

out the folly of attempting to "overthrow English Protestantism by abusing Protestants."

Does the writer in the *Rambler* think it will conciliate Protestants, or tend to prejudice them in favour of what he calls "Catholic truth," to denounce the Thirty-nine Articles as "vile"—to speak of the "chaotic world of Protestantism"—of "Protestantism as essentially a religion of negations," in which it is *difficult to find two people who do not disagree in their creed*—of "that singular thing, English Protestantism . . . raising new churches, and paying additional elergy by hundreds and thousands, yet *winking at burial-club poisonings, wife-beatings, and child-murders*, and extolling the English people as the most moral on the face of the earth"?

Were we to have *conciliated* our Roman Catholic readers by similar vituperation, instead of calm argument and affectionate remonstrance, we rather think we should have long since been consigned to the oblivion we should have merited, and all our fine professions about candour and fair play would have been justly set down as mere snares to entrap the weak or unwary, instead of being considered, as we trust they are (even by our opponents), as the honest expressions of an earnest desire to follow truth wherever it leads, and of a sincere confidence that "the ultimate power of truth and sincerity" must, at last, prevail.

While, however, we protest against such harsh and uncharitable sentiments as unworthy of an article on "The True Principle of Religious Controversy," and utterly inconsistent with the sound views so ably urged in the paragraphs first cited, we are glad to be able to add some further extracts, couched in a more candid spirit. Speaking of English Protestants, the writer says, in another passage—

"They make sacrifices for religion—some of them great sacrifices. . . . They have wonderfully improved in general morals during the last half century; and that, not under the pressure or from the example of Catholicism (of which they know nothing), but from some influence residing among themselves."

Well, this we think is some set-off against the grievous charge of *winking at burial-club poisonings, wife-beatings, and child-murders*; and, probably, our readers will agree with us, is somewhat inconsistent with it. But if the *Rambler* expects to influence the minds of English or Irish Protestants by really doing what he professes, "placing his confidence in the ultimate power of truth and sincerity," we would recommend him to act up to his own wise principles, as we have endeavoured (we hope not wholly unsuccessfully) to do, and sincerely and steadily try to *lead* the minds of those who now sincerely differ with their Roman Catholic brethren (men whom the *Rambler* acknowledges cannot be *driven*) by fair reasoning, learned and logical argument, and truthful historical statements, based on adequate authority, into that glorious unity, which has been so eloquently described by the great Burke, as being not "unity of belief in the bond of ignorance, nor unity of profession in the bond of hypocrisy, but unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." In the words of the *Rambler* itself, we think there is, indeed, "an indescribable power, a victorious efficacy, in the very look, the voice, the gestures, and still more in the words of those rare persons in whom Christian *love* not only lives, but is absolutely dominant, which is unapproached by all the achievements of logic, and all the captivating beauty of human discourse. The reason we believe to be this—that the saint appeals to that which is good in a man, and treats him as being better, perhaps, than he is; while we, for the most part, attack that which is evil in him, and treat him as worse than he is, or, at the best, with the barest measure of rigid justice."

We shall forward our present number to the Editor of the *Rambler*, in the hope that the

