

The "sectarian question" has invaded the Massachusetts State Prison at Charlestown. The office and duties of chaplain are provided for by statute, and the present incumbent is Rev. S. L. B. Speare. So far as anything appears to the contrary, he has proved the right man in the right place. In 1875 the legislature enacted that no inmate should "be denied the free exercise of his religious belief and liberty of worshiping God according to the dictates of his conscience;" under cover of which law a Roman Catholic priest has introduced himself, not only with the mass and the confessional, but also with a behest that the "Catholics" shall stay away from the chaplain's Sunday school, attendance at which is voluntary, and that none of them shall read the Bible, with a copy of which it is made the duty of the chaplain to see every convict provided. We should say that on a good many minor points an accomodating and truly catholic spirit on both sides might be reasonably expected to prevent any serious friction under such a mixture of administration, but that on some other very important points a conflict of authority is, to say the least, imminent. We should like to ask the Inspectors of the Prison, and through them the Governor and Council, who is the present Chaplain of that institution; and what right any other minister has, no matter of what relations, to interfere with his authorized arrangements for the religious instruction of his flock?

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