

as to the ultimate authority to which we appeal in matters of knowledge and faith.

It will now be generally admitted that through many influences, some of which were clearly pointed out by de Lamennais, a spirit of indifference under various names, such as Agnosticism, Irreligion, Immoralism, or Probabilism has found its way into the thoughtful literature of Western Europe. And, further, we are struck by the fact that prominent thinkers in this country, such as Mr Balfour, and before him James Martineau, have made the question of the seat of authority or the court of appeal in matters of knowledge and belief the subject of special study.

It is a matter of historical interest that a similar problem presented itself, in the early part of the century, from an entirely different point of view and in different surroundings, to de Lamennais,—the problem of certitude in matters of belief. The fact that a tendency to indifference was slowly growing out of the Protestant principle of Toleration did not then strike either German or British thinkers; and this is easily explained if we realise that in Germany, at the time when the 'Essay on Indifference' appeared, there existed just the opposite, a spirit of hope and genuine trust in the promises of idealistic speculation which was not to supersede, but to put the verities of Christian religion upon a securer intellectual foundation; further, that in England a quite different but not less hopeful spirit had become diffused through poetry, literature, and art since the beginning of the century, and that this