

VI.

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY ARRAIGNED
BEFORE THE NINETEENTH :

A STUDY ON THE REFORMATION.*

1878.

"Optat supremo collocare Sisyphus
In monte saxum : sed vetant leges Jovis."
Hor. *Epd.* xvii. 63.

1. In the month of October 1850 was kindled a strong political excitement, which ran through this island in all its districts, and gave birth to the measure, at once defiant and impotent, which, under the name of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, encumbered the Statute Book for a quarter of a century, and then silently closed its unwept existence. Public susceptibility had been quickened at the time by a number of secessions from the Church of England to the Church of Rome, large in relation to the previous rarity of such occurrences, and important from the high character of the seceders, and the talents of many, as well as the fine and subtle genius of one, among them. It happened that I had occasion to travel by post in the centre of France at the period when the stir began. Resting for Sunday at Roanne, I attended the *paroisse*; and heard an earnest

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preacher on the triumphs of the Church. His capital point was, that these triumphs were in no way confined to the earlier centuries: they were even now as conspicuous as ever; at the very time when he addressed them the great fortress of heresy was crumbling away, and the people of England were returning in crowds within the one true fold of Christ.

2. Is the worthy preacher now alive? Has he observed the currents of the religious and the ecclesiastical world? What does he think of his description, and of the prediction which it involved? Is he satisfied with the statistics of conversion? Or does he look deeper than statistics, which can at best speak only for the hour that is? Does he dive into causes, and, estimating moral and mental resource in all its deep diversities, does he still see in the opening future that golden harvest, with the glow of which his vision was then delighted?

3. As for the statistics, they are obstinately stationary. The fraction of Roman Catholics in the population of this country, as computed from the yearly returns of marriages, has for a generation past been between five and four per cent.; and, out of this small portion, by far the larger part, probably not less than five-sixths, are of Irish birth. The slight variation observable has, on the whole, been rather downwards than upwards. The fraction itself, which approached five per cent. in 1854, now rises little above four. There is, in short, no sign that an impression has been made on the mass of the British nation. This is especially remarkable on two grounds. First, that a new lodgment has really been effected in the body of the aristocracy. Now, high station is in this country a capital element of attractive power. Fully half-a-score of peers, or heirs apparent to peerages, have, within forty years,

joined the Latin communion; and have carried thither in several cases the weight of high character, in one or two that of noted abilities or accomplishments. But, secondly, these years have beyond all question effected an enormous augmentation in the arguing and teaching capacity of the Anglo-Roman body. I do not speak of merely mechanical appliances as buildings. It is probable, that the secessions have multiplied at least fivefold the stock of educated ability and learning, available for all its purposes. The aggregate addition might perhaps claim to be equivalent in force to the entire body of honour-men at Oxford or Cambridge for several years. The zeal of the seceders has been even more conspicuous than their talents. Yet this great afflux of missionary energy has entirely failed to mark the work of propagandism either by an increase of relative numbers, or, as every observer must admit, by an augmentation of civil, political, or social force.

4. Upon this curious state of things, a French priest, the Abbé Martin,* looks in a state of mind more curious still. For him, and for those on this side the water who may have prompted him, the whole argument in the Roman controversy is on one side. Though there has been a great historical controversy, worked out, during many centuries, in many countries, through the most disturbed and complex human action, and often, as all candid men allow, through the vilest human instruments, and through means equivocally good or unequivocally bad, yet this is not one of the matters in which real weights lie in the opposite scales of argument, and we have to be led by the "probable evidence" which is "the guide of life."

* 'What hinders the Ritualists from becoming Roman Catholics?' By the Abbé Martin. *Contemporary Review*, August 1878, pp. 113-136.

The case on his side is as clear as a little rill of water, a couple of inches deep. Then these Ritualists, of whom the Abbé writes, have gone so provokingly near him; and yet, like the asymptote of the hyperbola, they will not touch him. They seem to hug and scrape the boundary, and yet refuse to pass it. So the Abbé and his friends are as men standing under a tree, whose branches bend under a weight of golden fruit; and they shake the tree with all their might, yet, he says, the apples will not fall. Or they are like a professor of a popular natural science in his lecture-room, with all his paraphernalia around him: his explanation is clear, his description of what he is about to do has not a shadow of a doubt upon it; but, when he comes to his experiment, his instrument will not work, and he finds that there is something wrong. If Mr. Babbage's calculating machine had given him an erroneous result, he would at once have suspected a fundamental error in his adjustment of the parts; but this is the very last thing that would occur to the Abbé or his friends.

5. No unkind or discourteous word, indeed, drops from his pen. The glove he wears in his helmet is perfumed "sweet as damask roses."* He has all manner of reasons to excuse these Ritualists; reasons of unconscious, concealed interest, of feeling, of tradition. But his article is entirely subjective; all on the men, nothing on the question. Anything and everything suggests itself to him, except that he finds no reason, great or small, lying in the heart and essence of the case itself; a supposition, which the self-centred certainty of the Roman Church forbids any of her sons to entertain. And certainly his

* 'Winter's Tale,' iv. 3.

case is so far a hard one, that the rush of converts forty, thirty, and twenty years ago was such as to raise a fair presumption that so many teachers would surely be followed by a corresponding multitude of the taught, and to afford at once temptation and excuse for many an unwary and precipitate anticipation.

6. The general proposition announced by the Abbé at the outset seems to be this: that a portion of the English Church much resembles the Latin Church in ritual, usage, and doctrine, and it is therefore matter of astonishment that the resemblance does not merge into identity; in other words, that they do not enter the Papal fold. Now, it may relieve the Abbé's mind of a portion of the pain of this astonishment if he asks himself another question; it is this. There is another body, whose ritual and doctrine is deemed by his own communion to be very much closer to its own, than those of any portion of the Church of England. The ritual and doctrine of the Eastern Church have received from the Latin Church an acknowledgment it has never granted to any Anglican faction or section whatsoever; it is admitted that, in these capital points, that Church stands unassailable. Accordingly, it is only impeached on the charge of schism, a charge which the Eastern polemics retort in a manner highly inconvenient to the defenders of the *Filioque*, the Supremacy, and the Infallibility. Now, the Abbé must be aware not only of the admitted nearness of the Easterns to the Roman pattern, but also of the fact that nothing is so rare as a theological or ecclesiastical conversion from among them to the Latin communion. He may, then, do well to take the beam of the non-conversion of Greeks and Russians out of his eye, before he troubles himself so seriously with the mote of the non-conversion of Ritualists.

7. The Abbé is not coherent in his account of these Ritualists. At one time (C. R. pp. 113, 126) they do not truly belong to the Church of England; at another (p. 125) they "only continue the traditions of Anglicanism under a rather more subtle and dangerous guise." Which of these is the Abbé's meaning? Perhaps, though it might seem difficult, he holds by both. If, then, these Ritualists are people who have found out a form of Anglicanism "rather more subtle," *i.e.* difficult for an opponent to grapple with, and "rather more dangerous," *i.e.* to the Roman controversialist, is it any great wonder that they should remain in the communion where they may think, as they are indeed assured by the Abbé, they have found out new means of making good the positions held by their fathers for a term now of three and a half centuries?

8. But, in truth, this article is not an argument merely about Ritualists, as the term is commonly understood among us. The point of the weapon is directed towards them; but the blade is one which cuts down together all, under whatever name, who are either unable to recognise the paramount claims of the actual Roman Church, or resolutely determined to repel them. While the Abbé cannot understand—but I hope my reference to the Eastern Church may have advanced him at least one step towards understanding—how there can be a Ritualist, who is not a Romanist, so neither can he, in the same page (113), comprehend how there can be a Protestant who is not a Rationalist. In both cases alike, he sees the fact, but he cannot unravel the question how it comes about. Into any of the specialties attaching to the name of Ritualist, or the name of Protestant, I will not enter. I pass by the men, and go to the case. The appeal which

I wish to recognise, is really a broader one, on more open ground, in fresher air.

“Es machte mir zu eng, ich musste fort.”*

It is an appeal to all the disobedient; and it summons them all alike to repent and to obey.

9. What the Abbé does not understand is the fact presented rudely, but substantially, by the statistics I have cited: the incompatibility, be it for good or be it for evil, of the English mind with the Roman claims, and the system which those claims introduce. Now to this system, whether under the name of Rome or of Ritual, or whatever other name, I hold it perfectly certain that this nation will, at least until it has undergone an extensive moral as well as theological transformation, decline to submit. And yet not on the ground which the Abbé Martin, exhibiting herein a want of acquaintance with the state of opinion and feeling among us, appears to imagine. He thinks that the people of this country in general suppose the Roman Catholic religion to be “a tissue of error and iniquity” (pp. 117, 118). In this idea I believe he does them great injustice.

10. Among the only admissible witnesses, namely, men thoughtful and trained, the great Latin Church as often perhaps receives more than justice, as less. In her vastness, in her continuity, and in the close cohesion of her clergy, she has great and telling advantages. These, let me add, are enhanced by the aspect of unity and standard of zeal which, in this country, existing as a small and marked sect, she exhibits even in her lay members.

* Schiller's 'Wallenstein.'

Beyond all doubt, partly as fact and partly as idea, she makes a most powerful appeal to the imagination, by the side of the little fenced-in "Anglican paddock," as Mr. Dowden has happily denominated the system which resulted from English action on Church matters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Gregory VII., Innocent III., Thomas à Becket, are great and imposing figures to us all; but Archbishop Laud, who was the Gregory VII. or the Innocent III., or the Thomas à Becket, of our little "paddock," seems to take hold of nobody's imagination, and has been set down by Macaulay before his millions of readers as an individual truly contemptible.

