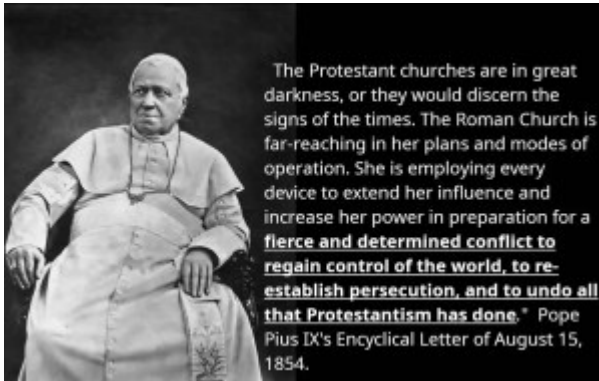


# The Papacy And The Civil Power –

## Chapter VI. Claim of Divine Power



Continued from [The Papacy And The Civil Power – Chapter V. The Pope.](#)

Claim of Divine Power over Temporals by Pius IX.—Its Extent.—He alone Defines its Limits.—Effect of this in the United States.—Principles of the Constitution within the Jurisdiction of the Papacy. —Germany, Italy, etc. —The Pope stirs up Insurrection there.—The Jesuits Expelled.—Papists in the United States Justify Resistance to the Law of Germany.—Same Laws in the United States.—Effect upon Allegiance.—Bavarian Protest. —Abuse of the Confessional.—Power of Absolution.—The Immoral Bearings of the Confessional.

SINCE the formation of our Government, there has been, among the people of the United States, much discussion and some of it angry and exciting—involving the extent and distribution of civil power, and the relations between the National Government and the States; yet no portion of them have been disposed to assail the fundamental principles upon which our institutions are founded. Their differences, although often radical and threatening, have hitherto failed to eradicate from their minds the strong attachment they have always borne to that form of popular freedom and sovereignty which constitutes one of the most distinctive features in our plan of government. Even sectional jealousies and civil war, with all their terrible and deplorable consequences, and with the bad passions they invariably engender, have failed to destroy or weaken this attachment; and to-day there is no single State in the Union which, if it were remodeling its domestic government, would not preserve with the most sedulous care the separation of the Church from the State, so that *the people* should remain the primary source of all civil power. If there is a single sentiment which has universality among all the lovers of our free institutions, it is this. They cling to it with affection like that with which the mother hugs her offspring to her bosom. And it is something of a tax upon their patience when they see this great principle assailed at the bidding of a *foreign* power, no matter whether that power is clothed in the robes of ecclesiastical or temporal royalty, or both combined.

Pope Pius IX. has been, of late years, exceedingly fruitful of encyclical and apostolic letters, intended for the double purpose of warning the nations and advising the faithful. He deemed it necessary to issue one when he rejected the guarantees for his spiritual freedom offered him by the Italian Government, so as to notify the world of the reasons which prompted his

refusal. It was dated May 15th, 1871; and while less comprehensive than that which accompanied the Syllabus in 1864, it is equally explicit in the claim that the "*civil principality*" of the pope was conferred upon him, not by any human concessions, but by "*divine Providence*." He declares that "all the prerogatives, and all the rights of authority, necessary to governing the *Universal Church* have been received by us [the pope], in the person of the most blessed Peter, *directly from God himself*." Hence he cannot consent to "be subjected to the rule of *another prince*;" for such deference to human authority would be violative of the divine decree.

His reference here was directly to Victor Emmanuel, who, by seizing upon his royal crown, had, in his eyes, been guilty of an impious and sacrilegious act, punishable by excommunication. But he looked further than this. Realizing the necessity of stirring up the faithful all over the world to a defense of his temporal sovereignty, and, possibly, to a crusade for its restoration, he availed himself of the occasion to notify them that the wrongs inflicted upon him "have redounded on *the whole Christian commonwealth*;" that is, that as it is a part of God's irreversible law that he should remain a *temporal sovereign*, the belief to that effect has become an essential part of the religious faith of the Church, which must be maintained by all who desire to escape the papal malediction in this life, and secure heaven in the next.

He looked, also, to the consequences of this doctrine, which, logically, give precisely the same universality to both his spiritual and temporal power, so that where one is, the other must also be. If God gave "*civil principality*" to Peter in order that he might *establish* the Church, then the conclusion is inevitable that the same *civil* power which Peter possessed is necessary to *govern* the Church, not only at Rome, but elsewhere. And it must be possessed in the same degree in all parts of the world; for whatever is necessary to preserve and advance Christianity at one place is equally so, for the same purposes, at all other places.

The faith and the Church, as papists insist, must both be unchanging. The whole "*Christian commonwealth*" must be so wedded together as to become a perfect unity. This "*commonwealth*" must be presided over by the same prince—the representative of Peter—governed by the same laws, and held responsible to the same tribunal, in the entire domain of faith and morals. There must be no discordance anywhere, from center to circumference. As Peter had a universal primacy, and governed all Christians as the royal head of the Church, he could not be a *foreign* prince in any part of the "*Christian commonwealth*," but, by virtue of his divine appointment and God's unerring will, was a *domestic* prince throughout its whole extent! If, therefore, the pope could not, without violating the Providential decree, consent to be governed by "*another prince*" at Rome, he could not consent to be governed by another prince, or government, or any earthly power whatsoever, in any other part of the world; or, if he did, he would forfeit his claim to universality of dominion, such as he alleges Peter to have possessed, and destroy the unity of the Church, which would be offensive to God. With his mind persuaded by this process of reasoning, the pope announces his independence of all human authority, and his supremacy over all governments and peoples, in this

strong language:

"Thinking and meditating on all these matters, we are bound anew to enforce and to profess, what we have oftentimes declared, with your unanimous consent, that the civil sovereignty of the Holy See has been given to the Roman pontiff by a singular counsel of Divine Providence; and that it is of necessity, in order that the Roman pontiff may exercise the *supreme power and authority*, divinely given to him by the Lord Christ himself, of feeding and *ruling the entire flock of the Lord with fullest liberty*, and may consult for the greater good of the Church, and its interests and needs, that he shall *never be subject to any prince or civil power.*" (Appletons' "Annual Cyclopedia," 1871, pp. 689, 690.)

This not only asserts the "civil sovereignty" of the pope as a matter of "necessity," but explains that necessity by the assumed fact that it is conferred by Divine Providence, with supremacy everywhere, so that by means of it he may rule "the entire flock" of Christians with the "fullest liberty," that is, without the interference of any "civil power" on earth! To this point, everything is settled without room for cavil or controversy. Beyond it there lies this great question, full of interest to the world, and especially to the Protestant portion of it, What degree of "civil power" must the pope possess—how far shall he control the management of civil affairs—in order that he may rule nations and peoples, and keep them in the line of duty to God and the papacy?

When it is said that the pope desires to absorb in his own hands *all* the powers of civil government elsewhere than in Rome, the accusation is probably too broad. In so far as the laws and institutions of any of the nations regulate and direct the ordinary practical working of government, he could have no special motive for interference with them. As it regards these, it could make but little difference to the papacy whether they provided for one thing or another; or whether the machinery was in the hands of many or few. Or whether they are such as commonly belong to a monarchy or a republic, would, perhaps, not concern him in the least. Judicial, revenue, postal, land, and other systems concerning local affairs alone, and the ministerial duties pertaining to them, are all matters which the pope might be quite willing to leave undisturbed. It is to these, undoubtedly, that he and his followers refer when they talk about the affairs which legitimately belong to human governments. It should be conceded to them, inasmuch as the declaration is made so frequently and with such apparent sincerity, that with these they do not desire the pope to interfere.

