

it with us, Whom Ho is pleased to send even as the Father had sent Him!" As the excellent man thus soliloquized he was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Frear, a member of his flock whose attendance, upon church had of late been rather remiss. He was originally an emigrant from England, but having been many years in Canada, had acquired a snug little property, and, though somewhat illiterate, was a well-meaning and worthy man.

After the courtesies common upon first meeting were over, Mr. Frear, evidently feeling a little embarrassed, said, "Well, Dr. Sanicroft, I always wish to act openly, and therefore I come to say that though I respect and like you very much, I fear my conscience will oblige me to leave the Church. I am, I know, only an ignorant man, but the people tell me you lean too much to Popery, and I think I cannot help seeing something like it; you are different to most other clergymen I have seen. You have prayers in the church much oftener: you even use the Prayer-Book in your own family; you preach in the surplice; you keep saint days; at Christmas I saw there was a cross of evergreens on the window over the Communion-Table, indeed it is there yet; and I think I have heard you say that you would like to see a cross on the top of our church-spire instead of the weather-cock; and then, worse than all, I have heard you preach about our parsons being priests, and say that they could forgive sins, and bless the people, and such-like. Now, I hope you will excuse me, sir, but all this does, to plain folks, like me, look all one as if we were Papists, and my conscience, and you know, sir, we must follow our conscience, won't let me stay at church to be made a Papist of; my father and mother were strong church-people, and I was always the same; but it was a *Protestant* church then, sir, and my parents died Protestants, and I mean, please God, to do the same. I hope you will excuse me, sir; but I thought it best to be plain and to speak my mind right out at once."

"In one thing at least," replied Dr. Sanicroft, "you have taken the manly and indeed the Christian course, Mr. Frear, that is, in coming straight to your clergyman with your difficulties; only would it not have been better, and more scriptural and reasonable to have come to me, as your appointed pastor, a little sooner, be-

fore you had so nearly settled in your own mind what was right or wrong?"

"However, I hope it is not too late to prevent your leaving the appointed fold of Christ, for some humanly originated sect; as to do so would, in your case at least, be a sin, whatever it may be in others, because you have the opportunity of knowing better."

"Why, Dr. Sanicroft," interrupted Mr. Frear, "you surely do not think that all dissenters are sinners for being such."

"I am sure," replied his Pastor, "that they are in serious error of their degree of sin; God is the judge, not I, as He alone knows how far their error is their fault, or their misfortune. But, as regards yourself, all the statements you have made are perfectly correct; and yet the conclusions you draw from them are not in any degree warranted either by Christian antiquity, your own church, or the Bible. I assure you, Mr. Frear, I am as far, perhaps further, from Popery than you are. None of the practices or teaching which you so dislike have any tendency whatever to Romish superstition; though very many people, besides yourself,—and some, I am sorry to say, whose own fault it is if they do not know much better,—say the same thing. Some of the practices and doctrines you have alluded to are, I admit, to be found in the Roman Catholic Church, and some are not; but then you must remember that they are a very ancient portion of the Christian church, and deeply as they have fallen into sin and error, they yet, thank God, retain much of the vital truth of the Gospel; thus they believe in the atonement of Christ, in the necessity of repentance, faith, and good works, in the Judgment Day, in the duty and value of public worship, of private prayer, and so forth; shall we therefore give up these precious truths because papists also hold and teach them? Surely not.

Mr. Frear.—Yes, sir, what you say is not to be denied, and perhaps shows that we ought not to be quite so ready as some of us are to think everything is bad that the Papists believe. But then, sir, all real Protestants agree in thinking that they put their church in the place of Christ; and we cannot help thinking that some of these Puseyite parsons—I don't mean any offence, sir—do the same.

Dr. Sanicroft.—You mean parsons who are