

Infallibility and Intolerance.

Under the above caption, the Christian Guardian maintain with a great flourish, as though announcing something new to most people—"that infallibility is the parent of intolerance." It is very evident that a teacher in mathematics who proposes an axiom, or who demonstrates the solution of a problem, will not tolerate an unreasonable or foolish opinion contradictory of evident truth. He would be intolerant of the saying "that two and two make five," or that "the shortest distance from one point to another is not the straight line." But would the teacher's intolerance or just indignation be a reason for hiding the truth, or not proclaiming it, or would those who in spite of demonstration, still hold to the error, be justified in resisting competent authority and denying the teacher's, or rather the axiom's infallibility? To such absurd conclusion must our contemporary have reached when it declares that "when-ever infallibility is claimed, intolerance is the natural consequence," and that "the knowledge of truth depends upon no office or position." Had the Guardian made the statement that the knowledge of truth depends upon no man individually, we might agree with the writer, but very different is the assertion that "the knowledge of truth depends upon no office or position." The best men are fallible and may be deceived. But the office or position they occupy, if established by God, and guaranteed against all possibility of error, will render them capable not only of imparting a knowledge of truth, but of teaching all truth necessary to salvation, and of teaching such truth infallibly. It was the commission given to the prophets and apostles, not their personal characters, that secured for them a hearing from an unbelieving world.

If we had nothing but the piety and self-sacrifice and other eminent virtues of the sacred writers and evangelists on which to rely, honest and righteous as they were, we have no sufficient reason for believing what they wrote or said to be the Word of God. Their personal characters may be important when the question turns on their credibility as witnesses to the facts they record, but does not enter into the account when the question is on their authority as teachers of revealed truth. As Brownson puts it, "No man's personal character is a sufficient warrant for believing that anything he asserts to be a doctrine of revelation is really and truly a doctrine of revelation." If it were, we should be obliged to believe whatever any man, whose character is, so far as we know, honest and irreproachable, who chooses the teach us the word of God. So that it is quite wrong to assert that "the knowledge of truth depends upon no office or position."

It was the office to which God raised Balaam and Jonas that made them prophets and exponents of the saving truths they were commissioned to announce. Both men were unreliable as men, but in their official capacity they were glorious prophets and saviours of God's people.

The Twelve Apostles received the commission to teach infallibly "all

they had heard" and to baptize the nations. The command given them to teach, implied the command given to the nations to allow themselves to be taught. All peoples and individuals were commanded to hear and be instructed. "They who hear you hear Me, they who condemn you condemn Me." In their office or position they taught infallibly. Their successors (or the Church) teach infallibly to-day, and shall so teach to the end of time. "Behold I am with you all days." God's Church was not established for one generation of men, but for all the children of Adam as long as the world endures.

In spite of the knowledge of this Heavenly commission, and in face of the most evident and clearly explicit passages of Holy Scripture, and in opposition to all the most important facts and events of history in proof, the Christian Guardian has the audacity to say "there is no evidence whatever of such infallibility as is claimed for the Popes."

The Popes, or successors of Peter (for whom it was prayed "that his faith should never fail"), are intolerant of error, as the teacher of mathematics is intolerant. In spirituals he alone is justified in being intolerant; for he alone received the commission: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." Protestants who claim themselves and their ministers to be fallible and just, as likely to err and teach error as not, on principle give up all claim to intolerance. But why is it that in practice they are so intolerant; that they have no faith in Catholics; that they keep them out of office; calumniate them, misrepresent them, believe in all the abominable lies of Mrs. M. L. Shepherd and others? But there is no consistency in Protestantism. We give it up.

Two Gatherings.

All who have an interest in the literature of Ireland, and all who have acquired that admiration of her Excellency the Countess of Aberdeen which the people of Ireland delight to manifest would do well to be present at the lecture in the Massey Music Hall on the evening of Friday the 31st inst. The subject is one which should have a charm for everyone; the price is so low as to be within the means of all; the young ladies of the Association are doing a valuable work and deserve well of the community; and the distinguished lecturer deserves a continued tenancy of the warm spot in the affections of Irish Catholics and Irish Canadians that has been hers for a number of years.

Within a few weeks it is anticipated that we shall be favored by the presence of some American prelates of the highest distinction. The officials of the pan-American Congress promise that Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, Bishop Keane of Washington University and Bishop Watterson of Columbus will be in the city. If such should prove to be the case, Toronto Catholics have in store for them the greatest intellectual treat in many years.

The Amnesty Movement.

Those who have been striving to impress upon the British Government the advisability of releasing the Irish political prisoners have received a welcome addition of strength by the publication of the following letter from Archbishop Walsh of Dublin, which was read at a recent monster meeting:

DEAR SIR—In reply to your letter, I have only to repeat what I wrote to the Secretaries of your Association, now nearly three years ago, that in my opinion, "the time has long since come for the granting of an amnesty to those who are in prison for political offences."

I am aware that it is contended by those who are opposed to the Amnesty movement, that the prisoners whose release is called for by your Association are undergoing imprisonment for crimes that cannot be regarded as merely political, and that therefore they have no claim to be amnestied on political grounds. As to this, I would once more suggest, as I suggested in my former letter, that your Association should take the most effective means of putting the public fully in possession of the true state of the case.