11. Our bishops are indeed Peers of Parliament; but they have as good as ceased to take part in its debates, except on matters relating to the paddock. Their incomes are carefully regulated by statute, and I believe most properly and becomingly laid out; but they do not partake much of the ideal, even in the sense in which the ideal may be recognised in the eighty and sixty thousand a year inherited at this day by some of the Austro-Sclavonian prelates from the middle ages. Luther, quarried out of the rock rather than shaped out of the marble, the Huguenots, the Puritans—these, among them, have taken up the imaginative sides of the great reforming movement. They exhibit all its poetry; Anglicanism shows little but the prose of compromise and the *via media*. Cranmer, notwithstanding his great position, and his latest moments on the heights of heroism, has never excited half the living human interest that has been given to Margaret Wilson, drowned at a stake by the advancing tide on the western coast of Scotland; as to

whom Mr. Napier has lately shown it to be somewhat probable that she never was drowned, or otherwise "done to death," at all.*

This want of hold upon one of the great sovereign faculties of human nature has, I am persuaded, been a main cause why the English Church has been unable to retain some of her loftiest minds. She is a Church which makes a double appeal to the Catholic and to the Reformed traditions; but she exhibits each of them in shapes in which they are disowned by the more acknowledged representatives of the two respectively.

12. Nor is this all. There has, it is manifest, been a rather marked tendency to Erastianism in the "Anglican paddock"; the natural result of the care which the State bestowed on fencing it, and the legitimate parent of a strong tendency to worldliness. This has been encouraged by historical events. The Puritans were ejected in 1662, and the Nonjurors after the Revolution. Without doubt, the bulk of those who remained were as conscientious as those who departed. But there is usually, almost inevitably, on such occasions, a worldly leaven, a more or less corrupt minority, that loves to abide where the "loaves and fishes" are to be had; and this minority lowers the average tone of the mass, in which it remains. The Puritan and the Nonjuring clergeries were alike in this, that they carried with them a very small laity, and at the same time a portion

* [Since this passage was written, I have seen a further development of the subject in the work of the Rev. A. Stewart, minister of Glasserton, 'History vindicated in the case of the Wigton Martyrs.' I do not undertake to pronounce a judgment in the case; but there is much to be said for the hypothesis, that the execution did take place, against or without the authority of the Government, and as the act of subordinate persons on the spot.—W. E. G., 1878.]

relatively large of the zeal, and love, and faith, which are the life of a Church.

13. But there are other reasons which seem, on one side at least, to blunt the sword of controversy. We think ourselves to be great lovers of historic truth. Partly by our origin, partly by our institutions, partly by our habits, we are bound to its service; chained, as it were, to its car, whether we will or no. So that, even if we break the chain, we drag the fragment; it entangles all our movements; we have not the undisturbed complacency, the tripping step, of those who settle every debate as the old Neapolitan police, when they tapped a man on the shoulder and apprehended him, met his inquiries for a cause with the conclusive reply: *per ordine superiore*.

14. No country, again, has produced more temperate reasoners than this country. Witness Richard Hooker, witness Bishop Butler; I add a third, not unworthy to be named with them for learning and for love, Bishop Forbes of Edinburgh, the author of the 'Considerationes Modestæ.' Nor, I believe, has any country produced a greater number of Henotic writers; the theological peacemakers, who, hoping against hope, have striven, by charitable corrections, and favourable interpretations, to close the breaches of Christendom. It is true, indeed, that we have also to this day a section of almost fanatical combatants against the Church of Rome, and everything in which they can trace a resemblance to it. But their productions are supposed to pass with unusual dispatch into the waste-paper basket, and it may truly be said of that Church that, in this country at least, she is even more happy in her extremest adversaries, than in her friends.

15. In point of fact this servitude, a noble servitude so

far as it is realised, to historic truth, is what I cannot bring myself even to stigmatise as inconvenient, if we measure convenience largely, and by eventual results. However this may stand, without doubt the general habit of mind, encouraged by the causes I have named, derives a more direct encouragement from the spirit of the Christian religion such as we profess it. For it is undoubtedly a spirit of examination; even as the spirit inculcated, and generally prevailing, in the Latin communion is a spirit of acquiescence. And here it is that the conditions of any discussion with one in the position of the Abbé come into such violent discrepancy on the two sides respectively, that I can hardly hope to convey with any fulness or clearness to his mind what is the point of view from which, according to our national habits of thought, his position is regarded. If two men meet in argument, one of them desirous to measure fully and accurately the points of strength and weakness on both sides, but especially the points of weakness on his own, and the other with an equal honesty of intention, but with a mental habit formed and hardened under influences which forbid not only any condemnation but even any critical scrutiny of the system he belongs to, they can have no common measure of truth, no means of comprehending one another. They are like men, neither of whom understands the language spoken by his adversary.

16. My countrymen in general will I think give their full and final adhesion only to a method which bends submissively to all historic evidence; which handles that evidence in the domain of Church history on the same principles as in any other domain; and which has for its aim nothing else than this, to come at the clear and entire truth, without fear or favour. And there is need of a

disposition of this kind. In every religious body without exception, there forms itself a stalactite, so to speak, of special tradition; an atmosphere, in which its members habitually live and breathe, and according to which all their ideas arrange and shape themselves. In every case, and not alone in the Roman case, this tradition lapses and slides far away from the truth of history. For it is not formed upon facts alone, but upon passions, sympathies, prepossessions: it is the offspring of man's promiscuous nature, and not only of the faculties given him for searching out the truth; and it is matter of much difficulty, even where no authoritative inhibition intervenes, to get out of the mist and the dusk which this tradition sheds around us, and to look at the face of things as they are in themselves, and after they have been stripped of their spurious integument.

17. Now the first consequence of such a resolute method of proceeding is one unpalatable to every sincere controversialist. He must stoop to the effort of making admissions. - I will proceed to make one. Believing the general enterprise of Roman Propagandism to be hopeless throughout Great Britain, I nevertheless can also believe that, between the bold and confident assumptions of the Latin Church, the shock given to many minds through the sceptical movement, and the real faults and shortcomings easy enough to be discerned in the Church reformed after the Anglican fashion as well as in every other Church, the Roman fishermen will from time to time gather a handful of fish into their net.

18. The matter of those faults and shortcomings requires a more detailed notice in one branch. Abuses properly so called, that is to say, corrupt deflections from the acknowledged standard, have in no Church been more

rife and rank, than they were in the Church of England for several generations. But these are in a great degree things of the past; they are generally and strongly renounced, at any rate, by the clergy, in spite of whom they exist, so far as they exist at all. But the defects, other than mere abuses, have a deeper seat.

19. The Protestant, and the Anglican tradition of this country, in the sense in which I recently described, starts from a position allowed by all, that the Christian Church in general had, in the course of time, fallen away in various particulars from its purity. This was the state of declension which prevailed until the Sixteenth Century. Then there came upon Christendom, initiated by the bravery of Luther, a powerful impulse, which passed into a mighty struggle. This conflict was carried on through many years, with many vicissitudes. But it resulted in a new state of things. On the one side, there remained the Latin Church with its dogma generally unchanged, but with many current opinions and practices hardened into dogma. On the other side stood a variety of Protestant or Reformed communions, differing it is true on several points among themselves, but differing more profoundly or more sensibly, or both, from the great Latin communion which had rejected, or had been rejected by, them. Speaking roughly, there were now set up in Western Christendom two systems of doctrine, discipline, and ritual, instead of one: issue had been joined on a multitude of points, and upon all of them where the controversy lay between reformed and unreformed, the second, according to the Protestant tradition as I have described it, was simply wrong, and the first simply right.

20. The Reformers were regarded, not indeed as inspired, but as those who had displaced a false system, and

either devised or replaced a true one, in such a sense that it was obligatory, or wise at the very least, to follow them in each and every point as they had delivered it, under pain of impeachment for disloyalty. There was a kind of latent reserve on behalf of those who wished to go beyond the Reformers, though this reserve was again subjected to reservation, and was not held to shelter Unitarians. But for such as fell short of the Reformers, there was no mercy. To adhere to the Gospel in its republication was a duty, as much as to have adhered to it in the form of its original publication. The new system was to be reasoned from, not reasoned on. Private judgment was legitimate, if it resulted in accepting on trial the conclusions of a particular time and crisis; but the lawfulness of its exercise was conditional upon its thinking generally as the Reformers thought, and in each country as the Reformers of that particular country thought.

21. In England, it had so happened that the Reformation-period, popularly thus called, had left the Church of the land in a state of inward conflict between two schools, alike determined in rejecting the jurisdiction of Rome, and various other matters along with it, but seriously differing on sacramental doctrines, on the nature and government of the Church, and generally on their relation to the framework of the old religion apart from the more recent Roman peculiarities. It was not for a hundred years, namely, not until 1661, that this feud was brought to a decisive issue by the final triumph of the historical or traditional school, which has commonly been called Anglican, and which is represented in the phrase of the "Anglican Paddock."

22. The framers of the scheme then settled were really the final Reformers of the Church of England. But, in

the thought and language of the Protestant tradition, they were believed to savour somewhat of reaction; and never took the benefit of that peculiar authority, above the natural though below the supernatural, above the Patristic though below the Apostolic, which the Protestant tradition ascribed to the Reformers. But, though their authority may be little recognised in the abstract, it is beyond doubt that, through the medium of the Common Prayer Book they have operated very powerfully on the religious mind of those within the pale of the Anglican Church, and have helped to lift it some would say above, and others would say away from, the true Reformation-standard. In the main, however, it is the body of ideas evolved in the sixteenth century, as accepted in England, which has been the treasure, it may even be said the idol, of our "Protestant tradition"; and has been popularly deemed to hold a place beyond the reach of ordinary criticism. This conception, however, is now very widely felt to be one which it is difficult for the philosopher to conceive, or for the reasoner to defend.

