

posed to the improvements which are taking place in the morals and habits of the Hawaiian people under the influence of the missionaries. My position enabled me to hear the statements of both parties, and although the heat of the dispute had in some degree abated, mutual complaints were still made. By a comparison of the two statements, the truth does not appear difficult to be reached.

The party opposed to the missionaries were anxious to counteract the influence they ascribe to them; and for this purpose, when they saw the old heathen practices and vicious habits of the people rapidly vanishing, bethought themselves of the Roman Catholic priests, and seem to have desired to excite a sectarian war as one of the most effectual means of opposing the progress of the Protestant missionary cause. For this purpose they held out inducements to those priests to enter and establish themselves in the Hawaiian territory. This was in direct defiance of the law, which had made the Protestant the established and solely tolerated religion of the state.

This principle, by which all forms of worship except one were excluded, seems to have been adopted by the king and chiefs, in the belief that two creeds would have tended to distract the minds of the people, and produce contention and confusion. What share the missionaries had in bringing them to this conclusion, I found it impossible clearly to ascertain; but by information obtained from those best informed on the subject, I was satisfied that the accounts of the persecutions undergone by Catholic converts, and of the cruelties said to have been endured by them, were much exaggerated. Nor were these in any case to be imputed directly to the missionaries, who had in many instances endeavoured to prevent the infliction of punishment for religious reasons. Of cruel treatment for this cause, I could learn no authenticated instance, nor did I meet with any one who could adduce facts from his own knowledge, although I sought information from those inimical to the missionaries, as well as from those who favour them. That the missionaries and their proselytes entertain apprehensions of evil from the propagation of Romanism is true, but I found less illiberality on the subject of religious forms existing in the Hawaiian Islands than in any place I visited on the cruise; less than is entertained by opposing sects in our country; and far less than exists in Catholic countries against those who hold the Protestant faith.

In spite of the prohibitory law, it is a notorious and indisputable fact, that the first Catholic priests, who landed in 1827, were kindly treated by all classes of natives, and by the Protestant missionaries. The American mission even furnished them with the books they had