow a modern phrase, we find him engaged in conflict with the sect from which he had made his way to Christianity, with the Manicheans. If I may for a moment anticipate things that have to be said later on in this paper, we find him here defending human liberty, the very freedom of man's will, against a teaching that was deeply imbued with fatalism. He has so often been accused of minimising or eliminating the freedom of the will in his treatises on grace, that it is worth while calling attention to this point, noting that he never withdrew from his original position, not even in his *Retractationes*, which date from the last few years of his life (426/7), in which he goes over some matters more deeply and in certain respects modifies his early teaching; nowhere do we find him taking up a fatalistic and passive view of the part played by the human will in the working out of salvation. As a recent convert, I said, he was busy attacking the Manichean sect; once he became bishop of Hippo his great concern was to bring back to the unity of the Church those who had been cut off by the Donatist schism. He has well been described as the great teacher of the principles of Church unity and in our own day, when these questions are so agitated by both Catholics and others, it is to Augustine that all should turn for a true and fertile presentation of the principles on which the unity of the mystical body of Christ is based and must be extended so

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as to incorporate all who owe Christ allegiance.

Neither the Manichean nor the Donatist sects were creations of Augustine's own day. But for the last twenty years of his life he had to come to grips with an entirely new heresy, that of Pelagius. And in dealing with this new error he achieved his greatest claim to fame and the foremost rank amongst the doctors of the Church. It is for his theology in the field of divine grace that we are most indebted to him, and it is in this field that his influence on Christian thought in all generations has been most profound.

Just a word about his opponents and the development of the controversy. Pelagius, the originator of the error, was apparently born in these islands; he has been variously described as British, as a Scot, or as Irish. We find him at Rome towards the end of the fourth century, a layman noted for his asceticism, probably a popular director of souls. His almost inseparable companion was Celestius, who subsequently received Orders at Ephesus. Pelagius, as far as we know, remained a layman to the end of his days. It is presumed that he fled from Rome during the siege of Alaric, or soon afterwards, for we find him in North Africa in 411 with Celestius; the latter seems to have tarried there, while Pelagius went on to Palestine, for the first move of their opponents was to summon Celestius before a council of bishops at Carthage in 411 or 412. At the same time Augustine began his long series of writings against the new error, a series which was only to be broken by his death 20 years later. In Palestine St Jerome was very active, too, in opposing the errors Pelagius was by now spreading there. Pelagius was brought before a synod at Diospolis in 415 but managed to escape condemnation by evasive answers and partial retractions. The North African bishops were not to be put off so easily and great councils met at Carthage and Mileve in 416 to condemn the error in no uncertain tones. In the following year their decisions were ratified by Pope Innocent I just before his death. The appeal made by Pelagius however came before his successor, Zosimus, who seems to have hesitated a little until his hand was forced by a further council at Carthage in 418. Its decisions, ratified by Zosimus, seem to have killed the heresy in North Africa and indeed little more is heard of its author after this date. In fact, the chief protagonist of the error from this date was a certain Julian of Eclanum (in Apulia), who refused to submit to Zosimus and went into exile, where he became Augustine's chief opponent and the recognised leader of the sect. He was deposed from his bishopric by Pope Boniface in 421. He apparently tried to regain it under Pope Sixtus

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III after Augustine's death, but was frustrated by this Pope. He, too, died in obscurity.

Apart from this isolated centre of resistance (Julian), the Pelagian heresy seemed to have been crushed by the year 420, but by about 424 we hear of its recrudescence in a somewhat milder form, which in recent centuries has acquired the name of semi-Pelagianism. The first sign of this occurs in a letter sent to Augustine in 424 by the monks of Hadrumetum (North Africa) objecting to the great Doctor's letter (No. 194) to Sixtus (later Pope) in which he denied merit prior to faith and affirmed absolute predestination. This, the monks claimed, eliminated free will, and the value of discipline and correction as widely practised in monastic life. The monks of Hadrumetum seem to have been satisfied with clarifications made by Augustine in his two works *De gratia et libero arbitrio* and *De correptione at gratia* addressed to them. But meanwhile trouble had been brewing in the South of Gaul. The great Cassian, abbot of St Victor at Marseilles, had attacked Augustine's teaching in his *Collationes*; and now the monks of Lérins (notably Vincent) attacked the doctrines expounded by Augustine in the two works just mentioned. Prosper and a certain Hilary reported this to Augustine, who answered in a double work (*De praedestinatione sanctorum—De dono perseverantiae*). These, with the *Opus Imperfectum* (against Julian of Eclanum), were his last controversial writings. The dispute was carried on by Prosper after his death. Mutual explanations calmed both sides by about 435. The controversy was revived towards the end of the century by Faustus of Riez, himself a monk of Lérins. The final steps were taken by the bishop of Arles, Caesarius, who summoned a small provincial council at Orange (529). Though only a small gathering yet it sounded the death-knell of Pelagianism in Gaul and ushered in 1,000 years of peace on this thorny subject of grace . . . until it was reopened at the time of the Reformation, and subsequently by the Jansenists, as well as by the opposing Thomist and Molinist schools within the Church. Orange was a symptom of the complete triumph of Augustine's views, and the past fourteen centuries have really enriched our knowledge very little indeed on these matters. The Church is practically where she was in 431, when Augustine bequeathed to her his teaching, which, apart from a few details, she was to recognise as her very own.