good spirit in which the main part of the article we have referred to is written, will induce the conductors of that journal to try whether there are to be found in our pages any of the "illogical assumptions, the violations of history, or the puzzled confusion," which they would have their readers to believe are the characteristics of all writers who are opposed to them. Our pages have dealt with so large a number of topics as to afford ample ground for detecting and exposing such faults, if they exist; and not pretending to the supernatural powers of infallibility, we are not vain enough to suppose that we may not at times have fallen into involuntary error. One thing we are sure of, however, that we would not willingly either *remain in error* ourselves, or lead others into it, and shall, therefore, be truly glad to have any errors into which we may have fallen pointed out if they exist; and, with that view, we shall be happy if the Editor of the *Rambler* will permit us, not in a boastful or pretending, but a sincere spirit of Christian friendship, to present him with the whole of our periodical, Nos. 1 to 40 inclusive, if he likes to break a friendly lance with us in controversy, carried on in the Christian spirit we both profess to admire and approve of. We can assure the Editor that we have no party object in view, but are sincerely anxious to promote the cause of truth and virtue, and that we ever look upon those who differ with us, as *friends* and not as enemies, when they are trying to convert us to the opinions which they conscientiously believe to be true; and should the *Rambler* succeed in exposing inconsistencies, or illogical assumptions, in what we have presented to the world, he will, at least, not find us "*shameless*," but, on the contrary, *sensitively alive to character*, and anxious to repair any wrong we may have done, as all honest men ought to be, when venturing to write on subjects of such vast importance to the happiness and safety of the whole human race, as the boundaries between religious truth and error.

DISPENSATIONS BY THE POPE.

OUR attention has been called to this subject by the leading article in the *Tablet* newspaper of March 24. A proposal has been made in Parliament to allow a widower to marry the sister of his deceased wife. It is not the object of our paper to discuss such questions; but if we were bound to give a decided opinion, we should fully agree with the *Tablet* in condemning this proposal, and, perhaps, on stronger grounds. For, if God has made man and wife to be "one flesh" (Gen. iii. 24; and Matthew xix. 5; and Mark x. 8.), then we do not see how it can be lawful for a man to marry his wife's sister, any more than his own sister. We hope the proposed change will be rejected in Parliament; and even if it should be adopted, we hope the Irish people will never act on it. So far, therefore, we are quite agreed with the *Tablet* about it. And we are sorry to find that all Roman Catholics do not agree with the *Tablet* on this subject; for Mr. Bowyer, an English Roman Catholic lawyer, who is member for Dundalk, did actually support this proposal in Parliament: on which the *Tablet* observes, "English lawyers have never been famous for their respect for the Holy See."

But our present question is with the power of the Pope to grant dispensations to people to do what is wrong.

The law now restrains men from marrying their wives' sisters. Some people try to get up an outcry against that law. The *Tablet* condemns that outcry, and says, "it is a scandalous reflection on the discipline of the Church, which has ever maintained, with zealous vigilance, these unpleasant restrictions on human extravagance."

But, if this be so, how are we to understand what the *Tablet* says further—"We know well that these marriages are now unlawful, and that *nothing can make them innocent but the permission of the Pope*?" Now, if these marriages are guilty and sinful in themselves, can the Pope give men leave to incur guilt and sin? and does his permission make it innocent to commit sin?

But the *Tablet* goes on to say—"The dispensation is most difficult to obtain, *excepting only where sin is in question*." Now, what does this mean? Does it mean that the Pope gives leave to commit sin, only where people *will* sin, whether they get leave or not? That seems to be the meaning; for the *Tablet*, in speaking of the evidence which Cardinal Wiseman gave, concerning these dispensations, says—"His Eminence was speaking

of one class of dispensations, *which come from the penitentiary*, and which were made, in a sense, *necessary by the sins of the petitioners*. . . . Nothing was further from his thoughts, or more removed from his practice, than the issue of dispensations, by which persons *of blameless life and conversation* could marry the sisters of their departed wives." So it seems that to get a dispensation, a man must first commit sin, and then "the penitentiary" gives him a dispensation to continue in his sin; and that makes his sin innocent!

But, if this be so, why does not the Pope allow all his subjects to continue in sin, and make them innocent, just by giving them a license or dispensation? Should he not give fair play to all? Should not the rich and poor be on the same level in respect of sin, and of the Pope's care to free them from sin?

But the *Tablet* says this is not so. The *Tablet* says—"If the law were changed to-morrow, no English Catholic under the degree of a peer, could reasonably presume that his case could be listened to; and it passes our comprehension how any Christian can say that this is a *poor man's question*."

