

## THE CONTEMPORARY REVIEW.

(From the 'London Tablet'.)

The first article in the 'Contemporary' for this month is the reply of the Archbishop of Westminster to the attack made last month in this Review by Mr Fitzjames Stephen on the paper read some time ago by his Grace before the Academia of the Catholic Religion, and since published under the title of "Cæsarism and Ultramontanism."

I took up (the Archbishop writes) Mr Stephen's article on "Cæsarism and Ultramontanism" with a full hope of finding all that could be said for the former, and against the latter, urged with the close reasoning of which I have always believed the author to be a master. I laid it down with a feeling of disappointment. The case argued is not mine. The whole issue has been changed. The title ought to have been "Faith and Doubt." This is the sum of the argument. "Ultramontanism is untenable, because Christianity cannot be proved to be true;" or, again, "Ultramontanism cannot be proved to be true, because we cannot be certain of the existence of God." The whole article is a profuse verification of a sentence in the essay under attack, in which I said: "No man can deny that the authority of the Church is separate from all civil powers, and within its own spiritual sphere supreme, without renouncing his Christian name, or the coherence of his reason." In this the article before us is not incoherent, and Mr Stephen admits that, granting Christianity to be a Divine revelation, and the Church to be a Divine institution, he does not see how he could stop short of my conclusions.

He then proceeds to say that, so far from Christianity being proved to be true, even the existence of God is not certain: that the arguments of Locke, Clarke, Butler, Pascal, and Dr Newman fail to prove it.

Another passage is well worth noting:—

I cannot believe that Mr Stephen's excursions to Bellarmine and the Arabian Nights, the Limbus Patrum and the imaginary jury, the blackman and the fishes, winding up with the wit of undergraduates about Moses and the whale, were intended for argument. When a writer has declared that Christianity is not yet proved to be true, and that the existence of God is doubtful, I think I may postpone my answer, as to what I believe of infants dying without baptism. My answer cannot appreciably affect the thesis before us. I have, indeed, very explicitly given my answer to this question, publicly and in print, but to repeat it here and now would break the line of what I have to say. I fully acknowledge that I cannot render Ultramontanism credible to any mind that does not believe the Articles of the Apostles' Creed; nor can I hope to render Christianity credible to any mind that is not convinced of the existence of God. The article before us is of great value. It reveals the position of a small number of minds among us. They are convinced that what they think is the opinion of their age. The more confidently they believe it themselves the more confidently they believe others must think as they do.

Mr Stephen is controversially unreasonable, if not controversially unfair. He endeavors to force us into a position which he should rightly occupy himself, and from which, if he believes he has a good case, he ought not to shrink. He writes, says the Archbishop,—

As if the *onus* of proving Christianity to be true rests upon us who believe it. But surely at this time of day the *onus* of proving it to be false or to be doubtful rests upon those who refuse to believe it. Meanwhile, *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*. The Christian world is in possession. It is a fact which must be accounted for before Christianity can be rejected. It is a visible fact, as palpable as the British Empire. It is a fact in history which can be traced up to its foundation. As the British Empire has its succession of Sovereigns, its unwritten and written laws, its legislature, and its tribunals, its customs and traditions of public and private life, its documents and records; so has the Christian Church, more widely known, more profuse in evidence, more open to every kind of test. Like the British Empire, the Church has a corporate identity and living consciousness which are traceable up to the time of its Founder. Its account of itself rests upon a history which cannot be rejected without shaking all evidence, except the personal eye-witness and ear-witness of each man for himself. If we were to believe nothing but what we have seen, heard, and touched, the human mind would dwell in a blank isolation. The Divine origin of the Christian Church rests upon a history which cannot be shaken without shaking the foundation of all moral certainty. It rests upon a legitimate authority of direct evidence, the most explicit and uninterrupted to be found in all history.

The Archbishop reminds his antagonist that he is addressing those who believe Christianity to be a Divine revelation, and he therefore dismisses from the contention the first of Mr Stephen's four theses, namely:—1. That there is a God. 2. That the historical statements of the Apostles' Creed are all true, in fact; and amount to an account of the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ; while he accepts as a duty the maintenance of the third and fourth—that Jesus Christ established a Church with the constitution and powers which he claims for His Church—and that his Church is the Church so established. He confines himself in this paper to the maintenance of the third thesis, and in proof of it adduces only the evidence of non-Catholic witnesses. The point in hand is, he says, this—that the Church is separate and supreme. His Grace begins by asserting that the Established Church of England affirms to this day, in its whole ecclesiastical law and by the teaching of its highest authorities, that the Church of Jesus Christ is a society separate in its spiritual constitution from all civil powers, and within its own sphere of doctrine and discipline supreme. He guards himself against being misunderstood to mean that the Established Church has preserved its spiritual supremacy in doctrine and discipline, and refers to his Academia Essay in which he has expressly shown that the Reformation has reduced its spiritual powers to subjection. Nevertheless, he maintains, the spiritual supremacy in doctrine and discipline is in theory explicitly recognised in the very statutes by which in practice it has been suspended. Again, what may be proved from the documents of the Established Church in England, may be even more easily proved from the documents of the

