

their learning. The land which could afterwards boast of a George Buchanan—during that period when the other portions of Western Europe was steeped in ignorance, and rapidly sinking into barbarism, could boast of a college in the small Island of Iona. Certain it is, that “in the school of the prophets,” among the Hebrides, the ancient classics were eagerly studied, and diligently taught, and, were it not for the barbarous destruction of all the Scottish monasteries, and with them Scottish antiquities, it is very probable that the lost books of Livy would still be in our possession.

But it is time that our remarks were drawn to a close. The college of Iona is no more, and many of its former libraries are buried together with not a few of the kings and nobles of Scotland, beneath its venerable ruins. Their memory shall long live, they have helped to make Scotland illustrious, they did much to stem the tide of ignorance and depravity, and now rank among those great ones who entitle a Scotsman to venerate the land of his birth and the home of his fathers.

S. M. G.

The Defence of Christianity.

BY AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT.

I OBSERVE you have published my last little article, and as I have now half-an-hour's leisure, I would like to throw out an idea or two on this subject, which has had possession of me for some time. There is no cause so good, which will not at some period or another, have assailants and enemies. Christianity has been no exception; for from the earliest times, it has had to contend for the truth, against assaults of every possible description. Long ago, persecution broke against it; power, in high places, tried to crush it out of being, at the stake or in the loathsome prison. It signally failed. Philosophy, the subtleties of the schools, tried their strength against it; and though they too failed, they left enduring marks of the contest, showing how much more dangerous and powerful intellect is, than mere brute force, however strong and uncontrolled. Our pure and glorious faith thus far triumphed throughout many vicissitudes over all its enemies. But why has it triumphed? By the blessing of God through the excellence of its armor. In nearly every age of the Church, and more particularly when she has been most rudely assailed, she has had champions to defend her, armed not only with the breastplate of faith, but with all human knowledge, and gigantic intellect. Where would our common Christianity have been to-day, had there been no Chillingworth, or Taylor, or Watson, or Paley, or Butler, to come to the rescue when assailed by the scoffing school of Voltaire, armed with learning, intellectual

dexterity, and that pointed and formidable weapon, wit. The scoffer came on confidently, but retired before the citadel of truth in confusion, leaving it surrounded with a still loftier blazon of glory.

The present age is witnessing a renewal of this contest, waged however from a different point, though with pretty much the same weapons. Christianity is once more put upon her defence. This time her assailants are not open scoffers, nor professed wits, nor modern Epicureans. They pretend to be grave and earnest men, devotees of truth, certainly, men of high personal character, of considerable accomplishments, and of no mean intellect. Their form of attack is not like that of their predecessors, to laugh or ridicule us out of our belief; but to speak in technical language to proceed by sap and mine, first to destroy the foundation, and thus bring down the whole building. They apply their learning, knowledge and ingenuity in seeking to disprove the truth of certain portions of Holy Scripture, knowing well that if successful in one part, the whole fabric must fall.—They are in no hurry to gain their point.—Indeed their main hope of success consists in making their progress as slow as it is insidious. For this purpose were written the famous Essays and Reviews, as well as Colenso's book on the Pentateuch. It behoves Christianity therefore to be upon its guard, to be not only prepared, but well prepared.

Her assailants are not every day men, and they must be met by men their superiors, if possible in human learning, in human intellect, and grasp of thought. Truth is strong, but if she has no worthy champion, she will be put to shame. Hence in my opinion the grand necessity of insisting upon the highest standard of learning in our candidates for the sacred office. It is not now high enough.—Lower it as some would seek to do, and the respectability and position of Christianity in the world may be seriously endangered. We know that Essays and Reviews have received many answers, but from what quarter. Perhaps the most crushing was the famous article in the Quarterly, the recognised organ of the Church of England. Certainly, the only answers which came up to the mark in point of learning and mental power, were from sons of the Church of England. The poison and the antidote thus emanated from the same source. Now, why is it that from amidst the vast army of dissent, not one answer has come worth looking at? We think the reason is obvious. Amidst the multiplicity of dissent, there is no lack of general cleverness, or of pulpit ability in the form of popular eloquence, but these are not exactly the ingredients required in such a case as this.—There must not only be learning, but a long and careful course of mental training, and that perhaps unfortunately is at present scarcely to be found in Great Britain, beyond the walls of Oxford or Cambridge. And the