In that case it passes our comprehension, too, how "dispensation" can be a "poor man's question." But it is quite within our comprehension, why dispensation is *not* a poor man's question. A dispensation from the Pope costs a large sum of money. So a poor man cannot get a dispensation to continue in sin with innocence, and a rich man can. The poor man, unless he gives up his sin, *must* go to the devil; but the rich man need only go to the Pope and be safe in his sin.

We leave it to our readers to consider, whether sin be no sin when the Pope gives license to live in sin? And, if this be so, whether the poor man should not have license to live in sin, as well as the rich man?

SPIRITUAL POWER OF THE POPE.

IN our last number we showed what differences exist in the Church of Rome about the *temporal* power of the Pope. Many of the greatest authorities of the Church of Rome have maintained that the temporal power of kings and princes is subject to the Pope, who has authority from God to command, and even to deprive them of their kingdoms. Many Popes have claimed and exercised this power; and none have since disclaimed it; but it still stands in the canon law, as part of the law of the Church of Rome, that it is "altogether necessary to salvation that every human creature should be subject to the Roman Pontiff."

On the other hand, Roman Catholic princes, as is natural, do generally resist and deny this doctrine; and we believe that most of the Roman Catholic laity at present do reject and deny it.

This involves serious questions. Either these Popes have falsely claimed to have a power from God, which God never gave them; or else a vast number of Roman Catholics have been, and now are, resisting a power which God has given to the Popes.

It is not our intention to pursue this point of the Pope's temporal supremacy any further at present; but if any of our Roman Catholic correspondents are disposed to discuss it, we are ready to supply them with materials in plenty.

But our present object is to ask, whether Roman Catholics are better agreed among themselves about the *spiritual* supremacy of the Pope.

Here, at least, we might expect to find Roman Catholics agreed; and yet it is far otherwise. For many ages past the Roman Catholic Church has contained in it two parties who hold opposite views about the Pope's spiritual supremacy; and these two parties continue to differ about it at this day.

One party thinks that the Pope is only the chief servant of the Church, and subject to the Church.

The other party thinks the Pope is lord and master of the Church, and that the Church is subject to him.

But it is better that we should give these two opposite views of the spiritual supremacy, from the writings of most eminent Roman Catholic divines, and not from our own. We, therefore, give the best and clearest statements we can find of the two different opinions.

We take the first statement from the learned Aeneas Sylvius.

NO. I. AENEAS SYLVIVS.

"It is the opinion of all those who are dead, if that ought to be called an *opinion*, which is fortified with sufficient authorities, that the Pope of Rome is subject to the universal Church; neither dare those who are living deny it. But they venture on this, to make a doubt among some, whether that should also be believed concerning a general council. For there are some, whether desirous of distinction, or that by flattery they expect rewards, who have begun to preach certain strange and *altogether new* doctrines, and are not afraid to exempt the Pope from the jurisdiction of the holy council; for ambition has blinded them, from whom not only this modern schism, but all schisms to this day, are found to have arisen. . . . They who are half ashamed to beg, do chiefly support this heresy of to-day, of whom one cries out, that the actions of those subject to him are to be judged by the Pope, but that the Roman Pontiff is reserved to the judgment of God alone. Another says, that no one shall judge the first See, because that neither by the emperor, nor by all

the clergy, nor by kings, nor by the people, can it be judged. . . . These wretched men do not consider that the words they so earnestly preach are either the words of Popes extending their borders, or the words of those who flattered them; and because such words are easily answered,* they run immediately to the Gospel, and interpret the words of Christ, not as the sense of the holy spirit requires, but by their own fancy. They chiefly rely on this, that it was said to Peter—"thou shalt be called Cephas," by which they make him head of the Church; "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven;" and "whatever thou shalt bind on earth;" and "I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not;" and "feed my sheep;" and "cast thy net into the deep;" and "fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men;" and that Christ commanded Peter alone, as prince of the apostles, to give tribute for himself and for him; and that Peter drew the net to land full of great fishes; and that Peter alone drew his sword in defence of the Church; all which things these men, in an astonishing manner, set up on high, the expostions of the holy doctors being altogether disregarded.†

