

Mission boards are justified in trying to convert Catholics. Now who is to be the umpire in this momentous question?

Remark that unless Catholic doctrines are corrupt, it is criminal to controvert them; for, either they are Christ's teaching, or not. If not, then they deserve contempt; but if they are, to controvert them is to condemn Christ. The Catholic Church claims, and has ever claimed, that her teaching is Christ's, *nothing more nor less*, and will not allow her children to doubt this, nor listen to other teaching. Either this claim is well founded, and, therefore, the greatest blessing given to man, or it is an infamous usurpation deserving of overthrow. Now, who is the judge? Are we to take the words, the *ipse dixit* of Protestant parsons? We can judge as well as they! Let the Bible judge, they say. We can interpret the Bible as well as they. Who will say which is the right interpretation?

If they say it cannot be decided, then essay our conversion. If I ask in detail which of our doctrines are corrupt, it would be amusing to hear the various mission boards replying. If they could only agree as to whether infant baptism is, or is not, salutary, whether there is a probationary state in the next life; or whether Jesus is God and man, or only man; or whether the Trinity has one or three persons in it, they might presume to tell us, with some show of authority, that our Church was corrupt, and our souls on the road to perdition. Pardon me, gentlemen of the mission boards, you are impertinent. You don't know what is the doctrine of Christ—so necessary for salvation—and yet you dare tell us, who are one with the Apostles,—unless all history is false,—that our doctrines are damnable. You are more than impertinent, you are impious—pardon me again—for, on the suggestion of your views, and with no better backing for your peculiar views than the raving denunciations of a few disobedient, drunken and lecherous priests or laymen, come into the world 1,500 years after Christ established His Church, you vilify Catholic doctrine, which the monumental history of the last 2,000 years, and the tongues and pens of such men as Newman and Bellarmine, Aquinas and Augustine, Jerome and Irenæus have professed to be that of Jesus; you—you, nameless protesting sectarians, call it corrupt, unscriptural! It is blasphemy.

ii.

Leaving the moral aspect of the case out of view altogether, these mission boards and their supporters are inconsistent. The fundamental doctrine of Protestantism is individual judgment; practically, that a man must stand or fall by his own views of religion as he imbibes them from the Bible. Now, on this principle, Simon Magus was as good a Christian as St. Peter; Arius, who denied the divinity of Jesus, as great a saint as Jerome, Photius, who denied the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son, as orthodox as Anselm; and what Protestant, adhering manfully to his bottom principle, can decide with unerring certainty between Luther and Tetzl, Calvin and Arminius, Knox and Latimer, Swedenborg and Spurgeon? And if the High Church Anglican with his Bible open on the pew before him, can bow down and adore the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, while his more (or less?) evangelical brother at his side calls his act idolatrous and damnable, how in the name of bejewelled consistency can any Protestant, cleric or layman, say with certainty that any or all of the Catholic doctrines are false? To be logical, he can only venture to whisper meekly "my opinion" is so-and-so. Now, opinion is not faith. The object of faith is *truth*, that of opinion, probability. To make an act of faith, therefore, a Protestant, for the nonce, abandons his own principle; he does not say "I opine," but "I believe so-and-so." But if he can logically have only probability of his own views, how does he pretend to assail his neighbour's?

Another, and to us a comical inconsistency, is that in their endeavour to proselytize Catholics these would-be missionaries permanently abandon their principle in practice, while maintaining it in theory. They preach what they call *truths*, and they preach as men "having authority," and insist on belief in these truths. In fact they have a creed more or less developed which they propose to their proselytes; but a fixed creed indicates an external authority and upsets the claim of private or

individual judgment, on which claim alone they can at all logically oppose Catholic doctrine. It is recorded that during the caliphate of Abdal Malec a queer adventurer put on a red turban and proclaimed himself Caliph and true successor of Mahomet, prophet of God. When Abdal Malec heard of it in Damascus he nearly died of laughter, and were it not for the terrible consequences of usurping the mission of the Son of God, well might the Pope in Rome and his faithful children throughout the world laugh at the antics of the modern new-fangled Mission Boards.

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The Church in Canada.

Under this heading will be collected and preserved all obtainable data bearing upon the history and growth of the Church in Canada. Contributions are invited from those having in their possession any material that might properly come for publication in this department

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE PARISH OF ST. THOMAS.

ii.

As early as 1841 the principle of Separate Schools was organized, and in 1847 further facilities for their establishment were granted. Additional legislation was secured in 1853, 1855, 1862, and in later years. By the B. N. A. Act Separate Schools were pledged to Catholics. It was not, however, until 1872 that a Separate School was opened in St. Thomas. The first teachers were Miss Maher and Miss O'Leary. Some time afterwards the school was taught by the late Mr. Griffith Patrick Lanan, and later by Mr. Cleary, now a mail clerk in the P. O. Department. To Rev. Father Flannery, now its Local Superintendent, is due the greatest credit for the progress the school has made. The present building on Talbot street was opened in 1879 with two rooms. Since that it has been enlarged, and four teachers, sisters of St. Joseph, are employed. About 250 pupils are enrolled, and the annual expenditure is about \$1,000. The property is valued at about \$10,000. The limit of the school course is the requirements for entrance to the Collegiate Institute. This work is well done, and the organization and discipline are good. In 1786 Mr. D. J. Donahue, County Attorney, was appointed a representative on the Collegiate Institute Board. Mr. Stephen B. Pocock is chairman of the Separate School Board, Mr. W. P. Reynolds, secretary, and Mr. J. H. Price, treasurer. The Board consists of twelve members, two from each ward. The following are the trustees at present:—

Ward, No. 1—S. Corbett, W. P. Reynolds. Ward, No. 2—John King, S. B. Pocock. Ward, No. 3—F. C. Flannery, P. B. Reath. Ward, No. 4—P. J. McNulty, W. Reath. Ward, No. 5—C. W. Regan, John Clark. Ward, No. 6—J. H. Price, W. Jaffers.

In that green isle far away, about whose beauties bards have sung, over whose wrongs nations have wept, and concerning whose destiny the whole civilized world is exercised—in the Emerald Isle—Father Flannery first opened his eyes. At the age of fifteen he left the land of his birth for the South of France, where he entered the Basilian College at Annonay, with the intention of preparing for the priesthood. There for seven years he remained without hearing the English language spoken, and when it is considered that his education was entirely in French, his facility with his pen and his fluency of speech are matters of wonder, and what he would have been as orator and scribe if he had been brought up to the use of his mother tongue can only be conjectured. In 1852 he sailed for the land of promise, Canada, and in September of that year arrived in Toronto. The year following he was ordained priest by Bishop DeCharbonnell, and for seven years taught as professor in St. Michael's College. His health had during this time begun to fail, and on that account he received permission to return to his native land, and had leisure to study the Irish question thoroughly and intelligently.