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ROMANISM AND
CIVIL LIBERTY

A Lecture, Delivered in Oakland, Cal.,
 By Hon. William Jackson Armstrong.

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Romanism and Civil Liberty.

FELLOW-CITIZENS: All of Romanism is not inside of the Catholic Church.

I am here to-night neither as the representative nor the antagonist of any religious faith, but only as an American to discuss with you principles dear to the genius of our common country. It is a question of intellectual liberty. It is nothing more. There is no discrimination here between Greek and Trojan. Especially have I nothing to urge against the sincerity or goodness or the devotion of that numerous body of our fellow-citizens who are the followers of that faith which for a thousand years encouraged whatever there was of art or architecture, preserved whatever there was of classic learning, and, even amid eras of blood and cruelty and tempest, guarded the seeds of whatever there was of virtue in Christendom—that faith under whose inspiration the brush and chisel of Angelo wrought and carved, and at whose touch sprang into being the mightiest monuments of modern Europe. I mean the Roman Catholic Church. An assault upon the members of that church, as being the weaker in numbers in this land, would be to revive in this republic the spirit of the middle ages, and an act of cowardice on the part of any American.

But whenever, and as often as it becomes a question of taxing the American people to teach the infallibility of the human pope of Rome, it is good morals and good Americanism to object. Whenever, at the suggestion of Protestant fanaticism, it becomes a question of changing the fundamental law of this republic, to establish a religious creed to be taught in the public schools of this

nation, it is better morals and better Americanism to object.

Nothing gives greater force to the theory of man's descent from the tailless ape than his cruder conceptions of the function of religion. His history in this regard, more than in any other, has been a cruel and costly evolution.

No sooner was religion instituted by man than there entered his brain the monstrous and merciless fallacy that it should fetter every operation of the human intellect and dominate every function of human society.

That fallacy was conceived in the brain of inexperienced and unmoralized man in the form of a half-suppressed syllogism, or argument. Strange to say, after the lapse of four thousand years of authentic human history, that crude syllogism still survives among civilized men. Fully stated, it runs as follows:—

“Whatever is of greatest importance to man should have the control of human affairs. Religion is of greatest importance to man. Therefore religion should have the control of human affairs.”

Very likely that argument was invented by semi-barbarians among the hills of ancient Syria, five thousand years ago. It was practiced there upon human beings, by the religious people of that age. It was accepted in that primitive time by other half-savage races who had only to look over their shoulders to catch a glimpse of the tailless monkeys who were their ancestors.

It is still good enough logic for the holy Catholic Church of to-day. I mean no disrespect to the faith of that church, with which I here have nothing to do. I mean the ecclesiastical policy of that church.

From its seat at Rome that church demands, as it has demanded for one thousand years, nothing less than the subordination of the affairs of this world to its alleged spiritual authority.

It is still good enough logic for the cranks of the Protestant Church in the United States—the pious gentlemen who picturesquely say that we must “enthroned God” in the American Constitution. I mean no disrespect to the faith of that church, with which I have here nothing to

do. Only the Protestant church of the United States, whose ecclesiastical policy, unlike that of Rome, is not inimical to the interests of perfect citizenship, has some exceedingly dangerous enemies among its camp-followers.

A modern logician will tell you that there is something the matter with this venerable syllogism of the primitive descendants of the monkey. If he speaks as a logician, he will tell you that its major premise is not distributed. If he speaks as a man, he will tell you that all its premises, like its conclusion, ought to be dispersed.

And yet this argument is the most ingenious and plausible piece of reasoning ever addressed to the human intellect. Look at it. It simply asserts that that which is most important to the welfare of man should control his affairs in this world. What could be more reasonable? It is as appealing and fascinating in its loving simplicity as the innocent babe slumbering in its cradle in the light of the summer afternoon.

And yet electric force and hydrostatic pressure, combined and operated by the genius of man, could not compress into another statement as much mingled falsehood with truth, as much malignity to the human race, as is found here. For three thousand years this argument has scarred the history of this world with murder.

By this argument the hemlock was administered to Socrates seized from the gardens of Athens. By this argument Nero lit the nights of Rome with the followers of Christ, converted into human torches, with wrappings of linen and naphtha. By this argument his fellow-Cæsars slaughtered three millions of the faith of the cross. By this argument Mohammed swept the plains of the world with flame and sword. By this argument Galileo found a dungeon, and Giordano Bruno and Savanarola felt the agonies of the stake. By this argument Michael Servetus died. By this argument were kindled the fires which consumed Huss and Jerome of Prague and Latimer and Cranmer and Ridley and their fellow-martyrs of England. By this argument the Inquisition was evoked. By this argument was incited the slaughter of a hundred thousand Frenchmen on the eve of St. Bartholomew, and of a million of Moors on the shores of the Mediterranean.

By this argument the priests of Catholic Spain inspired the bloody desolation of Netherland Europe, and the murder of fifteen millions of men and women under the shadow of the Andes. By this argument the priests of Presbyterian England secured from an English Parliament an edict of death against all those who denied the loving-kindness of their creed. By this argument all the howling passions of men were for forty centuries let loose, every plain of Asia and valley of Europe blighted with human slaughter, and the civil governments of the world, uniting with fanatical hierarchies, turned the sunny and beautiful face of this planet into a carnival scene of flame and blood. By this argument, in seventeen centuries from the birth of Christ, one hundred millions of men had gone to untimely death under the religious wars and persecutions of Europe alone,—slain in the name of God and the kingdom of love, by their fellow-men. This innocent argument had done it all with its little hatchet of persecution!

But its murderous work was not ended yet. It lingered in wars of religious hate; and at the end of two hundred years more, in the face of the sunrise of the twentieth century, its malign and bloody ghost still stalks the highways of the civilized world,—in the demand of the Church of Rome on enlightened governments to support the propagation of its creeds, in the clamor of Protestant fanatics to convert the free Constitution of this republic into a pack-horse of religious faiths.

Fellow-citizens, let us look into this question. I think we shall reach the conclusion that the government of the United States is not an organization for Sunday-school work. I think that we shall reach the conclusion that it is not in disrespect to religion or good morals that it is not such an organization.