And Æneas Sylvius goes on to say—"Seeing the Pope is Vicar of the Church, no one doubts that a master may, at his pleasure, turn off his vicars; nor is there any doubt that the Pope is more truly called the Vicar of the Church, than the Vicar of Christ;‡ and elsewhere, "whatever some men say, I cannot agree with those who call the Pope the Head of the Church, unless, perhaps, a ministerial head;§ for we read that Christ is Head of the Church, not the Pope.¶"

We take this passage as a fair statement of the views of a very large party, including even whole nations and churches in the Church of Rome.

For Æneas Sylvius wrote this in defence of the Council of Basil.

That Council of Basil, in its second session, about the year 1432, had renewed a decree formerly made in the General Council of Constance, in these terms—

"This Synod, lawfully called in the Holy Spirit, and constituting a general Council, and representing the Church militant, has power immediately from Christ, to which every one, of whatever state or dignity, even though it should be the Papacy itself, is bound to obey in those things which relate to faith, or to the extirpation of the aforesaid schism, or to the general reformation of the Church of God, in its head and in its members.¶¶"

And in their 32nd session the Council pronounced this decree, which makes the Council without the Pope supreme, and binds the Pope to obey it, to be "a verity of the Catholic faith.***"

This decision of the Council of Basil has been, of course, condemned as heretical at Rome; and the decree of the Council of Constance, which the Council of Basil only confirmed, has always been reprobated at Rome, although the

* If our readers will look back to our number for January, 1854, in the article "Forged Decretal Epistles, No. II.," page 3, columns 1 and 2, they will find that the two things which Æneas Sylvius reports to be cried out by the supporters of the Pope in his day—viz., "that the Roman Pontiff is reserved to the judgment of God alone," and that "neither by the emperor, nor by all the clergy, nor by kings, nor by the people can he be judged," are both taken from the forgeries of the middle ages, and have no other foundation. Æneas Sylvius, who was a really learned man, might, therefore, well say, that these things could be easily answered. But our readers will be surprised when they come to the end of this article, and learn by whom these things, so easily answered, were again set up.

† Opinio omnium mortuorum esse, si opinio vocari debet que idoneis confirmatur autoribus, quia Romanus Pontifex universali ecclesie subjectus existit; neque hoc viventes negare audent. Audent illud autem, apud aliquos revocatur in dubium, an id quoque de generali concilio credi oporteat. Sunt enim aliqui, sive avidi glorie, sive quod adulando præmia expectant, qui peregrinas quasdam et omnino novas prædicare doctrinas ceperunt, ipsamque summam pontificem ex jurisdictione sacri concilii demere non verentur. Execravimus namque illos ambitio, quia non solum hunc modernum, sed omnia usque ad hanc diem schismata, suborta reperuntur. . . . Hodiernam hæresim illi præcipue nutriunt, quos jam mendacis suppedet, quorum alius clamat, subditorum facta iudicari a Papa, Romanum vero Pontificem solum Dei reservari arbitrio. Alius dicit, ad omnia primam sedem nempe iudicari, quod neque ab Augusto, neque ab omni imperatore, neque a Regibus, neque a populo valeat iudicari. . . . Nec considerant miseri quia quæ prædicant tantopere verba, ant summorum Pontificum suat suas fimbrias extendunt, aut illorum qui eis adularantur. Et quia huiusmodi dicta solutionem habent, recurrunt statim ad Evangelium, et verba Christi non prout spiritus sancti sensus exposcit, sed supite ingenio interpretantur. Plurimumque illud extollunt, quia Petro sit dictum, tu vocaberis Cephas, per quod illum caput ecclesie faciunt: Tibi dabo claves regni cælorum; et quodcumque ligaveris super terram; et rogavi pro te, Petre, ut non deficiat fides tua: et, passe ove meas: et duc in altum rete; et noli timere, ex hoc oris homines capiens: quodque soli Petro, tanquam apostolorum principi, Christus mandaverit, pro se et pro illo staterem dare: et quia Petrus traxit ad terram rete plenum piscibus magnis; et quod solus Petrus ad Christi defensionem gladium evaginavit. Quæ omnia hi homines miro modo sublimant, expositionibus sanctorum doctorum posthabitis.—De Gest. Concil. Basil. L. I. Edit. Basil, 1551, pp. 11, 12.

