

Rev. F. C. Simpson's Third Sermon on the Ne Temere Decree

The following sermon in reply to Rev. P. W. Dixon's third letter on the "Ne Temere" decree was preached by Rev. F. C. Simpson in St. Mark's church, Douglastown, on Aug. 27th, 1911:

"What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder."—Mark X-9.

In my last sermon on the "Ne Temere" decree, I intimated my purpose of dealing further with the subject. Father Dixon has spoken again and claims that I have steered clear of the main issue in discussion; that I "have not answered, not even attempted to answer," his letter. If he can find consolation in such self-delusion he is entirely welcome to it. I certainly did not *exhaust* the subject, nor shall I do so on the present occasion: but it is equally certain that I did not evade "the main issue;" and others can judge as to whether I answered his letter or not. In Father Dixon's own letters there is a strange evasion of "the main issue," and a deliberate attempt to turn the discussion from it. Why did he introduce Luther, Henry VIII; the early Catholic missionaries, and the Jesuits? Why did he go out of his way to indulge in indecent and insulting personalities? Why did he drag in, the question of Christ's Divinity, making such slanderous statements in connection with it? Of course his purpose is easily discerned, but what had these things to do with "the main issue" in discussion? And yet he says, "As Mr. Simpson has steered clear of the main issue in discussion, preferring to indulge in vulgarity, I shall adhere to my resolution to take no further notice of his sermons." That is very amusing. I can say with regard to the "vulgarity" what I said of "rushing into the limelight." Father Dixon has had it all to himself. And we shall see whether he adheres to his resolution or not.

If, in his first letter, Father Dixon had given a fair presentation and exposition of the "Ne Temere" decree, couched in