

combatants, by mutual arrangement, fired their pistols in the air—and the arch-punster expressed the hope that all duels might 'have this upshot in the end.'

The Catholic Church has set the mark of her high reprobation of murder by duelling by visiting principals and seconds, if Catholics, with the most severe ecclesiastical censures. Priests and medical men are strictly forbidden to be present at any duel for the purpose of ministering to wounded or dying combatants. 'Duelling,' says Thein, 'is strictly forbidden by the Church. Anyone concerned in duelling becomes guilty of a grievous sin, and those playing the principal part become guilty of a double crime, by willingly exposing themselves to death, and by attempting to take the life of another. The duel is only considered permissible as preventing greater disaster, or as conducive to public welfare, as was the case when David fought Goliath (*1 Kings*, xvii., 50). The Church has forbidden duelling (also when the contest is not for life and death), and punishes with excommunication not only the parties themselves, but also all accomplices, counsellors, assistants, witnesses, and spectators, who by their presence approve and sanction it. He who perishes in a duel is likewise deprived of Christian burial.'

SOLID ROCK AND SHIFTING SAND.

THE CHURCH AND THE 'ISMS.'

READERS of Samuel Butler's great masterpiece, *Hudibras*—a rhymed *Don Quixote*—will recall his hero's 'heroical epistle' to Sidrophel. Sidrophel had made a great discovery of an elephant in the moon, but the 'critter,' upon examination, turned out to be nothing more or less than an inquisitive and enterprising mouse that had lost its way and got into the tube of the great man's telescope—a curious anticipation, by the way, of the loud *Io triumphe* and the later shock of blank disappointment that followed the discovery of the sticky ooze (sulphate of lime) which Huxley in 1868 named *Bathypus* and proclaimed far and near to be Dame Nature's grand store of protoplasm, and to furnish the solution of the great puzzle of the origin of life upon this hoary old planet! Well, Sidrophel represented the rather large class of persons who are gifted with an uncommon guid conceit o' themselves and who, in Butler's words, profess to

'Know more of any trade b' a hint,
Than those that have been bred up in it.'

There is probably no organisation on the surface of the earth that suffers more from the insane omniscience of these Sidrophels than the Catholic Church. Unfortunately they are frequently not content to play an innocuous part. An hour's perusal of a hostile pamphlet written by a wild-eyed vitriol-thrower, and, presto! they know more about the Catholic Church than all her clergy, and set forth to teach the Pope and the whole College of Cardinals what they deem to be the real facts of our doctrine and practice. The course of the real student of Catholic history, dogma, and philosophy is much more toilsome and its results widely different. It is outlined with singular felicity and condensed and well-balanced completeness in the narrative of personal experience which Father Sheehan puts into the mouth of Geoffrey Austin in *The Triumph of Failure*.

'I think,' said Geoffrey Austin, in the course of his narrative, 'my first great surprise—indeed, it was almost a shock—was to find that there was such a thing as Catholic philosophy. Greek philosophy I had known, and the remnants of it that survived through the middle ages under the name of Neo-Platonism; French philosophy I had known under the name of absolute negation; German philosophy I had known nebulous and transcendental; and the schools of Scotch and English philosophy, supposed to be characterised by common sense and hard-headedness, but always drifting towards a common idealism, but Catholic philosophy? Catholic dogma, if you like, clear-cut, well defined, unmistakable in its terms, independent of argument, but a Catholic philosophy with all the equipments of definition and axiom, and all the dread array of proposition and objection, why, this was a revelation. But still greater when I found what a firm, uniform, consistent, and spiritual system was embraced between the mysticism of the Fathers and the fiery logic of apologists, the decrees of councils, the testimony of martyrs, until, in the writings of St. Thomas, all became crystallised in the most compact and irrefragable theses that ever exercised the ingenuity of the human mind. Yet, even there, it does not terminate its marvels. For opening out again into dissertations on the loftiest truths and speculations on the highest mysteries, as in the pages of Suarez and Petavius, it gives the human mind new empires of thought to conquer, new realms of ideas wherein to disport itself, yet all is certain and tangible and sure; and if you are blocked by the high walls of mysteries that are impenetrable, you are taught to know, not, in the jargon of philosophers, that behind is the Unknowable and Uncognisable, but that within are the gardens of God. It was magnificent compared with this solid phalanx of mighty thinkers, marshalled and disciplined, marshalled under the same standard with the same eternal watchword on their lips, and with the unbroken assurance that theirs was the cause of truth and righteousness, and therefore of ultimate victory, the scattered bands of philosophers mutually distinguished and uniformly despairful appeared like a ragged battalion of filibusterers fighting for ideas that were blasphemous and a principle of liberty that was libertinism in thought and anarchy in action.'