It was about the end of sixteen centuries of the modern world that it began to dawn on the human brain that there was something the matter with this little piece of lamb-like reasoning about religion taking charge of the civil affairs of this world—that there was a weak spot in it somewhere. It had killed too many people. Martin Luther, that human thunder-bolt of force and courage,

with the fire of chivalric Germany in his veins, hurling his defiance at Rome and his ink bottle at the devil, had fractured the papal power. Archbishop Cranmer, Rome's own august prelate, chained to the burning stake by the combined cruelty of that church and the English government, had denounced the supremacy of Rome over his conscience as an Englishman.

In a moment of weakness he had recanted that denial. Holding his right hand in the flame till it dropped from its body, he said, "Let the hand first perish that signed the recantation."

He said to the ecclesiastical butchers who condemned him: "I am an Englishman. I owe my fidelity to the Crown. The pope is contrary to the Crown. He is neither true to God nor the king who receives the pope. I cannot obey both. If you maintain the supremacy of the pope, you cannot maintain England too."

Thus was defined in his own case three hundred years ago by this sublime man, as clearly as by an act of revelation, the principle by which the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom which is not of this world can exist side by side on this planet without murder.

But it was left to a greater than Cranmer or Luther to make this declaration as broad as the scope of human need. A century later there came out from the mists and mountains of Wales into Presbyterian England a man who, lifting up his voice against priests and kings, said:—

"The civil power has no jurisdiction over the human conscience. Conscience belongs to the individual, and is not the property of the body politic. All human laws which prescribe or prohibit religious doctrines are damnable and unjust. Magistrates are but the agents of the people; on them no spiritual power whatever can ever be conferred."

That man was Roger Williams. Down amid the shadows and fogs of his sea-girt land, there had fallen upon this man an inspiration that was to roll back the tide of human hate and fear that had devastated this world for forty centuries. Reflecting upon the suffering of his race from religious cruelty, there had broken into his brain

the conception, simple and sublime, of the words of Jesus of Nazareth to the Herodians with the tribute money: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." Through the sea mists and shades of that beclouded little country, the monstrous fallacy of the claim that priests of religion should color and control the civil governments of this world, had burst as clear as an Italian noon. "The civil power has no jurisdiction over the conscience," he said.

From that declaration of Roger Williams, two hundred and forty years ago, was born the American Constitution.

Presbyterian England in the first half of the seventeenth century was not big enough to hold this inspired man. His continued presence would have split the throne of the Tudors and Plantagenets. From English religious persecution Roger Williams fled to the Puritans of New England. These gentlemen, too, had fled from Europe to enjoy (as they said) the blessings of religious liberty. But they had only enough liberty for Puritans and not enough for Roger Williams. So this brave man fled once more from the New England Puritans to the wilderness, and, among the barbarians of the North American forests in the Province of Rhode Island, established the first government according religious tolerance ever founded on this earth.

In all the civilized countries of the globe, two centuries ago, there was not enough space for standing room for the man who believed in the liberty of the human conscience. The gratitude of the American people to the North American savages for their aid in establishing religious liberty on this continent, should be perennial. Compared with the red men of the woods, the Puritan was the savage. These tolerant gentlemen would occasionally lift the hair of an enemy,—provided that he were not bald,—or light a little fire or two around the person of an unpleasant neighbor, but they never rose to the supreme Christian elevation of regarding a soul of so much importance that it must be burnt to save it.

In memory of this fact, I ask you if it is quite fair, after robbing these impartial gentlemen of their hunting-

grounds and buffaloes, to allow them to wander around the country in the airy costume of worn-out army blankets?

That, ladies and gentlemen, was the beginning of the American doctrine of the liberty of conscience on this continent. It came from Roger Williams and the savages. There was nowhere else that it could come from.

Immortal Roger Williams! On every page of American history, above the names of John Locke and John Milton and Martin Luther, his name should be written in letters of gold.

In an age of iron intolerance the superb moral sense of this man alone pierced to the core the brazen and murderous sophistry of priests, that their craft should bind the human soul. Himself a pious man, he said, "In order that conscience may be free, the Mohammedan, the Jew, and the atheist must have protection also."

One century later than the planting of his colony in the wilderness of Rhode Island, that seed of tolerance expanded into the full-blossomed tree of American liberty, throwing its splendor around the world. That century of reflection produced the fathers of this republic. That century, with all the centuries of blood and hate behind it for warning example, gave birth to the Constitution of the United States, "the sole monument of all history embodying the principle established by Christ for earthly government."

Article 6 of this Constitution says: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

Article 1 of the amendments to this Constitution says: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

In a treaty with the State of Tripoli made ten years after the adoption of this Constitution, it was declared that the government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion."

That treaty was signed by President Washington. It was framed by a Congregational clergyman. That gentleman had evidently studied law before going to a theological school. He had found time to read the Constitu-

tion of his country. He knew that the nineteenth century had arrived. He was not a bigot. He probably loved man as well as God and did not believe in burning a human soul to save it. His name should be niched in honor above every Congregational pulpit in the United States.

So jealous were the fathers of this republic of the intrusion of religious intolerance into the political administration of this country, that the constitutions of eleven out of the thirteen original commonwealths enacted that ministers of the gospel should be prohibited from holding office under those constitutions. That meant no disrespect to clergymen. They were simply held to be too good to take part in earthly affairs, as they have mostly proved to be till this hour. Nevertheless, I believe that clergymen and women should be allowed to vote.

Thus it happened, in the stately language of Bancroft, that "the new nation, the least defiled with the barren scoffings of the nineteenth century, the most general believer in Christianity of any people of that age, the chief heir of the Reformation in its purest forms, when it came to establish a government for the United States, refused to treat faith as a matter to be regulated by a corporate body or having a headship in a monarch or a State. It left the management of temporal things to the temporal powers; but the American Constitution, in harmony with the people of the several States, withheld from the Federal government the power to invade the home of reason, the citadel of conscience, the sanctuary of the soul, and not from indifference, but that the infinite spirit of eternal truth might move in its freedom and purity and power."

