

P R E F A C E .

After much solicitation from many friends I have consented to put forth the following lectures in a printed form. They were delivered to popular audiences, from my own pulpit, in Zion Church ; and were received with more or less of appreciation. One or two of them provoked much excitement and controversy. I am not answerable for that. The Church that cannot afford to have its history told, and its doings criticised is in degenerate condition ; and the men who try to put down freedom of speech by bluster, or blows, are fools. I have been much condemned by some "peace-loving" Protestants, and much threatened by some very ignorant, but devoted, Roman Catholics, and I have survived both.

I am well aware that in these lectures I have added but little to the general knowledge of Church History, and but little to the help of controversy, but my excuse is, they are lectures, and had, necessarily, to be brought forward in popular form, so as to give interest as well as information. But of this I am conscious : I have honestly striven to be accurate in all matters of history, and fair in all criticism.

Some complaints have been made that the Methodists and Presbyterians were not included in the series. It was unavoidable ; six being as many as could be well pressed into the time at my disposal, I had to make choice of those churches which would enable me to keep along the historical line. It may yet happen that I shall have a criticism or two to offer on those churches. Meantime I commit my book to the candid, intelligent reader, hoping he may find in it some pleasure and some profit.

MONTREAL, May, 1877.