

ation is an impossibility, an absurdity. It never was, and never can be practised. The question is not universal toleration, but what shall be tolerated and how far it shall be tolerated; and truth, reason and justice alone can determine and define the limits. If, then, universal toleration cannot be conceded, on what grounds are Catholics held to be more intolerant than their Protestant neighbors? The answer is simple, Catholic first principles are stricter and more intolerant than those of Protestants. For example—both agree that bigamy is a crime and should be punished. Adultery is also an offence against morality and therefore amenable to the law. But according to Protestant principles, this latter is sufficient justification for the dissolution of the marriage-tie, while according to the stricter Catholic principles, "that what God has joined let no man sever," the marriage bond is held indissoluble. The same may be said of religious vows, which in Protestant countries do not render marriage null, while with Catholics, there is no marriage at all, but on the contrary a sacrilegious concubinage, unless such solemn religious vows have been dispensed from by the proper ecclesiastic authority. Now if it is intolerant on the part of Catholics to prohibit divorce and punish the violation of the vow of celibacy, why is it not intolerant on the part of Protestants to allow but one wife at a time, and to punish bigamy?

As well might the Turk or Mormon, shackled by no such restraining laws, declare Protestants intolerant, narrow and prejudiced. The cases are exactly similar, for what the Mormon is to the Protestant, the Protestant is to the Catholic. We are stricter and more intolerant, because our first principles are higher and holier, more purely moral, more truly religious and consequently more Christian.

If Protestants had only a stronger and deeper sense of the gravity, truth and sanctity of those doctrines which they imagine themselves to profess, they would be more zealous in preserving them inviolate, and all injuries and insults offered to them would be punished as speedily and effectually as outrages against civil law, or the public weal. We would certainly hear less of Catholic intolerance and bigotry. But what Protestants cannot obtain, they affect to despise. With them intolerance is an impossibility, and toler-

ation is not a virtue, but a social necessity. For how could any one of the almost innumerable discordant Protestant sects presume to dictate to the others what must be believed and what prescribed? The idea is absurd, and so they have very naturally resorted to the only other means left at their disposal, namely to conceal under the veil of "toleration," "private judgment," "unrestricted freedom of conscience," or by whatever other name you wish to call it, the weakness and instability of the foundation upon which the whole structure of their religion rests. Thus far we have spoken only of religious intolerance, or that intolerance which consists in the conviction that there can be only one true religion. But besides this there is civil intolerance, which may be defined the excluding from society of all religions which are not true; and as religious toleration consists in the belief that all religions are true so civil toleration consists in allowing all men of whatever religious denomination to live in peace. Though this distinction is quite clear, still there are many who persist in maintaining, that no such distinction can be made, and who affirm that it is impossible to live in peace with those whom we believe will be damned, for to love them would be to hate God.

This may appear rather ridiculous, as in truth it is; nevertheless it is a standing argument with Protestants against Catholic intolerance. "The Catholic," they say, "according to the tenets of his religion, which teaches, that there is but one true church, and outside of that there is no salvation, cannot love his neighbor, and consequently cannot live in peace and harmony with him." It is strange, how ignorant, or at least seemingly so, some people are of what Catholics are held to believe, but stranger still to find those who, on their own confession know nothing about Catholic doctrines, revile and denounce them. They forget that every Catholic child knows it to be a duty, an indispensable precept, to love his neighbor, for among his first lessons in Christian doctrine, he is taught to repeat and understand the following answer to "who is my neighbor?"—"Mankind of every description, without any exception of persons, even those who injure us or differ from us in religion." The Catholic Church is so far from teaching that we ought to hate