But the question assumes an entirely different aspect, when the policy of a government, or its constitutions and laws, touch upon, or in any way affect, religion, or the Church, or the papacy, either directly or indirectly. All these involve inquiries which, by the papal theory, are exclusively within the spiritual jurisdiction of the pope. They are within the domain of faith and morals; and as God has forbidden any human governments to enter upon this domain, everything that concerns religion, or the Church, or the papacy is subject to the sovereign authority of the pope, as the successor of Peter! He alone possesses legitimate power to decide all questions of this nature; and, therefore, human governments cannot take cognizance of them in any form.

Whenever they do, the State is placed above the Church, because it undertakes to interfere with the faith. And as God designed, in all such matters, that the Church should be above the State, all papists insist that whatever pertains to them shall be separated from human governments and given in charge to the Church, or to the pope, who is its infallible head. But inasmuch as the State must necessarily take jurisdiction of many things within the domain of morals, though not of faith, in order to keep society together and provide for the protection of person and property, the papal theory goes to the extent of requiring that, in so far as these are concerned, the spiritual authority of the pope shall include temporal authority, to the extent of enabling him to prevent any infringement upon religion, or the rights of the Church, or of the papacy. To this end it is necessary that the Church and the State should be united, so that whenever the State invades the jurisdiction of the Church, it may be brought back, peaceably, if possible, but by coercion, if necessary, within its own legitimate sphere.

Hence, the point at which the pope's interference with the temporal affairs of the State begins, is that at which, according to his theory, the spiritual and temporal jurisdictions unite in him. So long as the State stops short of this point, he does not seek to impair its functions; but when it reaches it and seeks to go beyond it, then it comes in contact with the sovereignty which, by divine right, belongs to him, and must yield submission to it at the peril of violating the law of God! This sovereignty is conferred upon him, as it was upon Peter, that he may prevent either State or people from violating this law.

When the papal authorities are pressed to the wall, they concede that "the State is supreme *in its own order*, and there is no power in *temporals* above it." But for fear the concession will weaken the cause of the papacy, they insist that there is an order above the State, and to which it is subordinate; that is, "the spiritual order or kingdom of God on earth, or the order represented by the Catholic Church." With them, "the Church is the guardian on earth of the rights of God," and belongs to a *higher* order than that of the State. Therefore, the State lies in the "subordinate" order, and the Church in the "supreme." She sets up, they say, no claim of authority, in this lower order in which the State lies, but "as the rights of God are, or should be, held to be above the alleged rights of the empire," she cannot surrender any thing which belongs to her, as the custodian of these rights, to the civil power. "To deny this," says a leading and able periodical, "is to assert political atheism. We must obey God rather than man." (*New York Tablet*, November 23d, 1872, p. 8.)

This leaves us to discover the line of partition between the two orders, that we may separate the higher from the lower, and thereby leave each to its proper jurisdiction. The Church represents the whole "kingdom of God on earth," and, therefore, all "the rights of God" belong to her. Whatever these rights are, they pertain to the order in which the Church lies. The papist does not hesitate an instant in defining them; the pope has so frequently done it for him as to leave his mind in no doubt about them. They necessarily embrace, in his view, whatever pertains to faith and morals; in other words,

all that concerns the Church, its discipline, its government, its welfare, and its progress toward the final conquest of the world. They include also all questions of faith, everything relating to morals, and the whole multitude of duties which men owe to God, to the Church, and to society. As all these are within the sphere of the "spiritual order" and the guardianship of the pope, as the "vicar of Christ," it belongs to him alone to define what they are. In doing so, he exercises his infallibility, and whatsoever he decides must be accepted as absolutely true. As he has no other witness but himself, stands alone in the world, and settles all questions concerning the extent and nature of his own spiritual jurisdiction, so it depends upon him to declare what belongs to the superior or spiritual, and what to the inferior or temporal, order; what to the Church, and what to the State. The papist accepts him as standing in the place of God on earth. Therefore, when he makes an announcement of what is within the sphere of the spiritual order, that must be accepted by him as belonging to that order, and as being removed entirely from the jurisdiction of the temporal order.

When he announces, as he has done, that the law of God does not allow freedom of religious faith and worship; or that the Church cannot tolerate any opinions contrary to its teaching; or that free speech, free thought, and a free press are leading the world to perdition; or that Church and State should be united; or that his hierarchy throughout the world should constitute a privileged class, not subject to the laws which govern others; or any of those other innumerable things about which he has written so frequently and so much; then all these matters are removed from the temporal jurisdiction, and the State must not dare to lay her unhallowed hands upon them. They belong to the "supreme." order, in which the Church stands alone! They pertain to the "rights of God," of which the pope is the only earthly guardian! Therefore, upon all questions of this nature, according to the papal theory, the Church—that is, the pope—must be superior to and above the State, so that the State may be kept within its own inferior order, or if permitted to go beyond it, then that whatsoever it does shall be done under the supervision of the spiritual order, and in conformity with its commands. And this is what the pope and the defenders of his personal infallibility mean when they talk about keeping the Church in its "*supreme*" and the State in its "*subordinate*" order. Whenever the State infringes upon the jurisdiction of the Church, it must be taught that it has wandered out of its legitimate sphere. And when warned of its transgression, if it continues to lay its impious hands upon holy things, the papal lash is applied without mercy.

History is crowded with instances where interdicts, excommunications, the releasing of citizens from their natural allegiance, and pontifical anathemas, in every variety of form, have been visited upon the heads of such offenders. We shall become familiar with some of these at the proper time, as they rise up before us in that marvelous order of events which mark the progress of the papacy.

Now, when we come to make a practical application of this papal theory to our own national and state policy, so as to see what the pope meant in his Encyclical of 1871, when he said that he must have the "fullest liberty" to

rule "the entire flock of the Lord," and that, in doing so, he must not be subject to any "civil power," there is no difficulty in seeing where, in his view, we have gone beyond the limits of the temporal order, and offended against the Church and the true faith. All our constitutions, national and state, have forbidden a religious establishment; have separated the affairs of the State from those of the Church, by breaking the old bond of union between them; have left every man's conscience entirely free, so that he may entertain whatsoever form of religious faith it shall dictate, or none, if that shall seem to him consistent with duty; have provided for the utmost freedom of speech and of the press; have made all the laws dependent upon the consent of the people, and every citizen, no matter what his condition, obedient to them; and have guarded against any possible encroachment other great principles which we consider as belonging to the very fundamentals of civil government. Is any man so ignorant as not to know that all these have been denounced, not only by Pope Pius IX., but by many of his predecessors? In his view, they involve matters which do not legitimately belong to civil government in the narrow and contracted sphere in which he would confine it. They pertain to the spiritual order, and are, therefore, within the circle of the spiritual jurisdiction! They affect the true faith, infringe upon the rights of the Church, limit the authority of the papacy, curtail the rightful powers of the hierarchy, give encouragement to heresy and infidelity, and for these and other reasons are defiant to the laws of God; therefore, God has imposed upon him, as the successor of Peter, the obligation of declaring that they are impious in his sight, and of employing all the weapons in the pontifical armory for their extermination! And thus, to the extent of being enabled to regulate all these matters according to the command of God and the requirements of the Church, by striking them from our constitutions, and repealing all the statutes passed for their preservation, he considers that God has united both spiritual and temporal authority in his hands, and that the "civil power" of this country has no just right to place the slightest impediment in his way! The nation must bow in humiliation and disgrace before him, so that as the papal car rides in triumph over it, the last remembrance of the work of our fathers shall be crushed out!