What were the errors, Pelagian and semi-Pelagian, against which Augustine fought so strenuously? A sharp distinction must be made between them. The one was thoroughly un-Christian, basically Stoic,

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in its outlook; its proponents were quickly outlawed from the Church, in which it never really gained any serious footing, thanks chiefly to the vigilance of Augustine and his fellow African bishops. The so-called semi-Pelagians were a totally different type. The names I have mentioned, Cassian, Vincent of Lérins, even Faustus of Riez, are all canonised saints, men of great piety and mortification, lights of the Gallic church. All involved in this controversy were treading on delicate ground, that of the interplay of divine grace with man's free will. Augustine was unquestionably the greatest and deepest mind of them all. In the end his teaching so prevailed that some points taught by his opponents were condemned formally by the Church, but long after their death, so that their own holiness was in no way impugned. And let it be said that certain of Augustine's own teachings were tacitly dropped and would hardly be defended by any theologian today.

The root errors of Pelagianism are three: (1) an absolute indetermination and autonomy of the human will (likened to a balance equally weighted on both sides); (2) an undue exaltation of man's natural powers; and (3) the denial, in consequence, of the necessity of any interior grace for salvation. In more detail: Free will is such that it emancipates us from God, putting entirely within our reach the power to will and attain what is good. Original sin is reduced to Adam's 'bad example', the grace of redemption to nothing more than Christ's 'good example'. Nature has in no way been corrupted and we are well able to work out our own salvation without any help from God. It is, we would now say, a complete denial of the supernatural order, coupled with the Stoic approach to the problems of virtue and happiness. About such a system there could be no hesitation. The semi-Pelagian system is much more subtle; in effect it attributes an exaggerated role to the possibilities of man's unaided efforts both at the beginning and at the end of his working out his salvation. It admits the reality of original sin, but asserts that there is enough good left in fallen nature to make faith, hope, repentance and prayer possible to our unaided efforts. These merit grace, which is therefore partly a gift from God, partly a reward for human merit. To use their own terms, we can attain the *initium fidei* ourselves; God then gives the *augmentum fidei* (which roughly corresponds to our modern idea of faith enlivened by charity). This alone, without any further actual grace, is enough to enable us to live virtuous lives, resist all temptations, persevere to the end and attain Heaven. Into this enters the even more delicate question of predestination. God foresees our merits (or wickedness) and

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accordingly gives us grace, or not; predestination is therefore reduced to fore-knowledge on God's part of our behaviour and his gifts are conditioned by our (future) conduct.

Before we proceed to examine Augustine's system we must be quite clear about one point. Neither of these errors touches directly the question of habitual grace; they are both concerned with the necessity of actual grace either eliminating it altogether, or restricting its scope to one particular moment in the spiritual development of man's free will. Augustine's theology of grace centres round the topic of actual rather than of habitual grace. Not that he did not speak of this, but we must not look for his teaching on habitual grace in his controversial works so much as, for example, in his letters, sermons and Scripture commentaries. We find that his teaching on the radical nature of sanctifying grace centres round two points, both of Scriptural origin, one being our adoption into the sonship of God, the other being man's creation to God's image (in Adam) and his restoration to this same image in Christ; grace, therefore, makes us sons of God and produces the very image of our Creator in us. Augustine tells us that we are sons of God, not by nature, not by our substance, not by our merit, but by a divine gift, by grace, by a spiritual regeneration, by a true adoption. The source of this adoption is the wonderful exchange by which the Son of God became a partaker of our mortal nature in order to make us partakers of his immortal nature. The measure of our true sonship is the keeping of God's commandments and its consummation is to be found in our heirdom to the kingdom of heaven, since we are co-heirs with Christ. As regards God's image in us, this consists first in our intellectual nature, but our mere manhood is a very distant image, hardly worthy to be called such; the true image consists rather in our imitation of God's goodness; it is dynamic rather than static; having lost it by sin, we have it restored to us by the grace of Jesus Christ; God requires that it should be directed to himself, its source, by the turning of our minds to him, so that what we now possess substantially by faith and hope, will reach its perfection in our possession of God in vision hereafter.