23. It is a serious matter to shake any tradition established with regard to religion. For the invisible world contends against the visible at many and terrible disadvantages, and gets so much less than fair play in the general competition, that there should be much tenderness and caution about shaking any part of the ground it actually holds. But such motives, though they recommend care and forbid precipitancy, cannot establish a standing law in derogation of historic truth; and it is the attempt so to derogate which may often generate the most violent and dangerous reactions. The English mind, under the guidance of liberty,

"*Libertas, quæ, sera, tamen respexit inertem,*"

has found it impossible to justify the practice of looking at the Reformation as if it had been a Revelation. We cannot be bound even to approve all the proceedings of the primitive Church in its dealings with the heathen world. Much less can we suppose that in the civil wars of Christianity, the conduct of either side had a monopoly of virtue, or its thought of religious truth.

24. It does not follow that the work of the sixteenth century is to be hastily or harshly judged. Its case before the court, so to speak, of posterity is like that of the men of Magna Charta, of the Revolution of 1688, or of the Reform Act. All of these are recognised as signal public benefactors; but none of them are exempt from criticism, or even censure, in the points where it may be found that their workmanship has been defective. But as the passions attending those great political epochs were less fierce, violent, and subtle than those of the Reformation, and again as the business of the Reformation was one far more complex and difficult to deal with, we must be prepared in its case to find, without astonishment, more excesses and more failures mixed with the details of a great and immortal performance. And, when we find them, we must estimate them with judicial calm, but with historic freedom.

25. The mental and moral upheaving, both of nations and of individuals, at the date of the Reformation was an effort such as civilised man had never before been called upon to make. For Christianity, from its origin, wound itself but slowly into the body of society. And, although the early controversies, such as those of the Fourth Century, went much nearer the foundations of the faith, they were carried on (so to speak) in the scientific region, and did not greatly enter into the moulding of ordinary

life and character. But the struggle of the Reformation was not confined to the mental and moral sphere. At every point, it was prosecuted or repressed by the axe and the stake, by sword and cannon. When reason and feeling were thus fiercely and inextricably blended with "blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke,"* it was impossible that the action of mind could be normal and duly measured, or that its results should come forth without bearing upon them the marks of the agony and convulsion of their birth. To treat the particular tenets of the Reformation one by one, and the verbal forms in which they are expressed, as purely scientific products of human thought, is contrary to all the lessons of history, to the whole analogy of our nature. The circumstances of the Reformation as a great uprising in vindication of human right, and as a manful protest against corruptions now admitted and lamented by every candid man, gave it a great authority, in the philosophic sense of that word; but this was in its broad outlines and in the main scope of its moral purposes, and cannot be shown to ramify and descend equably into the detail of all its processes.

26. Of this we have a marked example, as I think, in the doctrine of justification. For Luther, it was the note and test of life or death, the *articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesie*. Yet the Anglican Church seems to have steered amidst these troubled waters clear of all the difficulty. Some may think it requires a strong appetite for controversy to detect a radical incompatibility between the Anglican Article on this subject and the Tridentine teaching in its positive part.† The complemental doctrine of assurance, so widely taught on the Continent as

* Acts ii. 19.

† Art. xi. Conc. Trid. Sessio vi. capp. viii. ix.

a thing necessary for the Christian, has never at any time been sanctioned by the Church of England. The 'Considerationes Modestæ' of Bishop Forbes present abundant materials for a view of the controversy of justification; and that work, together with the 'Symbolik' of Möhler, written from the opposite side, appears to supply all that reasonable minds can require in order to close the contest.* Accordingly, the divines, who met at Bonn in 1874, do not seem to have encountered much difficulty in the composition of a reconciling formula, which has not, so far as I have learned, given cause for any scandal in this country.

27. There were other points, at which partisanship has left its mark, if not on the body of doctrine formulated in the Sixteenth Century, yet on the Protestant tradition, which is for the greater number of minds its living representative. The strong and just reaction from the Purgatorial system, prevailing in the Latin Church of the period, went far to account for, and even excuse, that stark and rigid conception of the effect of death on the state of the human being, which led to an abandonment of the uniform practice of the earliest ages of the Church, as testified by the Liturgies, in the commendation of the faithful departed to God, for an increase of their rest and peace. But what caused, nay even what might excuse, the violence thus done to nature, as well as to religion, did not frustrate its mischievous effects in narrowing the range of Christian sympathies, and establishing an anomaly in the general doctrine of prayer.

28. With the obscuration of an universal tradition there

* Bishop Forbes's 'Consid. Modestæ,' Books 1-5; and Möhler's 'Symbolik,' i. 1-3.

came, indeed, manifold confusions of doctrine: the final judgment, with its solemn import, seemed to have no place left for it, when the intermediate state of souls had been reduced almost to a cipher. Worst of all, the new standard appeared to be in hopeless conflict with the widest experience: for it implied that the entire work of discipline was in every case fully accomplished on this side the grave; that every soul passed away into the unseen in a state of ripeness for a final destiny of bliss or woe. But violence begets violence. Within the last twenty years a reaction has arisen, under the force of which a crowd of Protestants, and even many who deem themselves to be of the cream of Protestantism, have adopted ideas of trial and purgation beyond the grave, which vastly exceed in latitude anything ever taught by the Church of Rome.

29. Again, if it be true that, in the current doctrine and practice of the Eucharist, the sacrificial idea had, before the Reformation, and not for the best purposes, been allowed to assume an undue and enormous predominance over that of communion, it came, in the course of controversy, to be so depressed on the Protestant side, that it was almost effaced from the common mind. This could hardly be done without a serious dislocation of the historical relations between that great Sacrament and its historic types. Nor, again, without seriously lowering the general conception of Christian life and worship as a true sacrifice to God, which had the Eucharistic sacrifice for its central point. St. Paul seems to lift upward the whole fabric of Christian observance, when he exhorts the faithful to present their bodies a living sacrifice unto God, which, he says, is "your reasonable service."* And, if

* Rom. xii. 1; cf. 1 Peter ii. 5.

so, whatever tends to impair the efficacy of that idea, tends in like degree to lower the Christian obedience from the level of the filial, towards that of the servile, standard.

30. A fourth point, in which the general interest of Christian truth took damage from the course of the controversy, related to the authority of Holy Scripture. Exultation in the recovered access of the people to the Divine Word concurred with the jealousy of it exhibited on the Roman side to heighten our conception of its exalted function under the economy of the Gospel. The bald announcement of a co-ordinate authority in dogmatic traditions, exterior to the sacred Volume,* the wide door thus laid open to arbitrary assertion, and the unlimited use made of Church authority against human freedom, provoked the reforming parties into the total rejection of that authority, and the substitution of the invisible for the visible Church. It thus became alike a logical and practical necessity to lay upon Scripture the entire stress of defining and proving itself, and to hold the Almighty pledged as it were to every letter forming part of its *corpus*, with a particularity and rigour hardly known to former ages. It has become long since evident that this was a straining of the truth; and that the superstition thus engendered might, when it wore out and disappeared, make room for scepticism. It can hardly be doubted that the Christian world is, in our day, suffering seriously from this cause. Diminishing, by an arbitrary process, the aggregate of testimony which the wisdom of God had supplied for the establishment and determination of the Gospel, and finding the stock, when thus diminished, to

* Perrone, De Loc. Theol., pars ii. sect. ii. 1.

be insufficient, we impeach the Revelation itself for a want, which is due only to our improvidence.

31. This great and menacing mischief was inherent in the course of the foreign, much more than of the Anglican, Reformation. But another evil was an especial growth of the movement as it shaped itself in England. The Popedom was, after the rupture had been consummated through the folly of Pope Pius V., virtually effaced from the national Christianity. So serious a void there was a temptation, perhaps a necessity, to fill; and through the force of events, more than any formal declaration, it was filled in the main by the Sovereign. This was a result extremely adverse to civil freedom. It further heightened that excess of regal power, which had already marked the Tudor period. The doctrines of divine right, and of passive obedience, took deep root in England; and they were peculiarly the growth of the English Reformation. The strength of the Crown had, indeed, in many respects eased the religious process; and the ill-effects in this department were greatly mitigated by the sagacity of "great Elizabeth," and by an undoubted sincerity of attachment to the Church in the two first sovereigns of the Stuart line. But, on the whole, the tendency of the exaggeration I have noted was to depress spiritual life and energy, and to promote and perpetuate a civil intolerance, which the marked theological moderation of the Church of England would of itself have greatly discouraged.

32. Now, I would warn the Abbé Martin—the repeated recurrence of whose name in this paper I trust will not offend, as it is rather typical than personal—that he will not on all hands receive the benefit of such admissions as have here been made. Many among us will demur to them on their merits, many more out of deference to tra-

dition, *videlicet*, the current popular tradition. Some will probably go so far, as to censure any writer, by whom they are made. But doubt, says Dante ('Parad.' iv. 130), nestles at the root of truth, and no lesson more profound is to be learned among the many that have proceeded from that great and royal teacher. To tradition, as the witness of history, the highest regard is due. Tradition, as the floating opinion of a sect or party, has only a presumptive title to respect even among the members of that sect or party, and cannot be pleaded against a serious investigator, like a privileged communication in an English court of justice.

