

have taken place between the Dominicans and Franciscans? The Council of Trent in its sixth session laid down its decrees respecting original sin and justification. At the close of the session, Soto, one of the leading Dominicans, dedicated a work, in three books, to the Council which was intended to be a commentary on the decree just passed; maintaining, of course, that his views were in strict conformity with the decisions of the Council. This called forth a still more elaborate work, in fifteen books, from Vega, the leader of the Franciscans, in which he interpreted the words of the Council so as to countenance the views of his party, which were in many points diametrically opposed to those of the Dominicans. Not the least remarkable circumstance in this memorable controversy is the fact that these divines were among the ablest of the theologians at Trent, and had themselves taken most prominent parts in drawing up the very decree about whose meaning they now differed almost *toto calce*. The Council itself was appaled to for an explanation of its real meaning regarding the points in debate. Some of the Fathers espoused opposite sides. Others remained neutral, declaring that they did not understand the grounds of difference, and that they had assented to the verbal form of the decree, because both parties had agreed to adopt it. Such was the explanation vouchsafed by the infallible Council of Trent, respecting one of its own infallible decrees. It decided nothing; because it could attach no exact meaning to the words which it employed. Like the oracles of ancient Greece, it chose to leave its dictum enveloped in a maze of verbal ambiguity. All Europe made merry at the expense of the poor Trentine Fathers. Among the jests current at the time, the following was one, viz.: The Council resembled Caiaphas, who prophesied without knowing what he said. The sting of the jest lay in this, that this very illustration was employed by the Bishop of Mantua, in his famous sermon delivered at the opening of the Council, when he was endeavouring to prove that the Council would be the infallible organ of God whether it meant to be so or not. The question then debated has, of course, never since been settled. And it furnishes a notable example at once of diversity of opinion respecting a doctrine of faith, and of the worthlessness of the decree of an infallible Council in defining a dogma with unmistakable precision and certainty. We need not stop to enumerate other doctrines respecting which the widest diversity of opinion prevails amongst Romanists themselves. Every one knows what fierce contests have raged between the Jesuits and Jansenists; between the Ultramontanes and the Gallicans. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was long the battle field between the Dominicans and the Franciscans. And though it has lately been exalted, by the present Pope, to the rank of an article of faith, yet it is quite plain, from the numerous protests which have been made against it by Roman Catholics in various countries, that diversity of opinion regarding it still prevails. Here, as in so many other cases, the famous dictum, "Roma locuta est, causa finita est," has been proved false. What a striking comment do these differences furnish on the words of Dr. Milner, "When disputes arise among Catholics concerning points of faith, the pastors of the Church fail not to examine them by the received rule of faith, and to pronounce an authoritative sentence upon them. The dispute is thus quashed, and peace is restored!" or, as another high Romish authority expresses it, "Learned and unlearned are bound to submit themselves immediately, heart and soul, to the definition once pronounced, under pain of anathema. Therefore, it is impossible that unity of faith should not be preserved among them." This impossibility reminds one of what poor Galileo said, when forced to recant his heretical assertion of the movement of the earth. After promising not to promulgate such dangerous doctrines in future, he added, in a whisper, "And yet it moves!"

§ 11. DIFFERENCES AS TO THE MANNER OF PROVING THE SUPREMACY DE JURE DIVINO OF THE ROMAN PONTIFF.

But waiving for the present the want of unity amongst Romanists respecting other doctrines, there is one point concerning which, as we before remarked, there ought to be no difference, as it lies at the basis of their theory of the Church—viz., the *proof itself* of the government of the universal Church being vested by divine authority in the Bishop of Rome. If this dogma be as true as it is essential to the Romish theory, it ought surely to admit of some tolerably simple and perfectly conclusive proof. But so far is this from being the case; so far are Romish theologians from being unanimous as to the mode of establishing so momentous a doctrine, that the modern philosophical school have felt themselves compelled to abandon the ground hitherto taken as wholly untenable, and to occupy an entirely new and different position. A few words will suffice to explain this sufficiently. The arguments by which Bellarmine and all the most renowned amongst the earlier champions of Romanism attempted to establish the divine supremacy of the Pope were derived partly from *a priori* reasonings, partly from certain well known texts of Scripture, and partly from the alleged testimony of early ecclesiastical history. These were the arguments which Dr. Barrow and other Protestant divines undertook to refute, and which they as triumphantly demolished. Reason and Scripture and primitive antiquity were shown to lend no countenance to the dogma of a Vicar of Christ upon earth; and the