Fellow-citizens, you have perhaps been somewhere told, as if it were the last refinement of appreciative praise, that the Constitution of your country should be valued as if each word were of the coined substance of gold. Permit me to say that that eulogy is a sickly and sentimental slander of its mighty guardianship of human rights—a damning with faint praise approaching nearly infinite mockery. Gold indeed! The American Consti-

tution is drained from human agony and tears. That Constitution represents the gathered warnings of liberty from all the ages. Its every clause is conceived from the measureless anguish of our self-tortured race; its every word is distilled from the blood of martyred millions. In the recital of those two brief prohibitions regarding religion may be heard the shriek of the myriad followers of Christ nailed to the gibbets of the Cæsars, the groans of three centuries of victims of the Roman Inquisition, the sighs of the millions of martyrs slain by wheel, and flood, and flaming fagot, the sob and moan of desolated women through a thousand of years of wars for opinion, the clash and clang of bloody steel, the thunder of slaughtering chariot and cannon driven by mortal hate and frenzy on battle-fields heaped with religious murder through twenty centuries of human history.

From the shadow of those horrors the Constitution of this republic was made to save us and to protect humanity in all the future.

The fathers of the American Revolution found that the experiment of propagating religious opinions by governments was a failure—that it had produced all crimes. They found that the attempts on the part of a government to descend into a man's conscience and administer to him a religious conviction, as you would administer to him an emulsion from a stomach-pump, was a failure—that it made the man a hypocrite and the government a bloody tyrant. They found that you could not make a man religious by law.

Those wise men believed that opinion should be held sacred. They believed this because they believed by whatever antecedents a man came to hold an opinion, you could not by process of law invade the structure of his brain and exterminate it. They believed this because they believed that there did not anywhere exist between the earth and the heavens on the circle of this planet a power wise enough to authoritatively administer the mysteries of the Infinite. They believed this because they believed that that which a man held as a necessary result of the inscrutable processes of his brain, beyond the limits of his will, was not a crime. That Constitution is their work.

It is this august fabric of law, fresh as a revelation, hoary with the wisdom and warning of all the centuries, vindicated now on this continent beyond experiment by six generations of men, that from time to time is being assailed by a foreign power in this nation. I mean the power of Rome in the United States. It is this fabric of law that is being assailed by the hand of Protestant fanaticism in this nation.

Touch not religion with the State. Lay not upon the State the finger of religion. That is the American doctrine—the doctrine of the republic. “The State is the guardian and dispenser of religion.” That is the doctrine of Pope Leo XIII.—the doctrine of Rome. That was the doctrine of all the predecessors of Leo XIII., since popes set up as vicegerents of Divinity on earth, in the twilight of modern history. That was the doctrine of the Inquisition.

The doctrine of inquisition into human conscience! that was the stone which the founders of this republic rejected.

“Every man who conducts himself as a good citizen is accountable to God alone for his religious faith, and should be protected in worshiping God according to the dictates of his own conscience.”

That is what George Washington wrote in reply to an address on the subject of religious legislation.

“All Catholics should do all in their power to cause the constitutions of States and Legislatures to be modeled after the principles of the true church.” That is what Leo XIII. writes to his lieutenants of the papal see. Leo XIII. against George Washington! Rome *versus* the republic! Americans will decide as to the infallibility here.

I speak in no slightest or conceivable bitterness against the Roman Catholic faith. Born under a Protestant roof, I will grasp the hand of my Catholic fellow-citizen more warmly than that of my Protestant neighbor, to prove to him my faith that the sermon on the mount and the sentiment of human fellowship are more vital and splendid than all the creeds of history. I make no discrimination of abstract faiths. As affects this question,

however, there is a difference. The Protestant churches acknowledge their head as not of this world. The sovereignty of the Roman Church is dual—the sovereignty of Rome and the sovereignty of God—a sovereignty of this world, as well as a sovereignty not of this world.

With the mysteries of the conscience of the Protestant in his attitude towards the Infinite, we, as citizens, have nothing to do. With the mysteries of the conscience of the Catholic in his attitude towards a Supreme Being, we, as citizens, have nothing to do. Into the greater mysteries of his relations with the temporal head of his church, we do not inquire. But against the intrusion of this temporal sovereignty into the affairs of the American State, this republic, born in civility and clothed in the white garments of religious liberty, has set its face forever and forever!

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

A government administered by universal suffrage is dependent for its life and integrity upon the intelligence of its citizens. For this cause, this nation, through the agency of its several commonwealths, has appointed as a part of its essential and necessary machinery a system of public and secular education. This establishment was a part of its sovereign right. It touched the creed or the conscience of no man. It needs no metaphysical defense from any source. We do not apologize to Rome for the establishment of education by the State. We do not apologize for the American public school.

The republic said: "My subjects are sovereigns. The right of knowledge is the right of citizen kings. Learning shall know no caste. The American school-house shall be the palace of the moneyless and the millionaire; within its walls the pauper shall be prince, and every child under the flag shall sit in the purple of the Understanding." That which was appointed to be taught was neither creeds nor opinions, but *facts*, appealing to the universal need and intelligence of man. Its citizens thus instructed, the principles of a free government would not die. That was the American doctrine. Vindicated by the experiment of a hundred years, it has

made this nation a beacon for the civilized world—a spectacle of popular intelligence and prosperity unprecedented on this planet.

It is this superb scheme of the people's education, diffusing light and joy like the warmth of life, that is being assailed by the hand of the Roman Church in this nation. The agents of Romanism say that the American public-school system is an establishment of immorality.

Fellow-citizens, I have said that I speak here without a drop of bitterness in my heart against the followers of the Catholic Church. Its members in this country are my respected fellow-citizens. But I wish to say to these accusing gentlemen of that church that they are misinformed; that they make a misstatement. I will go further. I wish to say that if there be any falsehood, crowning all other falsehoods, any slander riding in serene and queenly triumph above all other slanders, it is the slander of the agents of that church against the American school system.