33. Again, Abbé Martin may find rained down upon him in abundance, as reproaches, in answer to his inquiry, all those accretions to the Christian faith, partly in the current usages and tradition of his Church, partly in its more authoritative documents, which have been urged by our controversialists with much power; at the various periods when they have seriously drawn the sword of controversy. This ground I leave to professional combatants. I waive, therefore, much advantage, and rather desire to make every possible admission; in the belief that, for the time in which we live, the ultimate issues of discussion will be mainly governed, not by the topics which the propagandist loves, and which he uses in individual cases with great effect, but by those which take a broader grasp of the general reason of mankind. At the same time, while I shall speak of the Roman Church in Roman Catholic countries, on the other side I limit myself to English ground; for I do not feel myself possessed of that acquaintance with the entire case, as it stands in Protestant lands abroad, which is necessary to warrant the degree of pretension implied in the very act of making

any contribution to a public discussion. The religion of each side I take where it is the prevalent religion; for where it represents but a handful, the comparison is vitiated by exceptional, and therefore misleading particulars.

34. Admitting, then, for argument's sake, that certain conceptions, material to a largely developed Christianity, have been impaired or curtailed, and consenting to pass by the countervailing inquiry whether our common religion has not on the other side suffered more deeply from exaggerations which practically mutilate, I take the case at the worst, and I compare the condition of Christian belief, as such, in the great Latin communion with what it is, for example, in England. I will not rely upon the case of the respective clergies, which we may safely take to be, as a general rule, firm in the faith which they profess. Yet I cannot dismiss their case without a remark. In the Roman Church, they are a body trained, from an early age, in jealous and careful severance from the laity. In adult life, this severance continues; so that belief among the clergy tells us nothing as to belief among the educated laity. In England, as also in the Eastern Churches, the clergyman is everywhere a citizen, and everywhere (I include our Nonconformists) in sympathy either with all or many of the educated laity; so that here the general fidelity of the priesthood or ministry does tell us a great deal as to the existence of belief among the educated laity. Nor will it be disputed that the state of belief among those of the general community, who have received the highest instruction, is likely in the course of time, perhaps to determine, at any rate largely and vitally to affect, the belief of the mass.

35. I suppose it too, to be undisputed that, in the early,

though not in the earliest, days of the mediæval culture, a strong spirit of reaction against faith asserted its place in the contemporary literature; that is to say, in the permanent, incorporated thought of man for the period. This spirit, mainly known by its relation to the Renaissance of the fifteenth century, I shall describe by the name of Paganism. And for one most signal manifestation of it I go back to the middle of the fourteenth, and to the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio; a work which has undoubtedly become part of the literary inheritance of mankind through all generations. This production is saturated from top to toe with the Pagan spirit. Many a book composed with the direct intention of assailing dogmatic religion, is far less profoundly estranged from it than the 'Decameron.' I do not now speak mainly of its indecencies: partly because there has been a change in the general tone, if not the framework of ideas, which makes an exact judgment on the point difficult: partly because that offence has been committed by others, who have left evidence of a strong spirit of Christian belief and feeling, such as Margaret, Queen of Navarre, has given in her very beautiful verses "Qui veut être vrai Chrétien."

36. The profound Paganism of the *Decamerone* again, is not principally to be proved by its merciless exhibition of corruption among the priests, monks, and nuns; although the chastisement is couched in a tone as different as possible from that of a reformer. It seems as though it was their being specially bound to the exhibition of the great anti-pagan system, which, instead of exciting grave sorrow and shame, gave zest and intensity to the pleasure of the author in exposing their worldly and fleshly vices. But it is the entire strain, the atmosphere, nay, the very basis of the work, which is Pagan, and ultra-Pagan. It

lies in the exhibition of dissolute life, upon Epicurean principles, as the proper and natural refuge of the very choicest spirits in Florentine society, women as well as men, from the horrors, and from the solemn duties, brought to their doors by the Black Death of the period.

37. This revival of the *carpe diem* * as the guide of human life, close to the head-quarters of Latin Christianity, is the more remarkable, because the book makes no attack on speculative belief. It was truly a fact in the life of the country of its birth, and of its own and the following generations, such in magnitude and moment as to have no parallel, for the purpose of the present argument, in literary history. It was a national event. It entered into the business of States, and the circle of diplomacy. Produced close to the central seat of Latin Christianity, it became the subject of one or more embassies to Rome from Florence. Under Paul IV. and Pius IV. it was in the *Index Prohibitorum Librorum*; but in 1573, under Gregory XIII., it was published at Florence, with express approval from the Roman Inquisition, and with a Brief from the Pope, which granted the copyright to the publishers, and excommunicated all who should anywhere infringe it, besides fining them heavily if in the Roman States. It had been corrected; but how? Mainly by the omission of one out of the Hundred tales, and by certain omissions, such for example as the omission of ecclesiastical personages, for whom schoolmasters and students were commonly substituted. This concession, which would be incredible if it were not

* Admirably described in the Preface to the new edition of Maçon's (1545) Translation. Paris: Liseux. 1878. The subsequent regret of Boccaccio, if established (see Ugo Foscolo's Discourse), will not affect the argument.

indisputable, tells more than many a volume might be written to tell, of the strong and impregnable position which had been taken by Paganism, at the very heart of the whole civilised and Christian world. Unhappily it would be quite easy to widen this illustration, though deepened it could not be; as, for example, by reference to the 'Canti Carnascialeschi' of the Medicean Court, to the remarkable Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, and to the now infamous, but then famous, person and works of Pietro Aretino, Knight of St. Peter by favour of Julius III.

38. When Christian morality had been to so great an extent shaken and displaced in the mind, and in the practice, of the educated and refined, we cannot be surprised at the violence with which, upon the wider introduction of the new studies from the East, the Christian dogma also was touched by the influence of Greek thought. If ever in the natural world a tempest was required to re-establish atmospheric equilibrium, the great earthquake of the Lutheran movement was needed to shake the very ground under the feet of the Roman Court, to compel reflection, to revive religion, and to abash and overbear the interests opposed to disciplinary reform. In this sense I suppose it to be admitted by many members of the Roman Church that it was not only helped, but saved, by the Reformation. The reforms, however, which were accomplished by, and after, the Council of Trent, were confined to the ecclesiastical sphere, and did not exorcise the spirit of Paganism. That scandal of scandals which I have set forth, the acceptance and commendation of the *Decamerone* from the Roman chair, was effected amidst the storm of religious war in France and in the Low Countries, and one year only after the same reigning

Pontiff had struck a medal, and ordered a thanksgiving, in honour of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

39. As early, indeed, at least, as in the time of Dante, the severance of the supreme Christian teaching from Christian practice had come to be such, as to produce results highly significant of the future. The Poet, than whom there had been no more profound believer, and perhaps no greater spiritual writer, since the Apostolic time, has described the Court of Rome in terms which would have satisfied the highest transports of Luther; and gave tokens of attachment to human liberty sufficient to mark him as a dangerous man. In our own time, a devoted adherent of the Popedom has published an elaborate work to prove him an heretic, as well as a revolutionist and a socialist.*

40. But the further lodgment of the enemy had not then been made within the precinct where was to dwell "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle;" even "the King's daughter, all glorious within," and having "her clothing of wrought gold." Made it was, and seemingly before another century had passed. To this day, he has never been dislodged. Nay more, he has enlarged his tents enormously; and it is no secret that among the educated men of France and Italy, with the exception of a few individuals, the Christian dogma has ceased to hold an authoritative sway over either intellect or life. It is not this or that tenet which they doubt: the whole basis has crumbled, the whole superstructure fallen to the ground; and what even in this day moves some of them when they come to England is, astonishment at the large number of believers.

* 'Dante Hérétique, Révolutionnaire et Socialiste.' Par E. Aroux, Ancien Député. Paris, 1855.

41. All minor assaults upon belief the Latin Church has indeed put down in her own precinct, with the same success as that which she achieved in defeating the reforms of Scipio Ricci and the Synod of Pistoia, or in blasting the promise of Port Royal. Nothing can be more splendid than the external tokens of victory. Jansenism, and Josephism, and the *Petite Eglise* of France, before our time, and in our own day Hermesianism and the movement of Ronge, have gone the way of all flesh. It remains to see what will be the fate of the Old Catholicism of Germany, and of the sister-associations elsewhere. But, while so many attacks have been repulsed, so many rebellions quelled, in detail, the foundations themselves have been sapped, and the educated thought of civilised man, in the countries of the Roman obedience, has broken, and to all appearance finally broken, with Christian belief.

42. Now it must be most instructive to compare, even in the rudest and briefest outline, the experience of the Pagan movement in our own country with its history abroad. I say in our own country, for the Abbé Martin's appeal is to us, whom he seeks to draw out of our Churchless, shelterless condition, into the shelter he so much enjoys. But many of us doubt whether we are quite so Churchless, and still more of us whether we are quite so shelterless, as he supposes.

43. The rebellion of Paganism against the Faith was felt throughout Western Europe. It was a barometrical indication of the condition of a moral atmosphere, which overspread all Christendom, and pervaded its essentially common life. England was an early recipient of the Greek studies in her two Universities; and the close connection of her rising literature with Italy ensured her,

sharing largely in all the impulses which had convulsed or touched the mother-country of our civilisation. The marks not only of Italy, but of Boccaccio, are stamped upon English letters from Chaucer onwards. But Chaucer exhibits neither the moral foulness, nor that deep underlying of the pagan spirit, which marks the great Italian novelist. His "goodman of religion," is purely and strongly Christian :

"But Criste's lore, and his Apostles twelve,
He taught; but first he followed it himselfe."*

44. One of the very sweetest and most perfect of Christian poems is 'The Merle and the Nightingale,' by Dunbar. If it be said that this difference was national and not religious, it has also to be replied that England was distinguished from Italy between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries, first by a doctrinal reaction among a portion of the people, which found vent in Wiclif and in Lollardism; secondly, by that strong and truly national reaction against the court and see of Rome, which touched its climax in the proceedings of the reign of Henry VIII. So much for the first stage in the history of the Italian Paganism.