Already the censures of the pope rest upon whatsoever he finds in the civil policy of all the nations violative of the lights of the Church, or of God's law, as he interprets it. The governments of Italy, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, and Brazil have deemed it expedient for their own domestic peace and protection to adopt certain measures, which are designed, among other things, to require every citizen to obey the law of the state, and thereby to prevent sedition. It cannot be denied that they had the right to pass these laws, by all the principles which nations recognize. They have relation to questions which concern their own domestic economy questions which each nation has the exclusive right to decide for itself. The laws have been enacted in proper form, and with the usual solemnity, so that they should be considered as expressing, in each case, the will of the nation. Yet, because they affect the interest of the Church, have taken from some of its favorite orders a portion of their temporal wealth, have prohibited the prelates from teaching sedition, and have required them to conform to the law, the pope has fulminated against these states the most terrible anathemas. They have invaded his spiritual jurisdiction, because the laws they have enacted,

although in reference to temporalities, affect the affairs of the papacy and weaken its power.

Therefore, Pius IX., professedly speaking "in the name of Jesus Christ" and "by the authority of the holy apostles, Peter and Paul," admonishes the authors of these measures that they should "take pity on their souls," and not continue "to treasure up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the just judgment of God." And not only does he thus assume jurisdiction to denounce and condemn the authors of these measures of civil policy, and the measures themselves, but he compliments and applauds his adherents for their disobedience to the laws, although subjects of and owing allegiance to the governments enacting them! Speaking more particularly of the German empire, he says:

"Nay, adding calumny and insult to their wrong, they are not ashamed to charge their raging persecution as the fault of Catholics, because the prelates and clergy, together with the faithful, *refuse to prefer the laws and orders of the civil empire to the most holy laws of their God, and of the Church*; and so will not leave off their religious duty."

And then he goes on to talk about these subjects who have refused to obey the laws of their states as exhibiting "admirable firmness," as having "their loins girt about with truth," as wearing "the breastplate of justice," as "dismayed by no dangers, discouraged by no hardships," as carrying on a "combat for the Church," for the papacy, "and for its sacred rights valiantly and earnestly," and as presenting "the power of a compact unity."(\*)

(\*) This "Allocution" of Pope Pius IX. is dated December 23d, 1872, and will be found at length in the *New York Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register* for January 18th, 1873. Also in Appletons' "Annual Cyclopaedia," 1872, p. 714.

Thus he gives his pontifical sanction and approval to what every nation on earth considers disloyalty; but what he considers right and justifiable, because the obnoxious laws, although in reference to temporal affairs, impair his pontifical rights, and, consequently, violate the law of God. He insists that his spiritual scepter extends over all these nations, and that he has a right to release their citizens from their proper allegiance to their domestic laws, whenever, in his opinion, those laws shall encroach upon his own personal rights, or the rights of the Church, as he shall declare them! And he thereby furnishes a practical application of his theory of the spiritual power, which is neither more nor less than a denial to the state of any jurisdiction over even temporal matters, when, in his judgment, they concern religion, the Church, the papacy, or any thing within the unlimited domain of faith and morals!

These papal censures rest, of course, most heavily upon such nations and peoples as have declared, by the forms of their civil institutions, that the Church shall have no share whatever in matters pertaining to the civil jurisdiction, or in the government of temporalities. All such nations have, according to him, committed the sin of infidelity, which they aggravate when they require his hierarchy to obey all the laws, and refuse them permission,

as in Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and Brazil, to set up an ecclesiastic empire within the state, with a "*foreign prince*" to rule it. Among these nations the United States occupies the most prominent position. Our Government has always persevered in maintaining measures which the popes have considered prejudicial to the interests and welfare of the Church; and has always denied the authority which they claim to belong to them by divine right.

By means of these and kindred matters, we have, in the eyes of the papacy, become egregious offenders. We have made our institutions infidel and heretical. We have refused to accept the papal policy of government in preference to our own. We have kept the State above the Church in all matters concerning temporalities. We have failed to give any form of ecclesiasticism the support of law, or to confer any exclusive privileges upon the hierarchy. Hence, the followers of the pope are availing themselves of our Protestant toleration, in order to assure him, by assailing such principles of our government as he has condemned, how completely they have submitted their intellects and wills to his dictation.

Not having been permitted, thus far, to restore the temporal power of the pope at Rome, and maddened by his downfall to an extreme degree of violence, they have converted a large portion of their Church literature into denunciatory assaults upon our constitution and laws, possibly with the hope that when their work of exterminating Protestantism has ended, a "*holy empire*," with the pope as its sovereign, may rise upon the ruins of our free institutions. While with one breath they tell us that it is false to say they desire the pope to interfere with our civil affairs, with the next they assail our Constitution, and insolently declare that we do not ourselves understand what its fundamental principles are. They actively employ their untiring energies and acute intellects in the work of reconstructing our Government, so as to turn over to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction the very matters which our fathers intentionally removed from it, notwithstanding that removal has, thus far in our history, contributed, in an eminent degree, to our strength and progress as a nation.

Examples of this are far more numerous than is generally supposed. The relations between the pope and his hierarchical adherents are so intimate and direct, that he has but to give the word of command, and they become immediately emulous (competitive) of each other in the exhibition of their obedience and submission. His voice they consider to be the voice of God, and wheresoever he requires them to strike, there they direct their blows. They rest neither night nor day; for the vigilance of the Jesuit never sleeps, and nothing can extinguish his hatred of religious liberty.

*The Catholic World*, in the number for September, 1871, contains a leading article, entitled "The Reformation not Conservative." It appeared so soon after the pope's Encyclical of that year that it must have been intended as a response to his fervid anticipations of ultimate sovereignty over the world. The author professes to accept the Constitution of the United States "as originally understood and intended;" that is, as he interprets it, in a sense which denies *the sovereignty of the people*, or that the Government holds from them, or is responsible to them! He repudiates entirely, and with



indignation, "*the Protestant principle*," from which this popular sovereignty is derived, because he considers it to be *Jacobinism*! And from these premises he reaches the following disloyal conclusions in reference to the Constitution:

"...but as it is interpreted by the liberal and sectarian journals that are doing their best to revolutionize it, and is beginning to be interpreted by no small portion of the American people, or is interpreted by the Protestant principle, so widely diffused among us, and in the sense of European liberalism and Jacobinism, WE DO NOT ACCEPT IT, or hold it to be ANY GOVERNMENT AT ALL, or as *capable of performing any of the proper functions of government*; and if it continues to be interpreted by *the revolutionary principle of Protestantism*, it is sure to fail—to lose itself either in the supremacy of the mob or in military despotism; and doom us, like unhappy France, to alternate between them, with the mob uppermost to-day, and the despot to-morrow. *Protestantism*, like the heathen barbarisms which Catholicity subdued, lacks the element of order, because it rejects authority [the authority of the pope], and is necessarily *incompetent to maintain real liberty or civilized society*. Hence it is we so often say that if the American Republic is to be sustained and preserved at all, *it must be by the rejection of the principle of the Reformation, and the acceptance of the Catholic principle by the American people*. Protestantism can preserve neither liberty from running into license and lawlessness, nor authority from running into despotism." (*The Catholic World*, September, 1871, vol. xiii., p. 736.)

