

CHAPTER XXVIII

**Rebuked by a Prominent Presbyterian Minister. Approved
by His Congregation**

My Christian readers would be much mistaken if they were thinking that the lecturer on Romanism is constantly walking among sweet briars and roses, and that he is sure to be fed with sugar plums when working among the Protestant population of America and Europe. More often than is suspected his paths are among thorns, and his bread is mixed with the bitterest gall.

I am, as the dear Saviour was, looked upon as an impostor and a disturber of the peace by many of those very Israelites He wanted to enlighten and to save; so, very often, the brother who is called by God to open the eyes of the Protestant people to the errors and idolatries of Romanism has nothing to expect from many of them but unkind and ungenerous and utterly disappointing treatment.

After I had been, several times, so kindly invited by different Christian ministers of Halifax to address their congregations, it was remarked that I had never been seen within the walls of St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church, of which Rev. Dr. Grant was pastor.

To the question several times asked me by elders of that Church, why I had never addressed them, I invariably answered: "Your good pastor possesses more historical and theological knowledge in his little finger than I have in my poor brain about the errors of Romanism; he feels as I do, that he does not want me to teach you anything on that subject. He can do that himself better than anybody else."

They answered: "You may think and say what you please about our minister, but the fact is that we have never heard a

word from his lips against Romanism. It is the very contrary. Not only do we see him in company with the Bishop and priests of Rome, but he is ready enough to show us that he is in sympathy with that Church in many things.

“We would not admire him less cordially, if he were a little more frank in dealing with Rome. Remember that we do not think that our pastor is such a traitor as to try to lead us into the sink of errors of Romanism. We only regret that he is absolutely mute about the past and present errors of that system. As Protestants we want, not only for ourselves, but for our children also, to hear some warning words from our pastor against the snares of Popery.

“Now and then we have the sad and shameful spectacle of some of our Protestants in Halifax turning Romanists. This would never occur if our ministers were more attentive to warn us against the snares of those wily and implacable foes of the Gospel. Would you accept an invitation to give us an address in our church, if you were invited by our pastor?” I answered, “I will accept such an invitation from your good pastor with the utmost pleasure, for there is not a Protestant minister in the whole of Canada for whose talents I have greater admiration.”

The result of this conversation was, that, later on, in 1876, after the riot of Fort Massey Church, I had the honour to sit at the tea table of Mr. Grant, previous to the address which he had requested me to give, that same evening, on a subject of my own choice, about Romanism. Those who are acquainted with the gentleness of Dr. Grant need not be told that nothing could surpass the courtesy with which he presented me to his people before the address.

I took for my text the second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, where St. Paul, speaking of the future enemies against whom they would have to protect themselves, mentioned, “that man of sin, that son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as god sitteth in the temple

of God, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thess. 2: 3, 4.)

Among other things I said, were these:

"After having been twenty-five years a priest of the Church of Rome, no doubt remains in my mind that that anti-Christ, that man of sin, who sits in the temple of God, and who does not only believe but makes the people believe that he is above God, is the priest, the Bishop and the Pope of Rome.

"Yes! Popery or Romanism is the embodiment, the personification of the power, the religion, of the church of anti-Christ.

"Go where you please from one end to the other of this terrestrial globe, and I ask you to show me any persons, who, more than the Pope with his bishops and priests, persistently and publicly say, before all the nations of the earth as well as the angels of God, that they have such mighty power that the eternal and almighty God, who created heaven and earth, is absolutely powerless in their presence.

"Please pay attention to what I say here, and understand that which I want you never to forget.

"As soon as a priest is ordained by the imposition of the hands of his Bishop, he is to believe that he is more above God than the heavens are above the earth; he is obliged to believe that in his presence the Word of God and God Himself, Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, who with a word of His lips has created the sun which was so bright to-day, with that beautiful moon and those millions of stars which are so bright over our heads to-night, does absolutely lose His power in the presence of a priest. Yes, He must obey the priest more submissively than the vilest slave has ever obeyed his master. He must submit Himself to the will of the priest more quickly, more absolutely, than the little dog need obey you when you have tied a rope to his neck and obliged him to follow you.

"I know you are amazed and horrified when you hear me telling you these things. You are tempted to think and say

that I exaggerate. But please give a moment of attention, and you will see that these are no exaggerations, but that I am telling the simple but the most frightful truth you ever heard.

“Look at these small cakes which I hold in my hands. This small one is for the use of the people, and the large one for the use of the priests.