45. The second stage was that, which it reached under the influence of the classical *renaissance*. And here I suppose, that the British analogue to the Italian manifestation of the sixteenth century is to be found in the Elizabethan literature, the terrene spirit of which has been very powerfully described by Mr. Dowden in his remarkable works on Shakespeare. Let us estimate that literature first in its prince. Shakespeare undoubtedly exhibits a strong reaction against the transcendental spiritualism of the

* 'Canterbury Tales,' Prologue.

middle ages. It is hard to measure the distance between his mental attitude and that of Thomas à Kempis, or even that of Dante, who was, outwardly at least, a man of the world, a practical politician and partisan. The mediæval Church, or rather that part of it which aimed at fidelity to its mission, in its anxiety to keep religion pure and lofty, had set a gulf between it and the rude common life. Its idea was lofty; but it was not the idea of training the human being in every faculty and for every function of the present existence as the normal means of preparing him for a remoter future. Mary it followed; but Martha, who of necessity must be more typical of the mass of Christians, it rather proscribed. The conditions of earthly existence were renounced, rather than sanctified, in the religious ideal.

46. In order to the eventual re-establishment of the balance between the worlds, there required to be a strong reassertion, not only of the reality of this world and of life in it, but of their legitimacy. They, and not the cloister, were the school, in which the Almighty had appointed his children to be taught and reared. Hence came, as the grand characteristic of our Elizabethan age, what Mr. Dowden calls "devotion to the fact," "attainment of the fact," "rich feeling for positive, concrete fact."* In this reaching out with one arm, so to speak, of our nature over the whole terrestrial domain, there was a real widening of the scope of life; and if we look back impartially to the history of that great period, it seems difficult to deny that there was also a great accession of new human energy to the pre-existing stock. It was the office of the other arm to embrace the unseen life; and probably

* Dowden's 'Mind and Art of Shakespeare,' pp. 18, 19, 23.

this grasp was weakened for the time. It could hardly be but that, as in all human reactions, the function restored should trespass on the province of the function previously in too exclusive possession.

47. We need not then be surprised that the works of Shakespeare, as a whole, bear a somewhat worldly aspect; that in their exhibition of human nature, entirely unrivalled in all literature for largeness and variety, with depth, so small a portion should be seen on the side lying heavenward; that saintship, where it appears in Henry VI., is emasculated and incoherent; that not only in our early plays, such as 'Romeo and Juliet,' but in the later and greater works, 'Macbeth,' 'Othello,' 'Hamlet,' 'Lear,' the deep problems of our life and duty are handled upon a basis which is but negatively Christian. This is the more noteworthy, because a multitude of passages exhibit Shakespeare as an undoubting believer. But religion had been wrenched away from life; and life, in its recoil, busied with the gathering of all its energies, had not recovered the key to its own harmony with religion.

48. I have endeavoured here not to understate the charge, which a *Beatrice* might be warranted in making against our Elizabethan age. But when we compare the English "Paganism," as exhibited in Shakespeare, with the Italian Paganism, hardened into an Epicurean creed and sanctioned by the Roman court, or teaching with the very same pen, as in the "divine" Aretino, the vilest profligacy and the most orthodox theology, or even as it is exhibited in the splendid poetry of Bojardo and Ariosto, I cannot but think that, in fidelity to history and the fact, we must allow that the comparison is favourable, as far as it goes, both to England and to the Reformation.

49. Mr. Dowden has chosen with great judgment four

names as being together typical of the Elizabethan age in letters: Shakespeare, Bacon, Spenser, Hooker. The magnificent intellect of Bacon is held by Mr. Dowden to have been profoundly indifferent to religion. Is this truly so? I do not presume to deny that in Bacon's character "the world that now is" weighed for more than "that which is to come." But I would appeal with some confidence to his account, for example, of the fall of man, as a proof that he rendered a solid faith and fealty to the Christian dogma. As for Spenser, it is surely notable that, forming himself as he did upon the poets of the Italian romance, he utterly renounced their uncleanness, and, as it were, "passed by on the other side." More still is it to be noted that, while far from being the most robust of the band, Spenser is the one who seems to have taken the best aim at the literary restoration of a true theory of life. All virtue, all duty, all activeness of the human character, are set out by him, under the forms of chivalry, for our instruction: but his ideal Knight is Christian to the core.

"And on his breast a bloody Cross he bore,
The dear remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweet sake that glorious badge he wore,
And, dead as living, ever him adored."*

Nor was Hooker less a restorer than his great compeers. For was it not given to him to recall our theology from the hungry region of mere polemics to that of positive and fruitful truth, and to become the father of a long line of divines, reared undoubtedly, in the mere Anglican paddock, yet not without name and honour in the wide pastures of the Christian world?

50. I know not whether the Abbé Martin will recognise

* 'Faerie Queene,' i. 2.

the relevancy of a discussion of this kind. He may think it *ἀπροσδιόνυσον*; far from the mark. I admit that it fetches a compass; but this is precisely what, in strategy, often hems in the adversary with a zone of iron. The case, I think, may be thus exhibited. Religion lives in various forms: but it has to a great extent the same evils to contend with. These evils are failure in the law of human duty, and failure in the Christian dogma, without which dogma, as Christians believe, the laws of human duty cannot on a large scale be maintained. Obviously our controversies would be solved, could we see plainly in which of its rival forms our religion dealt with these foes most effectually. But then comparison of the dogma is the polemical business, which in this paper has been waived. Comparison of the morality, on an adequate scale, of the countries of the Latin Church and the countries of the Reformed communions would be most instructive; but the facts are so manifold and complex, as to defy reduction to a simple issue. It is something, then, gained towards the establishment of truth, if we can obtain hints for tracing the intellectual history of these countries respectively, in its relation to religion. Such a hint I have sought to supply by exhibiting the effect upon the two systems, or upon the two frames of mind, of the great paganising movement dating about the close of the middle age. We might find here something that may faintly resemble the parables of our Lord, and their adaptedness for public instruction; wherein the truth (as I think Whately observes) is perceived before its application to contending parties has come into view.

51. Upon the whole I believe, that a continuation of the inquiry into the lay literature of the respective countries down to our own day would tell the same very significant story;

and would show that, with all our faults, which are countless, yet, taken at large, religion has dealt and deals more hopefully with the great anti-dogmatic movements here in England, than in the lands of the Papal Church. Suppose, for example, that we bring into the field Tasso on the one side, and Milton on the other. Undoubtedly the chief work of Tasso rests upon a basis of Christian facts: yet it may be doubted whether the Christianity of Milton, as exhibited in his works, with all its errors or offences, had not in it far more of the character of a living operative power, holding the allegiance of heart and will. Again, while, in the last century, the Voltairian torrent carried away the mind of France, the three most prominent contemporary names in English literature, those of Johnson, Burke, and Richardson, were eminently Christian. At a later period we can point to at least four great contemporary poets, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and Scott, none of them professional * or theological, but all markedly Christian. It might be difficult to find a parallel within the Roman pale. Men such as these, it must be remembered, are fountain-heads of thought, moulders and makers of the generations yet to come,

“Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood o’ the world.” †

52. At the present moment, indeed, belief in the revelation of the unseen is undergoing, here as elsewhere, a shock which is without parallel, at least in the history of this country, for the activity of its manifestations; and is suffering a sharp retribution for all the errors of all its professors. But it remains to be seen whether what we

* I do not think Coleridge's early function, as a preacher of a creed soon abandoned, requires me to qualify this epithet.

† Tennyson's 'Princess,' ii.

witness is a structural change, like those which fill the record of geological time, or whether it is the wave of a cyclone, which wastes and submerges, and is then itself reabsorbed. So it was with the unbelief which Bishop Butler described; so it may be again. It is, however, even now, my persuasion that, so far as men of mature life are concerned, there is exaggeration abroad, if not as to the world of physical science—which has not yet become the “mother and mistress of all the sciences”—yet as to the world of literature; still more as to the sphere of those professions, which are mainly conversant with human life and action, and which, as I cannot but think, must best prepare men to judge of any scheme, which has for its object the training of mankind.

53. But whatever modesty, whatever reserve the present rampancy of the non-believing movement may inspire, it will hardly prompt us to look to the Latin Church as invested with the reconciling mission between faith and the human reason. It is true that the central authority of that Church has recently pointed out another method of settling the difference. It proposes to effect the work by the simple action of authority: and this method, boldly proclaimed, and well echoed through the world, may attract a fragmentary proportion even of English minds. The Abbé Martin says (p. 132), “The fundamental principle of Catholic discipline is respect for authority;” and he calls on us to “understand very clearly” (p. 131) that those, who accept his invitation, must, “in religious matters, make an entire surrender of their personal liberty and of their own will.”

54. Freedom, then, is quietly trodden under foot. Now, this is not a lawless country. It constantly excites the surprise of foreigners that, when Revolution shakes

or saps the Continent, Authority sits undisturbed in England. But that, it will be said, is temporal authority. It is not temporal authority alone. Rely upon it, the acknowledgment of a law external to ourselves in things unseen is the absolute condition, under which alone authority can uphold itself in the sphere of the visible and tangible. But it is met by the counteracting play of liberty; met, yet not extinguished. Authority can only be defended by reason: it is a part of what reason sanctions and recommends. But there is no escape from this, that it must be tried by reason; as even the being of God, with reverence be it spoken, must be tried by reason. Tried by reason, under a great responsibility; but under no external coercion, either physical or moral.