What is here meant by such expressions as the "*Protestant principle*," the "*revolutionary principle of Protestantism*," and the "*principles of the Reformation*?" Manifestly, they are used as equivalent terms to express the same idea that our Government derives its powers from the people, who, in the revolutionary contests with monarchy which followed the Reformation, successfully resisted the divine right of kings, and entered upon the experiment of governing themselves. Until this revolution began they had no voice in the management of public affairs, and were not consulted about the laws. Kings governed by divine right, and the papacy, under the same claim of right, was one of the great, if not the greatest, controlling powers in the world. But new light was shed by the Reformation, and new forms of government began to arise. Protestantism being its natural fruit, had its influence in their formation; and inasmuch as all its teachings and tendencies inculcate the elevation of individuals and the progress of society, this divine right of government was denied, and the right of self-government established. The authority of kings was dispensed with, and the authority of the people substituted for it. No institutions in the world guard and guarantee this great principle better than ours. The constitution declares it in its preamble, and protects it in all its parts.

The most efficient means of protection afforded by it are found especially in those provisions which prohibit an establishment of religion, creation of privileged classes, and provide for equality of citizenship and rights, the universality of law, the freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press. These are the "Protestant" and "revolutionary" principles to which this author refers. They are the former, because they are opposed to the

principles of the papacy; the latter, because they place the authority of government in the hands of the people, rather than in those of a monarch. By our fathers, who established the Government; by all those who have been entrusted with its management from the beginning; and by the great body of the people of the United States, our constitution has been always and invariably interpreted in the light of these principles and facts. We have differed among ourselves about many things, but not about these great principles. And we now cherish them none the less because it required revolution to establish them.

This papal writer is not so ignorant as to be uninformed about our history. He tells us, however, that, as we understand and interpret our constitution, he, though professedly an American citizen, *will not "accept it,"* that it is *no "government at all"*—a mere rope of sand, and not "capable of performing any of the proper functions of government." If he took the oath of allegiance to it in the Protestant sense, he must have cherished treason in his heart against it at the time. If he took it in any other sense, he committed perjury in the eye of the law. Be this as it may, he stands now before the country as the confessed enemy of the great fundamental principles which the Constitution was designed to perpetuate. And what are the avowed grounds of his opposition? These, and nothing less: That the right of self-government in the people is only the "*supremacy of the mob*;" that a government founded upon that right "*lacks the element of order*," and cannot maintain liberty or society "*because it rejects authority*." What authority? The authority of kings—of those who govern by divine right.

The people, said Dr. Brownson, were born to be governed, not to govern; they need a master! And this writer instructs us where we may find such a master; "by the rejection of the principle of the Reformation, and the acceptance of the Catholic principle!" Then authority will triumph, the right of self-government will be gone, the divine right be re-established, the fundamental principles of our Government will be lost forever; we shall have an established Church and a privileged hierarchy, and no more freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press; the papacy will win its grand triumph, and the pope become our master!

But the questions we are discussing do not involve the necessity of dwelling upon these consequences, which are not likely to be visited upon us, unless some power shall arise sufficiently overwhelming to arrest the career of national progress. They have to do, rather, with the position of the papal defenders in this country, the motives which influence them, and the principles upon which they justify their combined assault upon institutions to which, in their present form, the greater part of them have taken oaths of allegiance.

Wherein does the difference consist, in principle, between them and those citizens of Germany who have been so highly extolled for their resistance to the laws of their Government? The particular measures of civil policy which have invited the resistance are not alike, but the principle is the same in all the cases. It is neither more nor less than opposition to law, because it affects the Church, by denying that the pope has any right, either divine or human, to interfere with the domestic and temporal policy of the government.

The pope claims that, by virtue of authority conferred upon him by Divine Providence, he has the spiritual right to release these disobedient citizens of Germany from their allegiance to their own Government, and that any resistance to this by that Government is a violation of God's law. He teaches that their "first duty" is to him, because he represents God; and that if, in paying this duty, they violate the laws of their state, they stand justified before God, because the spiritual order is above the temporal. And thus he erects an ecclesiastical government within the temporal, demanding obedience upon the ground that God did not design that the pope should be subject to any "*civil power*" on earth! He holds out the same justification to his followers in the United States, encouraging their opposition to principles of our Government far more fundamental than any assailed in Europe, and rests it upon the same claim of divine power.

As "vicar of Christ" he dispenses the obligation of allegiance, and turns loose his ecclesiastical army upon every government on earth which dares to establish any constitution, or pass any law, or do any act that shall curtail his authority or that of his hierarchy, or shall prevent the papacy from becoming, what he claims for it, the universal governing power. And writers like the author of the foregoing article in *The Catholic World*, perfectly obedient and submissive to him, enter with alacrity upon the task of assailing the very fundamental principles of our Government, as if the American people were either insensible to their perfidy, or ready to become the impassive dupes of their intrigues.

That these papal followers in the United States occupy a position substantially analogous to that of those in Germany, who are justified by the pope for resistance to the civil power, is easily demonstrable. Take, for example, the relations between them and the Government of the empire. Before the unification of Germany, Prussia was a Protestant nation. Like all other Protestant nations, its laws gave equal protection to every denomination of Christians. In so far as they protected the rights of conscience, they recognized no difference between the Lutheran and other Protestant churches, and the Roman Catholic Church. Perfect freedom of faith and worship was not only conferred, but guaranteed to all. Education was compulsory, but each of the churches was permitted, in addition to the education required by the state, to impress the principles of its own faith upon the minds of the young who were under its charge. In the Roman Catholic schools the religion of that Church was taught, without any prohibition by the state. Papal infallibility had not then been decreed, and, consequently, was not a necessary part of that religion. It was, undoubtedly, maintained by the Jesuit or Ultramontane party, but this constituted so small a portion of the great body of the Church in Prussia, that the Government was not disposed to hold it responsible, as a whole, for the doctrines of this party. It was well understood that it would elevate the pope to a condition of superiority over the state, if the power to do so were given it; but it made so little progress in that direction, on account of the natural tendency of the German mind toward freedom of thought, as to excite no serious apprehensions on the part of the Government. And, consequently, under the Prussian kingdom there was no attempt to interfere with the Roman Catholic schools, or with the Church, or with the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of its hierarchy.

This harmony was disturbed by two of the most important events of the present period: the decree of infallibility, and the war between Prussia and France. These two events occurred so nearly together that there would seem to have been some intimate relationship between them. The war was designed on the part of Napoleon III. to settle the superiority of the Latin over the Teutonic race, and the decree to make the papacy supreme over all the nations. So far from the former of these objects having been accomplished, the contest resulted in German unification; in not only converting the kingdom of Prussia into the German empire, but in making it one of the strongest and most compact military powers in the world.

Whether, during the struggle, there was any effort on the part of the ultramontane prelates and clergy to convert it into a religious war, by persuading the Roman Catholics of Germany into the belief that the triumph of the true faith would inevitably follow the destruction of the Protestant Government of Prussia, does not bear especially upon our present inquiry. It is, however, the fact, that, after the close of the war, when the civil authorities entered upon the duty of consolidating the empire, they found that the effect of the decree of infallibility was to make the Roman Catholic religion in the empire a very different thing from what it had previously been in the kingdom. A considerable number of the German prelates had voted "non placet," that is, against the decree, in the Lateran Council, but they were unable to resist the power and pressure of the papacy, and yielded their assent under ultramontane dictation and threats. The necessary effect was that the Roman Catholic Church in Germany became subject to this same dictation; or, perhaps, it is more proper to say, that the ultramontanes immediately inaugurated measures to put it under the dominion of the papacy.

