

Holy See is the unerring exponent of absolute truth? Be this as it may, the passage above quoted from Mr. Mivart amounts to an admission that the Pope is becoming, in his relation to the Church, less and less like the rudder of a ship, and more and more like the tail of a kite; or (to use an apter illustration), less of an Absolute and more of a Constitutional Sovereign. What, then, are likely to be his lasting prerogatives? As an outsider, I, of course, speculate on the subject with extreme diffidence. But I venture to suggest that (on the hypothesis) he will retain complete control over ceremonies and discipline; he will also pronounce, on matters of faith, decisions which the Catholic masses will accept as permanently and literally accurate; while Catholic philosophers will consider them, if not as mere symbols and *broken lights*, at least as liable to revision by his successors.

A very distinguished Catholic, writing to me last year, mildly intimated a hope that his Church would hereafter modify its views on eternal punishment; but added that, at present, he could "see no footstep in that direction." This whispered protest is full of promise. One is tempted to infer from it that the time may come when (to put the matter somewhat brutally) an