Kirk of Scotland, in which are found in the amplest terms the separate existence of the spiritual power, its independence, its direct authority derived from its own Head, its supremacy within its own sphere over the Civil State and its rulers, its exclusive power to make spiritual laws, to pronounce spiritual judgments, to elect and ordain its own ministers, in absolute independence of all persons and powers of the Civil State, and its right to evoke the secular arm to enforce by civil process the discipline and judgments in which it admits neither of appeal nor review. But, thirdly, direct and explicit as is the evidence of the Kirk of Scotland, the witness of the Free Church is still more decisive. And, finally, there is the history of what is called the Free Churches of England, which came into existence by the refusal of the Royal Supremacy in religious and ecclesiastical matters. In all their sufferings they had companions who, though differing from them in the most sacred truths, nevertheless agreed with them in this, that the authority of Revealed truth is supreme over all civil powers. Nonconformists and Catholics, says the Archbishop, lay bound in the same prisons, and suffered on the same scaffold, and notwithstanding their wide divergences of faith, in this point at least they suffered for the same cause.

As to the three principles in which he had said Ultramontanist consists, viz.:—

1. In the separation of the two powers (civil and spiritual), and the vesting them in different persons.
2. In claiming for the Church the sole right to define doctrines of faith and morals; and
3. To fix the limits of its own jurisdiction in that sphere.

I affirm, he says, once more, that these three principles are held by Anglicans, by Presbyterians, by Nonconformists of every name; and, further, that they are the substance of Christianity: that no man can deny any one of them without denying the office and even the existence of the Christian Church, or without affirming the preposterous and monstrous doctrine, that the revelation of Divine Truth is to be judged and disposed of by Royal mandates, legislative enactments, and civil tribunals, which is the lowest and basest form of Erastianism. *Cujus Regio ejus Religio*. Surely this is a denial of Revelation altogether. Why not say so at once?

I therefore affirm again that every Christian, who believes that Christianity is a Divine Revelation, must also believe that a Divine Revelation is independent of all civil authorities, and is dependent upon the authority of God alone, whether that Divine Authority make itself known by its own action in the isolated conscience of each individual man, or in the assembly of each Christian sect, or in the congregation of a Presbytery, or by the acts of an Episcopate, or by the voice of the Visible Head of the Universal Church. The forms, indeed, are different; the principle is one and the same. The Revelation of God is sustained and promulgated to the world by the authority of God Himself, in independence of all civil authorities, and in supremacy over them all.

This is the claim I have, therefore, made for the Catholic Church, abstracting from all forms of visible order and external policy; and I submit that Mr Stephen's third thesis is maintained explicitly by the Anglican Establishment, the Established Kirk, the Free Kirk of Scotland, and by all Nonconformists in both countries: namely, that "Jesus Christ established a Church with the constitution (visible or invisible) and powers which I claim for my Church." The answer "We ought to obey God rather than men," carries the whole claim of Divine authority.

## AN "ENLIGHTENED" VOTER.

THE following unique specimen of an "enlightened" voter appeared as a witness at the Stroud Election Petition:—

Mr Baron Bramwell—Do you know which party governs the country now?—Witness—The yellows, I suppose, sir (laughter).

His Lordship—Do you suppose Mr Disraeli is a "yellow"?—Witness—Well, I don't know, sir (laughter).

His Lordship—You don't know?—Witness—I don't know; I'm a man as can't understand.

His Lordship—When you gave your vote did you know what principles you were voting for? Did you know what party the color you voted for represented?—Witness—Yellow is the Liberal party (laughter).

His Lordship—What are the other party called?—Witness—The blues (loud laughter).

His Lordship—Don't you know any other name?—Witness—No sir.

His Lordship—What are the blues?—Witness—I don't know what they do call 'em (renewed laughter).

His Lordship—Have you heard of Mr Disraeli's name?—No answer.

His Lordship—Have you heard the name of the present Prime Minister?—Witness—No, sir. I don't know (laughter).

His Lordship—Mr Gladstone. Have you heard of him?—Witness—Oh, yes, Mr Gladstone (loud laughter).

His Lordship—What is he?—Witness—I suppose he is a Liberal, sir; I think.

His Lordship—Do you know what opinions the Liberals have?—Witness—I think the Liberals be the best side of the party, sir, (laughter).

Mr Hawkins—This one of the new voters under the Act of 1867.

His Lordship—Yes, and I was rather curious to see what he knew about it.

A correspondent of the 'Scientific American,' speaking of glue as a healing remedy, says:—"For the last twelve or fourteen years I have been employed in a shop where there are over 300 men at work, and hardly a day passes but one or more of us cut or bruise our limbs. After a while it became generally known that a rag glued on a flesh wound was not only a speedy curative, but a protection against further injury.