55. What the English mind demands, and will demand, is that the contest between belief and non-belief shall be fought out upon equal terms. This does not mean that human consent, that the tradition of ages, shall be cast aside as a thing of no account; but means that it shall be weighed, and account taken of its weight, by that faculty which God has made to be the very door of our matured minds, and through which alone lawful entrance into them can be had. The principle of authority, the fact of Revelation, the stability and perpetuity of the Catholic Creed, all these, I trust, will remain firmly grounded among us; but they can only be maintained through a frank acceptance of the challenge to make good their claims by reason.

56. This demand of the English mind has been met by the Roman Church with the allegation, that her head is infallible. But then we know that, until eight years ago, this very thing was freely denied by the highest

authorities in her communion. She likewise asserts her universality; but does not this seem to be somewhat impaired by the fact that the Christians, who are not of her communion, are quite as numerous as those who are? She claims, too, a right to override the conclusions of science; but will candid reflection regard the plea as strong enough to stand the shock of hard and concrete facts? We observe in the Roman Church a most powerful organisation, and a great faculty of action upon all those who do not laboriously think, or largely contribute to supply mankind with its stock of thought: but we observe also, when we look to the countries of her unbroken dominion, an apparent want of capacity to meet the human mind in its questioning attitude; so that it has simply broken away from her control, and the communications between the two are like the voices of men severed on this side and on that by a broad and deep stream that neither of them can cross. The non-believing guerillas are busy in the field of science, of archaeology, of language, of pre-historic facts, of speculative philosophy, of Biblical and all archaic criticism. In every one of these they challenge Christians to the fight. What, within the last thirty years, the current generation—during which the trumpet of defiance has been ever sounding in her ears—have this vast clergy and Church effected in answer to the challenge? And why are Ritualists, or anybody else, to be in a hurry to surrender their Christianity to a body that shows so small capacity to defend a territory, which nevertheless it claims exclusively to occupy?

57. The truth is that the Reformation, amidst its convulsive throes, lifted again to the surface a gigantic question which had long lain buried beneath the *débris* of

the current religious traditions; namely, whether freedom is one of the vital and normal coefficients for a healthy life and action of the human soul? It answered this question, too, not at once, but partly led and partly driven by the logic of events, in the affirmative. Neither had the Roman Church, before the Reformation, replied to it in the negative. Since that great epoch, her attitude has become in many ways more artificial and constrained. The tendencies adverse to freedom within her pale are supposed to be due to the order of Jesuits. But Loyola is himself only the first, and most prominent, index and result of those tendencies. The foe was everywhere around the walls: sentries had to be multiplied, passwords appointed, and doors formerly open kept fast with lock and key.

58. Jesuitism was only rendered possible by the Reformation: it was, by reflex action, the Reformation's child. Compulsory confession was a yoke which one-half Europe had refused to bear: but, in the post-Reformation Church, that rule was developed into the system of direction. Now Tartaros was as far beneath the ground, as the ground was beneath heaven; and direction was as far beyond mere confession, as confession was beyond the lines of human autonomy. Religion became more sensuous, more artificial, more feminine. The saints of this period differ from earlier saints, not merely as the ages differ, but from the specific reflex effect which had been wrought upon the Latin religion. What a difference, for instance, between Saint Bernard and Saint Francis de Sales: how much more human, natural, and universal is the one, how much more removed is the other from the largeness of the true type of manhood. And so it still seems to be a continual tendency, nay, a standing policy,

to depress the man in the priest, and to make the common type of the order force down the growths of individual character.

59. Finally, what the Reformation did once, the French Revolution did anew. It stimulated and centralised the ecclesiastical spirit, narrowing its precinct, making it more intense within that precinct, but widening the gap between it and the lay Christian world, and wearing away the hope of reconciliation between them. It is easy to denounce from the Roman chair all opposers, as simply representing the world, the flesh, and the devil. But the question will recur to calm minds whether that absoluteness of rule which it establishes, from the head downwards, through the several stages of its clergy, ending in the dominion of them all over the flock, and in the establishment of an unchecked clerical supremacy over the detail of life, is really healthful for mankind; really according to the laws of the constitution given us from on high; really the due form of the remedy appointed for the healing, the restoration, and the full development of human nature?

60. A variety of circumstances tend to confirm this mistrust in the capacity of a Church, such as the Abbé Martin recommends, for becoming a successful champion of belief. We know, for example, that forty, thirty, or twenty years ago the fortress of thought and of scientific theology, for the Latin Church, was in South Germany. But we also know that the band of men, who were then her joy and crown, have been driven, since the Council of 1870, out of her communion; and are now known as Old Catholics. If we cross the Rhine into France, we observe that Lamennais, the greatest genius of the French clergy of his day, and Hyacinthe, once their most famous preacher,

each, though in different directions, became estranged from their Church; that Montalembert* is widely believed, and Gratry is more or less suspected, to have died in mental estrangement from the Council of the Vatican. If we carry our view into Italy, we find that nearly all the most remarkable men of its clergy for the last half-century have been unable to hold their positions, or have fallen under the positive censures of the Church: Rosmini, Gioberti, Ventura, Passaglia: a list to which two notable names, at least, of men now living might be added. In England it is true that a large number of notable persons were, within our memory, induced to cross the Roman border. They changed the colour of their small but respected Anglo-Roman communion, and some of them have been active in polemical campaigning; but what has this clergy effected in the great warfare for belief?

61. There was a time when the champions of the Latin Church were content to pursue the historic method, and to trace through the sacred Scriptures, the writings of Fathers, the structure of liturgies, and the decrees of Councils, those severed elements of proof, which, as they thought, welding themselves by degrees into a mass, presented the features of a true historic growth, and justified them in inscribing over the portals of their Church the proud title of the Unchanged. There was not only a material but a formal difference between this mode of arguing, and the mode now in use. For it was a process carried on in the open, level arena, upon the common ground of an appeal to history, and to rational judgment, upon a wide range of actual fact. The method is now

* [The reader, if desirous of further information, will naturally consult his Biography by Mrs. Oliphant. The subject is discussed in vol. ii. pp. 390-9, but with a certain amount of reserve.—W. E. G., 1878.]

disused; and such men as the Bossuets, the Nicoles, or as the great divines of Constance, are discredited and even denounced; a change in tactics, which must have a cause, and which suggests no other cause than this; that, in the face of the profound alterations lately effected in the Roman system, the appeal to history has become a patent peril, and must be not only laid aside but inhibited. But do the modes of argument, which have been substituted, better sustain the ordeal, through which they have to pass in every reflective and impartial mind?

62. For example, in lieu of showing what has been in the world, and what is, or is not to be deduced from the abundant facts of history bearing on the case, recourse is now often had to the argument *à priori*. This may well be called the domineering argument; as, in order to instruct man, it lays down the law for God, and determines the provision it was needful for Him to make in order to ensure the fulfilment of His promise to the Church that the gates of hell should not prevail against it; or, that the Christian faith, and the society to whose stewardship it was to be intrusted, should endure throughout all the ages, until the work of the Redeemer should have been fully accomplished. To this end, we are often told, it was necessary that there should be an ecclesiastical organisation with one head exercising supremacy over the entire body.

63. But when we look through or over the wall of the Western Church, into the precincts of the Eastern, we seem to find a living confutation of this argument. For there a vast body, nearly a fourth of Christendom, has subsisted from the great day of Pentecost to our day, which not only does not enjoy, but which renounces and condemns, the whole doctrine of supremacy; and which,

under the old Patriarchal constitution of the Church, retains the Christian faith entire, by the acknowledgment of Rome herself, which invites, and invites in vain, to her Councils those unyielding patriarchs of the East. And what is the answer? We may really marvel that human lips can be found to speak, or hands to write it. It is, says Abbé Martin (p. 125), that the Eastern Churches are "almost all of them dead or dying for the last many centuries." Dying for the last many centuries! It is told, I think, of Fontenelle, that he was warned against coffee as a slow poison. "A very slow one," he replied; "I have drunk it through eighty years." Surely it is a poor, thin, transparent shift, which the dire necessities of exhausted polemics may rather account for than excuse.

64. I shall attempt no reply except to say that the score of millions of those Christians, who inhabit the Turkish Empire, have for almost a corresponding tale of generations enjoyed the highest of all honours; they have been sufferers for their faith. They have been its martyrs and its confessors. They alone have continuously filled that character. Many a tender maid, at the threshold of her young life, has gladly met her doom, when the words that accepted Islam, the act that invested her with the yatchak, would have made her in a moment a free and honoured member of a privileged, a dominant community. Ever since the Turkish hoof began to lay waste the Levant, those twenty millions have had before them, on the one side peace and freedom, on the other side the Gospel. They have chosen the Gospel; and have paid the forfeit. And whatever be their faults and errors, it is not for us of the West, amidst our ease and prosperity, our abundant sins and scandals, to stigmatise them as professors of a dead or dying Christianity, and thus to

disparage the most splendid and irrefragable, perhaps, of all the testimonies which man can render to the religion of the Cross. Of this deplorable plea I should confidently hope never to hear again, but that I believe none better can be found to serve its controversial purpose.

