

FATHER FLANNERY AND DEAN INNES.

From the Catholic Record, March 16, 1889.

The following letter from Rev. Father Flannery, associate editor of the CATHOLIC RECORD, appeared in the daily papers on Monday last. It was written in reply to a letter from Dean Innes, published in the *Free Press* last week, in which the rev. gentleman attacked the statements contained in our leading article in the issue of the 2nd instant :

TO THE EDITOR: On Friday last there appeared a letter from the pen of the Ven. Dean Innes, of this city, in which the editors of the CATHOLIC RECORD are accused of Billingsgate, want of courtesy, etc., because their journal made some sharp comments, last week, on his published estimate of the Jesuits. As one of its editors, I feel called upon to state that the RECORD never could think of contesting his right, or the right and duty of any other clergyman, to vindicate the doctrines of the Church of which he is an accredited, and, no doubt, in every sense, an exemplary exponent. But that is no reason why the RECORD, or its editors, should allow clergymen holding responsible positions to misrepresent and attack, as the Ven. Dean has done, the principles and the teachings of accredited ministers of the Catholic Church, who enjoy the confidence, the respect, and, I may say, wherever known and understood, the affectionate regards of all those with whom they are officially brought into contact. The Ven. Dean is willing to admit that the Jesuits (I quote his words) "are in general an earnest, zealous, self-sacrificing body of men, and many of them very talented." . . . "This country is undoubtedly, in its early history, indebted to them, in some respects, especially for the self-sacrifice and zeal with which they devoted themselves to the education and civilization of the native tribes." With all this in their favor, how is it possible the Dean can bring himself to say almost in the next breath: "The Jesuits have been one of the greatest curses on earth. Their principles are wrong, and their whole system a falsehood."

If the RECORD were guilty of such unmeasured and sweeping denunciations of any Protestant body of men, the Ven. Dean would have reason to complain of want of courtesy and Billingsgate.

The Dean bases his condemnation of the Jesuits not on what he admits them to be to-day: "Earnest, zealous, self-sacrificing men," but on what they are reported by history to have been over a hundred years ago. Now, histories differ, and the Ven. Dean may have read one prejudicial to the Jesuits. It must have been a very partial and jaundiced history, indeed, that would make him call such earnest and self-sacrificing men of God "the greatest curse that ever appeared on earth."

But now for the facts. "Let the following list of expulsions from Roman Catholic countries, and by Roman Catholic rulers suffice," says the Ven. Dean. "Bull issued in 1741, by Benedict XIV., in which he calls the Jesuits disobedient, crafty, and reprobate men." With the Dean's permission I deny this utterly. There is no such Bull in existence, and if the Dean ever read of such a Bull in some controversial work, he should have probed into history, and he would have found it to be a genuine "cock-an'-a-Bull-story." It is true that Pombal, the corrupt