We now come to the question of actual grace, and to the very kernel of Augustine's teaching. Though scattered up and down his many works, his teaching is very consistent and it may help if we group it round the various phases in the spiritual development of the soul. That not only provides a simple framework on which to hang the main points of his doctrine, but it does really correspond

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to the development of the semi-Pelagian controversy, which sprang up during the closing years of his life and therefore brought forth the most mature expressions of his thought.

One of the most crucial points of the teaching of his opponents concerned the beginnings of the work of salvation in the soul, the *initium fidei*. To them this was normally the unaided work of man; only in exceptional cases was it admitted that God moved the will in the first instance. In the gospels, Peter made the first move towards our Lord, whereas Matthew was 'called' away from his worldly occupation; in the Acts, Cornelius the centurion prayed and merited the grace of conversion, while Paul had to be struck down by grace before he would submit. The latter case, it was said, is exceptional and miraculous; normally it is up to man to make the first step and it is in his power to approach God by faith, trust, repentance and prayer, in answer to which God will give grace, the *augmentum fidei*, sufficient for him to work out his Christian life to the full and attain his salvation. To this Augustine replied: that, firstly, the first grace is gratuitous, being granted without any merits whatsoever on man's part; that, secondly, man is prepared for grace by a divine action described as a forestalling of any action of the human will (he uses the word '*praevenire*'); and that, thirdly, faith in particular constitutes the beginning of the process of justification and is therefore gratuitous in an absolute sense (i.e. the *initium fidei*). He bases this on two chief texts of Holy Scripture (Ps. 58, 11; Philipp. 1, 29): 'My God, his mercy shall prevent me' (Douai translation); 'For unto you it is given for Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him.'

This initial *gratia praeveniens* (or *praecedens*) is most frequently coupled with a *gratia subsequens*, which signifies that the action of grace in the will is not confined to this first moment of the process; there is a very definite 'following-up', as the complementary term suggests. A closer idea of what Augustine intended may be had by noting two sets of synonymous terms: '*operans—cooperans*' and '*excitans* (or *praeparans*)—*adjuvans*'. The very first step therefore is a divine action *operating* in the will, *arousing* it and *preparing* it for what was to follow. And what was to follow is a further *help* or *cooperation* for the activity of the will.

In this connection we must note, too, that repentance is a gift from God, that fallen man needs a 'call' to sorrow:

> . . . and his strength being poured away and lost, there could be no return except by the grace of his Creator calling him to repentance and forgiving his sins. (*De Trin. lib.* XII, 11, 16.)

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Also we must note briefly what Augustine taught about prayer at this initial stage. It is well known that one of the chief tenets of the Pelagians was that something exterior, the Law itself, constituted the very essence of grace; the commandments were a kind of sign-post that indicated the way; the actual following of the way was well within man's unaided power so that no interior grace or help was needed and all reason for prayer ceased, for there is no point in asking for what we have already in our possession. According to Augustine we must pray to get the grace (interior) that is necessary if we are to keep the Law.

> (By the Scriptures) we are warned that to carry out all that is commanded us, we must seek help from him who commanded. (*Epist.* CLVII, 3, 16.)

But then he hastens to correct any possible misapprehension that prayer itself may spring up without grace and yet merit grace:

> the spirit of grace makes us have faith, that through faith we may implore in prayer the power to do what we are commanded. (*De grat. et Lib. Arb.* 14, 28.)

For Augustine grace is not an answer to prayer simply, but also the unmerited source from which prayer proceeds as one of the first-fruits of faith. In brief, faith is the first gift, entirely without merit on our part; that arouses the will to proceed further and, with helping or cooperating grace, it proceeds to pray for further grace necessary to keep the commandments; and if they have already been broken, then there is first a 'call' of grace to repentance.