notion of a divinely appointed visible head of the universal Church was overthrown as far as unanswerable argument could effect its overthrow. Still, Protestants were charged with blind bigotry because they would not infer the Pope from reason, or discover him in Scripture and in the extant remains of primitive antiquity. Their invincible scepticism on the subject has, however, been at last fully justified, and from a quarter, too, of all others the most unlikely. In the bosom of Rome itself has of late years sprung up a school of divines who, unable to blind themselves to the patent fact that the claims of the Papacy, as well as many other dogmas essential to Romanism, cannot be sustained by the arguments hitherto advanced in support of them, have invented a new method of proof, viz., the famous doctrine of Development, of which we have already said something in our pages. Dr. Mohler, who first clearly propounded this doctrine, in his argument to establish the supremacy of the Pope, omits all reference to Scripture and tradition, and abandons the attempt to trace up to Christ and His Apostles anything beyond the simple episcopate. From it he deduces, by the application of the principle of Development, the dogma of the Papacy. "The idea," he argues, "of the unity of the Church was progressive, unfolding itself gradually as time went on, like the continually widening circles of a disturbed sheet of water. Hence," he adds, "before Cyprian's time when the unity of the whole Church first became a matter of consciousness among Christians, there could be no Pope, even in rudiment." "They who require," he says again, "before that period incontrovertible evidence of the existence of the Primacy require what is unreasonable, the law of a true development not admitting of it; and, consequently, the trouble which some [Romish divines] have given themselves to discover before the same epoch the full idea of a Pope must be considered as vain, and their conclusions untenable. As throughout the inferior organization of the Church, so in this point the want must be felt before the supply could be found. . . . It is evident that during the first three centuries, and even at the close of them, the Primacy is not visible, save in its first lineaments; it operates as yet but informally, and when the question arises, When and how did it practically manifest itself, we must confess that it never appears alone, but always in conjunction with other Churches and bishops." Exactly to the same effect Dr. Newman allows, in his Essay on Development, "that in the first ages of the Church this doctrine existed only in a seminal form; it was a mystery. First the power of the Bishop awoke, then the power of the Pope. Nor would a Pope arise but in proportion as the Church was consolidated." The same ground has been taken by the late Mr. Wilberforce in his work, "The Principles of Church Authority." This view of the gradual growth of the Papacy has, doubtless, the great advantage of being historically true, and will be readily acquiesced in by those who regard it as a natural product, arising out of the peculiar circumstances of the Church of Rome in its relation to the other Churches of Christendom. But, on the other hand, if this account of the origin of the Roman Primacy be true, what becomes of the numerous folios which have been written to prove that the Bishop of Rome was invested from the very first with headship over the universal Church, and that this divinely bestowed prerogative has been actually exercised in unbroken continuity from the age of the Apostles to the present hour?

§ 12. THE ROMISH THEORY OF THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH, AS CENTRED IN THE BISHOP OF ROME, SUICIDAL.

There is one more consideration respecting the Romish theory of the unity of the Church, which we think too important to be passed over unnoticed. It is this. If the so-called Vicar of Christ be as essential to the unity of the Church as Christ Himself, then it must surely be necessary that there should never arise any real doubt as to the identity of this visible centre of unity. Such a thing as the simultaneous existence of two rival Popes, to say nothing of three, should seem as great an absurdity as that the planetary system should have two suns, or two distinct centres of gravity. And yet the case of rival popes has occurred not once or twice, but at least thirty times, as the Papal historian Platina allows.<sup>1</sup> It is a striking fact that during the twelve centuries contained between the 3rd and 15th, there was only one (the 13th) which did not witness a schism in the Papacy. Sometimes two, sometimes three, Popes simultaneously claimed to be each the visible centre of the Christian world. Every one has heard of the great Schism of the West, which lasted more than half a century, and during which the rival Popes—two, and even three at a time—had their respective obediences, and most cordially anathematized each other. "Robber," "heretic," "tyrant," "schismatic," "antichrist," "son of Belial," were a few of the complimentary epithets which they interchanged. Where was then the visible centre of unity? No adept in the theory of the Romish ecclesiastical system has as yet ventured to solve the problem of determining the true centre of unity in Christendom when two Papal luminaries, and occasionally a third, claimed to be each the centre round which the entire system by divine appointment revolved. "It has never yet been deter-

<sup>1</sup> This argument is contained in his work entitled "Unity in the Church."  
<sup>2</sup> Bellarmine acknowledges twenty-six schisms in the Papacy.

mined," says Dr. Newman,<sup>1</sup> "which of the many *de facto* or rival Popes are to be acknowledged *de jure*. A Romanist might at this moment deny the existing Pope to be St. Peter's successor, without violating any article of his creed." A comfortable reflection this for those who regard the Roman pontiff as the organic principle of the union by which the whole visible Church of Christ is combined into one.