One of the most efficient of these was the assertion of the right to teach the doctrine of papal infallibility in the public schools of the state, and thereby impress the minds of the Roman Catholic youth with the idea that, instead of owing their "first duty" to Germany, they owed it to the pope; from whom, notwithstanding any law of the state, they were bound to accept every thing concerning religion and the Church as absolutely and infallibly true. They put themselves, accordingly, in direct hostility to the civil authorities of the empire, and, by doing so, forced large numbers of their Church who desired to remain obedient to the laws, and who were opposed to the doctrine of infallibility, to separate themselves from the papal organization under the name of "Old Catholics." Among these were some of the most distinguished and learned professors of the German universities, who were followed by many of their pupils, and by others, who were convinced by the force of their arguments that if they put themselves in the power of the ultramontanes, and accepted the doctrine of the pope's infallibility, they would occupy, necessarily, a position of antagonism to the Government. All these were excommunicated by the pope, and one of the questions which the Government had to meet was to decide upon the effect of this act. The pope and the ultramontanes insisted that it cut off all the excommunicated from Christian intercourse, and from the right to perform any church functions whatever. The public authorities thought and decided otherwise, and gave them the full protection of the law in maintaining their organization; which they claimed to be precisely in accordance with that which prevailed in the Church

in the ages before it was corrupted by the papacy.

Other events contributed to make the breach still wider. There is a military church at Cologne, where a priest, who refused to accept infallibility, and was under the ban of excommunication, offered the sacrifice of the mass. For this the church was placed under interdict by the ultramontane chaplain general of the army, who claimed that, by virtue of his episcopal office, he had the right to prohibit the use of the building for any other worship than that which had the approval of the pope. For this he was tried by a military court for a violation of the articles of war, and his episcopal functions suspended.

The Bishop of Ermeland excommunicated two professors of theology as apostates, and the minister of worship denied to him the right to cut them off from Christian communion without the consent of the state. The bishop, still defying the authorities, was deprived of his government salary. The Emperor William sent Cardinal Hohenlohe as an ambassador to the court of the pope, and the pope refused to receive him. The excitement became more and more intensified every day, until the Government, convinced that the Jesuits were the prime movers in all the acts of resistance to its authority, issued a proclamation, July 4th, 1872, expelling all foreign Jesuits from the empire, and providing that those who were natives should have their places of residence prescribed to them. This was done pursuant to a law passed by the German Reichstag, which was ultimately interpreted to embrace other monastic orders and congregations which had yielded to the pressure of ultramontane influence, such as the Redemptorists, the Lazarists, the Trappists, the Christian Brothers, etc.

All this was called persecution, of course, and yet these acts of the Government were domestic remedies against disloyalty. They were adopted in defense of the laws of the state, and it is in that view alone that they are now considered. Whether they were politic or not was exclusively for the German Government to decide. But the pope and the ultramontanes did not so regard them. In their view they were an invasion of the pope's jurisdiction. They demanded that, as the pope represented God, and the Emperor William represented the state, the latter should permit the former to enter his dominions as a domestic prince, and dictate what laws concerning the Church, its faith, and its priesthood should be executed, and what should be disobeyed! That was, and is to-day, the sole question of controversy between the German empire and the papacy, just as it is between the papacy and all other governments, the United States included.

Although the issue grows out of different measures of government policy, it is substantially the same everywhere. And, therefore, when the pope accompanied his claim of "*secular principedom*" with the sentiments already quoted from his Encyclical of December 23d, 1872, he intended that the encouragement he thereby gave the violations of the law in Germany should equally apply to all other governments where the rights of the papacy, as he has announced them, are either denied or violated. Governments have no more important question to deal with than this: their existence may depend upon it. Whatever, or however varied, their domestic policy may be, they should decide it for themselves. The moment they allow a *foreign* power to dictate

it, in any essential particular,. that moment they lose their independence and sink into imbecility.

While the American people have no just right to concern themselves about the internal policy of the German empire (it being fully competent to manage its own affairs), it is important that they should know how far the Roman Catholic mind in this country is likely to be affected by the teachings of the pope in reference to those who have so offensively violated its laws. If his power over the sentiments and opinions of his followers in the United States is as great as it is there—and there is no reason to suppose it is not—then, although there may be no immediate open resistance to the principles of our Government which he has condemned, the fact exists that there is a cherished purpose to make it whenever there is a reasonable promise of success.

We may not fear resistance, but are always better prepared to meet it when aware that it is contemplated. The seeds of disease are more easily removed before they have become diffused throughout the system. One of the fathers of the Republic gave us this admonition:

“Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government.”(Washington’s Farewell Address.)

And one of the great men of our own times, contemplating the possible dangers which might result from even the foreign ownership of stock in our moneyed institutions, said:

“Of the course which would be pursued by a bank almost wholly owned by the subjects of a foreign power, and managed by those whose interests, if not affections, would run in the same direction, there can be no doubt. All its operations within would be in aid of hostile fleets and armies without. Controlling our currency, receiving our public moneys, and *holding thousands of our citizens in dependence*, it would be more formidable and dangerous than the naval and military power of the enemy.”(Jackson’s Veto of the Bank of the United States.)

The nation did not stand in the immediate presence of any danger from foreign influence when these sentiments were uttered. Their distinguished authors looked to precautionary measures alone. And how much more “formidable and dangerous” than a few stockholders in a moneyed corporation are a multitude of men, moved by a single impulse, compacted together by a common sentiment, and ready, at the dictation of a “foreign prince,” to aim their blows, openly or secretly, at such principles of our Government as he may condemn, upon the plea that they belong to the spiritual order, over which God has placed the pope as the sole, sovereign, and infallible judge?

On the 25th day of March, 1873, “a very large meeting” of “the Catholic Germans of Philadelphia” was held in that city. Its avowed object was “for the purpose of placing upon record their sympathy with their oppressed and

persecuted fellow-Catholics of Germany, and to *congratulate them and their noble hierarchy upon the heroic stand they have taken in the face of the persecuting Government;*" that is, upon their resistance to laws regularly and legally enacted. The Bishops of Philadelphia, Scranton, and Harrisburg were all present at this meeting, accompanied by "a large number of the reverend clergy." Clapping of hands, hearty cheers, and strains of music enlivened the occasion. Eloquent addresses were delivered; but one, by the "pastor of St. Bonifacius," produced a "sweeping effect" and great enthusiasm, because of its castigation of "Bismarck, Garibaldi, and Co.," its praise of the Jesuits, and its adulation of Pope Pius IX., whom he called "the fearless Hildebrand of the nineteenth century!"

When the proper degree of excitement had been produced, resolutions, with an explanatory preamble, were adopted. They enumerate the terrible persecutions which had been visited upon their "fellow-Catholics" in Germany, as follows:

1. The expulsion of the Jesuits.
2. The encroachment on the constitutional rights of the "German Catholic hierarchy" by retaining "in their positions and dignities" the "Old Catholics," whom they denounce as "faithless sons of the Church."
3. The encroachment upon the rights of conscience by keeping those who had abandoned the faith in charge of the public schools.
4. The "unchristianizing the schools."

