

died in 628, as a heretic—a condemnation renewed by every pope for 1,000 years afterwards. The seventh—so-called—compelled the pope to retract a former assent of his, and to pronounce what he had assented to heterodox. The remaining councils were not oecumenical at all, not being received in the East.

The Origin of the Christian Religion.

THERE is a very well known observation of Archbishop Whately on the difficulty that there is found in assigning any other reasonable origin to the Christian religion than that which Christians had always maintained that it is Divine. He says "No complete or consistent account has ever been given of the manner in which the Christian religion, supposing it to be a human contrivance, could have arisen and prevailed as it did. The religion exists; that is the phenomenon; those who will not allow it to have come from God are bound to solve the phenomenon on some other hypothesis less open to objection; they are not, indeed, called upon to prove that it actually did arise in this or that way, but to suggest (consistently with acknowledged facts) some probable way in which it may have arisen, reconcilable with all the facts of the case. That infidels have never done this, though they have had nearly two thousand years to try, amounts to a confession that no such hypothesis can be devised which will not be open to greater objections than lie against Christianity."

A learned writer in the "Quarterly Review," of July, 1887, has very well pointed out that this

argument of Archbishop Whately has received a wonderful confirmation during the last fifty years. The Reviewer says, "He (the Archbishop) was only able to say that infidels had never given any satisfactory explanation of the origin of Christianity on purely human grounds. Since his time, the vast ingenuity and industry of German scholars have attacked the problem with concentrated energy, and each new writer does but bear testimony that the others have failed. Considering the resources of ability and learning which have thus been directed to this object without accomplishing it, even to the satisfaction of a favorable audience, we may feel almost justified in saying not only that the attempt has not been successful, but that *its impossibility has been practically proved.*" The way in which one sceptic after another has absolutely demolished the theory set up by his predecessor in order to establish his own theory, though having the same object in view, reminds one of what is said of the false witnesses at our Lord's trial, "Many bear false witness against Him, but their witness agreed not together."

Short Sketches of Districts.

No. 2 of Short Sketches of Districts in Diocese—Sumner, with German and Hungarian Settlements—will appear in our next issue.

General Church Intelligence.

The Synods of the various dioceses of the Church in Canada were held generally about the middle of June, but they seem to have