65. There may be many, who believe in the perpetuity of the Christian faith, and Christian Society or Church, and therefore in its preservation in all necessary truth; and yet who, on the broad ground of rational interpretation of Scripture, would utterly deny, or resolutely question, the assumption that either the Roman Pontiff, or any organ or organs of the Church whatever, have a guaranteed immunity from error. The life of the Church is one thing; its health, and the perfection of its health, surely are another. A promise of life to an individual does not exclude sickness: why should the promise of life to the Church? It is surely futile to reply that she cannot err, because immunity from error is essential to the perfect discharge of her duties. Here we have again the *à priori* doctrine, and rules of conduct laid down for One whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our ways.* But the assumption is not only arbitrary; it is in straight contradiction to the whole constitution of things, under which we live. For in it every provision for the performance of duty, for the attainment of good, is marked with the imperfection thus haughtily refused. To this rule there is no exception. Even the very "creature,"† the beautiful material world, is touched and streaked with it; lest perchance, if it had been faultless, it might suggest to us a claim for immunities that seem to have been advisedly withheld by the Supreme Wisdom.

* Isaiah lv. 8.

† Rom. viii.

But also this daring argument, which threatens, like Capaneus, to scale the gates and walls of heaven, is, after all, quite insufficient for its purpose. If we are to believe in the inerrability of a person, or a body of persons, because it is, forsooth, necessary for the full preservation of the truth, we must then also believe in all besides that can be shown to be needful for the perfect attainment of that end. Now, the conservation of all spiritual truth is not a mere operation of the intellect. It requires the faultless action of the perceiving power of the spirit. That is to say, it requires the exclusion of sin; and the man or body that is to be infallible, must also be a sinless organ. I here deal, it will be observed, only with the argument *à priori*, which proclaims that infallibility must be true, because it is necessary for the perfect maintenance of truth and exclusion of error. If this be so, there is something else that is necessary for infallibility. It is necessary that the tainting, blinding, distorting power of sin should be shut out from the spiritual eye of the infallible judge. In a word, one-half of the claim is too glaringly at variance with the facts of every day to be prudently employed; yet it is requisite, in order to make good in reason the other half, which is only advanced with greater safety, because its detection depends upon long, and more complicated and disputable processes.

66. Another argument which has been recently brought into use, and has dealt a heavy blow to the old and revered motto of *Semper eadem*, has been that which may indeed be called *Nunquam eadem*; or, the doctrine of development. When Dr. Newman explained to the world that this was the instrument which had opened for him the way from his mother Church and university into the

Roman communion, he felt the necessity of supplying tests, which might serve to distinguish a development from a corruption. Of these he enumerated no less than seven.* They were:—

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| 1. Preservation of type or idea. | 5. Logical sequence. |
| 2. Continuity of principles. | 6. Preservative additions. |
| 3. Power of assimilation. | 7. Chronic continuance. |
| 4. Early anticipation. | |

67. Now I submit that these seven tests, imposing as they sound, are radically insufficient to guarantee a normal and healthy growth, which is, I apprehend, the only legitimate development; for they do not include either maintenance of the equilibrium of the system, or the due proportion of its parts. Certainly they afford a warrant against the removal of the old essence and the substitution of a new one; against the transubstantiation, so to speak, of the Church. But they afford no more. Suppose a child to be born weaker in one leg than in the other, and suppose that weak leg to be bandaged up and never put to the ground. The child develops—that is, he grows up, though he grows up a cripple, with a shrunken limb. But the type or idea of a human body remains; the principle of its life is continuous; it assimilates, for it is nourished by food; the early anticipation was shown in the weakness of the limb; the logical sequence is the continuity of growth; the preservative additions which, on Dr. Newman's principles, must be accessories only, are found in his duly measured clothes; and the chronic duration is in the long life, to which such a person may, and often does, attain, like another of seemlier formation. But the equilibrium is gone, and he wants a crutch;

* Newman on Development of Doctrine, chap. i. London, 1845.

the parts have lost their just proportion, and exhibit only the contrast of a strong side and a weak one.

68. Now this, if I may presume so far, not unfairly describes the development of the Roman out of the Apostolic Church. No doubt (as I for one believe) the Church began with a clergy; nay, began in a clergy. It had its centre of life, and of self-propagating power, in the Apostolic College, which gradually called into being those orders that form the full equipment of the Christian ministry. I could not in candour deny that Holy Scripture assigns to St. Peter some kind of leadership or primacy. Thus far, and if this had been all, we have, I admit, the germ of an absolute hierarchy, capable of development into the full organism. But these principles of life were girt about on every side with limiting conditions, of an equally active kind. As between St. Peter and the Apostles, by the independence of each upon every other individually, extending even to the power of remonstrance and rebuke, and by the superior authority of the Apostolic College and the Council of the Church. As between the ministry and its flocks, by their free admission to the Word of God without stint or limit; by the authorised, nay, commanded, exercise of their rational mind upon it: by their having some share in appointing to the ministerial office, for surely it was the *cheirotomy* of the Acts that expended into lay assent, perhaps lay patronage, in the subsequent history of the Church: by their actual participation in government, which I suppose might very well be developed out of the Council of Jerusalem; and finally by their paramount control over temporalities.

69. I do not dispute the historical and huge development in the Latin Church of the first set of principles and powers. But what has become of the second?

The access to the Divine Word of Scripture has, to say the least, been greatly narrowed. The duty to prove is replaced (see Abbé Martin) by the duty to submit. Not only are lay rights in regard to appointments fast passing into clerical hands, but presbyteral and episcopal rights are in course of rapid absorption into the will of one single supreme clergyman, the Roman Pontiff. The last remnant of lay influence, from within the Church, over its government was effaced in principle and fact, by the exclusion of the representatives of States from the Council of the Vatican. Even of the care of temporalities the Church went far to relieve the people, when, besides the tithes and the voluntary offerings, it possessed before the Reformation from one-third to one-half the land of various countries. And at this day it is held to be vital by a party, that the Pope ought also to be a King, in order that he may be temporally independent. The whole space, given for the growth of two sets of principles, has been monopolised by one. In the structure of the Church system, the original equilibrium has been thus wholly dislocated, and a new one devised, with a crutch. The proportion of parts is lost; the laity count but do not weigh; hardly a vestige of their ecclesiastical rights remains; that vestige is only in the form of patronage; and it is marked for early extinction.

70. It is, I think, clear that, for the purposes of popular influence as well as of controversy, the Roman Church derives vast practical advantage from the continuity of her traditions. She is like a State that has never undergone a Revolution. I will not say she is like Russia, as compared with England: since I feel that the illustration is imperfect. For in a State, when evils become intolerable, a radical and violent change must come; inasmuch as to

be in the State is, and is felt to be, a first necessity of life. In these times, there is no corresponding sense of a first necessity to be in a Church, that is, to be truly in it, as among its living and working members. So it is quite possible that, in lieu of the trouble, the pain, the agony, of a convulsive change, like revolution in a State, men in a Church may tacitly withdraw, and may pass, through a comprehensive but noiseless disobedience, into a dogmatic vacuum, if not into spiritual death.

71. This much it is right to allow; that traditions, unbroken by any shock of change, offer undoubtedly an imposing spectacle; but they supply no test of truth in religious controversy, any more than they supplied a test of health and safety in the France of 1788. It had unbroken traditions; but it was to come down with a crash in 1789. England, on the other hand, by deposing bad sovereigns, and extorting Magna Charta and the Triennial Bill and the Bill of Rights, in a series of revolutions, had won her way to a true stability of civil existence. A just parallel, a sound illustration, is to be found, as I think, in the Pagan or Olympian system of the classic ages. From what original did that system draw its lineage? The Abbé Martin will probably agree with me in believing that a primitive religion was given, as the Scriptures tell us, in the cradle of our race. It was not by the shock of religious revolution, by the violence of Luthers, and Zuingles, and Calvins, that this primitive religion was disnatured and deformed. Here and there we have indications of minute local conflicts between an old god and a new; but they were purely local. It was not by persecuting laws, by tribunals of inquisition, or by wars of religion, that the old monotheism was (so to speak) transelemented, and caricatured, into the gorgeous but

gross and motley religion of the Greek and Italian Peninsulas. It was by continually importing new matter, of a particular quality and bearing. And these were very "preservative additions"; insomuch that they supplied the most civilised part of man, through fifteen hundred years, with what, "in chronic continuance," served them for a religion.

72. But they gradually and slowly drew the system off its old axis, and pitched it on a new one; and so handled it, that at last it seemed to lose all features of religion considered as a discipline for man. It then no longer presented the first of the seven tests in the preservation of the type or idea. Let it not be supposed that I mean to insinuate such a charge against the Latin Church. The type or idea, that of redemption and renovation through our Lord and Saviour, is, I rejoice to think, still held with a marvellous consent by nearly the entire body, however broken up, of professing Christians. My argument is one *à fortiori*, and is this;—that the plea of continuous traditions is of no binding force, because, as we see from the case of the Olympian system, this feature may subsist, and yet not merely corruption and debasement, but even possibly change of the type, and loss of the essence, may arrive.

73. Another imposing plea, the plea to which the Latin Church commonly owes what success she may achieve in making proselytes, is the great advantage, or, as it is sometimes put, the necessity, of certainty in religion, for the satisfaction and establishment of the soul. In this department of theology has been elaborated the doctrine of a "divine faith," the privilege of every Latin Christian, distinct, from the first, in its nature from even the most normal process and fullest ripeness of persuasion and con-

viction. Without doubt faith is distinct from knowledge, in things human as well as in things divine. But, over and above this, it is taught that faith is in essence different from the just appreciation of motives of credibility,* and a claim seems to be made for every Latin Christian of what is essentially a separate and specific revelation. Thus infallibility, on the one side, in the living voice of the Church, seems to be met by a divine certainty on the other in receiving it. No more ingenious scheme could be devised for shutting out that scrutiny of doctrine and ecclesiastical title, which is recommended to the members of all other religious communions, and inhibited to her own.