'Their watchwords differ,' he continues. 'Christian thinkers cry "Jesus Christ, yesterday, to-day, and forever." The philosophers write one word on their standard: "Humanity." The former echo "Humanity"; but they mean the humanity of Christ all-powerful to save humanity. The latter interpret the word: "Ye shall be as gods," even by your own efforts. The former declare that we are fallen, and can only rise by union with Christ. The latter admit the imperfections of the race without attempting to explain the cause, and bid us look along the interminable vistas of human evolution until we see the perfect man somewhere in the far and undetermined future. So too with their professions. Ask the leading thinkers of the Church "What are you?" and the answer of the innumerable host from the first to the nineteenth century is: "A Christian." Ask the hybrid masses of philosophers: "What are you?" and you are confronted with Babel. Spinozists and Cartesianians, Kantians and Fichteanians, Hegelians of the right, Hegelians of the left, Baconians and Voltaireans, Pantheists of the shape of Emerson, higher Pantheists, Spencerians, swearers by Schopenhauer, Idealists, Materialists, Sceptics, all mutually repellent, yet all identified by one common idea—the dethronement of God—and linked by one common ambition—the eversion of preceding theories and the erection of their own.'

'It may be objected: "Such is the nature of philosophy, particularly of that branch of philosophy called metaphysics. Even amongst your scholastics are found Nominalists and Realists, Thomists and Scotists. You are no better than we." True, as far as variety of modes of teaching is concerned. But these mediæval scholars exercised all the ingenuity of their keen intellects in unravelling mysteries that were accepted facts of faith. You are ingenious in devising subtleties that may take the place of faith. With them all the great truths were taken for granted before they discussed their constituent principles or ideas. You subvert all truth and try to build your own castles upon nothing. And all this would be tolerable if you had only speculative truth to deal with; or if, as one of your philosophers said when "waking out of his dogmatic slumber," life was but a bundle of sensations. But you touch on the one hand God with the rod of rebellion, and, on the other man's soul, his life, his hopes, his destinies, with a wand of despair. In truth the great error of all philosophic thought that is not guided by the Church is embraced between the blasphemy of handling the Creator, His existence, His attributes, as a subject for metaphysical dissection, and the sacrilege of treating God's most perfect and delicate handiwork, the human soul, as a piece of mechanism whose intricacies are to be unravelled, and the secrets of its organisms laid bare. If all this concerned only the students of the closets or the recluses of laboratories, whose minds may have been constructed of tougher material than ordinary, and whose experiments might not disturb their beliefs, it would be not quite unendurable, although even here the warning would hold good: "*Quoniam ille soit très solidement monté: il faut ne pas brutalement la machine.*" But unfortunately the vast majority of philosophers have aimed at being not merely students of the unknown, but framers and builders of systems, and have passed from thence to the ambition of founding religions and establishing new codes of ethics amongst men. What the result has been the world knows. They have committed the awful crime against humanity of destroying its beliefs and substituting wild theories that end in despair.'

NO SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CHURCH;

OR

THE DOCTRINE OF EXCLUSIVE SALVATION.

UNBAPTISED INFANTS.

THE following is the final of a series of articles on the above subject contributed to the *Austral Light* by his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne—

A series of papers treating of the doctrine of exclusive salvation may be fitly brought to a close by a paper such as this, which deals with the condition of infants who die without baptism. It is a subject of deep and perennial interest. The very obscurity in which it is shrouded invites reverent investigation. In a letter to St. Jerome, St. Augustine says that the consideration of it caused him keen anxiety, and left him still in considerable doubt. 'Cum ad pœnas parvulorum ventum est, magnis mihi crede coarctor angustus, nec quid respondeam prorsus invenio, doce ergo quid sentire, quid dicere debeamus.'

One of the many consequences of original sin is the absolute necessity of some form of baptism for infants as well as for adults, to entitle them to the beatific vision in the kingdom of God. From this very necessity of baptism St. Augustine, in his controversy with the Pelagians, undertook to prove the fall of our first parents, and the transmission of original sin to their posterity. So clearly is that necessity conveyed in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel, that the Pelagians, though they denied the transmission of original sin, were forced to admit that without baptism no infant could enter the kingdom of God. They were driven, therefore, to invent a distinction between the kingdom of God and the possession of eternal life elsewhere, and to maintain that baptism was necessary for the former, but not for the latter. Other heretics went farther, and denied the necessity of baptism at least for the children of Christian parents, even though they admitted that such children are born subject to original sin.

Outside the Catholic Church there is, at the present time, considerable difference of opinion regarding the necessity of infant baptism. But the Catholic Church holds what she held from the beginning—what she held in the Councils of Milevis and Orange in refuting the Pelagians, and what she continued to hold at the Council of Trent in resisting the Calvinists—namely, that baptism,