

## THE ROMAN CHURCH TO THE RESCUE.

BY CHARLES CATTELL.

THE true religion is safe at last. That is, if any religion is credible, Christianity—under the protection of the Roman Church—may meet the demands of the intellect of the present age by absorbing the great principle of Evolution and making it all its own, Herbert Spencer furnishing the basis of the proceeding. The author of this patent medicine for grinding scepticism and unbelief to powder is Mr. W. H. Mallock, who discloses his remarkable invention in the *Nineteenth Century* for November.

How true it is that, when infidelity comes in like a flood, the Holy Spirit sets up a standard against it. But it must be very mortifying to Protestants, for their religion is at present in a state corresponding to what biologists term "protoplasmic:" evolution has barely begun in that structureless system of faiths, almost devoid of organs or functions, to say nothing of brains or backbone. The Roman Church is a continuous personal organism, whose history corresponds with the process of organic evolution: it is a single organ of thought and historic memory, able to personally attest the earliest facts of its history as though from personal experience. That is a downright good character. Possibly some may think this only a string of bald unsupported assertions, as I do, but note the issue.

Is there any doubt about the Resurrection or the Ascension? If so, "the Church replies, 'I was at the door; my eyes saw the Lord come forth.'"

Is the miraculous birth a stumbling-block? "The Church replies, 'I can attest the fact, even if no other witness can, for the angel said "Hail!" in my ear as well as Mary's.'"

If anybody can credit the report of this continuous organism, the result must be confusion to unbelief and the defeat of rationalism.

It should be mentioned that this scheme is only formulated by Mr. Mallock as suggestive to some future apologist of the Roman Church. The occasion of it naturally arises after Mr. Mallock's demonstration that the Reformed Christianity of Protestants has been completely annihilated by modern cosmic science and scientific historical criticism, "in the eyes of every thinking man." It appears a benevolent suggestion on the writer's part to meet the emergencies arising out of the failure of the dominant faith in England at the present day.

As Mr. Mallock takes this scientific stand, we are clearly entitled to inquire: In what strata of the early centuries of Christianity can the first forms of this continuous organism be found? Is this organism anything but the creation of Mr. Mallock's fertile brain? I think not. If the varieties of the Gospel stories in early times prove anything, it is that there existed many churches and no organized centre of authority at all.