In my judgment neither the government nor the public school has any business with the formal teaching of morality. The State and its adjuncts are civil and not ethical instrumentalities. Try the case by the methods of any judicial analysis, and you will see. Government cannot rightly prescribe that which it cannot enforce. But the administration of every public school in this land, in its order, its regulations, and its teaching, like the administration of every function of the nation itself, is in responsible obedience to the fundamental laws of morality that govern civilized and enlightened men. In every step and act of our American public-school education there is difference to the underlying code of ethics that rules in the homes of this republic. No strict teaching of a formal code of morals could have so powerful an effect for right.

Education itself is a moral function. Intelligence is morality's twin sister. A moral nation cannot have immoral institutions. An intelligent nation cannot have immoral institutions. Every school-house in the United States gives the lie to the giant slander from the lips of Rome.

But what is the attitude of Rome towards the educational system of this nation?

I hold in my hand its explicit statement—the editorial pronunciamento of the most powerful organ of Romanism in this country, the *Catholic Review*. In an issue of a few weeks since this *Review* says: “The right of the State to foist upon its citizens a school system without consulting their religious convictions on the one hand, and their rights as citizens on the other, is one that must be rejected totally—always denied, and thoroughly pounded as long as it asserts itself. The province of the State in education can be respected, for it has been defined by competent jurists. Its assumption of the right to tax a powerful minority to support a school system which it will not use, must be resisted. No taxation without representation. Therefore, the State must allow them their own system, and the day must come when the parochial school shall draw its support entirely from the State.”

Well, that is not a man of straw. No danger of injuring the innocent here! Hydrostatic pressure, again, cannot compress the theory of Rome into more compact compass than that.

Foist a school system upon the citizens without consulting their religious convictions! Taxing a powerful minority to support schools which they will not use! Parochial schools shall draw their support entirely from the State!

American Republicanism asks Rome what a public-school system has to do with religious convictions? American Republicanism asks Rome if a powerful minority rejects the benefit of free schools, whose is the fault? American Republicanism *answers* Rome, that the day when the parochial school shall draw its support from the State will be the day after this ceases to be the American republic—when last year's bird's nests shall hang in the trees of to-morrow.

What is the assumption behind this assault upon American schools?

It is that the teaching of religion is a function of the State—the assumption of the syllogism with the undistributed middle—the argument of the primitive man

who looked over his shoulder and saw his immediate ancestor, the tailless monkey,—“Religion is the most important concern of man; therefore it must control his civil affairs.” Let us see about this argument once more. Let us see! Government, in its common acceptance, is an institution for the protection of the lives and property of men, to facilitate commerce and perform other civil functions. To these functions there has been added in this republic that of educating the citizen.

But Romanism says that religion is more important than all these; therefore the State must teach religion. Then every piano factory in the country must have a butcher shop attachment, because meat is more important to man than music! A gas factory is an institution for the manufacture of gas; a horse-car railroad company is an incorporation for the transporting the people in our cities. But religion being more important to men than the manufacture of gas or riding in street-cars, every horse-car company and gas factory must establish a religious department and dispense spiritual instruction to its patrons! Down in southwestern Texas, an enterprising citizen conceived the notion of establishing a soap manufactory. There was need of that product there. He was encouraged by occasional droves of mules which stumbled over from the borders of Mexico and died in that neighborhood. The business was accordingly started and flourished till it employed many laborers. For a strange thing, a religious revival overtook that hitherto unevangelized neighborhood. It had been one of those regions where the Old Testament had been heard from but the New Testament had not yet arrived. In the new zeal of the religious epidemic, an intimation was sent to the soap factor that it would be well for him to start a Sunday-school in connection with his soap business. The hint fell on stony ground. A church committee accordingly waited on the hard-hearted proprietor and expostulated with him. Then the soap factory man grew wrathful. He answered that committee. He used some of the words they sometimes use in a Sunday-school, but he gave them a different sound. He told them (leaving out the Sunday-school words) that that was not the kind of

a business his was; that his was a soap factory; that the achievement of cleanliness in that community was the nearest he even expected to make to godliness, and that, in his opinion, if southwestern Texas used more soap, it would need fewer Sunday-schools! That Texas soap-maker was undoubtedly a bad man; but he held the constitutional American doctrine on the alliance of Church and State. That gentleman was also perfectly logical. There was not a flaw in his argument.

There is nothing mysterious nor metaphysical nor supernatural about the functions or purpose of government. It is simply a civil institution to carry on the order of society. The question of the comparative importance of religion does not touch it. It has rightly no more to do with religion than a railroad company or any other corporation. Wherever in the history of this world government has assumed the religious function—the taking care of souls—there has been trouble; there has been persecution. There is but one step from a religious government to a religious inquisition. The barbarous sophistry of a religious government should have died with the middle ages. It is dying to-day in every country of Europe where it has lingered, while here in modern America, which threw off the ghosts of medievalism a century ago, in the very inception of a free State, it is sought to be perpetuated by an irresponsible foreign power in the State. But since Italy repudiates him, perhaps it is natural they should seek to prepare America for the home of the pope.

But Rome is not *sincere* in her opposition to the American public school on the ground of its ungodliness. If a government supports a religion it should be allowed to furnish the religion. It is not that which Rome wishes or would tolerate. It is nothing less than the Roman Catholic religion that she demands shall be supported from the treasury of the United States. The infallibility of the human pope supported by the right arm of the free republic! that would be a cartoon for the comic press of the country! The papal infallibility! that is a part of her catechism, of her fundamental creed, re-enacted less than twenty years ago at Rome by one of

the largest ecumenical councils in history. Her demand is explicit on this point,—“The day must come when the parochial school shall draw its support entirely from the State.” Why, then, in the name of the justice and equity she claims for religious minorities, shall not this nation be taxed to establish parochial schools for the Jews, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Episcopalians, the Mormons, the followers of Buddha and the Greek patriarch and Mother Ann? Why not for the agnostics and the atheists? These, too, are unrepresented minorities in the public schools in matters of religious opinion.

Uncle Sam, with his hand on a worn purse, distributing educational alms to the infinite and infinitesimal religious bodies of the United States, the respective number of whose educational mendicants he frantically attempts to keep on a notched stick in the Treasury Department! that would be another cartoon for the comic newspapers. An election campaign fought out on the issue of alleged injustice to the society of the Holy Dunkards in the distribution of the school fund! The clamor and wrangle in American politics of the multitudinous sectarian young crows over their rations of educational “pap” from the paternal government beak!