We are now face to face with one of the gravest problems of theology, the interplay of free will and grace. By sin man has turned away from God; by repentance he turns back again; but he cannot repent without God's help; that help changes his will from 'bad will' to 'good will'; the first move is from grace. Is it a violent change? does it leave the will truly free? Let us see what Augustine says about this:

> from him from whom I received my very being I received also that I should be good. (*Enarr.* in Ps. 58, 18.)
>
> the grace of God is always good, and through it it is achieved that a man be of good will, who before was of evil will. (*De Grat. et Lib. Arb.* 15, 31.)
>
> it is granted by grace that first the hardness of the heart be taken away. (*De Praed. Sanct.* 8, 13.)

It is clearly the mind of the Saint that our good will is itself a divine gift, without which there can be no question of good will existing at all. And to understand his mind more clearly we have

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to note a further distinction, that between the ability to will something and the actual willing of it, a distinction so succinctly expressed by the Latin infinitives *posse—velle*. And in a characteristic phrase he tells us:

> Grace brings it about that not only do we will to do what is right, but also that we have the power to do it, not by our own strength, but by the help of our Deliverer. (*Expositio Quarumdam Prop. in Epist. ad Rom.* 13-18.)

So not only the right action of the will, but even the very possibility of willing aright is a gift, a grace. Without it, we are helpless; with it . . . is the will to be regarded as being driven against its own natural inclination? has it lost its freedom? or had it ever any freedom to lose? Augustine has not infrequently, particularly by Liberal Protestants, been accused of preaching 'irresistible grace', compelling and completely over-riding the will. Actually the word *irresistibilis* is not once found in his writings in this connection. The most difficult passage is this:

> help has been brought to the weakness of the human will, that by divine grace it should be moved unfailingly and unconquerably; and therefore, though weak, it should not however fall away, nor be overcome by any opposition. (*De Corrept. et Grat.* 12, 38.)

Has the Augustine who so vigorously defended human freedom against Manichean fatalism now fallen into a kind of Christian fatalism, as if he said: I can't be anything but good because God's grace forces me to be good against my own will—it just sweeps me along so that I cannot commit a sin, even if I want to? NO! the opening phrase of this difficult passage gives the key to those two frightening adverbs . . . *subventum est infirmitati*. The trouble is that the will is *weak*, not that it is non-existent. Left to itself, it cannot overcome the double obstacle, the interior one of its own weakness and the exterior one of 'adversity', or opposition. So grace steps in, comes to its rescue, so that it will neither fall away through its own weakness nor be overcome by outside enemies, so that it will act in an 'unfailing' and 'unconquerable' way. The only difficulty left is the passive form of the verb *ageretur* . . . is the will purely passive, being 'driven' along by grace like a ship before a storm? The context gives the answer:

> for the weak he has provided that, by his gift, they should will unconquerably what is good and be unconquerably determined not to abandon this (i.e. what is good). (*ibid.*)

There is no question of the will not functioning, but of its having been fortified by grace so as not only to will the good, but to will it so strongly as to resist all the efforts of our enemies to divert us

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to evil again. The will, in fact, has gained something, a power it did not possess before:

> We therefore will, but God works in us that we do will: we act, but God works in us that we do act, according to good will. (*De Dono Persev.* 13, 33.)

> 'No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him' (John 6, 44). Who can be drawn who was already willing? And yet nobody comes unless he is willing. In wonderful ways therefore he is drawn to be willing by him who knows how to act in the very hearts of men, not that men should believe unwillingly, for this is impossible, but that from being unwilling they should become willing. (*Contra duas Epist. Pelag.* I, 19, 37.)

It is quite clear that Augustine never visualised a grace by which the will is driven in a purely passive way, but a grace which gives the will the power to use its free action for the good, which is impossible without grace, especially as a consequence of original sin having weakened this faculty; grace in no way removes the possibility of the *nolle* but puts the *bene velle* within its scope, thereby perfecting its liberty, and this is carried to its highest degree in the case of those who are given so rich a measure of grace that the will is strengthened to resist all assaults and finally to persevere in grace at the moment of death. In this sense Augustine does preach an irresistible grace, one that is stronger than all the forces of evil, but then it has restored the fulness of liberty to the will and made the latter irresistible too, as far as the attacks of the enemy are concerned. Here lies the true sense of 'irresistibility', not in the possibility of an ineffective resistance of the will to grace, the function of grace being precisely to enable the will to attain more surely to the good and more freely, because it has with the aid of grace the possibility and force to attain unmeasured good, whereas before its freedom was limited and biassed, being only unlimited in the direction of evil.

