

INTRODUCTION.

At the Anniversary Meeting of the SAINT JOHN BIBLE SOCIETY, held in the *Mechanics' Institute* in January 1858, Judge WILMOT made a Speech in the course of which he told, as having come within his own observation, a story of a boy who had been flogged by a Catholic Priest, in Miramichi, for reading the Bible. This story he elaborated and embellished with all his skill, telling that "the boy's father found him reading a Bible, and ordered him to read it no more. The boy refused to obey, and the father finding commands and entreaties unavailing called on the Priest, who, in turn, had recourse to expostulations, commands, and menaces all in vain. The boy persisting in his resolve to read the Bible, the father and Priest at length tied him to a tree, and the Priest flogged him, occasionally stopping to ask him if he would give up reading the Bible: the boy continued firm, and the Priest as he flogged him would say, 'How hard it is to beat the Protestant out of him.' 'How loud the Protestant Devil howls in him.' The Priest was at length exhausted, and the boy still resolute, was untied and turned from his father's door. Falling on his knees on the way side he prayed for strength, and then proceeded on his way, soon after reaching Fredericton, where he was taken care of by the Judge, and some others, and became a Methodist." Such in substance was the story. In the Report of the Judge's Speech, published in the *Church Witness* in due season, this story was not given, and it would probably have been soon forgotten, but that some months after a story somewhat similar was told in a paper in one of the Western States. The story was republished in all the St. John papers, but as names were given the contradiction quickly followed. The papers which gave circulation to the story took no notice of the contradiction, and in remarking on this the *Freeman* said that it was no wonder such stories were told in the far West, when, in our own Province, a Judge of the land stated at a Bible Meeting that a Miramichi Priest