We wait for an answer from Rome. By virtue of the equity she claims for the religious opinions of the citizen, is she willing for the American Government to tax its treasury to teach the opinion of the atheist?

What is the distinction of her claim to public support for the teaching of her especial tenets? Why does she separate herself in this demand from the vast body of citizens of other faiths who look towards an invisible Power and world to sustain their hopes of an immortal life?

Fellow-citizens, we have reached the heart of the issue here. I answer the question. It is because the Catholic Church is separated in its creed from the whole body of Christian worshipers, outside its faith, by owing an allegiance to a power of this world. The sovereignty of the United States conflicts not with the sovereignty of God but with the sovereignty of the pope of Rome.

It is not to establish the kingdom of heaven but to ex-

tend the metes and bounds of her temporal authority in this republic that the Roman Church demands of the American state support for the teachings of her religion. By that fact alone her claim is cast out. The government of the United States is strong enough for universal religious toleration, but can hardly afford to nourish from its breast powers hostile to its own authority.

The Catholic Church, through its unfortunate mouth-pieces, affects to be sensitive to the statement in American school-books that medieval popes sold indulgences for sin. Barring the infallibility of popes, how does this statement affect anywhere in this world the cause of true religion? It would be expedient to exclude from American school-books statements written in prejudice of any religious faith. But the facts of history are stubborn things. The path of civilized man has lain through barbarism. Every faith has been touched with the savagery of our race. No Protestant resents the historic statement that the adherents of his faith in certain barbarous epochs (not so very long ago) persecuted for opinion. No Puritan resents the historic statement that his ancestors exterminated venerable ladies supposed to navigate the air on broom-sticks, and burned certain benevolent gentlemen with broad-brimmed hats.

All the whitewash of history and the expurgation of the school-books of the planet will not blot out the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the murders of the Inquisition. We commend to the sensitive agents of Rome the admonition of the Irishman,—“The best way to prevent what is past is to not allow it to happen.” Rome would not wince under the statement of the sins of her past if she were prepared to leave them.

But it is not American school histories that are feared of Romanism. It is the American school system itself. That system belongs to the present and the future. Rome belongs to the past. That system belongs to the light, Rome to the shadow. The mists of the night dissolve in the sunrise. The fogs of medieval superstition melt under the noon of nineteenth-century intelligence. The pope of Rome knows that the infallible pope is the American school-boy.

But what are the explicit religious doctrines which Rome will teach in the parochial school to be established at the charge of this republic? I quote from a school-book used by that church, entitled, "An Abridged Course of Instruction, Apologetic, Dogmatic, and Moral, by the Rev. Father F. X. Schoupe, of the Society of Jesus, translated from the French third edition; new edition thoroughly revised, with the imprimatur of H. E. Cardinal Manning; London." There can be no higher authority in that church.

This volume, on page 278, recites: "The civil laws are binding in conscience so long as they are conformable to the rights of the Catholic Church. Human laws are susceptible of dispensation. The power to dispense belongs to the pope."

The late Cardinal McClosky, of New York, wrote: "The Romanists of the United States are as strongly devoted to the sustenance and maintenance of the temporal power of the holy father as Catholics in any land of the world, and if it should be necessary to prove it by acts, they are ready to do so."

"Religious liberty is merely endured until the opposite can be carried into effect without peril to the Catholic world."

This is from the precious authority of Bishop O'Connor.

"The Catholic Church numbers one-third of the American population. There is, ere long, to be State religion, and that State religion is to be Roman Catholic."

This charming piece of intelligence is from Priest Hecker.

These are the true and inward doctrines to be taught the future citizens of this country at the cost of the national treasury! Possibly Americans may continue to object to this demand.

But an eminent priest* of that church has told us that "the time is not far away when American Catholics will refuse to pay their school tax, and that at an order from

*Monsignor Capel.

the pope they will send bullets to the breasts of the government agents appointed to collect them." That gentleman has evidently been inspecting the entrails of the sacred chickens. Very well! the American republic is familiar with bullets more dangerous than the bullets of Rome. Let that order come. The sooner the better. It needs but that order to dissolve the dream of medievalism on this continent forever. American Catholic citizens are not fools, because, by the traditions of their faith, they confess to priests who do not see the sun.

But let the venerable pope hesitate before giving that order about the bullets. All his intimate personal friends who know anything about our meek American ways will advise him not to do it. Victoria and Bismarck will recite to him little reminiscences about the Alabama and Samoa. Besides, they are getting a little tired of popes even in Europe. They have experimented with them there now for about twelve hundred years, and they have proved an increasing unsuccess. They think in Italy that it may be a change of climate that is needed. The climate of that country is no longer what it used to be for popes.

So Leo XIII. may have to come to America for his health, after all. He should not hurt the feelings of American tax collectors in advance. These gentlemen are modest and sensitive. We will give him such a reception here as pope never had before, ordering out the fire companies—taking into charitable consideration that his views have been narrowed perhaps by the shape of the country in which he has lived.

He will see things from a different standpoint here. We will give him a home and a vote. He may feel a little strange at first, but we think we can make him comfortable in New Jersey. Moreover, he may meet the Reverend Joseph Cook and gracefully surrender his own claims to infallibility. The new republic, taking to its breast the dearest enemy of freedom, when the governments of Europe have cast him out! that will be poetic justice—the supreme triumph of American liberty! That is better than Catholic bullets for the agents of the school tax.

The name of Gladstone has been invoked to defend the position of Romanism. That is a name to conjure with. Mr. Macaulay attended to Mr. Gladstone's little case of incipient medievalism. Mr. Gladstone, coming out of the fogs of Oxford fifty years ago, advocated the propagation of a State religion. By the logic of his premises he was forced to hold that none should hold office under the government except those who belonged to the faith of the State. Mr. Macaulay reminded him that by this ruling England would have lost the services of Nelson, and the supremacy of the sea. Nelson added to the English crown the luster of a Catholic name. Genius knows no creed. We appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober. Mr. Gladstone has recanted the heresies of his youth. He asserts to-day that Rome has "refurbished all the weapons of her medieval armory" for her nineteenth-century crusade.