THE POPE.

It is now just twelve months since we expressed our belief that the title "Vicar of Christ" was never applied to a Bishop of Rome before the Council of Florence, A.D. 1439,<sup>2</sup> and asked our Roman Catholic correspondents to tell us where the title "Vicar of Christ," as applied to the Bishop of Rome, is to be found at an earlier date, if it were really older than the fifteenth century.

The question was, surely, both a fair and an important one; for if learned Roman Catholics cannot show that we are wrong we may ask how any man can believe that Christ made the Bishops of Rome his vicars, and yet that no Pope should have been called the "Vicar of Christ" for 1400 years after such appointment.

We know that for the last 400 years the Popes have been continually called by that title—the most dignified, or the most audacious, that ever has been borne by man.

Another question somewhat akin to it has been suggested to us, and which we shall also try to give a distinct answer to:—Is it true that St. Peter was the first Pope; and is it true that the Bishops of Rome have ever since the martyrdom of St. Peter enjoyed the peculiar privilege which they now possess of being alone known by the title of Pope?

We believe we may assert with confidence that there is not a single writer of antiquity who ever asserted that St. Peter was known by the title of Pope; and we may with equal certainty state that for 1000 years after St. Peter's death the Bishops of Rome did not enjoy the exclusive privilege of that title.

This may, perhaps, startle some of our Roman Catholic readers who have been brought up in the conviction that no one in the Christian Church was ever considered entitled to the high title of Pope except St. Peter's (supposed) successors in the See of Rome; and that the very fact that they alone were Popes goes far to establish their supremacy over all other bishops in the Church of Christ.

So far, however, is this from being the truth, that the simple historical fact is, until the times of the celebrated Pope Hildebrand (Gregory VII.,<sup>3</sup>) in the eleventh century, the title "Pope" was never considered to belong exclusively to the Bishop of Rome, but was common to all bishops in the Western Church, as it still is to those in the Eastern or Greek Church.

As some of our readers, however, may still be sceptical, and require further and more specific proof of the truth of our assertion, we think it may be worth while, once for all, to set the matter at rest by giving a few instances from the works of writers of undoubted reputation, published under the highest Roman Catholic authority, in which other bishops than those of Rome have been addressed by this title. We might multiply such instances indefinitely, but shall content ourselves with the following, giving, as is our custom, the exact references where the passages may be found.

We shall begin with a few of the saints and fathers of the Church, who had no connection whatever with the See of Rome, but were bishops in other and very distant places.

1. St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, is addressed as POPE Cyprian in all the letters extant in his works from the presbyters and deacons and also the confessors at Rome,<sup>4</sup> while not one of Cyprian's letters to Cornelius, Lucius, or Stephen, Bishops of Rome, are addressed to them as Popes, but merely to his brothers Cornelius, Lucius, and Stephen.<sup>5</sup>
2. St. Jerome always addresses St. Augustine, who was Bishop of Hippo in Africa, as POPE Augustine.<sup>6</sup>
3. St. Jerome in like manner addresses Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, as POPE Theophilus.<sup>7</sup>
4. St. Augustine writes to Aurelius, POPE Aurelius.<sup>8</sup>
5. St. Cyril of Alexandria calls Athanasius, POPE Athanasius.<sup>9</sup>
6. Dionysius of Alexandria calls his Bishop, Heracla, POPE.<sup>10</sup>

It may be necessary, however, for us to go further, and to show that the title Pope was not merely addressed to such distinguished Fathers as Cyprian, Augustine,

