

pose we are satisfied that there is one somewhere, the question arises, who is this Judge, and where is he to be found? For if we cannot find him, it is of no use to know that there is one in existence. We are told that this Judge is the Church, that this Church is the Church of Rome, and that the Church practically means the Pope. But on what authority is the decision of the Pope to be regarded as the voice of the Church? We are referred to the promise of our Lord to Peter—"Thou art Peter," &c. Still, however, we cannot discover, by the exercise of private judgment, any connexion between this promise and the Infallibility of the Pope. There is nothing here about the Bishop of Rome, or St. Peter's successors in that See. This interpretation is entirely founded upon the authority of the Roman Church, and therefore the attempt is merely an instance of the sophism of "arguing in a circle." The infallibility of the Pope, as the living judge of controversy, rests upon the interpretation of the promise to Peter, while that interpretation itself rests upon the infallibility of the Pope, or the authority of the Roman Church. But, further, are we sure that an infallible Judge would certainly decide all religious controversies in the Church? The Church of Rome, which professes to have such a Judge, has not exercised this power to the present day, as she has still left undecided some of the most important disputes relating to the peace of the Church and the interests of religion. Whatever, then, may be said, *a priori*, in favor of an infallible living Judge of religious doctrine on the ground of supposed necessity, we cannot admit the conclusiveness of such arguments, as they are chiefly founded on abstract reasonings, which cannot form the proper ground of faith; and the most difficult of all controversies is to decide who is