In view of these arbitrary and tyrannical measures, they express their sympathy for their German brethren as "Germany's truest sons and most faithful citizens!" because they obey the pope rather than the Government. They "admire the bearing of the German episcopacy" for their open hostility to their Government, and commend to them "the sublime example" of the pope, whom they are so nobly following. They declare their "inexpressible joy" at the "constancy of endurance shown by the whole German clergy" in opposing the laws, and their consequent "*beautiful submission to the Church.*" And then they express their conviction that the "Catholics of Germany will continue to value their faith above all other blessings" that is, above the empire—and that they will be always ready "to sacrifice life and all things for its dear sake." (*New York Tablet*, April 12th, 1873, pp. 3-11.)

Whether the great bulk of those who composed this large meeting understood the import of all this is somewhat problematical. But of one thing there can be no reasonable doubt: that the three bishops and the "reverend clergy" understood it fully. As the mere means of preserving unity among their followers nobody has any right, and probably very few have any inclination, to object to it. It is only of consequence in view of the principles enunciated, and the attitude in which the papal training places those who are entirely submissive to the hierarchy, and who, in other respects, are good and peaceable citizens. These latter are not responsible, for their Church does not allow them to reason about her affairs. The hierarchy command—they obey.

What did the hierarchical manipulators of this meeting mean? This only: to teach their followers that the measures of the German empire, which they called persecution, belonged to the Church—were of the faith; were outside

the temporal jurisdiction of human governments; pertained only to the spiritual order; and, therefore, could only be decided upon by the pope! Now, with the single exception of the expulsion of the Jesuits, all the enumerated grievances of which they complain in Germany exist in the United States. Our Government gives protection to every Church and every religious order. It confides the public schools to men of every faith, and of none. It maintains "unchristian," or, as they choose to call them, "godless schools." And all these things, and others of like import, it considers as belonging to temporal affairs, the regulation of which is under the exclusive cognizance of laws passed by the state. Hence, when they recognize the pope as having authority over these temporal matters in Germany on account of his spiritual supremacy, they must be understood as meaning that he has like authority in the United States. As the fundamentals of our Government, heretofore indicated, belong to the same class of temporals, so, in their view, the pope has the same power to release them from the obligation of obedience to them, as he has to release their "fellow-Catholics" in Germany from their obligation of obedience to the laws of their own country! This logical conclusion cannot be escaped, in reference to all these fundamentals condemned by the pope. But there is even more than this to show that he would have them go one step farther, and substitute the "*divine right*" of kings to govern for that now possessed by the people.

If he considers that God has established this right, then it must be a necessary part of the faith, for whatever he declares to be the law of God must be so, if he is infallible. And if it is of the faith that kings govern by "divine right," it must be maintained as well in the United States as at Rome; for otherwise the Church does not possess a uniform faith, and forfeits her claim to universality. One might suppose that the anxiety exhibited by Roman Catholics in the United States for the success of De Chambord in France and Don Carlos in Spain would leave but little doubt upon this subject. But this is not sufficient of itself to settle the question. The pope interprets the law of God, and establishes the faith. "When Rome has spoken, that is the end of the matter."

Some time ago, Mgr. Segur—from whom we quoted in a former chapter—prepared a pamphlet with the title "Vive le Roi," which he presented to the Count De Chambord, who claims that he is the legitimate heir, by divine right, to the throne of France. The object of this pamphlet was to demonstrate the nature and existence of this right. An American review of it, from the pen of a Roman Catholic—probably a Jesuit—thus states his proposition:

"Henry V. presents himself to France *in the name of Him from whom emanates all right and all legitimate sovereignty*. He is King of France, not in virtue of the capricious will of the people, but *in virtue of the order established by God*; he is King of France by *divine right*."

The nature of this right is defined to be "the right of God," and "a true right of property," which cannot be taken away without robbery. And it is said:

...though it results from human facts, it is no less *divine*; and hence it may be said that *by divine right he possesses the crown*. On these matters there



exists a great confusion of ideas, owing to the *vulgar notions put afloat by revolutionists.*"

But for fear of possible collision between claimants, and differences of opinion as to the particular individual so favored by Providence, and so as not to oust the pope from his lofty position of supremacy over the world, he makes him the infallible arbiter. His final decision, rendered from whatever motive, is conclusive as to who shall be and who shall not be king! He alone knows what the will of God is! And when he has decided, the nation must obey! There is no appeal! The people have no will in the matter! They are slaves—he is their master! This writer, pointing out the mode of knowing "with certitude upon whom rests the divine right," and insisting that when this is ascertained "*he is the depository of the rights of God* for the good of his country," says:

"And if, moreover, the Church [that is, the pope] should take in hands his rights, protecting him with her sympathies and with *her divine authority*, the *certitude*, at least for Christians, becomes such that doubt would seem no longer *permitted.*"

Now, if these were only the individual opinions of Mgr. Segur, he should be left undisturbed, as an avowed supporter of monarchy, to enjoy them or to preach them, if he deemed it his duty, to the French people. They would, undoubtedly, be most acceptable to the ears of many hearers, and especially to all the hierarchy of France, who are at this time acting upon them as of the faith, with the hope that they may persuade the Roman Catholic people of that country to place Count De Chambord upon the throne, and destroy the republic; because, as we are told by this American reviewer," he has given the solemn promise that, once on the throne of France, *he will take up the cause of the pope,*" and "then the sword of Charlemagne shall spring from the scabbard, and convoke, as of old, the *Catholic peoples* to the rescue of Rome from the miserable and despicable Italian apostates." But high as the author of these sentiments is in the estimation of the hierarchy, he has secured to them a higher endorsement than his own, so that all who shall unite for these objects may be assured that they are serving God and the Church. He laid his pamphlet before Pope Pius IX., who, in expressing his approval of it, thus addressed him:

"Pius IX., Pope, to his Beloved Son, Greeting and Apostolic Benediction: We have received your new pamphlet, and we wish, from the bottom of our hearts, that it may *dispel from others the errors* which you, enlightened by the misfortunes of your country, have had *the happiness of rejecting*. In fact, it is not the *impious sects* alone that conspire against the Church and against society; it is also those men who, even should we suppose them of the most perfect good faith, and the most straightforward intentions, *caress the liberal doctrines* which the Holy See has *many times disapproved of*; doctrines which favor *principles whence all revolutions take their birth*, and more pernicious, perhaps, as at first sight they have a show of generosity. Principles evidently impious can only affect, in fact, minds already corrupted; but principles that veil themselves with patriotism and the zeal of religion, principles that put forward the aspirations of honest men, easily seduce good people, and turn them away, unconsciously, from true

doctrine to errors, which, speedily taking larger developments, and translating into acts their ultimate consequences, *shake all social order and ruin peoples.*

"Certainly, beloved son, if you shall have by this pamphlet the happiness of *bringing round many up to this time in error*, it will be a great reward."

When does the pope speak *ex cathedra*? When he declares the faith, say his followers. What is the faith? It is the law of God, or whatsoever is founded upon it, or is the necessary consequence of it. Therefore, when the pope thus gives his approval to the doctrine that it is a part of the law of God that kings govern by "divine right," it is necessarily a part of the faith, and must be believed as such by all the faithful. To reject it would be heresy. Evidently, it is regarded in this light by some of the papists in the United States? If not, wherefore the necessity of republishing in this country, and giving prominence, in a leading journal, to these anti-American opinions of Mgr. Segur, with the pope's brief of approval attached? (*The New York Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register*, March 9th, 1872.) And why should the reviewer of his pamphlet venture to declare "the identity of opinion between the Catholics of France and America with regard to the form of government to be adopted in the former country, and the good wishes of the Americans for the success of the Count De Chambord," unless this unity of opinion grows out of the teachings of the pope?