<sup>1</sup> Prophetic Office of the Church, p. 149.  
<sup>2</sup> CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. v. p. 91.  
<sup>3</sup> Biographie Universelle, Paris, 1817. Art. Gregoire VII., p. 396. — Il est aussi le premier qui ait ordonne que le nom de Pape ne serait attribue qu'à l'évêque de Rome." See also Baronius as cited by Father Lauzy, vol. v., p. 2, p. 314, and Father Paul in his Treatise on Eccl. Benefices, c. xviii., Opere di F. Paolo, Sarpi, tom. iv., p. 92, Helmsat. 1763.  
<sup>4</sup> See Epistles 23, 30, 31, 38. Oper. pp. 49. &c. Oxon. 1682.  
<sup>5</sup> See Epistles 44, 45, 47, 48, 51, 52, 57, 61, 64, 72. Idem. p. 85, &c.  
<sup>6</sup> See Epistles 66, 69, 71, 74, 75, 79, 80. Hieron. Opera, tom. iv., pp. 604 to 644. Ben. Ed. Paris, 1706. See also St. Augus. Opera, tom. ii., p. 166, 189, 343, 796. Ben. Ed. Paris, 1679.  
<sup>7</sup> See Ibid. Epistles 58, 59, 61, 64, p. 598, 599.  
<sup>8</sup> Ep. 60, and 174. Opera tom. ii., p. 147, 615. Ben. Ed.  
<sup>9</sup> Commentarium ad Eulogium. Baluze's Suppl. to Labba. Nova Collectio Concil. p. 598.  
<sup>10</sup> "Basilissimo Papa nostro Heracla." Epia ad Philomen apud Eusebium, lib. 7, c. 7, p. 207. Armada, 1696.

Athanasius, &c., but to bishops in general, as our readers will abundantly see from the few instances which follow.

7. The works of Sidonius Appollinaris, Bishop of Auvergne, who died A.D. 489, were printed in Paris in 1652, and edited by Jacobus Sirmondus the Jesuit. They contain letters addressed by him to a great number of persons, and, among others, to more than twenty bishops, each of whom he addresses as Pope, and some as "most blessed Pope," though none of them were Bishops of Rome.

We merely give their names, which any of our readers can compare with their list of Popes, and see whether any of them were Bishops of Rome:—

- Pope Lupus—p. 160.
- Pragmatius—p. 158.
- Leontius—p. 159.
- Theoplastus—p. 161.
- Basilius—p. 181.
- Eutropius—p. 162.
- Fonteus—p. 163, 178.
- Græcus—p. 174, 185, 193.
- Censorius—p. 165.
- Eleutherius—p. 166.
- Patiens—p. 167.
- Mamertius—p. 171.
- Megethius—p. 177.
- Agrocius—p. 179.
- Euphonius—p. 187.
- Perpetuus—p. 188.
- Auspicius—p. 197.
- Nounechius—p. 241.
- Principius—p. 243.
- Prosper—p. 245.
- Faustus—p. 252.

8. Our next witness is St. Avitus, Bishop of Vienne, who presided over the Council of Epaupe, in France, and died A.D. 525. His works were printed in Paris, 1643, and also edited by J. Sirmondus the Jesuit.

Avitus addresses his seventh epistle (p. 48) to John, Patriarch of Cappadocia, as POPE of Constantinople, and twenty-third epistle (p. 67) to Elias, POPE of Jerusalem.

9. The second Council of Tours, held A.D. 567, canon 21, calls this same Avitus, Bishop of Vienne, POPE AVITUS.

10. Rufinus calls Bishop Laurentius POPE Laurentius.

11. Prudentius calls Bishop Valerian, POPE Valerian.\*

12. Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, who died A.D. 609, and whose works are preserved in the Bibliotheca Patrum, tom. 10, p. 520, addresses Leontius, Bishop of Bordeaux, as POPE Leontius; Euphronius, Bishop of Tours, as POPE Euphronius, p. 539; Felix, Bishop of Nantes, as POPE Felix; Gregory, Bishop of Tours, as POPE Gregory, p. 553-4; Avitus, Bishop of Vienne, as POPE Avitus, p. 545; and Syagrius, Bishop of Autun, as POPE Syagrius, p. 555.

We think we need not weary our readers' patience with a longer catalogue, and shall merely refer those who are curious to trace the truth of our assertion further to Ducange's Glossary, Henschel's edition, tom. 5, Paris, 1845; and Faber Launois, opera, tom. v., part 2, p. 314, and Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticæ, v. i., p. 54. 1821.

We shall not wait to discuss whether the celebrated "Dictatus Papa" referred to by Lannoy be a genuine production of Pope Hildebrand or not;† but we believe that no one will deny that that document was cotemporary with or shortly subsequent to his time, and that the arrogating the title of Pope by the Bishops of Rome exclusively to themselves dates from that period, i.e., the latter end of the eleventh century.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

To diminish the chance of disappointment, all letters should be forwarded to the office by the first day of the month.

Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber.

The CATHOLIC LAYMAN is registered for transmission beyond the United Kingdom.

The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, SEPTEMBER 17, 1857.

THE apparition of *La Salette*, which, on the 19th inst., will have attained the eleventh year of its age, and the attempt of Dr. Ullathorne, *soi-disant* Bishop of Birmingham, to introduce this "new devotion" into England, continue to occupy a considerable share of public attention; and we have now before us three remarkable documents relating to it, each of which is we think, worthy of the consideration both of Roman Catholics and Protestants.

\* Rufinus Aquileinensis, Commentarium in Symbolum ad Episcopum Laurentium. Opuscula, p. 169. Paris, 1590.  
 † Aurelii Prudentii, opera, tom. i., p. 374. Parmæ, 1758, in libro περιεργων, hymnus xi., in passione S. Hippolyti martyris ad Valerianum Episcopum.  
 ‡ Lannoy, Natalis Alexander, Pagi and Mosheim do not consider the "Dictatus Papa" as a genuine production of Pope Gregory VII. himself, but rather of some cotemporary or subsequent writer, who deduced the 27 propositions contained in it from the writings of Gregory. One of these propositions is the claim in question.

Whether we view the apparition as a fact or a fraud, we think that too great importance can scarcely be attributed to it.

If it should prove to be a fact, and the truth of it should be satisfactorily established, such a fact would, we must admit, outweigh a thousand arguments, and go far to establish that Roman Catholics are correct when they consider (as too many of them seem to do) the Blessed Virgin as the sole source of divine mercy in averting the vengeance which the power of her divine Son is ready to pour down on the fallen race of mankind.\* If it be a fraud, without asserting that all its adherents are consciously assisting what they know to be an imposture, we think it unavoidably implicates a large number, including the present Pope himself, to an extent quite incompatible with that scrupulous regard for truth or honesty which should ever characterise one who claims to be the head of the Church and vicar of Christ upon earth.

The documents we refer to are an article in the *Rambler* for the present month, entitled "The *Edinburgh Review* on *La Salette*;" one in the *Tablet* newspaper of the 5th inst., on the same subject; and a French brochure, which a friend has been kind enough to procure for us in Paris, entitled "Suite de L'Echo de la Sainte Montagne ou L'Apparition rendue plus evidente par ses epreuves ses gloires et de nouveaux eclairecissements," by an anonymous author, but dedicated to the Bishop of Nantes.

Let us take them in the order we have named. Alas! for the success of Dr. Ullathorne's exertions in England, whether Birmingham or elsewhere, the editor of the *Rambler*, perhaps, the most influential of English Roman Catholic periodicals, readily admits that he cannot adopt his conclusions, and that in saying so he is expressing a sentiment very general among English Catholics, who, "for some reason or other," seem to feel very little interest in the matter.

"We believe that we express a sentiment very general among English Catholics, when we say that we have never been able to feel any very strong convictions either way respecting the apparition of the Blessed Virgin on the mountain of *La Salette*."—p. 139.

And again—

"For some reasons or other, it is undeniable that the reported miraculous appearance at *La Salette* has not awakened any very general interest in Catholic circles in this country, or, we believe, anywhere except a portion of France itself.

"A certain number of Catholics, undoubtedly of different classes, have not only been interested in it, but have unhesitatingly decided in favour of its reality. Much has been written in its favour, not merely by pious and uncritical enthusiasts, but by sound-judging and temperate men, who approached the subject with a conviction that the one sole thing to be considered was, whether it was true. On the whole, however, the great majority of Catholics, both lay and clerical, have either expressed a positive disbelief in its genuineness or a disposition to suspend their judgment until the subject was more thoroughly investigated; or, more generally still, have confessed that they could not arouse themselves to care very much about it either one way or the other. An immense number of 'pilgrims,' no doubt, have visited the mountain, and the water has been carried far and wide through Christendom; but, nevertheless, with certain exceptions, the narrative has not taken root generally in the minds of Catholics of an influential character; while of those who have actually travelled to the scene of the supposed apparition not a few have been but partially satisfied, however good a case they may have presented to their own minds and those of other persons."—p. 190.