But finally there is this broad distinction between the Catholic and the American doctrine on this question of the public schools and religion. The American doctrine touches no man's religion. The Catholic doctrine makes discrimination for religion, and would tax the State to teach creeds—the difference between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

PROTESTANT ROMANISM.

There is another department of this subject. As I have said, all of Romanism in this country is not inside of the Catholic Church. By Romanism I mean the policy of that church directed from its head at Rome. I mean the policy of the middle ages, which asserted that governments should dictate the religious opinions of mankind. Some of you may have innocently believed that all the adherents of Protestant faiths in the United States have cast off this superstition. It is a mistake. There is a body of men and women of these faiths, in this land, who know nothing of the spirit of the Constitution of their country, who live in the persecuting spirit of the past. Genius knows no creed. Stupidity and intolerance know no creed. These men and women of Protestant faiths have borne proposals to the Roman Church to join hands

with that church to establish and enforce a State religion in this republic.

In the United States Senate there sits a curious figure, a descendant of the Puritans, with an auburn beard, the figure of St. John—and the soul of his persecuting ancestors. In this man, the spirit of theocratic seventeenth century New England lingers at its gloomiest. He is a good man in the worst sense of the word. Under the dome of the American Capitol and the flag of liberty this man sits for Intolerance—the representative of the Past. He is admirable in his zeal for baneful convictions. He is respectable in the sublimity of mistake. He is without a vice. He neither drinks, nor smokes, nor swears, nor gambles, nor chews gum, but he would burn a human soul to save it. He is the political mouth-piece of the cranks of the United States. Cranks are people without brains, who have convictions.

A little more than a year ago this man, in defiance of the constitutional principle already established, that "no State shall ever make or maintain any law respecting an establishment of religion," introduced in the United States Senate a resolution proposing an amendment to the national Constitution. The beginning of the second section of this proposed amendment reads as follows:—

"Each State in this Union shall establish and maintain a system of free public schools adequate for the education of all the children living therein between the ages of six and sixteen years inclusive, in the common branches of knowledge, and in virtue, morality, and the principles of the Christian religion." It is further enacted by this remarkable article, by its fourth section, "that Congress shall enforce this article by legislation when necessary."

Here is a precious piece of business! A senator of the United States, sworn by his official oath to defend the Constitution of his country, attempting to upturn its foundations! By this enactment it has been well said: "The United States Government shall either compel each State to establish and maintain in its public schools the principles of the Christian religion, or else the national government will do this itself."

By this proposed legislation, you observe, the na-

tional power is distinctly pledged to the establishment and maintenance of the principles of the Christian religion. "It empowers Congress to legislate upon the subject of the Christian religion, and to enforce by legislation the teaching of the principles of that religion in all the public schools of the nation. It has been accurately said:—

"The adoption of any such amendment as this would be the establishment in this republic of a national religion, and the enforcement of that religion upon all the States. The amendment having been adopted, there would have to be a national decision of just what *are* the principles of the Christian religion. As no religious doctrines could be taught in the public schools except such as are common to all faiths, there would have to be a national council of churches officially called to decide what are the principles common to all, and establish a national creed—to be enforced and inculcated by the national power in all the public schools of the United States."

That council of Protestant priests, and bishops, and doctors, and deacons, and rabbis, and Unitarians, and agnostics, and Mr. Joseph Cook!—it would be a scene lovely to look upon. It would be the kingdom of harmony let loose. It would be an example of brotherly love for those not professing "Christian principles."

Then that loving council having rendered its decision, it has been rightly affirmed that every "State, and the people of every State, would have to accept as the principles of the Christian religion just those things which the national council had declared to be the principles of the Christian religion, and which the nation by this amendment will have pledged itself to see taught in the public schools of this country. In other words, the people of the United States will then have to receive their religion from the government of the United States."

This is the explicit and precise scheme of the author of this charming amendment. He writes a St. John's epistle to the secretary of the National Reform Association, in which he says:—

"I believe that a text-book of instruction in the principles of virtue, morality, and of the Christian religion, can be prepared for use in the public schools, by the

joint effort of those who represent every branch of the Christian church, both Protestant and Catholic, and also those who are not already associated with either."

That is, the Protestant and Catholic churches are to join hands in forming a national creed, which the United States shall adopt and enforce in all the public schools of this republic! That is the scheme of Protestant Romanism in the United States! That was precisely the way they worked it in the fourth century. That was the way the Papacy was evolved, and the scheme of religious despotism and murder saddled for a thousand years upon Europe. The parallel is perfect and interesting. It has been graphically recited by an American clergyman:* "Constantine made Christianity the recognized religion of the Roman Empire. Then it became at once necessary that there should be an imperial decision as to what form of Christianity should be the imperial religion. To effect this, an imperial council was called at Nice to formulate that phase of Christianity which was common to all. That creed was established and enforced by imperial decree. The establishment of an imperial religion ended in the Roman Papacy."

It is now proposed, under the shadow of the stars and stripes, and of the goddess of liberty crowning the Capitol at Washington, to establish the American Papacy!

That proposition has been received with hosannas by the Protestant cranks of the United States. They have an organization which they call the "National Reform Association." Joseph Cook, the Boston Monday lecturer, is a vice-president of that association. President Seelye, of Amherst College, is also one of its vice-presidents. Bishop Huntington, of New York, is another. The president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union is another. So are a score of others equally misguided, and eminently respectable and influential people. The official organ of this association is the *Christian Statesman*, a newspaper published in the city of Philadelphia. This newspaper says of this proposed unconstitutional amendment: "It should receive the strenuous

*Rev. L. T. Jones,

support of all American Christians. Give all men to understand that this is a Christian nation. Inscribe this character on our Constitution. Enforce upon all who come among us the laws of Christian morality. The civil power has the right to command the consciences of men."

So the Catholic Church of Rome has said for a thousand years.