This difficult question has been dealt with at length as it seems to give the key to the whole of Augustine's teaching on grace, a teaching which has become almost in its entirety the official teaching of the Church herself. It is no exaggeration to say that he was the light sent by God to show the universal Church what depths of truth lay in the revelation committed to the Apostles by our Lord. Grace is not something that cramps and restricts the activity of the will, it is something that gives it new strength and possibilities, that opens up new horizons, new pastures, none other than the pastures of God himself. By it we grow daily in the image of our Creator so that at death he will recognise us and we him, so

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that we shall enter into possession of him.

It is not difficult now to see that God's gifts and man's efforts run side by side through life and into eternity:

> By the grace of God alone men are delivered from evil, and without it they can do nothing good by thought, or by desire, or by action. So that not only does it show them what to do and enable them to know this; but it even helps them to do lovingly what they know they ought to do. (*De Corrept. et Grat.* 2, 3.)

Granted this, it is obvious that our merits are God's gift:

> when God crowns our merits, he crowns nothing other than his own gift to us. (*Epist.* CXCIV, 5, 9.)

Yet the reward is due to man for *his* good works:

> To these works a reward is to be reckoned as due; payment is due if they are done, but grace which is not due went before that they might be done. A good reward is due, I affirm, to the good works of men, but grace which makes good men out of bad is not due to them. (*Opus Imperf.* I, 133.)

It would be a mistake to think that Augustine has solved the mystery, for it remains a mystery. And a mystery is a truth that is so deep that we cannot grasp it all with our poor minds, only a little at a time, never all of it. Augustine has helped the Church, and all of us, to see a lot deeper into this particular mystery. That does not stop us from probing a bit deeper, if we feel capable of it, and as long as we are ready to accept the Church's ruling on our results.

We can say perhaps that Augustine has his weak points, even in his wonderful treatises on grace. And the weakest of them all is that particularly delicate matter of predestination. Not that his teaching has ever been condemned, but some of it was discreetly allowed to drop, even by so faithful a follower as St Prosper of Aquitania, within a few years of his death. And if large portions of his teaching found their way into the official decrees of Popes and Councils, yet silence has always been kept by the Church on this matter, of all the most delicate.

There can be no doubt that an air of gloom pervades the great Doctor's works on this topic. It was perhaps due to his emphasis on the reality and terrible consequences of original sin that he would seem to treat the process of salvation as being one of very great difficulty; if he tends to regard the number of the elect as being relatively small, if he speaks of the bulk of mankind as being a *massa damnationis*, if he even requires a penalty of pain for those babies who die without baptism, though he hastens to qualify it by the phrase *quamvis levissima* (though very slight), one must

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remember, too, his early life, his long struggles against God's grace, his wickedness before his conversion, for he truly tasted the depths of depravity and like our Lord 'he knew what was in man'. It is hardly any wonder that the view he took of the chances of salvation for the multitude was distinctly pessimistic. It remained for Calvin to usurp Augustine's authority to back his infamous theory that some men were made by God to be damned, but this blasphemous idea, needless to say, is nowhere to be found in the works of the Bishop of Hippo; it is a figment of Calvin's own distorted mind. Later on Jansen and his followers were to found their gloomy religion on their leader's interpretation of Augustine, and with just as little foundation.

What is the truth of this matter? Augustine was at the end of a long path, one that he had practically discovered himself and trodden alone. He was a pioneer blazing a trail over ground that became more difficult the farther he went. Little wonder if his steps did falter towards the end . . . and it should be remembered that predestination is both the beginning and the end of the mystery of grace. The whole providential dispensation of graces is governed by God's eternal and immutable decrees; looking at it from our human angle, it is the ultimate, the deepest of all the mysteries of God's relationship with his rational creatures. In his long struggle against Pelagians of every shade and hue the great Doctor had insisted, in season and out of season, on God's most intimate action in the wills of men, giving them the first impulse on the road to salvation, helping them at every step, and finally bringing his chosen ones safely into his eternal kingdom. The emphasis was rather on these than on the reprobate, i.e. those who are doomed to eternal damnation. God has chosen some from the *massa damnata*, and these he infallibly guides to their destiny, forestalling all their good works, granting all the graces he knows them to need, without which they could not be saved, and by which they are kept from falling away. The number of the elect has been settled by a decree of the Almighty; nothing can change it. What of the assertion that 'God wills all men to be saved' (1 Tim. 2, 4)? Augustine was not unaware of this text, but he applied it only to those who are predestined. God wills all *these* men to be saved and saved they will be—by his grace. The reader is left to draw his own conclusions about the rest of mankind. It was to be left to a later age to introduce the necessary distinctions: that of the antecedent and consequent will of God that would allow of a more generalised interpretation of the universal salvific will; that of efficacious and