“These cakes are made with a little wheat flour by the servant girls of the priests or by the nuns, between two well-heated irons. Every day, some of them, to the number of ten, twenty or sometimes to the number of a hundred, according to the number of communicants, are put by the priest into a silver box, called ‘cibarium,’ and placed on the altars where he performs, every day, a ceremony called the mass.

“About the middle of that mass, taking that silver box in his hands, he pronounces upon it the following words in Latin, just as I will pronounce them in your presence, ‘Hoc est enim corpus meum.’

“Then he must believe and every one of his people must believe that there is such a marvelous, such a divine power given him by the Pope, that more quickly than lightning, the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God Himself, has been forced by him to come down into his hands—and change Himself into those wafers—and change every one of those wafers into body, soul and divinity. He must believe and make his people believe, that there are no more wafers in his hands or in the silver box, but that every wafer has become Christ, God and man, whom you must accept, love and adore as your Saviour and your God.

“As soon as the priest has performed this wonderful miracle, he lifts up this newly created god above his head, and says to his people, ‘Come and adore your god; who to save you was made man and died on the cross.’

“And the whole people, falling on their knees, bring their faces to the dust and adore the god whom their priest has

just made before their eyes with that wafer baked by his servant girl between two well-heated irons.

“I was an honest man when I was a priest, just as I hope that all the priests who live in Halifax, to-day, are honest; but I was cruelly deceived, as they are, by the devil.

“I made and adored that newly made god every morning of my life during the twenty-five years I was a priest, as all the priests of Halifax made and adored their ridiculous, execrable and contemptible idol, this very morning.

“I do not say these things that you may have any contempt or bad feeling for the Roman Catholics. I do not give you these awful details about their idolatrous worship that you may say to each other when you go out of this temple, after this address, ‘How stupid and blind are those poor, ignorant Roman Catholics.’ No; our dear Saviour did not come from heaven to teach us to despise our neighbours—He came to teach us how to love and save them.

“The Roman Catholics are no more stupid than you are; but they are in the dark, and it is your fault! Yes; Protestants, it is your fault, it is your sin if your friends and neighbours of the Church of Rome are in the dark regions of Popery! You have the light and you keep it for yourselves. You have the truth about those solemn mysteries of the Gospel and your neighbours have it not! And what do you do to give them the light and the truth? I ask it in the name of the great God you adore: What have you done to show the truth and to give the light to the Roman Catholics on these great and solemn mysteries? If you have done anything, it is so small that it is almost an insult to God.

“The Church of Rome would have been a dead thing long ago, if you soldiers of the Gospel had fought it as you should have done. Yes; the Roman Catholics would have accepted the light long ago if you had done your duty towards them!

“You have forgotten that you are the soldiers of Christ, enrolled under His sacred banner to silence and conquer His enemies!

“Why has the great God of heaven granted you to conquer Canada if it were not that you might bring its people into the ways of the Gospel?”

“Have you done it? All the echoes of heaven and earth answer: No!”

“Do not speak of the difficulties which you have to encounter: it is neither British nor Christian to be frightened and paralyzed by difficulties, when the great Captain of Salvation calls you to conquer the French Canadian people to the Gospel.

“Were your heroic ancestors frightened when the Parliament and the King of England said, ‘We must conquer Canada?’ No! From one end to the other of Great Britain the heroic cry was heard: ‘We must conquer Canada!’

“Some people said: ‘But to conquer Canada we will have to shed rivers of blood—we will have to expend millions and millions of pounds.’

“Your heroic fathers answered: ‘We must conquer Canada at any cost—let the blood flow—let the millions of pounds go—at any cost we must wrench Canada from the hands of our foe, France.’ And Canada was conquered!

“Be true soldiers of Christ, to-day, as your fathers were true to their king and their country. Go and fight Rome as British men know how to fight. Go to the conquest of Canada with a British heart, a British intelligence, a British pluck and a British liberality, and Romanism will melt and disappear as the French colours had to fall and disappear at the roaring of the British lion on the Plains of Abraham, September thirteenth, 1759.

“But it is not with carnal weapons that we must fight Rome. It is not by hating or abusing the Roman Catholics we shall convert them. The only weapons which will give us the victory against Rome are the weapons of love which Christ has brought from heaven to save the world.

“The first weapon which will break the doors of the New Babylon and cause her strong walls to totter and fall into dust is the prayer of our hearts.

