

INTRODUCTION.

THE reason of this controversy was, as will be seen, a Lecture delivered according to announcement, by Father Ferguson, in the Town Hall, Owen Sound, which was reported in its main points, in the Owen Sound *Times* of February 10th, 1871. This was followed in the next number by a Letter from Mr. Stephens, in which he referred to the passage, "I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," and showed by a logical amplification of those words, what is claimed by the Pope in consequence of claiming possession of those Keys; and to this Letter was appended a copy of the Curse of Excommunication against Victor Emmanuel. The next paper (February 23rd) contained a poem under the caption, "How Peter used the Keys of the Kingdom;" and also, a Letter from Mr. G. Spencer, a late convert to Catholicism, in reply to Mr. Stephens' first Letter. The next *Times* (March 3rd) had Mr. Ferguson's first Letter in reply to Mr. Stephens. The next number (March 10th) contained Mr. Ferguson's second Letter, and Mr. Stephens' Letter in reply to Mr. Spencer; and in the following numbers of the *Times*, three Letters from Mr. Stephens, in reply to the two Letters from Mr. Ferguson, which ended the discussion, so far as it was published in that paper. But it was taken up editorially in the *Canadian Freeman* of Toronto, in two lengthy articles, which are given in this Pamphlet, as they are evidently from the pen of Mr. Ferguson. But before these articles had appeared, Mr. Stephens had continued his argument upon the general subject, which continuation is now published for the first time, as also his remarks upon those Editorials.

From the very great interest this correspondence excited during its publication in the *Times*, and from the opinion expressed by many that if it were completed and given in pamphlet form, it would command a very wide circulation and be the means of doing much good, Mr. Stephens resolved to try the experiment of publishing in this form; and trusts, with the blessing of God, that it may aid some at least, of the lovers of truth, to understand it better, and furnish them with arguments to defend it.

OWEN SOUND, 1st July, 1871.