Your demand implies no sympathy with crime. Your case, as I understand it, is that men whose offences bore a political tinge were sentenced to terms of imprisonment notably longer than were imposed in the case of others whose offence in the eye of the law was no less grave, but who, nevertheless, being in no sense Irish political offenders were less rigorously dealt with. In those other cases the terms of imprisonment imposed have, I believe, long since expired. You therefore hold, and so far as I can form a judgment on the case, you seem to me rightly to hold, that the present imprisonment of those for whom you claim an amnesty is an imprisonment which they are undergoing simply in consequence of the political aspect of their case.

A claim for amnesty, made in such circumstances as these, seems to me so obviously equitable that I cannot conceive on what grounds the rejection of it can be justified. Once more I would urge my view as to the importance of getting the salient facts of the case well into the public mind. I can assure you that they are not at all so generally known as those who are closely engaged in the working of the Amnesty movement may suppose them to be. The more widely you make the facts known, the wider will be the range of sympathy your movement will command. But work of this kind cannot be done for nothing. I therefore enclose a cheque for £5, in aid of your expenses.

Personals.

Edison's fondness for electric science is only surpassed by his admiration of children, and he never wearies of showing them through his works and mystifying them with his experiments.

Miss Oims Loftus (Mrs. Justin Huntly McCarthy) visited the House of Commons the other evening and was shown over the building by her father-in-law, the leader of the Irish party. A pleasant family dinner-party took place subsequently in the dining-room of the House.

Vicar-General Farley of the New York archdiocese, whose silver jubilee is soon to be celebrated, is a priest whose reputation is by no means limited to the city and bishopric of New York, and there are few American priests more widely or favorably known than he. As Secretary to Cardinal McCloskey, Monsignor Farley distinguished himself not less for his prudence than for his ability, and he is grown in public esteem since his promotion to the more responsible positions which he now fills. There is said to be no other priest in New York who is so popular as he with his fellow-clergymen of all ranks; and the belief is very common that he will one day wear the purple, if not as coadjutor to Archbishop Corrigan, as the ordinary of some diocese in the New York province.

To a Little One.

The way is long for thee, dear one,
But 'tis the same way I have trod;
I cannot say: "This evil shun,
Or take this way that leads to God."
Find thou the way with thy frail feet,
Ever as I have found it, sweet!

I cannot say: "Beware the thorn!"
Because above it climbs the rose;
Nor whisper: "Night will follow morn,"
For stars will shine at daylight's close.
Find thou the light and darkness fleet,
Even as I have found them, sweet!

And yet, for only thy dear sake,
The tenderest prayer that thrills my breast
Is that the kind, good God shall make
A world of roses for thy rest!
But thou must find with my dear feet,
The thorn or rose—as I have, sweet!

—FRANK L. STANTON

Blossom-Time.

Oh! the sweet world of the blossoms,
When the blithe winds to and fro
Rock the softly tinted cradles
Where the fruited orchards grow,
All the breezes wafting perfume
O'er wide fields of drifting snow.

Snow of summer and of flowers,
Not the flakes of feathery chill
Once that filled the sleeping hollows,
Rounded out each watching hill;
Snow of summer and of flowers,
Acres of it, where you will.

Hidden deep among the petals,
Even from eyes that love her best,
Many a patient little mother
Broods beneath her beating breast
Wings and songs that wait their rapture
When they flutter from the nest.

Oh! the white world of the blossoms,
Where the sweet winds to and fro
Softly, softly rock the cradles
Swinging high and swinging low,
Cradles of the fruited orchards
In the blossoms' tinted snow.

—Harper's Bazaar.

Possibilities.

By RICHARD KLIPING.

Ay, lay him 'neath the Simla pine—
A fortnight, fully, to be missed—
Behold! we lose our fourth at whist,
A chair is vacant where we dine.

His place forgets him; other men
Have bought his ponies, guns and traps;
His fortune is the great perhaps,
And that cool rest house down the glen.

Whence we shall hear, as spirits may,
Our mundane revel on the height,
Shall watch each flashing rickshaw light
Sweep on to dinners, dance and play.

Benmore shall woo him to the ball
With lighted room and braying band,
And he shall hear and understand
Dream faces better than us all.

For, think you, as the vapors flee
Across Sanjaolie after rain,
His soul may climb the hill again
To each old field of victory.

Unseen, whom women held so dear,
The strong man's yearning to his kind
Shall shake, at most, the window blind
Or dull a while the cadroom's cheer.

Yet may he meet with many a friend—
Strewed shadows, lingering long unseen.
Among us, when God save the Queen
Shows even extras have an end.

And when we leave the heated room,
And when at four the lights expire,
The crew shall gather round the fire
And mock our laughter in the gloom.

Talk as we talk, and they, ere death—
Then wanly dance in ghostly wise
With ghosts of tunes for melodies,
And vanish at the morning's breath.

One of the most weary things in life is the sense of an obligation you can never repay.

Remember there is but one man in the world with whom you are to have perpetual contention, and be always trying to exceed him, and that is yourself.

The apples of sin are all poisoned at the core, and every unlawful pleasure we pursue is transformed at last into a hound that turns and rends us.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
For though they gang a kennie wrang,
To step aside is human.

—Robert Burns.

We may as well think to see without eyes,
Or to live without breath, as to live in the spirit of religion without the spirit of humility. All the world preaches to an unattentive mind and that if you have but ears to hear, almost everything you meet teaches you some lesson of wisdom.