

rope. About the year 1265 a National Synod was held in London under Othobon the Pope's legate. This Synod, in which Welsh, Scotch, and Irish clergymen were present, as well as English, was looked on as of great authority, and as a rule of Ecclesiastical discipline to the Church. One of its canons provides against commutation of offences, and forbids the archdeacon ever to receive money on such accounts, for "such practices," says the Synod, "amount in effect to the grant of a licence to sin." This is another proof against the doctrine of continued Roman infallibility. Let it be remembered that the Synod was held "under the Pope's legate." Now we come to some great and undisputed facts in the history of the Roman Church; and if there were no others they would alone be perfectly sufficient to destroy altogether this asserted claim of infallibility. The whole of Christendom had been distracted for nearly forty years by a schism in the Popedom. The famous and sanguinary Council of Constance met in 1414 to settle this contention, and to consult and determine on other Ecclesiastical subjects. At this time, three pretenders to the chair of St. Peter, namely John XXIII, Benedict XIII, and Gregory XII, severally laid claim to *infallibility*. The Council deposed the whole of them, and chose as Pope, Martin V. Here the solemn and important question arises, where did the infallibility repose during those forty years of controversy? There could, of course, be but one Pope, and which of them was the man, or rather the infallible Vicar. The Council determined that it was not with either of them. Now with the Pope alone, according to the Roman doctrine then, and now, the infallibility rests. Of the three pretenders, one of them had as good a right to it as either of the others; but the Council agreed, in effect, that neither of them possessed it. What then had become of it during all these years? Had it vanished into thin air or become annihilated. There was here a kind of interregnum, as political historians would call it, and of a very anomalous description. Certain it is, the *infallibility* was nowhere to be found. Protestants beg to decline believing or trusting such a vagabond phantom, which might suddenly vanish away, just when they needed it most. That same Council of Constance passed a decree to forbid the laity the