

"The Vatican Decree of Infallibility promised to the Church new aids and guidance. The pastors of the Roman Church, however, appear now to be placed in such difficulty, that they are unable to ascertain the value of a Dogmatic Constitution of the Bishop of Rome.

The advocates of Infallibility declare that the faithful by applying to a priest can always obtain the certainty of the Catholic Faith.

In the present case, however, the Chief Pastor of the Roman Church in England, from the principal pulpit of his charge, delivers himself dogmatically of a heresy which has been condemned under Catholic anathema.

When asked for an explanation the preacher quotes authorities, the sense of which he obviously misapprehends, and which are readily shown to be refutations of himself.

Besides this, statements are made in defence which are proved to be fresh heresies, and which are incompatible with the rudiments of the theology of his Church.

Finally the whole correspondence is no ordinary instance of confusion of thought and language.

In this grave matter I have no alternative, but to bring the charge of heresy against your teaching.

I should be ready to prefer the charge in the proper place and in a recognized manner, if opportunity be afforded me.

In any case unless you fully retract the heresy, I reserve to myself the right of publishing this correspondence, that impartial judgment may be formed, whether you are justifiable in the dogmatic declaration of the deification of

the human nature of Our Lord, in your representation of the theological principals and the *Cultus* of the Roman Church, and, finally, in several statements advanced in defence of opinions which are subversive of the Catholic Faith.

I have the honour to be, Most Reverend Archbishop,

Your most obedient servant,

A. NICHOLSON."

As though Archbishop Manning had not blundered enough in former letters, he blundered still more in the next, for he was unwise enough to get out of temper, and to say that the invitation to enquirers which he gave in his sermon was "not addressed to controversialists, nor to those who profess to be able to correct the theology of the Catholic clergy." He further adds that "two things are sufficiently evident—(1.) That you (Dr. Nicholson) suppose yourself better informed than the theologians of the Catholic Church to whom I have referred you; (2.) That you are in error as to the doctrines of the Catholic faith." And with this cool avowal he begs to close the correspondence.

But Dr. Nicholson was not disposed to be put off in this very cavalier manner, so he wrote again to remind his Grace that the point at issue was a purely doctrinal one, and that no mere personal considerations affected it. As to the matters which were "sufficiently evident," he replied, that as regarded the first allegation, he had no controversy whatever with Roman Catholic theologians (a hardish hit at the Archbishop by the way), but simply with certain interpretations of them which were obviously untenable,