The reviewer substantially admits this when, immediately after avowing this unity, he says that the success of De Chambord "will *consolidate the union of Catholics*, and facilitate, at a later period, a more thorough co-operation, not only for the restoration, but also for the *consolidation and maintenance, of the sovereignty of the sovereign pontiff.*"

How "consolidate the union of Catholics" in Europe and America? Manifestly upon the principles avowed by Mgr. Segur and sent forth with the sanction of the pope. And how consolidate and maintain "the sovereignty of the sovereign pontiff," if not by means of this "union of Catholics," based upon these expressed principles of "divine right?" With what vivid imagination does he look forward to the time when this grand consummation shall be achieved! Then the pope "will be restored to the plenitude of his power; and," says he, "with the elder son of the Church as our leader, *we shall all hasten* to expel from the Eternal City the miscreants that are now despoiling it!"—which means this: that when the doctrine of "divine right" shall become established as a part of the faith, and the throne of France shall be held by virtue of it, then the Roman Catholics of the United States will unite with their brethren in France under the royal banner of Henry V., and make war upon Italy! Trained in such a school, and imbibing such principles as a part of their religion, how can these men help hating, with an intense hatred, all republican and popular institutions? And how hard they struggle to impress the laymen of their Church with kindred principles!

They are commanded in the name of a Church which asserts that its unity never has been and never can be broken, and which tolerates no disagreement among its members. Each one of them is educated to believe, under the penalty of excommunication, in an unchanging and unchangeable pope—the same yesterday,

to-day, and forever. "All that he [the pope] knows now as revealed, and all that he shall know, and all that there is to know, he embraces ALL in his intention by one act of faith!"(\*) If faithful, he believes in whatsoever all the popes have said and done regarding faith and morals— whatsoever Pope Pius IX. is now saying and doing, and whatsoever he and all his successors shall do and say in the future!

(\*) "Grammar of Faith," by Rev. John Henry Newman, p. 146. This author was a distinguished convert from the Church of England to Roman Catholicism. He has replied to Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet.

We are not without advice from European Roman Catholics, who have repudiated the doctrine of infallibility and the opposition to liberalism which grows out of it, which admonishes us that these things are worthy of our most serious deliberation. After the decree of infallibility was announced, *over twelve thousand* of the citizens of Munich, in Bavaria, presented to the Government, through the minister of public worship, an address, wherein they protested against it on the ground of the danger it threatened to their civil and social institutions. A brief extract from it will show how Roman Catholics themselves look upon the impious pretense that the pope stands in the place of God on earth—a doctrine equally inculcated here as there; how they shrink, with honest apprehensions, from the usurpations which must follow infallibility, if it shall become the universally recognized doctrine of their Church, and to what extent it has already given insolence and impunity to an ambitious and dangerous priesthood. It concludes thus:

"The doctrine which the Government of your royal majesty has declared *dangerous to the political and social foundations of the state*, is sought to be inculcated, with more and more urgency, publicly from the pulpit, and in pastorals and clerical newspapers, as well as *privately* through letters and the *abuse of the confessional*.

"*In criminal defiance of the Government*, the hearts of women are poisoned against their husbands, the father is cursed to the face of his child. And it is not only in the confessional that the weaker minds of women are sought to be gained. Importunate epistles and importunate visits are brought into requisition. We see especial danger in the abuse which many of the clergy have already begun to introduce *into the religious instruction of the schools*. The child is justly accustomed to look upon its religious preceptor as an authority; it believes him, and obeys him without suspicion or reflection. And these artless and unsuspecting minds are now taught this *dangerous new doctrine*. The child is told at school that his father who does not believe is damned and accursed. The priests denounce infamy and disgrace against those who refuse to submit—solemn anathematism, and, what is most hurtful, ignominious interment. The refractoriness of the clergy has gone so far—on the Rhine, for instance—that a soldier returned from the war, who was about to lead his affianced bride to the altar, was not allowed to marry her because his name had appeared on the protest against this dangerous innovation."

Here are distinctly shown, not only the apprehensions existing in the minds

of Roman Catholics in reference to the effect of this "dangerous new doctrine" upon the faith as they have been taught it, and its threatening aspects toward the political and social foundations of the state; but how that extraordinary instrument of ecclesiastical despotism, the confessional, is employed in fixing this doctrine of the pope's infallibility in the minds of the young and unsuspecting, in the very faces of all the governments, and in defiance of parental authority. This same marvelous power is at work in this country, to enforce, at the sacred altar, the politico-religious opinions already pointed out as so dangerous to the state, so at war with the whole genius and spirit of our institutions. Protestants have not duly considered what a tremendous engine of power this is—how far, as an element of absolutism, it transcends any other ever invented by human ingenuity. They should understand it better.

The ecclesiastical historians, Sozomen and Socrates, both inform us that, in the fourth century, when they wrote, confessions were made *in public*; thus showing in what light they were regarded by the primitive Christians who lived near the apostolic age. Sozomen says this was the custom of "the Western churches, *particularly at Rome*, where there is a place appropriated to the reception of penitents, where they stand and mourn until the completion of the solemn services from which they are excluded; then they cast themselves, with groans and lamentations, prostrate on the ground. The bishop conducts the ceremony, sheds tears, and prostrates himself in like manner, and all the people burst into tears, and groan aloud." Penance was then imposed, and after the performance of it, the penitent was "permitted to resume his place in the assemblies of the Church." He continues: "The *Roman* priests have carefully observed this custom *from the beginning to this time*;" while at Constantinople it had been the custom to appoint a presbyter "to preside over the penitents."(\*) This early custom, simple and impressive in its form of procedure, recognized the priest only as an intercessor for the penitent, by his prayers; but gave him no power to impose "alms-giving," at his discretion, as a satisfaction for sin. He had no right to excommunicate and cut off any Christian from fellowship with the Church without trial by the Church, and conviction upon competent evidence; and this practice, in so far as it involved the power of the priesthood, prevailed universally in the Western, or Roman, Church for many centuries after Christ.

(\*) "Sozomen's Ecclesiastical History," book vii., chap. 16 (Bohn's ed.), pp. 334–336; "Socrates' Ecclesiastical History," book v., chap. 19 (Bohn's ed.), pp. 281, 282. See the question discussed in Bingham's "Antiquities of the Christian Church," book xviii., chap. 3, vol. ii., p. 1064; also "The History of the Confessional," by Bishop Hopkins, published in 1850 by Harper & Brothers.

Within that period, however, the practice of giving publicity to confessions was changed. The ambitious Leo I., who became pope in 440, inaugurated a new system, in order to increase the authority of the clergy, and, consequently, of the pope. He directed that "*secret confession*" should be substituted for that which before had been public, and should be made "*to the priest only*," and not to the church. (The History of the Confessional," by Bishop Hopkins, pp. 142, 143.)