‡ Quia cum sit Papa vicarius ecclesie, nempe dicitur quod Dominus vicarios suos possit ad nutum suum destituere; nec dubium est, verius dici Papam ecclesie vicarium quam Christum.—P. 15.

§ The expression "ministerial head," means no more than "head servant."

¶ Quicquid tamen dicant aliqui, ego cum illis non sentio, qui Romanum Pontificem caput ecclesie dicunt, nisi forsitan ministeriale; legitimum enim, quia Christus est ecclesie caput, non Papa.—P. 15.

¶ Ipsa Synodus in spiritu sancto legitime congregata, generale concilium faciens, et ecclesiam militantem representans, potestatem immediate a Christo habet, cui quilibet cuiusque status vel dignitatis, etiam papalis existat, obdare tenetur in his que pertinent ad fidem, et extirpationem dieti schismatis, et ad generalem reformationem ecclesie Dei in capite et in membris.—Labbe and Coss., Con. Gen., vol. xii., col. 477.

** Veritas de potestate concilii generalis, universalem ecclesiam representantis, supra papam et quemlibet alterum, declarata per Constantiensem, et hoc Basiliensem Generalia Concilia, est veritas fidei Catholicæ.—Labbe and Coss., Con. Gen., vol. xii., col. 619.

Church of Rome expressly acknowledged the General Council of Constance as a general council, and infallible!

But the French Church has always acknowledged what was thus decided at Constance and Basil to be true and right. This is the main point of what is called the "Gallican liberties." And though the Gallican doctrine for the last few years has seemed to be forgotten in France, yet it is now rapidly reviving; and the Archbishop of Paris is known to be in favour of it. And this is what the *Tablet* meant (Dec. 23, p. 809), when it exclaimed in a rage against "the new sprung veneration for Bossuet;" for Bossuet was a famous French bishop who ably supported the Gallican liberties.

So the defence which Æneas Sylvius wrote at the time for the decree of the Council of Basil, may well be taken as expressing the sentiments of a large party in the Church of Rome, which exists to this day.

But we come now to the other view of the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, which is, perhaps, the one generally advocated in Ireland at this day, though it was far from being so general fifty years ago. In this case, too, we give the statement from a great authority, Pope Pius II.

NO. II.—POPE PIUS II.

"As cranes follow one; as among bees, one is queen; so in the Church militant, which is like the Church triumphant, one is the ruler and judge of all; from whom, as from the head, all power and authority is derived to the subject members, which power flows immediately to him from Christ the Lord our God. Nor truly has Christ chiefly imparted supreme authority to any other as the leader of his army, except to his own vicar, who first was Peter, to whom we have known that the care of the Lord's flock was committed. Nor do the evangelists make mention of two or more Peters, nor did the Lord institute two or more, who should hold his place as equal heads; but he appointed one, as the head, and leader, and pastor of the universal flock, Simon Peter, saying—'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;' and 'feed my sheep.' Which things are read to have been specially said to no other but Peter, so that unity and the highest authority is contained in Peter. Nor is any other but Simon called Peter, from the rock (Petra); that we might understand that Simon Peter is the only one who holds the place of that true and solid rock—that is, of Christ, as Paul expounds it; who alone drew his sword for his master when exposed to danger. Peter, therefore, and his successors, the Roman pontiffs, held the primacy in the Church. . . . And whosoever is set over the Roman Church, according to the canonical rules, as soon as he is elected in the sacred college, obtains supreme power immediately from God, and diffuses it in order through the whole Church, whose sins are to be left to be punished by the divine judgment.* And again, "Whoever has sat as chief priest of Rome, rightly appointed in the legitimate way of election, called by God like Aaron, all people, all kings, all clergy, all bishops have venerated him as the vicar of Jesus Christ, and the successor of blessed Peter, the head, and ruler, and leader of the universal Church.†"

