flaunting the irreconcileable opposition of reason and dogma, they laboured to reduce the doctrines of the church to a rational system. This was the long task essayed by Scholasticism ; and, though the great Schoolmen of the 13th century refrained from attempting to rationalize such doctrines as the Trinity and the Incarnation, they were far from considering them as essentially opposed to reason. It was not till towards the close of the Middle Ages that a sense of conflict between reason and revelation became widely prevalent and took shape in the essentially sceptical theory of the twofold nature of truth. Philo­sophical truth, as deduced from the teaching of Aristotle, it was said, directly contradicts the teaching of the church, which determines truth in theology ; but the contradiction leaves the authority of the latter unimpaired in its own sphere. It is difficult to believe that this doctrine was ever put forward sincerely; in the most of those who professed it, it was certainly no more than a veil by which they sought to cover their heterodoxy and evade its consequences. Rightly divining as much, the church condemned the doctrine as early as 1276. Nevertheless it was openly professed during the period of the break up of Scholastic Aristotelianism. Pomponatius, the Alex- andrist of Padua (*οb*. 1525), was one of its best known advocates.

The typical and by far the greatest example of the Christian sceptic is Pascal (1623-1662). The form of the *Pensées* forbids the attempt to evolve from their detached utterances a completely coherent system. For, though he declares at times “Le pyrrhonisme est le vrai,” “Se moquer de la philosophie c’est vraiment philosopher,” or, again, “ Humiliez-vous, raison impuissante, taisez-vous, nature imbécile,” other passages might be quoted in which he assumes the validity of reason within its own sphere. But what he everywhere emphatically denies is the possibility of reaching by the unassisted reason a satis­factory theory of things. The contradictions which meet us everywhere are summed up and concentrated in the nature of man. Man is a hopeless enigma to himself, till he sees himself in the light of revelation as a fallen creature. The fall alone explains at once the nobleness and the meanness of humanity; Jesus Christ is the only solution in which the baffled reason can rest. These are the two points on which Pascal’s thought turns. “ There is nothing which is more shocking to our reason ” than the doctrine of original sin ; yet, in his own words, “ le nœud de notre condition prend ses replis et ses tours dans cet abîme; de sorte que l’homme est plus inconcevable sans ce mystère que ce mystère n’est incon­cevable à l’homme.” Far, therefore, from being able to sit in judgment upon the mysteries of the faith, reason is unable to solve its own contradictions without aid from a higher source. In a somewhat similar fashion, in the present century, Lamennais (in the first stage of his speculations, represented by the *Essai sur l' Indifférence en Matière Religieuse,* 1817-21) endeavoured to destroy all rational certitude in order to establish the principle of authority; and the same profound distrust of the power of the natural reason to arrive at truth is exemplified (though the allegation has been denied by the author) in the writings of Cardinal Newman. In a different direction and on a larger scale, Hamilton’s philosophy of the con­ditioned may be quoted as an example of the same religious scepticism. Arguing from certain antinomies, said to be inherent in reason as such, Hamilton sought to found theology (in great part at least) upon our nescience, and to substitute belief for knowledge. He also imitated Pascal at times in dilating upon the “impotence” and “ imbecility ” of our faculties ; but, as with Pascal, this was rather in reference to their incapacity to evolve an

“absolute” system than to their veracity in the ordinary details of experience. The theological application and development of Hamilton’s arguments in Mansel's Bampton Lectures *On the Limits of Religious Thought* marked a still more determined attack, in the interests of theology, upon the competency of reason.

Passing from this particular vein of sceptical or semi- sceptical thought, we find, as we should expect, that the downfall of Scholasticism, and the conflict of philosophical theories and religious confessions which ensued, gave a decided impetus to sceptical reflexion. One of the earliest instances of this spirit is afforded by the book of Agrippa of Nettesheim (1487-1535), *De Incertitudine et Vanitate Scientiarum.* Sceptical reflexion rather than systematic scepticism is what meets us in Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), though the elaborate presentation of sceptical and relativistic arguments in his “Apologie de Raimond Sebond ” *(Essais,* ii. 12), and the emblem he recommends —a balance with the legend, “ Que scay-je ? ”—might allowably be adduced as evidence of a more thoroughgoing Pyrrhonism. In his “ tesmoynages de nostre imbécillité,” he follows in the main the lines of the ancients, and he sums up with a lucid statement of the two great arguments in which the sceptical thought of every age resumes itself—the impossibility of verifying our faculties, and the relativity of all impressions. @@1 The argument from the mutability of opinions and customs was probably the one which appealed most strongly to himself. In the concluding lines of this essay, Montaigne seems to turn to “nostre foy chrestienne ” as man’s only succour from his native state of helplessness and uncertainty. But undoubtedly his own habitual frame of mind is better represented in his celebrated saying—“ How soft and healthful a pillow are ignorance and incuriousness .... for a well-ordered head.” More inclined than Montaigne to give a religious turn to his reflexions was his friend Pierre Charron (1541-1603), who in his book *De la Sagesse* systematized in somewhat Scholastic fashion the train of thought which we find in the *Essais.* François Sanchez (1562-1632), professor of medicine and philo­sophy in Toulouse, combated the Aristotelianism of the schools with much bitterness, and was the author of a book with the title *Quod nihil scitur.* Of more or less isolated thinkers, somewhat later in point of time, who wrote in the same sceptical spirit, may be mentioned the names of François de la Mothe le Vayer (1588-1672), whose *Cinq Dialogues* appeared after his death under the pseudonym of Orosius Tubero ; Samuel Sorbière (1615-1670), who trans­lated the *Hypotyposes Pyrrhoneae* of Sextus Empiricus ; Simon Foucher (1644-1696), canon of Dijon, who wrote a *History of the Academics,* and combated Descartes and Malebranche from a sceptical standpoint. The work of Hieronymus Hirnhaim of Prague (1637-1679), *De Typho Generis Humani sive Scientiarum Humanarum Inani ac Ventoso Tumore,* was written in the interests of revelation. This is still more the case with the bitter polemic of Daniel Huet (1630-1721), *Censura Philosophiae Carte- sianæ,* and his later work, *Traité Philosophique de la Faiblesse de l'Esprit Humain.* The scepticism of Joseph Glanvill (1636-1680), in his two works *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661) and *Scepsis Scientifica* (1665), has more interest for Englishmen. Glanvill was not a sceptic at all

@@@1 “ Pour juger des apparences que nous recevons des subjects, il nous fauldra un instrument judicatoire ; pour verifier cet instrument, il nous y fault de la demonstration ; pour verifier la demonstration, un instrument ; nous voylà au rouet. . . Finalement il n’y a aulcune constante existence, ny de nostre estre ny de celuy des objects ; et nous, et nostre jugement, et toutes choses mortelles, vont coulant et roulant sans cesse ; ainsin, il ne se peult establir rien de certain de l’un à l’aultre, et le jugeant et le jugé estants en continuelle mutation et bransle ” *{Essais,* Garnier, i. 570).