But the power of absolution was not extended, even by him, beyond the petition and prayer of the priest that God would extend his mercy to the penitent, and pardon and absolve him from his sins. Thus Gregory I., who did not become pope till 590, wrote as follows to the proconsul, Marcellus:

"And since you have asked that our *absolution* may be given you, it is fitting that you should *satisfy our Redeemer* with tears and the whole intention of your mind for these thing, as duty requires; because, if he be not satisfied, *what can our indulgence or pardon confer?*" (\*)

(\*) "The History of the Confessional," by Bishop Hopkins, p. 147. Bishop Hopkins says that the third Council of Carthage prohibited secret confession by "widows and virgins," even to "bishops or presbyters," unless "the clergy" or "some serious Christians" were present (p. 166). I do not think he is sustained in this, or, if he is, that it established the dissoluteness of the clergy at Rome. The third Council of Carthage was a provincial council only. It was called by the Bishop of Carthage, and was attended only by the African prelates. And, besides, it was held in the year 397, when confession, in all the Western Church, was made in public. It was about half a century before the practice of secret confession was introduced by Pope Leo I. Nor do I think that the canons of this council make any reference to confession. They rather, it seems to me, refer to the dissolute habits of some of the *African* clergy. The seventeenth "forbids them to cohabit with strange women, and permits them only to live with their mothers, their grandmothers, their aunts, their sisters, their nieces, and those of their domestics who dwelt in the house with them before their ordination." And the twenty-fifth provides that "clergymen, and those who make profession of chastity, shall not go to see widows or virgins without the permission of the bishop or some priests; that they shall not be with them alone, but with other ecclesiastics, or such persons as the bishops or the priests shall appoint them; that bishops and priests also shall not visit them alone, but in company with other ecclesiastics or Christians of known probity. —Du PIN's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. ii., p. 278.

As the clergy had not, by this early practice, the power to pardon penitents, and thus to acquire the desired dominion over them, so as to regulate their thoughts and actions, the system of *compounding sins* was gradually introduced. It at first, however, made slow progress, even in the Middle Ages. In the ecclesiastical laws drawn up in England by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 967—when that kingdom was under papal rule—"alms-giving" was substituted for the ancient custom of performing penance. The rich were to "build churches," and, if able, to "add manors," build "roads and bridges," distribute their property, abandon their lands, their country, and "all the desirable things of this world." A fast of a day could be redeemed by one penny," and of a year by "thirty shillings," and so on. (The History of the Confessional," by Bishop Hopkins, p. 171.)

From this principle of making atonement for sin by the payment of money as "alms," it was easy to advance another step, and give to the priests the same power over sins that God possesses—that is, to absolve the penitent. This step, however, was not finally taken until the thirteenth century, when the doctrines of Thomas Aquinas obtained ascendancy. He insisted that penitence is a sacrament, like baptism, and that, as the priest in the latter says, "I

baptize thee," therefore, in the former, he should say, "*I absolve thee;*" ("The History of the Confessional," by Bishop Hopkins, p. 187.) thus conferring upon the priest the power of absolution.

The argument was convincing to those who desired to possess the power, and they soon began the construction of that system of rules for the government of the confessional which cannot be read without bringing a blush to the hardest cheek, and which are too immodest for review or repetition. (\*)

(\*) Upon this subject Bishop Hopkins says: "It is, indeed, a point of no small difficulty to ascertain how far it is consistent with propriety to proceed with such documents; for it is certain that they are an inseparable part of the subject; that they form the staple of the Roman confessional at the present day, and are a true but very brief index to the sort of questions which more than a hundred millions of our fellow-creatures, male and female, are obliged to answer whenever it pleases the priests to interrogate them; while over the whole of what takes place in the confessional an impenetrable veil of mystery is thrown. Moreover, these things are not only to be found in the authentic and public councils of the Church of Rome herself—being, in fact, the official acts of her highest dignitaries—but the same, in substance, are now *published in our own language and country*, for the use of the laity, as an essential guide to those who come to the confessional. And yet, so abhorrent are the feelings of our age toward the open discussion of such topics, that no writer can transfer the mere records of Romanism to his pages without incurring the reproach of indecency."—HOPKINS, pp. 193, 194.

"The Garden of the Soul: a Manual of Spiritual Exercises and Instructions for Christians, who, living in the World, aspire to Devotion," is the title of a work published under the auspices of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States. It has the special approbation of the Archbishop of New York, and may be readily procured. It is extensively circulated among the laity, with the object, as declared in the preface, "to instruct the members of the Roman Catholic Church on the nature of the most solemn act of their religion." And yet, in the "instructions and devotions for confession," in order that "a good confession" may be made, there is language employed which, if it were found in any public newspaper in the United States, would cause the filthy sheet to be cast out from every fireside. See p. 213.

The celebrated work of Peter Dens, "Theologia Moralis et Dogmatica," contains several numbers, in vol. iv., upon this subject, with which I am unwilling to soil these pages, even by the insertion of the Latin. Several years ago, in the city where I reside, a gentleman read and translated these before an audience where there were no ladies, and an honest young Roman Catholic layman present was so shocked that he caused him to be arrested and carried before the mayor upon a charge of *public indecency*!

The reader must examine for himself to see how completely every thought, sentiment, intent, and faculty of the mind is confided to the priest by the practice of auricular confession; and how every action of life, even to the invasion of the domestic sanctuary, is mapped out before him, in order that he may possess entire control over the penitent. In this connection it is only necessary to say further, that the Council of Trent, in 1551,

established the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas as a part of the faith, by giving the power of absolution to the priests, and continuing the system of allowing them, at their discretion, to compound for sin by imposing pecuniary penalties. The doctrine declared by this celebrated Ecumenical Council is, that God never gave "*to creatures*" the power to grant remission of sin until the coming of Christ, when "he became *man*, in order to bestow on man this forgiveness of sins," when "he communicated this power to bishops and priests in the Church," having delegated to them his authority for that purpose;(\*) thus showing that, by the act of the priest in prescribing penance or receiving "alms" in satisfaction for sin, the sinner is forgiven!

(\*) "Catechism of the Council of Trent," p. 83. This is a work of standard authority in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

And this, although the priest himself may be covered all over with the filth of his own personal corruption! (\*)

(\*) *Ibid.*, pp. 73, 74. Referring to such as are excluded from the pale of the Church, it is here said, "Were even the lives of her ministers debased by crime, they are still within her pale, and, therefore, lose none of the power with which her ministry invests them."

When we consider what enormous power is thus acquired by the Roman Catholic priesthood, and the requirements of them by the doctrine of papal infallibility, it is not surprising that they should have employed it in resistance to the law in Germany, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland, or that the Bavarian Roman Catholics should have protested against it. And when it is considered that this same power is now employed in this country, every day and almost every hour, by the same class of priests and for the same object, it is sufficient to excite both inquiry and reflection. The influence of the confessional does not vary with degrees of latitude and longitude. It is the same everywhere—putting the penitent completely in the hands of his confessor, to be molded, in his character and in all his thoughts and sentiments, by him.

While the bulk of the people of the United States are actively engaged in their daily occupations, unsuspecting and tolerant, the whole papal priesthood are devoting themselves, morning, noon, and night, to the employment of this enormous engine of power, in order to bring our Roman Catholic citizens—themselves unsuspecting, also—by persuasion, if possible, but by threats of excommunication, if necessary—to the point of recognizing the infallibility of the pope, and the universal sovereignty which it establishes, knowing, as they do, the conflict they are inaugurating with some of the most cherished principles of our civil institutions.

Is there no danger from all this? There may not be, and will not, if we heed the admonitions coming to us from other nations with every flash of lightning through the sea. Let us begin in time to guard our national heritage, and, while we are not required to do any thing in violation of the tolerant principles of our Government, we can so shield them from the

assaults of foreign imperialism, that the blows aimed at them by their assailants will rebound upon their own heads.

Continued in [The Papacy And The Civil Power – Chapter VII. The Encyclicals of Pius IX.](#)