We ask our readers to mark carefully how contrary these two statements are to each other.

1. Æneas Sylvius says it is not the Pope, but Christ, who is the head of the Church. Pius II. says the Pope is the head of the Church.
2. Æneas Sylvius says the Pope is only the Vicar of the Church, and not the Vicar of Christ. Pius II. says the Pope is the Vicar of Christ.
3. Æneas Sylvius says the Pope is subject to the Church. Pius II. says the Pope is ruler of the Church.
4. Æneas Sylvius says that the Pope may be judged by a general council, and that it is heresy to deny it, or to say that the Pope can be judged by God only. Pius II. affirms that the Pope can be judged by God only.
5. Æneas Sylvius ridicules the attempt to prove the supremacy of the Pope out of the passages commonly

* Sicut Græves unam sequuntur; et in apibus unus est rex; ita in ecclesia militanti, que instar triumphantis habet, unus est omnium moderator et arbiter, Jesu Christi vicarius; a quo, tanquam capite, omnis in subjecta membra potestas, et auctoritas derivatur, que a Christo Domino Deo nostro sine medio in ipsum induit. Nec profecto in alium, tanquam sui exercitus ducem, supremam auctoritatem Christus principaliter derivasset, quam in suum vicarium, qui primus fuit Petrus, qui commissam novimus generalis gregis curam. Nec diros plures Petros evangelistæ commemorant, nec duos aut plures instituit Dominus, qui suum locum tanquam capita tenerent æqualia; sed unum constituit, ut verticem ac ducem et pastorem universi gregis. Simonem Petrum, dicens: Tu es Petrus, et supra hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam; et tibi dabo claves regni cælorum, et quodcumque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum et in cælo; et quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in cælo. Et passe ove meas. Quæ nulli alteri seorsum dicta leguntur, nisi Petro, ut in Petro unitas et summa contineretur auctoritas. Nec alius a petra dictus est Petrus, nisi Simon; ut intelligeremus unicum esse veræ et solidæ Petræ, id est Christi (ut Paulus exponit) locum tenentem, Simonem Petrum, qui solus pro domino in periculo constituto exemit gladium. Petrus igitur, et successores ejus Romani Pontifices primatum in ecclesia tenuerunt. . . . Et quicumque Romanæ secundum canonicas sanctiones præficeret ecclesie, quamprimum electus est in sacro collegio, supremam a Deo potestatem sine medio consequatur, et per ordinem in omnem diffundit ecclesiam, cuius peccata Divino iudicio prius relinquantur.—Labbe and Coss., Con. Gen., vol. xiii., col. 1,408-9.

† Qui Romæ sederit antistes rite institutus per legitimam electionis tramitem, tanquam Aaron vocatus a Domino, hunc omnes Christiani plebes, omnes populi, omnes reges, omnes clerici, omnes episcopi tanquam Jesu Christi vicarium, et beati Petri successorem, universalia ecclesie caput ac rectorem ac ducem venerati sint.—Idem, col. 1,414.

quoted about Peter, and especially that one, which does look a poor proof, of Peter having drawn his sword. Pius II quotes all these passages, the sword included, to prove the supremacy of the Pope.

Thus it appears how opposite are the two views of the spiritual power of the Pope, which have each been so widely held in the Church of Rome.