One of the disciples of this association of American Protestant Romanists, writing to the organ of his association, says: "The proposed amendment has its chief value in one phrase, 'the Christian religion,' but if it shall pass into our fundamental law, that one phrase will have the potency of Almighty God, of Christ the Lord, of the holy Bible, and of the Christian world with it." Undoubtedly!

Another of these gentlemen of medieval proclivities is the Rev. Mr. Gault, a secretary of this Reform Association. He says: "Our remedy for all these malific influences is to have the government simply set up the moral law and recognize God's authority behind it, and lay its hand on any religion that does not conform to it."

Still another thumb-screwing apostle of the amendment, Doctor Jonathan Edwards, in a speech in New York City, says: "We want State and religion, and we are going to have it. It shall be that so far as the affairs of State require religion, it shall be religion—the religion of Jesus Christ; the Christian oath and Christian morality shall have in this land an undeniable legal basis." Mr. Edwards reflectively proceeds as follows: "Now, we are warned that to ingraft this doctrine upon the Constitution will be oppressive; that it will infringe the rights of conscience; and we are told that there are atheists, deists, Jews, and Seventh-day Baptists who would be the sufferers by it." Then Mr. Edwards, with that logical discrimination which is so fascinating in his class, ranks all these of his fellow-citizens with the atheists, and asks, with fourteenth-century simplicity, "What right has the atheist?" Yet another of these refreshing disciples, a vice-president of this association for the enforce-

ment of religious opinions by United States laws, the Rev. Mr. Graham, in an address reported in the organ of this association, says, with Christian moderation: "If the opponents of the Bible do not like our government and its Christian features, let them go to some wild, desolate land, and in the name of the devil, and for the sake of the devil, subdue it and set up a government of their own. And if they can stand it, stay there till they die."

You can almost see this loving gentleman stepping out of the picture of a medieval saint by one of the old masters. There is a benediction on his face. He is probably on his way to twist a thumb-ratchet in the chambers of the Inquisition. You would know that he was a Christian reformer by the language he uses.

And here comes a final representative of this evangelical Roman fraternity under the wing of the Protestant church,—the secretary of the National Prohibition Convention, who says that he wants to see "the day come when the church shall be the arbitrator of all legislation, State, municipal, and national; when the great churches of the country can come harmoniously together, and issue their edict, and the legislative powers will respect it and enact its laws."

This is what the churches of Rome did for twelve centuries, while they orphaned the children of Europe with religious murder.

This national association of pious cranks has at length succeeded in enlisting the innocent ladies of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in this campaign for the overthrow of religious liberty in the United States. These poor women know not what they do. They have not read the history of the Constitution of their country. They have been inveigled. They have been led into the deadly business of resolving. When people begin to resolve there is always trouble. There is a fatal fascination in it like that of strong drink. These good ladies, organized for the prohibition of strong drink, have been resolving for four years on religion, with increasing thirst. They have resolved in their national conventions an "expression of gratitude to the National Reform Association for the advocacy of a suitable acknowledgment

of the Lord Jesus Christ in the fundamental law of this professed Christian nation." They have resolved that "civil government should recognize Christ as the moral Governor, and his law as the standard of legislation." They resolved last year that "Christ shall be this world's King—King of its courts, its camps, its commerce, its colleges, its cloisters—that the kingdom of Christ must enter the realm of law through the gateway of politics."

This is melodious rhetoric. It is reform rhetoric. It comes from innocent and tender hearts. But it is not innocent. It is the old and enticing half-suppressed syllogism—the argument of the semi-barbarian that flooded this world with blood. Let these good women refrain from resolving, and read the history of their country. They are the victims of too much conviction and of not enough intelligence.

One of the official organs of these misguided associations has said: "Whenever the Roman Catholics of this country are willing to co-operate in resisting the progress of political atheism, we will gladly join hands with them." Not a doubt of it!

Well, the Roman Catholics of the United States in their just-closed convention at Baltimore have accommodated some of these fanatical gentlemen. They have accepted the proffered hands of the Sunday-Rest faction to establish by law a national Sabbath. The coalition has been made.

Nature makes no indication of a Sabbath. The sun continues to shine, the birds to sing, the flowers to bloom, and the rivers to run, every day in the year. But after fifteen centuries of debate these pious people, who represent only a fragment of the religious and Christian world, have decided which of the several days in dispute the Almighty has definitely appointed for rest and religious exercise by man; and they have resolved, with characteristic tolerance, to enforce this decision by law on their fellow-men. That was precisely the policy of the Roman Inquisition for three hundred years.

Their legislative mouth-piece at Washington has been equal to the occasion. He has formulated and introduced in the United States Senate an elaborate bill, by

which all recreations on the first day of the week other than that of religious exercises, shall be, so far as the national government is concerned, prohibited to Americans by law.

That bill lies before me. An examination of its provisions in detail would be an evening's entertainment. I hesitate to speak with disrespect of a scheme near to the hearts of so many good folks—as Douglas Jerrold hesitated before speaking disrespectfully of the equator. But I am under the disability suggested by the Reverend Sydney Smith, who said that he made it a rule never to read any book he was called upon to review, for fear of taking a prejudice against it. I have read this bill. I have taken a prejudice against it. I am constrained to say that, in my judgment, if you will take this bill and perforate with a street-car conductor's bell-punch all its misleading rhetoric and palpable sophistries, it will be found to resemble a remnant of Irish lace, or the countenance of a colored gentleman emerging from the vario-loid. There is a legend of Siam that they once had in that country an exceedingly small and pretentious king. That very small king was afflicted with a very large cancer. After a counsel of the royal surgeons, they operated for the removal of that tumor. But when they had taken away the tumor, it was found that the throne was vacant. A cancer had been king of Siam! That pretentious little king was all cancer. It would not do to operate for the excision of cancer on the United States Senate bill for Sabbath rest.

There are a thousand reasons why this bill should not become American law. The attorney pleaded to the court that there were thirteen reasons why his client was not present in court—and that the first of these reasons was that his client was *dead*. The first objection against this bill for Sabbath rest is that you cannot make men tired by law so that they can rest only in one way on Sunday. It is the assumption of this bill that two doctrinal sermons and four prayers will act as an invariable tonic on a tired man. They will not always do it.