“‘Anything which you ask My Father in My name will be granted,’ said our adorable Saviour. One of the great sins of the Protestants in Canada is that they do not pray as they ought for the conversion of the poor idolaters whom the Pope of Rome keeps enchained to the feet of his idols in Canada. Oh! let the day come when every disciple of the Gospel, every true servant of God, among you will raise his supplicating hands to the Mercy Seat, and then the walls of the modern Babylon will crumble, and on their ruins the angels of God will sing, ‘Praise the Lord, Babylon is fallen!’”

“The second weapon is to send the Gospel of Christ into every family, through faithful and intelligent Christians.

“There is an irresistible power in the Word of God. As the dark hours of the night are changed into the bright hours of the day when the rays of the bright sun come down from the skies, so the dark night of Popery will disappear, whenever you persuade our honest but cruelly deceived Roman Catholic countrymen to read the Word of God!

“The third infallible weapon to destroy Rome in Canada is, to give good example.

“Let the day soon come when the Protestants in Canada will everywhere give examples of a holy and Christian life, and you will see how my dear Roman Catholic countrymen will soon break the heavy and ignominious yoke of Popery.

“The eyes of the Roman Catholics are sharper than you suspect. When they look at you, they too often see your shortcomings. They see many who desecrate the holy day which the Lord has put aside to serve and glorify Him in. They see too often men who have a Christian name forget the respect they owe to themselves and to their God in the infamous saloons. They too often hear of the dishonesty in the ranks and files of those who have a Christian name in your midst.

“The result is that they say to each other: ‘Why should we leave our ranks in order to go among people who are as

bad as we are.' Yes; the scandalous lives of too many Protestants in Canada constitute a wall so high and so thick that my poor Roman Catholic countrymen can neither go over nor through it.

"But let every disciple of the Gospel in Canada be true to Christ, and give the example of a holy life, and very soon the Roman Catholics will see it not only to admire, but to follow you. At the sight of your Christian life, my dear countrymen will say: 'How beautiful are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!'

"They will say to each other: 'Let us go into the midst of that people, for surely the Lord is their shepherd.'

"They will come to you, brought by that irresistible attraction of your Christian virtues; and you will take them by the hand to the feet of the Lamb who will make them pure with His blood and free by His word. And, after having given up the false Christs of the Pope to follow the true Christ of the Gospel during the few days of their earthly pilgrimage, they will go with you to the Eternal Kingdom, where, during the whole eternity, we will bless our God for having so much loved the world that He sent His eternal Son, Jesus, to save the world."

My last word had hardly gone from my lips when the Rev. Mr. Grant rose and addressing his people, said something to this effect: "Now I understand why we almost constantly hear of tumults and riots wherever the Rev. Mr. Chiniquy gives his lectures. His language is by no means soothing or conciliatory towards Roman Catholics. He has no right to call them blind idolaters as he does. . . . If I were a Roman Catholic, after hearing him, I am not sure that I could meekly accept his teaching. I might even be glad if he were silenced."

After a short tribute to my mission work in Montreal, Mr. Grant sat down.

I thought my duty was to answer him. I rose and said, as calmly as I could:

“My dear sir, you are mistaken if you think that I shall accept in silence the judgment you have just passed upon me. I believe with my whole heart what I have said; and I have not spoken in an unkindly spirit. Let me appeal to your people who have just heard every word that fell from my lips.”

Then turning towards the multitude who had listened to my address with breathless attention, I said: “Ladies and gentlemen, after listening to my address with such a kind attention, you have just heard the sentence passed upon me by your pastor. If you think that I deserve that public rebuke and that want of confidence, I will accept it as well merited. I want you all to give me your mind just as it is before God. Please let those of you who are of the same mind as your pastor lift up your hands, and, if you do it, I will confess guilty and ask pardon for what I have said. Please let those of you who are approving the censure which I have received in your presence lift up your hands.”

But, though I requested that great gathering twice to lift up their hands in approbation of their pastor's views, not a single hand was raised:

Then I said: “Ladies and gentlemen, I appeal again to your Christian consciences and intelligences to know what you think of my address.

“Let those of you who disapprove the unfavourable sentiments uttered by your pastor raise their hands.”

And all the hands, without exception, were raised. I then turned towards the Rev. Mr. Grant, and told him, “My dear sir, there is the sentence of your people, and I bless God for it. Please let us sing the Doxology: ‘Praise God.’”

And the Doxology “Praise God” was sung by the angels of God, I hope, as well as by that intelligent and noble people.