That these views are, in fact, so opposed, that one must be rejected in order to hold the other, is very plainly shown by Pius II. himself, who emphatically says—"Æneas rejicite, Pium recipite"—"REJECT ÆNEAS, AND RECEIVE PIUS."

Our readers will, perhaps, be surprised to learn (and we trust their surprise will be instructive as well as amusing) that Æneas Sylvius and Pope Pius II. were the same man! But so it was. As Æneas Sylvius (before he was Pope) he exposed the extravagant claims made for the Popes, and said that these were only the words of "Popes extending their own borders," or the words of those who flatter Popes. But when he himself became a Pope extending his own borders, and listening to his own flatterers, then he could find nothing to prove his own claims by, except the very arguments which formerly he had said were "easily answered!"

Here, then, we find the Roman communion itself quite divided about the extent and nature of the Pope's spiritual power. One large body of them leaving him hardly any; another large body maintaining that God has given all power to the Pope.

Either Popes have been falsely usurping spiritual powers which God never gave them, or millions of Roman Catholics have for ages been denying and disputing the powers which God gave to the Pope.

We trust that the statements we have given of the two opposite opinions, both given under such different circumstances, by one who was a wise and learned man, will help our readers to judge which opinion has the most honest foundation, and which has rested on usurpation and flattery.

RECENT CONTROVERSY AT BOULOGNE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

(Continued from page 33.)

SIR—I think it scarcely fair to the pressure upon your limited space, and to the excellence of your other contributions, to trespass any longer upon the pages of the LAYMAN, especially as the account of this controversy already given is quite sufficient to show the mode in which it was conducted. I shall, therefore, with your permission, conclude with the present number, unless some reason may subsequently occur to show the continuation to be desirable.

The discussion was mainly confined to the question of infallibility. I had proposed it because, as it is the doctrine upon which the whole claims of the Roman Catholic Church really rest, I felt that being the most important doctrine, it was that one which its advocates were supposed to be best capable of defending. I, on the other side, felt assured I could show it to be impossible of proof. Thus the subject was one not only the most important, but, likewise, that which Roman Catholic controversialists should be most willing and best able to establish. I declared myself content to rest my whole cause upon the proof of this doctrine.

My own argument was, in fact, just that which any one who maintains infallibility ought, if that doctrine be true, to be able most easily to answer, because it was simply an examination of the steps necessary to prove it—nothing more.

It is evident that the main support of the doctrine is the passage—"Thou art Peter," &c. Therefore, because it is, in the judgment of Roman writers, their strongest text, I was ready to rest my case on it, as I should have been on any other.

Roman Catholics have never yet decided whether it be the Church, or the Pontiff, or both, who are infallible.

This indecision is, of itself, sufficient to show how little really can be made from the passages of Scripture alleged in proof. However, though my two opponents disagreed on this very essential point, we entered upon this text as a proof of papal infallibility and jurisdiction.

Now, it is clear that in order to establish the doctrine from it (or from any other which speaks of Peter), three distinct steps are indispensable, or the claim falls to the ground. It must be shown—first, that this passage (or any other) does really convey, or promise, infallibility or supreme jurisdiction to Peter; secondly, that the same prerogatives are declared to be continued to his (presumed) successors; and, thirdly, that such successors are, solely, the Roman Pontiffs. If any of these three separate propositions be incapable of clear proof, the whole claim is destroyed. I felt sure that each of the three was thus incapable.

Now, then, for the first of these steps (the same mode of argument applying, of course to all). I put the question, and I believe the difficulty—how do you propose to prove it? There are but three modes of proof—infallibility, private interpretation, or the universal consent of the Fathers.

The first of these must be set aside, since it cannot be assumed for proof of itself. The second is subject to all the uncertainty which, according to the Roman Catholic doctrine, attends and invalidates it.

The only available medium of proof then is, what the