To enact this bill would be to re-enact the joyless

Puritan Sabbath, on which, it is said, a man could not kiss his wife—though he had neglected that connubial obligation during the other six days of the week. The enforcement of such a measure would make more infidels in six months than the feeble preaching and vigorous intolerance of the advocates of Sabbatarian legislation have made in half a century; and that is a strong statement. The sacredness of the voluntary Sabbath would be lost by its becoming involuntary.

One of the pretexts of this legislation is that it is to enforce merely a civil day of rest in favor of that fraction of American workingmen now employed in the government mail service, on railway lines, and in other occupations. But the serpent trail of religious legislation is over it all. Its purposes for religious ends are distinctly and unblushingly avowed by the high priests of American Protestant intolerance, who are its inspiration. These benevolent gentlemen would enact, forsooth, a day of Sabbath rest for workingmen, and cut off by the same stroke the recreations and innocent enjoyments in which four-fifths of American laborers are accustomed to seek, on that day, relief from six days of toil and confinement. That is Christian altruism with a vengeance!

I have no respect for the one-sided statement of any question. I have no respect for the platform of the autocrat. I have no respect for the opinion of the man who fears to face its free discussion. At any future or appointed time during my stay on this coast, I will cheerfully divide this platform with any representative of this claim for enforced rest by law, who desires to demonstrate its alleged merits before intelligent Americans. But I admonish that champion in advance, that if he seeks to vindicate his cause under the principles of American liberty, rather than by the right of religious majorities to impose their observances on their fellowmen, its merits will be found to be conspicuous by their absence.

Such legislation as this has its origin in a total misconception of the problem to be solved. Some of its objects may be desirable. But they are not desirable through invoking the sword of the law to enforce them.

They are desirable by quite other instrumentalities. What American workingmen need is not more rest on one day in the week, but more rest every day in the week, and greater facilities thereby for self-respect and improvement, which cannot come by Sabbath laws, but by the elevation of the sense of American justice.

If the Sabbath of a majority of any religious faith can be appointed by law through the power of majorities, then that Sabbath can be abolished by law. It can be proscribed in turn in favor of the Sabbath of any other religious majority. The Jew and the Seventh-day Baptist may by force of attainable numbers enact their Sabbath in its stead. The infidel by the right of an emergent majority may extirpate the Sabbath of the Christian, and silence by law the sound of church bells that disturb his secular ear. And if in this nation the zeal of religious convictions could again successfully invoke the arm of the secular State for intolerance, better that that dream of the atheist were realized, and that churches and alleged religion were banished from this land. Religion that persecutes is not religion. It is the doctrine of an imperial state of this Union, solemnly uttered by its highest civil tribunal, that "true Christianity does not shield itself behind majorities; that a form of religion that cannot live under equal laws, ought to die."*

The day on which discrimination for religious opinion is inaugurated in the administration of this government, will be the day of the death of the republic—the failure of the American experiment—the funeral of civil liberty.

The American Protestant who clamors for the aid of the State to impose upon his fellow-citizens the least of his religious observances, has not a leg to stand on while demanding of Rome the abatement of her claim for State support of parochial schools. Let him first remove the beam from his own eye. The logic of civil liberty is inexorable. It does not end at the doors of the Catholic Church. The reprobation of the unconstitutional and un-American demands of that church, from the standpoint of sectarian hostility, is an attempted de-

* Ohio.

bauchment of the public conscience. There is no force in such warfare. The arm that strikes is unhinged at the shoulder. This is the land of religious liberty. The contests of creeds should be the contests of Christian charity.

Protestantism should know better. It assumes to have been the peculiar defender and champion of religious liberty since Luther. It has no excuse. It has nowhere any temporal head to serve. Rome, at least, is consistent. Her policy for thirteen centuries has been the same,—the aggrandizement of her earthly power. What could it avail the supreme Deity of the universe that his power shall be recognized by the civil governments of this world? That kingdom is spiritual,—it exists in the hearts of men, or it does not exist at all. Jesus of Nazareth was the respecter of civil liberty.

But do any of these people, Romish or Protestant, know what they do? Do they know the essence of their demand? Do they not see the destroying demon of intolerance they invoke for their own children? They would break the columns of the great Constitution and let fall the fragments of its temple upon their own heads. They forget the ages of blood from which this fabric of freedom has been slowly reared. They forget that the liberty for the most intolerant atheist is the liberty for the humblest Christian in this land—one and the same. They forget that man cannot be made religious by law. They demand a civil government with the affirmation of creed. They would make discrimination for opinion. They would roll back the centuries and persecute for faith. Intolerance is a two-edged sword. Fanaticism begets fanaticism. What if, their beliefs being established and entrenched by law, there should sweep back in this republic, as once in France, against ecclesiastical oppression, the tides of unbelief, and the Goddess of Reason should sit crowned in the Capitol? What if, invoking their example, the infidel and agnostic should establish a government of the negation of God, and visit their faiths with their own intolerance?—In that bitter hour they would recall the sacred teachings of the fathers of this nation, and the countenance of Liberty would

glow with a divine radiance only in the moment when it was lost.

Since the beginnings of man the features of the Absolute have been veiled. Standing between two worlds, with instincts beyond life, and hopes beyond death, from this "bank and shoal of time," man has looked with straining eyes towards the Unseen—attempting to illumine with his frail candle of reason the halls of the Eternal. Afflicted by sorrows, he has awaited in all times and all lands the merciful justice of the Unknown. With moan and tears he has in many a name and tongue formulated in creeds his measure of the Infinite. Every faith that has given courage to our kind has been held sacred by its worshipers. Every doubt, to the eye of Mercy is yet more sacred than faith, for it gropes in suffering. For the struggling tides of men,—fellow-workers and pilgrims on this mist-ridden shore,—the wisdom that remains for this world is charity—the doctrine out of Nazareth—the creed of love to all mankind. On American soil, a century ago, by the guidance of history and the inspiration of the Great, we built for the hope of the world the political monument of this sublime creed. Under its impartial shadow the worshipers of Truth, whether in church, or wood, or mosque, or synagogue, or temple, have known no discrimination for opinion. Let it be the oath of Americans to guard that monument forever.