

LECTURE

ON THE

ROMISH DOCTRINE OF THE RULE OF FAITH.

HERE is no point on which Romanists and Protestants differ more widely than on the Rule of Faith. On a question so vital, truth cannot be unimportant, nor error fail to be pernicious. The Scriptures teach, and all Christians hold, that faith is indispensable to salvation. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life."

Romanists assert that without divine faith salvation is impossible, and that divine faith can only be attained where their Rule of Faith is embraced. A Jesuit Missionary recently stated, in Ottawa, and Romish divines generally agree with him, that divine faith is, "To believe all that God has taught on the authority of God, and to believe without doubting, without hesitating."

We do not admit the correctness of this definition. It errs by defect, and by excess. It includes too little and too much. (1.) *It errs by defect.* It leaves out the essential element of personal trust in Christ, by which "we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel." The faith which saves is not the mere intellectual reception of certain propositions on any authority whatever. In this, there is nothing which devils do not exhibit, when they "believe and tremble." Their creed is most orthodox, and their faith is based on the authority of God. But while they believe they hate and disobey. (2.) *It errs by excess.* It requires as essential to salvation, what many, recognised by Christ Himself as His true disciples, did not possess. He that fails to believe all that God has taught, and to believe without doubt or hesitation, we are assured, perishes everlastingly. No distinction is made between the more and less weighty matters of the law, between more

* John iii. 36.

† Father Darnen's Lectures, page 1.