74. But, when the interior parts of this machinery come to be examined, it is found to exhibit fatal flaws. For there are no infallible means provided for carrying the message from the infallible mouth to the person happily endowed with a gift of "divine certainty" for receiving it. The priest who instructs him is not infallible, nor is the bishop who overrules the priest, nor is the Synod which outweighs the bishop. As to the priest, I need not enlarge. As to the bishop, in 1822 Bishop Baynes, a great authority, published his belief that no one in his communion, throughout England and Ireland, believed in the infallibility of the Pope. As to Synods, the national Synod of Ireland, in 1810, declared that no Roman Catholic could be "required to believe or profess" that infallibility, and also declared this freedom to be "a part of the Roman Catholic religion."† Into what terrible

* Perrone, De Loc. Theol. iii. 1, 2, 137, 138: "Credit perinde ac si cerneret intuitu suo, immo magis."

† Defence against Dr. Moysey, p. 230. Slater on Roman Catholic Tenets, pp. 14, 15.

pitfalls, then, may the Latin believer fall headlong unawares! for to-day he may be assured by a Synod, in the name of the entire Roman Church, that he cannot be required to believe a proposition, and to-morrow a Council, meeting at the Vatican, can lay on him that very obligation. What shock to certainty, comparable for a moment to this, has ever been imparted by any act done in the Anglican communion?

75. I do not wish to use any expression that can wound. But surely, in the sonorous pretensions of the Latin controversialists, there is a great deal of what in common affairs would be adjudged to be no better than "tall talk." The impression on my mind is, that it is no difficult matter to establish a very formidable and damaging indictment against any one of the portions of the Christian Church: damaging enough to excite, unsettle, terrify any one of its members, who does not resort to the unpalatable, but restorative, medicine of examining with an equal care such "wounds and bruises and putrefying sores" as may perhaps be detected in the community he is solicited to join.

76. I fear that the restless and eager prosecution of the business of proselytism has often done irreparable mischief. First, in exposing the cause of belief to those cavils and scoffs, which it has provoked from men who do not believe. Secondly, and yet worse, in unsettling the foundations of that reverence, which every one ought to feel for the faith in which he has been reared, even as for the breasts at which he has first been fed. How often has it shaken the foundations of authority in the very first ordinance of God, the family! How often has it promoted a supposed orthodoxy of belief, to the neglect or to the detriment of those laws of conduct, the support of which

is the work, and end, and the true and only renown of orthodoxy! How often, in accepting the hasty process, often of an unformed and youthful mind, as a sufficient warrant for the tremendous operation of changing a religion, does it, by an unfelt but inevitable influence, impair the strength and sanctity of those bonds which, if sincerely entertained, a religion must as such have woven round the mind and heart! How apt is it to insinuate, "Unless you believe what I tell you, you have no warrant to believe at all!" How eagerly does it inculcate authority upon principles of rebellion, and obtain the surrender of mental freedom through the operation of unbridled mental licence! I do not say that no man is to change a false religion for a true; or a less true religion for one with fuller truth; but that the change ought to be recognised for what it is, in fully developed minds, at the best a terrible convulsion, and at times such a rent in the spiritual life, as nothing can repair. Still less do I say that the spirit which our Lord once rebuked is confined to any sect or body: but I fear there is little doubt, upon a survey of the Christian world, which is its most favoured seat.

77. In writing this paper I have obeyed, as far as I could, the injunctions of the Abbé Martin, who deprecates dwelling on detail, and urges that "a great institution ought to be taken as a whole," judged "by its broad outlines," tested by its general results (pp. 127, 134). Anxious to avoid the sorer points of contact, I have avoided questions of morality; but he should know that we in England generally do not like the actual teaching of his Church as to the relative places given to particular sins and virtues. We fear that, in that teaching, a supreme law, the love of truth, comes off but second best; so that in the intercourse

of life with his co-religionists, we rely a great deal more on the individual, than on the Church.

78. I have taken little notice of his own observations as to details. It is no matter for wonder that his knowledge of things as they are with us, like ours of things as they are in France, should be but remote and inaccurate. Had he been a closer student of our history, he never could have said that there was no peace in the English Church, except when the State tightened the reins. The time of this tightening of the reins has usually been with us the time of the greatest disturbance. The State promoted a lethargic peace during the eighteenth century: not by tightening the reins, but by appointing Hanoverian Bishops, who could not exercise a sharp control over a Jacobite clergy; and thus by loosening, not tightening discipline. Nor could he have said, that the Church worked worst in periods of vigour. Hardly any one denies the enormous increase of good wrought in our own time, amidst all its troubles and all its scandals. He sets out in much detail trivial causes, which he thinks prevent conversion. It seems only to occur to him by accident, and as he draws near a close, that his Ritualists abide in the Anglican Church because they believe it to be "a part of the true Church of Jesus Christ" (p. 130). But if he is right,—and doubtless he is right,—in imputing to them this belief, how is it that he does not see how it supplies, until overthrown,—and he has done nothing to overthrow it,—the sufficient and conclusive answer to his question?

79. His courtesy and evident goodwill inspire the wish that he knew more closely the state of religion in this non-Roman world. He offers us a religion with "authority for its fundamental principle" (p. 132), but authority

blended with "great kindness and condescension" (p. 127). The freedom which we think to be, by the ordinance of God, an inseparable law of our life, and condition of all its healthful energy, has thus tranquilly disappeared from the system of the Abbé. What we want is not so much authority "blended with great kindness and condescension," as authority freely entertained and accepted by reason, met by it, and "blended" with it. Were he more familiar with us, he would see that in this country, conformably to its essential character, there exists no question as to the maintenance of religion without this freedom; the serious question is whether it is to be maintained with it, or not to be maintained at all.

80. The liberal coquetry of Von Hartmann* with the Latin Church, as the only foe that Negation can stoop to recognise, has, except as to individuals, little meaning for England. Yet there is here a great mass of positive belief, both within and without the Church of the nation. Among the Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Nonconformists of England, extremes of doctrine have been greatly mitigated; but theology is on the rise, and culture is held in increased esteem. No doubt the principles called Anglican, which have also greatly advanced in positiveness and in practical vitality, exhibit notable distinctions from the Protestant system, as it exists outside the Church of the land. But both this evangelical Protestantism, and the Anglican system, have crossed the Oceans, and sprung up in the remotest portions of the earth, with vigorous organisations to sustain them, and with no small exhibition of expansive force in efforts to reclaim the heathen. Of the Church of England and her

* 'Die Selbstersetzung des Christenthum,' p. xv.

daughters beyond sea, it may with no gross immodesty be said,

"Tum, fortes latè ramos et brachia tendens
Huc illuc, media ipsa ingentem sustinet umbram."*

81. There are Roman divines, who seem to boast of the disintegration of Protestantism. Yet I hardly understand how the candid mind, be it Roman or other, can fail to see that these two, which I have described, are great and powerful factors, for the present and for the future, in the composition and direction of the Christian world. They differ in their respective distances from the Church of Rome, in their conceptions of Church communion, of sacraments, of authority, and of Christian tradition. But both prize as an inestimable boon the power of free and universal access for all Christians to the written Word, the most powerful and pure of all instruments of human education: and that boon was obtained for both by the struggle of the Sixteenth Century. Both turn their eyes, with a common anxiety, to the great issues that are now debated in every form, and in the hearing of every class and every person. Both look to the determination of those issues, as involving the alternative of the further advancement, or the eventual degeneracy, of man.

82. For them the question of questions is, what *modus vivendi*, what terms of respective possession and reciprocal influence, can be established between the Christian Revelation and the more and more restless, but also more and more awakened and busy, reason of man. The foundations of the great deep are indeed broken up; and men have to contend for the first beginnings, elements, and

* Virg. Georg. ii. 296.

foundations of the truth. The specific idea of Revelation; the limit of inspiration in the Divine Word; the relation between the past and the passing generation in the acceptance and delivery of truth, between the ancient expressions of it and the play of recent thought upon and around them, between the action of freedom in which our nature is grounded, and the reaction of authority, which is as much an essential of mental as of external life; the place of law in the visible creation, and of miracle in relation to experience; the nature and range of intercourse by prayer between the creature and the Creator; the rules by which the dubious conflicts of righteousness in this world shall work out into its final triumph, and the probation of the human being, oftentimes so narrow and inadequate, to our human view, shall usher him onwards to a definite condition: these are some of the questions within the region of Theism, to say nothing of those beyond it, which call importunately for the vindication or readjustment of old replies, or the construction of new ones.

83. Nor do they call in vain. There is no acquiescence in the attempt to divorce morality from religion, or religion from theology. Though the contest be close and urgent, and all the more so from the respect due to so many of the assailants, there is no despondency as to the issue. But it is felt that the time has come, when discussion has to be substituted for anathema as the main instrument of defence. If the Latin Church will gird herself for that discussion, and show that she can surpass Anglicans and Nonconformists, Lutherans and Reformed, in vindicating the authority of religion, and establishing its harmony with the advised and persistent demands of the human reason, she may then only secure for herself the *spolia opima* of battle in the best of causes. She would thus,

assuredly, do more to bring about the ultimate triumph of her own particular claim, than by wondering, while admitting, that all Protestants are not Rationalists, or that all Ritualists do not leave a Church, which is said at the same time, as a true Church, to command their allegiance (p. 130); and, as "the living embodiment of every high and holy thought, memory, purpose, hope," to warm their heart.