We confess we are at a loss to account for "the great majority of Catholics," including the editor of the *Rambler*, making such a confession as that they have not been able "to arouse themselves to care very much about it either one way or the other;" especially when we find the admission in the very next page that "whether

\* Our readers will remember that the address which the Virgin is stated to have made to the children contained the following words: "If my people will not submit themselves, I shall be forced to let go the hand of my Son. It is so strong and so heavy that I can no longer restrain it." "Si mon peuple ne veut pas soumettre, je suis forcée de laisser aller la main de mon Fils. Elle est si forte, si pesante, que je ne puis plus la retenir."

the story of Mademoiselle Lamerlière is true or not, it is clear that it must exercise a powerful influence on the popular belief." Surely it is just in such a case that the conductor of what claims to be a leading organ and exponent of Roman Catholic opinion, ought to have spared no pains to come to a "strong conviction" whether the apparition was true or false, and, if true, to support the "Bishop of Birmingham" in his exertions to propagate the belief through the length and breadth of England; while, if he discovered the matter to be false, he equally owed it to the cause of truth and religion to expose the imposture with all the power and influence he possesses. That the *Rambler*, however, while professing to be exercising a mere philosophical "suspension of judgment," is plainly a *disbeliever*, is manifest from the whole tenor of his observations, from which we gladly extract and adopt the following excellent remarks:—

"Surely, it is a serious error to confound the consideration of what is 'pious' with the consideration of what is 'true.' It is a jumbling together the cause with the effect, which can only issue in injury to them both. It is an act of piety to regard with devout interest and veneration whatever is first proved to be true in the domain of religion; but until the clear and unbiased critical faculty has decided whether a statement is true or not, piety has nothing to do with the matter whatsoever. It is not a pious act to attempt to anticipate, so to say, the works of Providence, and to pretend to such a knowledge of the Divine will as to assume, even to the slightest degree, that it has chosen to act in one particular manner rather than another. It is contrary to true piety to approach the evidence of a reputed miracle with a bias either one way or the other. To be disposed against the evidence, through a feeling of dislike to believe that God has interfered in the ordinary laws of nature, or from an unwillingness to receive a fresh impression of the awfully close nature of our relationship to Him, is contrary to piety, indicating a worldly and generally irreligious mind. But in the avoidance of this fault, it is not right to go to the opposite extreme. Some persons like to believe that there are many modern miracles in general, and in detail are disposed to give credence beforehand to every reported supernatural occurrence. This may, doubtless, be a harmless disposition in themselves personally, though it cannot be denied that a tendency to wish for many miracles is not encouraged either in the Scriptures or the most eminent spiritual writers. But to call this disposition 'pious' is to abuse language, and to make the proof of all miracles more or less uncertain by confounding it with our own personal feelings or prepossessions. The *argumentum ad verecundiam* is, in truth, a weapon of reasoning which requires to be applied with remarkable skill and caution. It has proved one of the most prolific instruments of deception in use among men. It is precisely by its means that Dr. Pusey and other men of influence of his school have succeeded in controlling the actions of persons disposed to consider fairly the claims of Rome to their obedience. It is 'pious,' they are told, to believe in the Anglican Church, or, at any rate, to remain in her communion. And just so among ourselves there are persons in all ages and countries who would doctor the facts of history, and encourage chance reports of marvellous events, on the ground that it is pious to shut one's eyes to facts, and to believe that Catholics have been good men, when they have been great scoundrels; or that it has pleased Divine Providence to act in one particular manner, when it is really probable that it has acted the very reverse. For ourselves, we hold that true piety absolutely commands the exercise of extreme caution in crediting reports of miracles. We can see no reverence to Almighty God in a disposition to think that He is perpetually acting in one way rather than another. The most profound submission and the most ardent faith are perfectly compatible with an acute perception of the extreme carelessness with which reports of anything marvellous are repeated from mouth to mouth, and with the conviction that there exists a strong *a priori* improbability in every rumour which alleges that a miracle has taken place. The question is purely one of matter-of-fact; and piety has no more to do with its settlement one way or other than with the determination of the laws which govern the revolutions of comets or the growth of plants. All alike come from the hand of God; and it is contrary to revealed religion to believe an unproved miracle, as it is to natural reason to believe an undemonstrated algebraic formula."—p. 197.

With respect to Mr. Wyse, the author of the "Manual of the Confraternity of *La Salette*," which we have already reviewed in our pages, and which the *Edinburgh Review* characterised as a "mendacious production," the *Rambler* fairly throws him overboard without ceremony, in the following passage:—

"With respect to Mr. Wyse, it must be admitted that he has laid himself open to attack by his fierce abuse of the English people, and the want of discrimination he has