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sufficient grace that would allow every man an adequate chance of salvation. Augustine's doctrine is not false; it is one-sided, out of focus, if you like; incomplete would be a better word. Some of it would not be acceptable to any modern theologian; most of it finds its place in a much broader synthesis. Here perhaps he did not penetrate as far into the mystery as it has now been given to man to do; but that in no way minimises the tremendous debt we owe to him, even in this most obscure matter, for he laid the foundations surely and posed the main problems, though his answers, we have to admit, are at times a bit distorted or inadequate.

In conclusion we may certainly say that the greatest of all Augustine's works is his series of treatises on grace; that is why he is styled the Doctor of Grace. He was God's chosen instrument by which divine tradition on this central mystery came to later ages, the instrument by which the Church became fully conscious of the treasure that had been revealed to her Apostles, particularly to John and Paul. This great treasure, bequeathed by Augustine to the Church, was to remain secure and unchallenged for quite a thousand years. And during that time it was to be the great inspiration of her devotional and ascetical life. On it was built the whole theory and practice of spirituality as exemplified in the canonical and monastic orders. And when, after the long night of the troubled centuries we call the Dark Ages was over, theological schools were to revive and flourish all over Europe, it was to Augustine that the great Doctors of the late Middle Ages were to turn as to the chief representative and herald of Catholic doctrine and tradition. It was on the solid foundation he had laid that the great Thomist synthesis was to be built.

All this is commonplace. But there is another field in which the Doctor of Grace exercised a most profound influence, for which he is rarely given credit. When one has studied thoroughly his works on grace, the collects of the Roman liturgy spring to life, recalling his vivid phraseology, in a surprising number of cases. Exactly how did this come about? I began by saying that Augustine was the bridge by which all that was best in the old world passed into the new at the time when the barbarians were over-running the Roman Empire. The century which followed this was a time of great activity—of liturgical composition—at Rome itself, in Gaul and in the provinces. The three great Sacramentaries or Mass-books containing all the prayers and prefaces needed by the officiating bishop or priest, the Leonine, Gelasian and Gregorian, appeared at Rome in their primitive form at a date not very remote from Augustine.

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Of the three, the earliest, the Leonine, shows the most marked influence of the teaching of Augustine. Many of its prefaces and collects are saturated with his thought and terminology. Some of them were received into the Gelasian, while the final codification by Gregory the Great carried a certain number of the collects forward so that they have passed into our present-day missal. Compared with its early forerunners of the fifth to eighth centuries our modern missal is very much impoverished as far as prefaces are concerned, but the collects, particularly of the temporal cycle, bear marked evidence of Augustinian ideas. Not indeed that Augustine himself had any direct hand in this. My own researches led me to the conclusion that the bulk of this work was done under the fairly immediate inspiration of Pope Leo the Great (440-461), if not by him personally, and Leo I was very Augustinian in his outlook, as a glance at his Sermons is sufficient to show. St Prosper (Augustine's most faithful disciple) worked in the Roman curia under Leo the Great; he may have had some part in perpetuating the work of his Master in this form, though the style of the liturgical compositions of the period is much more reminiscent of Leo himself. However that may be, there is no doubt that the liturgy of the Roman Church owed a great deal to Augustine's followers in the decades that followed his death. And perhaps no greater or more appropriate monument could be found by the Church to the greatest of her Doctors than that his ideas should shape her prayers. To defend her doctrines against the Pelagians he had so often appealed to her practice in the way of public prayer. In effect he said: The Church prays for grace, for God's help to do good; therefore it is a gift from him. As was to be said a little later in the same century: Let the law of prayer define the law of belief. So it was only right that, when Augustine has so clearly and with such lustre defined the belief of the Church in this all-important matter of grace, the Church in her turn should canonise and immortalise his most cogent expressions by incorporating them into her public prayer-forms. No greater tribute could she pay to his genius and to his orthodoxy, to his having felt and thought with her so consistently on this matter.

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